EU migrants' social rights at the street-level:
A state-of-the-art review

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1. Introduction

The extent to which 'ethnic variation' among European Union (EU) migrants, and compared to German-born German nationals residing in Germany, referred to as German-born nationals thereafter, translates into (in)equality of access to work-related subsistence benefits administered by German jobcentres, remains under-explored. It is nevertheless considered important because of the impact of differential access has on (in)equality of material well-being and of subsequent life chances. The paper provides an a state of the art review of research on administrative influences on non-take-up, which is defined as the situation whereby individuals or households do not receive the amount to which they are legally entitled (van Oorschot 1995). The paper forms part of a larger doctoral research project exploring whether the potential (in)formal barriers to take-up can be attributed, in part, to ethnic penalty (e.g. through gatekeepers' potentially unfavourable understandings of EU migrants' 'ethnic deservingness') or whether potential intra-European inequalities of benefit access can be explained through other means.

1.1 Broader policy context

The question of the extent to which EU migrants can exercise their social citizenship rights is important and topical. Its relevance is illustrated by the heated, emotional public debate on migrants' entitlements versus redistribution in many European countries. Feelings are not only running high in Great Britain, where it has become the core of the Brexit debate, but also elsewhere such as in Germany, where media titles include: What does the state pay for foreigners? - SPD wants to curtail social benefits for EU foreigners\(^1\).

The current refugee crisis, which has led to an inflow of almost one million people fleeing war-torn areas and seeking refuge in Germany in 2015, is only one part of the current German debate on citizenship rights and belonging. The above mentioned news items all refer to EU citizens' social entitlements which are legally protected by a supranational framework on the coordination of national social security systems: Regulation (EC) 883/2004, based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination, guarantees

\(^1\) Sources of media headlines, in chronological order:
Tagesschau, 01.01.2016 https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/eu-sozialleistungen-101.html
beneficiaries who move within the EU the same social entitlements as national citizens have in the respective host country (Brücker et al. 2001). Their eligibility nevertheless remains questioned within the German public. Answers to the fundamental question on the social legitimacy of redistribution are nevertheless more and more urgently needed in light of the current fast-changing demographics of the country: Who should get what, and under what rationale in the light of the unresolved underlying tensions between notions of civic citizenship and symbolic membership in a German national (supposedly ethnically homogeneous) community?

As described by Brubaker (1992), Germany actively supported an exclusionary incorporation policy until the early 2000s, based on language and culture (Volks-centred) (Geddes 2006; Sainsbury 2006), even though the imaginary of a homogeneous nation-state had long become an artefact of the past. German society has become one of Europe's most ethnically diverse since the launch of the guest-worker programme in the 1960s: Germany now is the most important immigration country in Europe, with about 20 per cent of its population having a migration background, of which the majority are of Turkish or Polish descent (Loch 2014; Schierup et al. 2006). Yet a pro-active integration policy lagged behind until 2005 (Kaiser, Paul 2011; Meer, Modood 2014).

In the absence of a civic integration path, such guest-workers were integrated by virtue of their labour market participation; non-German citizens living in Germany have always enjoyed rather extensive social rights (Morris 2003). Stable employment and thereby accrued entitlements quasi automatically generated benefit eligibility for labour migrants and their families due to principles of communitarian economics within the insurance-based system (Esping-Andersen 1989; Kaiser, Paul 2011; Paul 2015; Mau 2003; Sainsbury 2006). The financing structure did not differentiate between German residents without migration background and guest workers (Schulzek 2012).

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2 German census defines migration background as following: (i) residents without German citizenship, (ii) residents with German citizenship who were born outside of German territory and who have at least one parent who is not a German national, (iii) German-born, German nationals who have at least one parent who was born outside of the country and in whose family another language than German is the main language spoken (Frings 2009).

3 This controverts conventional wisdom: Marshall (1950), who was concerned with the development of social rights of citizens in general, argued for the UK case that within a historical evolution citizenship first opened up civic rights, then political and only lastly social rights.
1.2 Relevance to (social) policy-makers: Curtailing inequalities?

One could argue that such state power to define the benefit eligibility of non-Germans, and hence to distribute privileges to individuals purely on the basis of their membership within a given polity, is inherent to a state's national sovereignty (Carens 1987). However, notwithstanding naturalisation opportunities, civic, political and social citizenship rights thereby become primarily inherited, and hence purely accidental. As argued by Shachar (2009) in her book *Birthright Lottery*, the combination of state-imposed restrictions to economic migration, and the arbitrariness of (not) being born into an affluent community with a comprehensive welfare state, produces important global inequalities. After all, the uneven distribution of the right to mobility, and related unequal welfare rights depending on one's country of birth, arguably violate global justice principles (Holtug 2010; Pécoud, De Guchteneire 2007).

Governments' rights to exclude foreigners from their territory, or to admit but bar them from basic rights to social security, i.e. from public provisions which protect individuals from a level of vulnerability and deprivation deemed unacceptable within a given society (Conway et al. 2000), is primarily a normative question. But the issue is also politically relevant. In contemporary societies where ethnic diversity has become the new reality, emergent political, social and economic dividing lines between individuals of varying resident status can weaken intra-societal trust, stability and cohesion (Alesina, Glaeser 2006; Holtug 2010; Kureková 2011). Social security, by its very function of mediating socio-economic life contingency risks such as poverty and unemployment (Taha 2013), can mediate such nascent relative inequalities and prevent societal marginalisation of newcomers (Hagan 2006), in light of migrants' eligibility.

Yet currently, migrants in Germany see themselves confronted with a double set of barriers to socio-economic integration: they find themselves largely unemployed or under-employed in inadequate, precarious employment within the segmented German labour market (Greve 2011). Such differences translate into higher rates of poverty if not (entirely) de-commodified (Kesler 2015; Sainsbury 2006). Disadvantage in labour market access might explain two-fold higher poverty incidence migrants experience in Germany compared to German-born residents (Barrett, Maître 2011; Kaiser, Paul 2011). Those on precarious wages are disadvantaged by the reciprocity logic underpinning the German
insurance system (Sainsbury 2006). Rights are primarily conferred through waged work (Mau 2003). Consequently, migrants are more likely to be in need of a social security safety net due to the adverse labour market conditions they experience. Their vulnerability is further enhanced by eligibility being conditional on previous contributions (Frings 2009).

