



# Transnational migration and global work

**March 6-7, 2014. Geovetenskapens hus, Stockholm University.**

In times of globalization, activities of work are also becoming more global in nature and in particular they involve transnational migration flows. Nation states and international organisations, such as the EU, are examples of emerging global migration regimes, trying to monitor global work. The increasing mobility of people, who wish to improve their life situations, is another indication of the significance of global work. Recruitment agencies are brokering migrant workers, students are entering international universities and transnational firms are acting within global value chains. Some migrant workers enter the high end of the economy and are sometimes referred to as highly-skilled or career migrants, whereas others enter the low end of the economy, often suffering from exploitation and low earnings. The extensive student migration from India to the ICT firms in the US, South-Asian women doing domestic work in Singapore and Thai berry pickers in Sweden are all examples of global work – gendered and characterized by class and ethnic hierarchies in an ever more globalized labour market.

This workshop emphasizes how various forms of global work are closely linked to transnational migration processes. Webs of networks tie countries together, constituting a transnational social space, facilitating migration flows. The everyday practices of individual migrants are affected by these networks – and the simultaneous events taking place in the sending and receiving countries – and at the same time contribute to their continuation. There are hence many examples of how transnational migration processes and global work practices are interlinked: in globalized economies institutions develop global networks within which workers are recruited. These institutions can be transnational firms, global brokers or a network of families and friends. In the receiving society, transnational networks are often used in the labour market and transnational migrant entrepreneurs can use their contacts in their homeland to establish their business in the new country.

**Please note: Keynote speeches are open for everybody who is interested. Participation in the workshop is restricted to registered participants.**

## March 6

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|---------------|---|
| 9:15 – 10:00  | Coffee, registration for workshop participants  |
| 10:00 – 11:00 | Keynote session:<br>Indonesian Domestic Workers and the (Un)Making of Transnational Livelihoods and Provisional Futures<br>Professor Brenda S.A. Yeoh<br>National University of Singapore<br>Venue: William Olsson, Geovetenskapens hus |
| 11:00 – 11:15 | Break   |
| 11:15 – 12:15 | Organizing Global Work: Migration Infrastructure and the Logistics of Transnational Labor in Asia and the Middle East<br>Associate Professor Johan Lindquist<br>Stockholm University<br>Venue: William Olsson, Geovetenskapens hus      |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch: Fakultetsklubben   |
| 13:45 – 15:30 | Workshop: Parallel sessions WG A (William Olsson, Geovetenskapens hus) and WG B (Y10, Geovetenskapens hus)  |
| 15:30 – 16:00 | Coffee  |
| 16:00 – 18:00 | Workshop: Parallel sessions WG A (William Olsson, Geovetenskapens hus) and WG B (Y10, Geovetenskapens hus)  |
| 19:30         | Dinner  |

## March 7

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| 9:00 – 10:00  | Workshop: WG C (Y10, Geovetenskapens hus)                           |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Coffee  |
| 10:30 – 12:00 | Workshop: WG C (Y10, Geovetenskapens hus)                           |
| 12:00 – 12:30 | Concluding discussion (incl. publication and continuing activities) |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch: Fakultetsklubben   |

