

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## New publication \ "All Day Waiting" – Causes of conflict in refugee shelters in Germany

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In this BICC Working Paper the authors Simone Christ, Esther Meininghaus and Tim Röing argue that conflicts in refugee shelters in Germany can largely be attributed to structural causes. These include the asylum regime, the interplay between the physical layout and social relationships within refugee shelters, and the specific properties of the refugee accommodation system, which can be regarded as a "total institution". Further, there are other causes of conflict, which can be located at the personal level.

On the basis of a qualitative survey, the authors worked with more than 200 participants in 33 refugee shelters operated at state and municipal level across the federal state (Land) of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). Based on the data collected, the authors analyse five types of conflict: Conflicts at the individual level, group conflicts, aggressive behaviour and criminality, domestic and sexual violence and conflicts between residents and staff as well as conflict between institutions. The hypothesis that reported cases of conflict represent more than a mere collection of isolated cases was confirmed. Instead, conflict can usually be ascribed to certain interrelated root causes. Participants themselves were often unaware of the processes at work here.

The BICC researchers therefore recommend a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention that takes both structural and personal causes of conflict into account. In this manner, the shelter situation could be improved significantly for refugees and staff.

You will find the full text of BICC Working Paper 3\2019 (pdf) at

[https://www.bicc.de/uploads/tx\\_bicctools/WP\\_3\\_2019\\_Refugee\\_Shelters.pdf](https://www.bicc.de/uploads/tx_bicctools/WP_3_2019_Refugee_Shelters.pdf)