Their status as (non-)nationals of non-German descent adds another layer of potential barriers to accessing local service provision: Tucci et al.’s (2014) analysis of German panel survey data concludes that 46 per cent of EU migrants living in Germany face discriminatory experiences in interaction with German public administration. However, the study does not explore the kinds of disadvantage experienced. There is a danger though of portraying such barriers to take-up as a simple result of direct discrimination. Such an over-simplistic analysis might overlook other potentially contributing, institutional factors, which could include a lack of knowledge and/or capacities of public welfare services to effectively cater to the needs of an increasingly ethnically, linguistically and culturally heterogeneous pool of applicants. The prevailing uncertainties about the mechanisms at play indicate a lack of evidence on how the current system might shape obstacles to migrant welfare in practice (Dean 2011). To date, Germany-focussed studies have largely analysed legal restrictions to accessing social security that vulnerable population groups with variant resident statuses might experience (European Migration Network 2014). Yet, *de jure* eligibility does not necessarily map onto the *de facto* access to benefits; the persisting gap between policy-design by policy-makers and implementation by local administrations is not a novelty. Notwithstanding, in the area of social policy such implementation inconsistencies can have severe effects on the livelihoods of disadvantaged population groups by leaving them unprotected against poverty and other social risks.

Considering migrants' comparatively high levels of need for subsistence benefits, the paper, as a first step of a larger research project, provides an overview of existing research on how (in)equality of process structures access to (employment-related) social benefits in Germany.
2. A literature review of migrants' social rights at the street-level

2.1 Empirical review of the evidence

With the *Hartz IV* reform, classical social assistance ceased to exist in Germany: means-tested social assistance under the social code *SGB IX* became targeted solely at those *normally resident* in Germany who are entitled to work but due to age, illness or related reasons are incapable to do so. All others are covered by the social legislation under *SGB II* which entitles them to means-tested, subsidiary *UB II* support either as an in-work top-up or as an unemployment benefit as long as they comply with the required labour market activation measures.

Those who are unemployed and with a sufficiently long contribution history do not have to rely on *UB II* and can instead access the top tier social security benefit under the social law book *SGB III*. As a key feature of the conservative social security system, the latter benefit offers strong protection for former workers, paying them 60-67 per cent of their most recent salary for an initial period of six to twelve months (Rudiger, Spencer 2003; Zimmermann, Rice 2016). While non-German nationals can unrestrictedly access the top tier benefit *UB I* if their accrued contributions are sufficient, there are explicit legal exclusions to the subsidiary minimum income schemes (*UB II* and social assistance under *SGB IX*) for those who are neither a refugee nor a family member of a German national. For instance, EU citizens who are seeking a job in Germany are not eligible to claim financial support, which effectively leaves many of them without an appropriate safety net (Rudiger, Spencer 2003; Wunder, Riphahn 2013).

Consequently, welfare states formally shape levels of stratification. The way the German social security architecture is constructed leads to inequality of access as a result of differentiating formal eligibility rules. The contribution-based system creates a distinction

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4 The 2005 Hartz IV reform re-organised Germany's unemployment protection by introducing liberal elements. It created a second pillar in addition to the traditional insurance scheme. This recalibrated the German system towards slimmer protection. The reform merged tax-financed social assistance with the former unemployment assistance scheme for the insured, long-term unemployed into a new conditional minimum income scheme for needy jobseekers (*UBII*). The new scheme's overall objective is to improve mitigation against new social risks by enhancing the employability of groups excluded from the labour market (e.g. long-term unemployed or lone parents) (Heidenreich, Rice 2016; Zimmermann, Rice 2016).
between those EU migrants in employment, who have gained sufficient entitlements through contributions, compared to those not insufficiently attached to the formal labour market, who can only access social assistance-type benefits based on need. In practice, migrants in Germany tend to be relegated to the lower ranks of the benefit hierarchy as a consequence of their either recent migration and/or their position in the secondary labour market (Zimmermann, Rice 2016). In the absence of regular, full-time employment for at least a year and associated social security contributions, migrants only may receive the stigmatising minimum income scheme *UB II*, which can be considered a second-class benefit due to its conditional and means-tested nature. As shown by Mau (2003), tax-financed assistance schemes rank recipients as inferior citizens, in contrast to insurance entitlements which are considered to be a deferred wage (Leibetseder 2014).

How much primacy given to the hard-working, self-reliant citizen (i.e. the market insider in full-time employment, with sufficient wealth resources and the desired skills) has shaped formal entitlements has been most systematically explored in the UK. (Non-)citizenship often becomes differentiated into economically active and inactive categories (Anderson et al. 2014; Anderson 2015; Shutes 2015, 2016). In the German context, Rudiger and Spencer's (2003) study accurately captures how legal exclusions of specific subgroups of EU citizens (e.g. job-seekers) break with the assumed hierarchy of legal rights, where EU citizens enjoy the most generous entitlements after German nationals (followed by A2 migrants, third-country nationals and migrants with irregular status at the bottom of the hierarchy). The contribution-based logic underpinning the German system, which confers status on the basis of one's real employment position, undermines the legal 'EU citizens versus third-country nationals' distinction. As highlighted earlier, it leaves EU citizens, if searching for employment in Germany, with no local social security access.

First, cross-country policy analyses (Amelina, Vasilache 2014; Carmel 2011, 2013; Favell 2014; Foti 2015; Paul 2015) extrapolate on social inequalities between EU citizens within the European territory post-enlargement. They show how EU migration governance keeps the poorest labourers and families in place. (Bernhard, Bernhard 2014)'s analysis delves into the complexity of this (dis)advantage by exploring the link between an EU citizen's country of origin and his/her position in the hierarchical German labour market: while Western European workers are commonly part of the highly skilled, international elite who
arrive to take up a job offer in a high prestige occupation, and hence have little to no contact with local jobcentres, Southern and Eastern European migrants are more dependent on local public support. Despite having on average medium to high education levels, they cluster further down the occupational hierarchy in the German labour market, and often arrive without an employment contract and little financial resources (Burrell 2010; Papadopoulos 2011; Verwiebe et al. 2014).

Notwithstanding the significance of an EU migrant's respective labour market status and skill level, experience of (in)equality of access to social security is more complex. Intra-EU migrants' *de facto* access to social security remains deficient, as pinpointed by the 2009 European Commission's President José M. Barroso:

“EU citizens still face numerous obstacles when they try to source goods and services across national borders [even though] they should be able to make use of their rights as EU citizens in the same way as they use their rights as national citizens” (European Commission 2010).

Yet, other determinants remain less well documented (Promberger 2015). The literature cursorily indicates some migrant-specific barriers, such as unobserved ineligibility, including informational and linguistic deficiencies to navigate local services, unfamiliarity with the dominant socio-cultural norms, mismatch of applicant-caseworker expectations, inadequate communications, service providers' lack of specialised knowledge on how to deal with some of the specific needs of foreign-born (non-)nationals residing in Germany, the reliance on standardised administrative procedures that rarely allow for accommodation of such diversifying needs, and discrimination experiences reported by a number of claimants (Canceedda et al. 2015; Frings 2009; Tucci et al. 2014; Weinbach 2014; Zimmermann et al. 2011).

One of the few in-depth studies on migrants' access to subsistence in Germany is a comparison of conditional minimum income schemes in Berlin and Madrid (Price, Spencer 2014). This study nevertheless lacks a sufficient exploration of the intersecting complexities of the (in)equality within the group of intra-EU migrants. The analysis focuses on barriers to access in practice more generally. It highlights differential treatment and inconsistencies in needs-assessments and service provision between German-born and migrant claimants, and excessive gate-keeping by German jobcentres. The study shows
how caseworkers instrumentalise the use of complicated language and bureaucratic procedures, including the systematic refusal of migrants' applications, or the assessment thereof. Their research explains such rationing of access by budgetary pressures, deservingness judgements by caseworkers (based on their personal values), a lack of training and of inter-cultural awareness, and the complexity of laws and policy frameworks. Frings (2009) relates caseworkers' unaccommodating attitude to a strategic commitment to principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination rather than a lack of awareness of migrants' needs.

Jewell's (2007) comparative study on social assistance practice in Germany, Sweden and the US echoes those findings: he shows how superficial, legalistic and incorrect treatments of cases in Bremen can be related to excessive work pressures and burnout syndromes of caseworkers. Such treatments result from high regulatory complexity and frequently changing regulations in combination with strong legal constraints on what caseworkers can do. Exceeding demand and chronically unmanageable workloads in turn stem from financial pressures, and subsequent staff reductions, as well as high staff turnover due to precarious work contracts. Other authors (Osiander, Steinke 2015; Promberger 2015) stress the introduction of new public management principles, such as dense controlling and reporting duties, which put local jobcentres under immense political pressure to reach targets and to increase efficiency and efficacy. These studies nevertheless examine claimants as one monolithic group instead of taking note of intra-group and inter-group variations.

Analyses which account for such complexity have been conducted in Belgium by de Wilde (2015). Her research establishes hierarchies of perceived deservingness of claimants through a vignette experiment on case-managers' decision behaviour. Her findings show how behavioural features, such as a claimant's motivation and compliance, and his/her health interact with the variable of migration background. Studies in the British (Osipovic 2010) and Irish (Timonen, Doyle 2009) context instead focus on migrant workers' subjective understandings of their deservingness to apply to social security, underscoring a prevailing unwillingness to apply to means-tested, tax-financed host countries' state support.

In the German context research examining the interaction between German service
providers and migrants has centred on visa policy: Cyrus and Vogel (2003) investigate work-permit decisions in Berlin, explaining implementation inconsistencies by under-resourcing and significant staff-turnover, excessive case-load pressures and over-regulated systems. Eule (2014) similarly links arbitrary decision-making to inefficient public service provision structures (e.g. low impact of supervision, lack of overall organisational goals and of accountability systems) and the piece-meal nature of the law itself. The nature of politics and policy-making leaves contentious issues vaguely spelt out in law and to the discretion of the local implementer, who draws on his/her personal and professional values in judging cases.

These results are mirrored by street-level studies in other EU countries: Miaz (2015) relates the somewhat inconsistent visa application outcomes in Switzerland to institutional factors of position, experience and institutional socialisation. In turn, Alpes and Spire (2014) in France, Fuglerud (2004) in Norway, Psimmenos and Kassimati (2003) in Greece, and Triandafyllidou (2003) in Italy explain them by the officers' devotion to protect socio-economic and political state interests (e.g. protection of resources and cultural homogeneity). Such objectives are mirrored in their judgements of applicants' moral deservingness and take the form of prioritisation of cases, favouritism and discrimination, ignorance of problems and cases being put on hold. Dubois' (2010) and Wright's (2003) ethnographies of French family allowance funds and British jobcentres well illustrate the significance of the interplay between operational structures on the one hand and caseworkers' personal interests on the other.

In summary, the existing empirical literature offers initial insights into potential barriers to subsistence benefit take-up that intra-EU migrants might experience in Germany. Such barriers include legal restrictions, individual characteristics of labour market attachment and education, and systematic gate-keeping and administrative burden processes. Moreover, it provides indications on the potential mechanisms at play, such as the role of deservingness judgements made in a context of strong administrative pressures. Nevertheless, studies on German social security take-up remain limited, and lack analytical depth with regard to the complexities of intersecting inequalities in intra-EU migrants' experience.
2.2 Theoretical backdrop on pathways of inclusion and exclusion

Social rights and national citizenship

Technically, mobile EU citizens derive their social rights, including the right to access local labour markets and social security, from their state's membership in a supranational organisation instead of their national citizenship (Dwyer 2010). Within a historic perspective, social rights have been defined as rights derived from national citizenship (Dean 2008; Dean, Brady 2015). Access to social rights has traditionally been linked to nationality, which is commonly defined as the membership in an exclusive community with shared social goods, based on a moral logic and some aspect of kinship or fellow feeling for insiders (Brubaker 2010; Freeman 1986; Guiraudon 2009; Marshall 1950). Social rights have become the means through which human needs (in terms of what we feel and experience, and things we must have or do) and dependency have become articulated, via formal legislation and its practice. Such social rights have been formulated in the particular context of the 20th century industrialised capitalist states (Dean 2015).

However, as became evident in the empirical review, access depends not solely on nationality: rights have become increasingly conditional and uncertain in nature since their antecedent during early capitalism, now imposing moral ideals of individual responsibility and self-reliance (Betzelt, Bothfeld 2011; Garsten et al. 2016; Lister et al. 2005; van Houdt et al. 2011).

Interconnections between (ethnic) diversity and inequality

Social rights in their exact form and substance to date remain a deeply contested theoretical concept: numerous critical scholars have questioned the very notion of social rights as genuine rights. Critical theorists argue the approach to have failed in light of continuous inequalities and unmet needs of certain population groups (Dean 2015).

Feminist critics, including Lewis (2000) and Lister (1990, 2005), illustrate how the way social rights are structured has contributed to enforcing women's dependency in the private realm. Social rights leave women uncompensated for those disadvantages they experience in the public sphere. Such disadvantage is created by the continuous misrecognition of their unpaid labour (Cox 1998). Anti-racist scholars concurrently show how selective boundary-drawing processes, through a definition of states as national entities, relegate
ethnic minorities, including migrants, to the ranks of second-class citizens with subordinated rights. This second group of scholars highlight that an analysis locating the source of disadvantage solely within the group of concern itself would indeed be misleading. Such an analysis would dismiss the role of the social interaction between minority and majority groups in structuring the position from which the dominant group looks at itself and others in a society (Bhopal 2011; Phillips, Platt 2016). Overall, critical theoretical studies approaches aim to overcome the traditionally exclusive focus on class in the politics of redistribution in unequal capitalist societies. Instead, studies of this nature explore social relations through the lens of the multiple and intersecting inequalities of human diversity, examining the practice by which social meaning is generated. Their writings acknowledge socially constructed difference as an important dimension of oppression and power, which generates differential life chances (Dean 2008, 2015).

The highlighted complexities and multifaceted linkages shaping inequality, i.e. the differential positioning of individuals with regard to certain societal goods, have been documented in the areas of social rights pertaining to education, employment and social security. According to Faist (2013), cross-border migration commonly involves processes of de-classing, through non-recognition or non-transferability of skills, and engendering, by slotting men into manual labour and women into irregular domestic work. Migrants tend to be shuffled into occupational niches of an ethnically segmented and hierarchical labour market. In Germany, they are typically over-represented in the lowest status, and poorest paid jobs which are first hit by economic shocks and restructuring, such as construction, services or care work (Foti 2015; Kesler 2015; Schierup et al. 2006; Tucci et al. 2014). Overall, this link between the structure of the German labour market, individuals' migration background and their qualification level in creating exclusionary labour market access dynamics has been well documented to date (Loch 2014; Seebass, Siegert 2011).

What remains less well explored is how the functioning of German social security contributes to inequality of material (dis)advantage of foreign born, non-German as compared to German-born residents. Sainsbury (2006, 2012) was the first to systematically investigate migrants' welfare rights. She supplemented Esping-Andersen's (1989) long-standing welfare typology with the notion of immigrant incorporation regimes (i.e. migrants' legal entry category and civic, political and social rights which regulate their level of inclusion or exclusion). In the case of Germany, Sainsbury's analysis and
subsequent research have shown how the conservative system focused on status maintenance propels the inequalities of those employed in the secondary labour market: the principle of equivalence, linking benefit levels to previous earnings, leads to a selective solidarity and maintenance of income hierarchies instead of redistribution across groups. It consequently cements migrants' comparatively low socio-economic position (Morissens, Sainsbury 2005; Paul 2015; Phillips, Platt 2016). Critical scholars such as Morris (2003) supplement the analysis of structured differentiation by investigating the impact of distinctions of race and gender in addition to residency and immigration status.

Typologies which centre on formal rights nevertheless omit informal exclusionary dynamics at play. Lockwood's (1996) analysis of civic stratification, which he defines as a system of inequality stemming from differential relations individuals have with the state, is more complete in this regard. The author notes that individuals' access to social security is shaped concurrently by the granting or denial of legal social rights and by the informal inclusionary or exclusionary practice of administrators. Practice conditions the relative gains or deficits citizens may experience depending on their social status. Nevertheless, his focus on social class (Cook et al. 2012) side-lines the impact of the intersecting nature of disadvantage highlighted by Morris (2003). Analyses that simultaneously question the multiplicity of individual characteristics and their interplay with formal and informal institutional dynamics remain sparse. Eliassi's (2013, 2014) interview-based studies of social service provision in Sweden provide an exception. Eliassi illustrates the over-reliance on monolithic conceptualisations of cultural difference, and the production of ideas of cultural hierarchy and Swedish superiority, in the interaction between Swedish social workers and Muslim claimants. In order to assess undeserving, deviant behaviour, social workers rely on a discourse of culturalisation of immigrants. Such essentialised framings lead to a negligence of poverty, unemployment, social isolation and ethnic discrimination when formulating interventions, and ultimately obstruct migrants' (material) well-being in Swedish society.

The example of Eliassi's analysis exemplifies how the discursive framing of social rights can only gain meaning in substance in the daily practice within a specific local context. Interactive processes between claimants and public authorities can undermine access to certain social benefits: local bureaucrats as implementers assesses who gets what and why.
They ultimately decide who should be given a voice rather than abstractly written policy (Carmel 2013; Hupe, Buffat 2014). Therefore a focus on the street-level is important.

**Practice of discretion in the realisation of social rights at street-level**

The analysis of interactions at street-level is not new: Lipsky (1980) pioneered this ever-growing body of literature. He defined street-level bureaucrats as those public service workers who interact directly with individual citizens in the course of their jobs. Their work is characterised by substantial discretion in decision-making, but at the same time curtailed by inadequate resources and immense caseloads. Considering their lack of capacity and time to flexibly interact with every single applicant, street-level bureaucrats develop routine, stereotyped ways of people-processing. Their coping strategies include adaptation or breaking of rules, pragmatic improvisation, rationing and creaming. Such strategies lead to an uneven allocation of resources (Loyens, Maesschalck 2010; Tummers et al. 2015).

Discretion, defined as free choice among several courses of action, is considered to be a key feature of such street-level work. It is an inherent to human services provision. Discretion allows implementation in an environment of scarcity, complexity, and uncertainty. It serves as an instrument of pragmatic and practical, rapid decision-making under conditions of limited time and information (Evans 2015; Hupe, Buffat 2014; Jessen, Tufte 2014; Maynard-Moody, Musheno 2003).

Dubois (1996) emphasises the two-way interaction process between institutional factors of working practices and role conceptions flowing from the organisational position an agent occupies, and the respective social position of both caseworker and claimant. Decisions are the outcome of a constant negotiation rather than of a quasi-mechanical interaction between an impersonal bureaucrat and a standardised applicant (Dubois 2010; Garsten et al. 2016). Following Maynard-Moody and Musheno's (2003) citizen-agent narrative (which he developed through an interview-based in-depth study of the US street-level bureaucracy), decisions are driven by moral judgements during face-to-face interactions. Policy is only relied on to justify the course of action chosen; to help to actualise, or in case of negative outcomes, rationalise the moral judgement after it has been passed.
Drivers of street-level judgements on migrants' deservingness

The discretionary space given to caseworkers at the street-level allows them to act upon their claimant's (perceived) worthiness, and thereby to define values of fairness and productive membership within a society overall. Undeservingness in this context is understood as an applicant's disqualification from the right to social support, as a consequence of his/her apparent moral and behavioural faults (Mau 2003).

Düvell and Jordan (2003) observe that caseworkers' personal value systems and national interests are woven into street-level bureaucrats' professional repertoires, in the form of culturalist assumptions, stereo-types and myths on particular nationals and communities. The interrelated systems of both personal and societal values become activated in the process of moral judgements that street-level bureaucrats pass on claimants. The welfare chauvinism literature, which assesses public attitudes towards immigrants' social rights more broadly, is instructive with regard to such deservingness judgements. This body of literature demonstrates how immigrants are perceived to be entitled to a lesser degree to public social support than nationals (Breidahl 2012). Data from the European Social Survey shows how the public is the least solidaristic with the migrant population in all European countries, independent of the underpinning welfare system. Immigrants are consistently relegated to the bottom of the deservingness hierarchy, while unemployed citizens rank in the middle and those incapable of working, such as the elderly or sick, the highest (Svallfors 2012; van Oorschot, Uunk 2007; van Oorschot 2008).

Van Oorschot (2008) developed five criteria on which he considers such deservingness judgements to be based: (i) control over one's neediness, (ii) level of need, (iii) claimants' attitude and compliance in the claiming process, (iv) reciprocity in terms of contributions to society, (iv) and identity, relating to the homophily of needy people. The latter criterion has been taken up by the representative bureaucracy literature. This literature explores how similarities or differences between claimants' and caseworkers' own demographic characteristics, and identification with such, serve as cognitive frames during evaluation of claims. Such research shows how caseworkers fill claimants' appearance, skin colour, gender, age and behaviour with social meaning (Fording et al. 2007; Maynard-Moody, Musheno 2003; Wilkens et al. 2015).

But notwithstanding the significance of the welfare chauvinism and representative
bureaucracy literature in explicating attitudes and behaviour towards migrants' welfare needs respectively, none has sufficiently taken into account the heterogeneity of the group of migrants. Studies by Castañeda (2015) or Cook et al. (2012) started exploring these inter-group variations in deservingness attitudes at the country level. What remains under-researched is how potentially varying categorisation processes and interpretations of migrants' social rights at the street-level interlink with exclusionary practice. Street-level research has provided useful insights into the drivers of discretion, but has insufficiently paid attention to how perception of the deservingness of others, with regard to Oorshot's criterion of identity, interrelate with caseworkers' differential interpretation of claims. Yet the only way to gain a rigorous understanding of the extent to which different claimant groups are substantially protected from social risks, and the mismatch between ascription and real experience, is an analysis of both the legal and physical structures to benefit access (Bommes 2000). While social citizenship is constructed by particular individuals in their everyday life local context, an in-depth, nuanced study on how administrative barriers play out and for whom is missing.

2.3 Unpacking the linkages between nationality, citizenship and 'ethnic deservingness' in street-level interaction

In light of the theoretical and empirical gaps described above, a more systematic analysis of the determinants of (non-)take-up, taking the lens of (dis)advantage in its interconnections with migrants' social status as others is needed. Such analysis calls for particular attention onto the implementation dimension, through an analysis of the interplay between street-level bureaucrats as gate-keepers of benefit access, who interpret eligibility criteria and assess claims, and potential EU migrant applicants who engage or not in the process of benefit claim-making. This section provides a first attempt of developing an appropriate conceptual framework (for an illustration refer to Figure 1 at the end of this document) as a heuristic device for the analysis.

Analysing social rights through the street-level lens

Considering that social rights of individuals only gain meaning when being negotiated and enacted at the street-level (Dean 2013), this concept constitutes the analytical bridge between policy in the form of legal entitlements and experience of substantive access in
practice. Following the social constructivist tradition, social rights in this research are seen as historically and socio-culturally constituted, ideological constructions.

Localised (non-)realisation of such social rights through (non-)take-up constitutes the dependent variable of this study. Non-take-up is understood to stem from: (i) eligible claimants not applying to the benefits they are entitled to; (ii) them delaying the application once they have become entitled (when falling below the minimum income threshold), (iii) them withdrawing from the claiming process after having initially put in a claim; or (iv) administrators rejecting their claim wrongly or allowing an amount which is too small. Discretion is central in explaining these respective policy outcomes of (non-)take-up. It can be exercised at several stages of the basic job-seeker's allowance claim: in decisions about the documentation required and the support offered during the application process, in decisions on case closure for instance in case of perceived lack of compliance, and in the application of sanctions once the benefit has been granted. Discretion links deservingness perceptions and policy outcomes, as it enables caseworkers to ration access to limited resources based on how worthy they perceive applicants to be.

Discretionary behaviour finds its expression in potential recurrence of administrative burden, a concept which helps to unveil the processes which create barriers to substantive access. Administrative burden is defined as those administrative costs which are not required by law, but imposed on claimants informally as additional admission criteria. It takes the form of burdensome, onerous new rules couched in the language of neutrality. Such informal costs include supplementary procedural requirements in terms of documentation to be provided, or of the controlling of the information flow by withholding advice (Herd et al. 2013; Moynihan et al. 2013). Administrative burden is nevertheless not always deliberately created. It can also emerge from habitual administrative routines or organisational constraints (Garsten et al. 2016; van Oorschot 1995).

Processes of (non-)enactment of social rights are analysed through Oorschot's identity lens, asking to what extent and how 'ethnic variation' is mobilised by actors during the claim-making process. For the purpose of this research, the thesis foregrounds the notions of 'ethnicity' and 'ethnic variation' rather than race for two reasons: first, official reference to race is fairly taboo in post-Nazi Germany (Schönwälder 2004). In Europe the Holocaust as a defining event has led to a reduction of the racial to the Jewish question (Goldberg 2006).
Secondly, biological racism has been superseded by ethnicisation (or cultural racism), where populations are rendered non-white on the basis of cultural rather than physical difference and superiority (Phillips, Platt 2016). Race also continues to carry a connotation of biological, natural traits (Silverstein 2005), which does not align with the interpretative approach chosen for the study.

The research approach echoes Barth's (1969) constructivist analysis, whereby dynamic group processes of inclusion and exclusion determine boundaries between groups rather than natural and fixed cultural differences as contended by primoridalists. Ultimately, discretionary decisions taken within both a specific organisational and societal context need to be understood as a boundary-drawing process by which different groups are defined. Approaches which explore the construction of such boundaries, including Lamont's (2015) studies of class and culture, and Wimmer's (2013) analysis of ethnicity in classification, will help to clarify the interrelations between complex (dis)advantage and migrants' ethnicity in accessing benefits at the street-level. Ethnicity in the context of this research is understood as subjective feeling of attachment and self-identification, based on the belief in a common origin which is formed during the interaction with others. It operates as an implicit criteria of cultural categorisation, where difference in position within fields of power becomes constructed as essential and intrinsic (Lewis 2000; Silverstein 2005). The concept of ethnicity therefore helps to explicate processes of essentialisation of migrants which might occur during service provision. At the same time, the recognition of the complexity of ethnic deservingness will help to overcome the trap of over-generalisation.

'Ethnic variation' in its interrelation with the migrant status

Migrant status, which is first and foremost a legal category, is closely connected to, but not to be conflated with the concept of ethnicity with which it is often interchangeably used. Both are discursively constructed notions, which need to be understood in their specific

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5 This distinction is considered to be essential for analysis of the proposed research questions. The way otherness of EU migrant groups is constructed and mobilised in public service provision is not simply examined through the lens of legal entitlements and citizenship status. Variation among EU migrants, and compared to German-born, German nationals is also, more importantly, examined by through the lens of how ethnicity, in terms of how 'ethnic variation', is constructed among EU citizens.
politically highly loaded context. As pointed out by Silverstein (2005), it is not uncommon for public discourse to portray immigrants as the poor, uprooted newcomers from the global South, thereby constructing a link between ethnicity and mobility. Immigrants become discursively ethnicised in their perceived socio-cultural otherness (also see Fanon, Philcox 2004; Miles, Brown 2003). Schönwälder's (2004) analysis of German guest-worker recruitment policies until the 1970s provides a good example: German policymakers perceived certain Portuguese citizens as unacceptable guest-workers due to their African descent, which was constructed to be in opposition with German values.

Such principles of ethno-cultural selectivity flow from an essentialist understanding of Europeanness. They not only informed the selection of guestworkers a few decades ago, but continue to govern contemporary labour migrant admission policies in Europe (Paul 2015). Yet the logic of ethnic classification has changed: instead of the binary of (non-)European descent, different shades of Whiteness are invoked. The British public discourse for instance constructs Eastern European citizens from the new EU member states as immigrants alongside other group of non-EU citizens, while German or Spanish migrants circulate as mobile EU citizens with little exposure to discrimination (Favell, Recchi 2009). Whiteness should therefore no longer be understood solely in terms of the structurally advantageous position that majority populations in the Western world occupy, subordinating (immigrant and other ethno-cultural) minorities through their respective power, status and affluence. The notion of Whiteness itself has become fluid and unstable (Phillips, Platt 2016; Silverstein 2005). The example of Gypsy and Traveller groups is instructive in this regard: their continuous experience of structural disadvantage is best explained by their marginalised position in European societies as outsiders. Their “non-acceptable shades of Whiteness” (Bhopal 2011, 327), which deprives them from privileges traditionally attached to a shared Whiteness (Castañeda 2015). Similarly, past generations of Irish, Jewish and Eastern European migrants to the UK have been constructed as not quite as White (Fox et al. 2012).

Today EU free movers are frequently subject to such processes of ethnicisation: As Favell (2014) poignantly summarises:

“[E]ven with all formal barriers to migration down, they encounter limitations and resistance to their movement that suggest the resilience of national ethnicities”
(ibid, 5); they “often find themselves excluded on an informal level in their chosen place of residence by locally specific, highly ethnicised processes of exclusion” (ibid., 11). Eastern Europeans in particular occupy an ambiguous position, as “they are making a new European space of movement and fulfilling a new idea of European citizenship, but they are also being shuffled into economic roles in the Western European economies that assigned in the post-war period to traditional non-European immigrants” (ibid., 5).

The latter category of Eastern European migrants indeed carries the characteristics of both free movers who, due to their European nationality and associated ethno-cultural proximity, see their barriers removed, and of traditional poverty migrants from the globalised South, who continue to experience disadvantage due to their position as in-assimiliable immigrants (Johns 2014). Such examples well illustrate the complexity of the European category, being by no means homogeneous as commonly assumed (White 2011).

More detailed knowledge is therefore needed on how the street-level administrative processes are implicated in the social (re)construction of the linkages between social citizenship, nationality and ethnicity. The street-level perspective helps to explicate the various framings of need and deservingness in public service provision, which result from the trade-offs between the politics of economic redistribution, cultural recognition and political representation (Fraser 1998, 2005). Such varying deservingness conceptions can be understood as a boundary-drawing exercise. The resulting categorisation processes ultimately determine individuals' material well-being by substantiating or attenuating (in)equality of access to subsistence benefits for various claimant groups.
3. First Results and Future Research

3.1 Reflections on preliminary investigations

Data collected through a first set of preliminary investigations (of four interviews, see bibliography for details) suggests a number emerging themes with regard to how access is negotiated at the local street-level. They mirror a number of issues highlighted by the empirical and theoretical review.

A first emerging theme is the presence of administrative burden, which creates barriers to access: Interviewees highlight the complexity of the administrative system which makes it difficult to be understood: “The whole system remains a riddle […] the procedure was difficult […] the process [of claiming ALG II] was overwhelming” (interview M1). Administrative burden is further generated by information deficiencies concerning, for example, eligibility rules - “I assumed not to be eligible” (interview M1) - as well a lack of transparency in the claiming process, which generates feelings of discrimination: “it felt a bit arbitrary in the sense that is is not clearly communicated how it is decided” (interview M1).

Another type of administrative burden which became visible through interviews is related to the use of language: migrant claimants perceive the obligation to conduct the application process in German as an obstacle due to their by times insufficient language skills: “sometimes they talked fast and you did not get the information” (interview M1); “German is the language of administration” (interview J1). An expert (interview S2) highlighted that foreigners tend to be turned away if they are unable to speak German or to fill in the necessary forms in German. Migrant claimants report an unwillingness to accommodate their needs on the behalf of jobcentre staff: “I don't understand them, and they do not want to understand me” (interview S2). Over-reliance on a technical and legalistic jargon further complicates the matter: as a migrant interviewee remarked, “that's where I got lost”. The system is described in terms of relying on a “very imperious language in written correspondence from the jobcentre […] which can create anxiety among claimants […] in a context of coercion” (interview J1).

A third type of administrative burden is created by the discretion of service providers in determining of what they consider “(in)sufficient participation” by the (migrant) claimant.
Result can be (premature) case-closure, as the burden of responsibility and compliance is put onto the claimant (interview J1). Migrant advice organisations report of a high probability of EU migrants' application for Hartz IV to be systematically refused (interview S2).

Interviewees explain such administrative barriers to access mainly through structural factors: an migrant interviewee reported no visible, direct discrimination (interview M1), while jobcentre staff acknowledge occasional institutional discrimination (interview J1). They yet have to be understood as creaming strategies, based on nationality, in a high-pressure, high case-load and over-regulated environment of mass-processing (interview J1). A migrant interviewee indeed acknowledged a change in attitude of the responsible caseworker when he became naturalised, as this made his case less complex and hence faster to handle for the staff (interview M1).

Overall, German national administration seems to continue to rely on national units in its categorisation processes, perceiving eligible EU citizens as “foreigners with EU citizenship” (interview S2). This can, in parts, be explained structurally, by a lack of coordination between EU member states on social security matters; exciting databases remain insufficiently used (interviews S1 and S2). Other reasons include a lack in specialist knowledge (interviews J1 and S2). Yet, interviewees (J1) also acknowledge instances of essentialising and stereotyping by nationality to make sense of “difficult” client behaviour. There seems to be a continued reliance on ethnicised understandings of citizenship within the German context: naturalised German interviewees report remarks of the kind of “you don't look very German” (interview M1), perceiving them as “foreigners with a German passport” (interview S2). How the complexity of categorisation processes plays out during street-level interaction nevertheless necessitates further detailed exploration.

### 3.2 Future planned research

Therefore, the larger PhD project aims to explore the extent to which EU migrants' social security entitlements as derived from EU citizenship are realised in daily practice within German job centres, asking why and for whom formal rights might not map onto substantive benefit take-up. It does so by delving into the justifications of eligibility mobilised by those administering benefit claims and by EU migrants themselves, and how
these relate to (in)equality of take-up experienced by certain groups of claimants. Focus in placed on the non-contributory, means-tested basic jobseeker’s allowance, also known as unemployment benefit *Arbeitslosengeld (ALG/UB) II* or *Hartz IV*. The minimum income scheme *UB II* provides an informative and illustrative case as it constitutes the only tax-financed, working age social security benefit in Germany after 2005.

The study centres on treatment and experiences of first-generation, intra-EU migrants (nationals of EU member states other than Germany) of working age (15-67 years of age) eligible to claim *UB II*, who have moved to Germany after the 2004 Eastern enlargement\(^6\). Research on social security access in Germany to date tends to neglect the dimension of (in)formal inequality\(^7\) between European citizens. Considering the magnitude of internal EU migration to Germany, which constitutes about a fifth of the total (Bartsch et al. 2014), and over half of current net immigration (Schmieder 2016), the focus of the research elects to take the intra-European dimension as the focus of investigation, while not losing sight of the larger immigration debates in the German context.

The German case is relevant because of its political importance (i.e. traditionally ethnic-based conception of citizenship and reciprocity-based social rights in a country hosting an increasing number of newcomers), and in particular because the German literature on welfare participation and (non-)take-up remains limited (Wunder, Riphahn 2013). The higher likelihood of EU migrants to be dependent on the minimum income scheme *UB II* instead of the contribution-based *UB I*, and *UB II*'s more disputed logic of entitlement, provide for an interesting element of this case study. The benefit's tax-financed nature allows for an extrapolation on the underlying, contested perceptions of deservingness which are actualised by local gate-keepers. The comparatively high level of discretion characterising a means-tested benefit permits one to draw out implementation gaps and ambiguities more clearly.

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\(^6\) They should have lived in Germany for at least three months while being in work or unemployed, which is necessary to be legally entitled to German social security benefits. Experiences of both EU migrants who are currently out of work, and who have experienced transitional spells of unemployment since the 2005 *Hartz IV* reform, are to be included. The analysis will primarily focus on accounts within the first five years of residence, as after this, in principle, EU migrants have the right to permanent residency.

\(^7\) Informal inequality here refers to inequalities of access generated by the way local administration functions and how benefit decisions are made rather than the legal eligibility rules themselves.
Element of this case study is a comparison between two jobcentres in Berlin and Frankfurt/Main respectively. The comparison of two cities allows the capturing of similarities and differences, including their local uniqueness in the context of a federal state structure. As pointed out by a number of authors (Collett, Gidley 2012; Heidenreich, Rice 2016; Wallerstein 2013), German federalism leads to higher levels of local administrative discretion in the implementation of national policies than in neighbouring countries. Inspired by Mill's (1843) method of difference, the research draws on elements of the Most Similar System Design (MSSD) to assist the selection of the two cities where fieldwork will be conducted: it entails a comparison between two areas which have been selected on the basis of their similarity (in terms of city size, migration pressure, governing parties). One dimension (the economic climate) differs (see Table 1): while Berlin is confronted with a lack of financial resources and high unemployment rates (hence stronger administrative pressures on local jobcentres), Frankfurt/Main is one of the wealthiest German cities with almost full employment.

Table 1 Selection criteria guiding city choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical unit</th>
<th>Berlin</th>
<th>Frankfurt/Main</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geographical unit</td>
<td>Large agglomeration, 3.5 million inhabitants, (political) capital of Germany</td>
<td>5th largest German city, with over 700,000 inhabitants, financial centre of Germany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Berlin</th>
<th>Frankfurt/Main</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>Large migrant population/high pressure (in proportion, more migrant than German-born residents)</td>
<td>Large migrant population/high pressure (capital of the Bundesland with the highest migrant/German-born resident ratio)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politics</th>
<th>Berlin</th>
<th>Frankfurt/Main</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Coalition government between central-right (CDU) and central-left (SPD)</td>
<td>Coalition between central-right (CDU), central-left (SPD) and liberal party (FDP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economics</th>
<th>Berlin</th>
<th>Frankfurt/Main</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Limited budget; high unemployment rates (highest rate (21 per cent) of ALG II beneficiaries in Germany)</td>
<td>Positive balance of city budget; very low unemployment rates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder (2010)

Following the welfare chauvinism literature, the latter, economic factor can be decisive in

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8 The role of the historic East-West divide is taken into account within the Berlin-based part of the study, as a jobcentre in each the former Eastern versus former Western part of the city is chosen.
determining (un)favourable deservingness judgements of the majority population towards migrants' entitlements, especially if benefits are means-tested. The underlying mechanism relates to feelings of insecurity and threat which can be generated by the presence of foreigners. Perceived ethnic competition over scarce resources can act as a powerful driver of welfare chauvinism (Cook et al. 2012; Harell et al. 2012; Hayes 2004; Mewes, Mau 2013; van der Waal et al. 2010). Extrapolating from this literature, two possible scenarios at street-level emerge: either bureaucrats implement legislation restrictively in order to protect national resources, or migrants' presence engenders more favourable deservingness judgements following positive inter-ethnic experiences.

Empirical data will be collected through a number of sources, including policy documents and qualitative interviewing. Interviews allow the questioning of common assumptions by delving into the complexity of decision-making processes and the various actors' ambiguous, multi-layered accounts of their reasoning, moral judgements and categorisation processes (Maynard-Moody, Musheno 2003; Zinner 2011). The interview sample is composed of the three subgroups of (i) key informants (including policy-makers, experts and social partners in their role as migrant advice agencies), (ii) local jobcentre employees and (iii) intra-EU migrants. In terms of countries of origin, the literature review suggests a focus on Eastern and Southern Europe: about 15 per cent of Germany's total population are of Polish or Italian descent, making them the top EU countries of origin, and the biggest migrant communities in Germany after the Turkish (Recchi, Triandafyllidou 2010; Schmaehl 2008). In addition, Germany increasingly receives EU migrants from the newest Eastern European members states (Foti 2015; Kaczmarczyk, Okólski 2008; Kahanec, Zimmermann 2009); one third of the 2012 net migration to Germany originated in Romania and Bulgaria (Brücker et al. 2013). Southern European migrants changed their mobility patterns in response to the 2008 financial crisis from Great Britain to Germany, so that Greeks, Italians, Portuguese and Spanish account for one fifth of the 2012 net migration to Germany (Brücker et al. 2014)\(^9\).

Inspired by policy ethnographic research (Dubois 2009), the researcher will record observational data whenever possible. This will include shadowing of caseworkers,\(^9\) In terms of regional variation, Bulgarians, Romanians, Italians and Polish cluster in the agglomerations of Frankfurt/Main and Berlin, underscoring the relevance of these two cities as field-study sites (Brücker et al. 2013; Canceedda et al. 2015).
informal discussions and possibly a few hours of participants observation in the reception areas of jobcentres and participation in induction or training session for staff, if feasible. Yet participant observation is not planned to serve as primary tool of data collection. Instead it will provide a source of background information to deepen understandings of the broader institutional context and everyday working lives in which encounters between migrant claimants and caseworkers and their negotiations over access are embedded into.

The study aspires to an inductive, intra-country comparison of how understandings of eligibility and deservingness are constructed and negotiated at the street-level, exploring caseworkers' and (potential) EU migrant claimants' own accounts and explanations of their situation. The street-level lens will shed light into black box of implementation. It helps to unpack the multi-layered policy-making process in order to better grasp how certain policy outcomes are produced (Hupe et al. 2015).
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(Social science studies series).


Interviewee list:

M1: Migrant of Mexican origin, naturalised (with German citizenship), male, born 1977, living in Berlin (19.09.2015)

J1: Jobcentre employee Berlin, responsible for long-term unemployed and in-work benefit recipients, female (20.02.2016)

S1: Representative of a social partner organisation advising migrants: German Trade Union DGB, Counselling Office for Posted Workers, Berlin (18.02.2016)

S2: Representative of a social partner organisation advising migrants: Workers Welfare Institution AWO, Counselling Office for intra-EU migrants, Berlin (19.02.2016)
(In)Equality of access to social rights with regard to the German subsistence benefit ALG II

Need for subsistence benefit (research puzzle, Chapter 1)

Poverty (low income)
Working age, self-responsible individual (instead of a dependent child), in or out of work

Legal eligibility (Chapter 4)

Means-test: Income below legally defined minimum threshold
(Prior) Labour market status
• Insufficient contributions for receipt of ALG I
Compliance with (activation) responsibilities
Status as a (non-) national
• Conditionality upon residency and self-sufficiency

Potential access (Chapter 5)

Legal entitlements
Applicants’ knowledge and understanding of the system
• Linguistic and informational barriers
• Unfamiliarity with dominant socio-cultural norms
• Stigma and shame
Responsiveness of service providers to claimants’ needs (e.g. provision of information and support)
• Purposively induced administrative burden
• Organisational constraints (e.g. high caseloads) in NPM-dominated environment, leading to selective coping strategies

Realised, substantive access (Chapter 6 & 7)

Street-level negotiation of benefit claim, embedded into a broader socio-political context (and into immigration policies)
• Migrant claimants’ perceptions of their deservingness
• Street-level bureaucrats’ perception of migrant claimants’ deservingness
• Processes of essentialisation and of strategic mobilisation of ethnicity
Discretionary decision of the bureaucrat (in context of unequal power relations)
• (Un)willingness and/or (in)capacity to respond to claimants’ needs in light of complexity of disadvantage EU migrants might experience

OUTCOME: (Non) Take-up, leading to material (non) well-being (Chapter 7 & 8)

Deterrence - Eligible applicant does not apply
Withdrawal after the initial application
Claim wrongly rejected or amount granted too small
Benefit withdrawn as sanction measure
Possible side-effect: Mitigation strategies developed by EU migrant claimants

Each of the proposed chapters of the thesis primarily focusses one of the columns. Aim is to explore the interrelations and the interplay between the different factors summarised above.