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**Stockholm University**



Geovetenskapens hus

### List of participants according to working groups and in order of appearance

Name	Affiliation	Title of presentation	Working group
Demelza Jones	School of Languages and Social Sciences, Aston University, UK	Negotiating cosmopolitan ambitions: The everyday social lives of South Indian student and young professional migrants in the UK	A
Benjamin Etzold	Geography Department, Universität Bonn	Migration, Informal Labour and Translocal Productions of Urban Space – The Case of Dhaka’s Street Food Vendors	A
Lisa Berntsen	University of Jyväskylä, University of Groningen and AIAS University of Amsterdam	Strategic acceptance and mobility: On the agency and everyday social practices of migrant construction workers	A
Sophie Cranston	Institute of Geography, University of Edinburgh	‘Imagining Global Work’ Producing Understandings of Difference in ‘Easy Asia’	A
Theodora Lam and Brenda S.A. Yeoh	National University of Singapore	Caring for Left-Behind Children at the Southernmost End of the Global Care Chain	A
Sanna Saksela-Bergholm	University of Helsinki	Defining Mutual Belongings through Transnational Practises: A Case Study of Filipino Labour Migrants in Finland	A
Linn Axelsson (Qian Zhang, Charlotta Hedberg, Bo Malmberg)	Department of Human Geography, Stockholm University	On tempos, work time and imagined futures: theorizing the times and temporalities of precarity among Chinese workers in the Swedish restaurant industry	B
Anna Lipphardt	Research Group Cultures of Mobility in Europe (COME), Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Institute for Cultural Anthropology/Folkloristics	Between Privilege and Precarity – Transnational Mobility in the Art Sector	B

Catherine Harris, Gil Valentine	University of Sheffield	Attitudes towards transnational migration: reactions to East European migrant workers in the UK	B
Alice Kern	Human Geography, University of Zurich	"I'm not a broker... but basically that's what I do": Contested perceptions and multiple functions of transnational labour recruiters in Nepal	B
Pekka Rantanen	YKY, Tammerfors universitet	Coordinating Globalisation: Informal recruitment agencies managing seasonal Thai-migrants to the Finnish wild berry industry	B
Barbara Hobson, Susanne Fahlén, Luwam Bede	Department of Sociology, Stockholm University	Do welfare Regimes Matter: A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Migration and Care/Domestic Work	B
Östen Wahlbeck	University of Helsinki	Transnational Social Capital and the Mixed Embeddedness of Turkish Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Finland	C
Anthony Ince (and Andrew Cumbers, David Featherstone, Danny MacKinnon and Kendra Strauss)	Department of Human Geography, Stockholm University	Worker organisation, community, and variegated mobilities in global industries: three cases from the UK	C
Lena Näre	University of Helsinki	Neoliberal Postcolonialism in Skilled Labour Mobility - Filipino Nurses' Coping with Deskilling and Ethnic Hierarchies in Finnish Elderly Care	C
Brenda S.A. Yeoh	National University of Singapore	Indonesian Domestic Workers and the (Un)Making of Transnational Livelihoods and Provisional Futures	Keynote
Johan Lindquist	Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University	Organizing Global Work: Migration Infrastructure and the Logistics of Transnational Labor in Asia and the Middle East	Keynote
Erik Olsson	Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University		Organizer
Charlotta Hedberg	Department of Human Geography, Stockholm University		Organizer

## Abstracts

### Working group A

Demelza Jones, PhD

Negotiating cosmopolitan ambitions: The everyday social lives of South Indian student and young professional migrants in the UK

The proposed paper draws on interviews and observational research conducted in 2011 amongst twenty-five student and young professional migrants from the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu (then living in the Midlands and South West of England).

Amongst these young professionals and students, the desire for a 'cosmopolitan' experience emerged as a strong motivating factor for their migration, concurring with the configuration of international experience as capital (see for instance, Findlay et al 2011). These migrants' viewed 'global exposure' or a 'cosmopolitan outlook' as a marketable attribute that could enhance their CV, as well as holding value for their personal lives (for example, building their status amongst peers or making them a more attractive marriage partner).

Scholarship has uncoupled cosmopolitanism from its traditional elite associations through accounts of 'working class' and 'ordinary' cosmopolitanism (Datta 2009; Werbner 1999). But while many of the migrant participants in this study lived in ethnically diverse UK cities where the encounters of everyday life may correlate more closely with this 'ordinary' cosmopolitanism, their talk around their expectations of the overseas work or study venture suggested engagement with a more traditional understanding. The paper explores how this particular understanding of the 'global experience' framed participants' perceptions of themselves and others as cosmopolitan or not, through talk and practice around UK social lives. Participants can be grouped into two 'types': 'self-conscious cosmopolitans' whose social networks are wholly or predominantly multi-ethnic (with this presented as deliberate and desirable), and those who are embedded in more homogenous networks with fellow migrants from the place of origin. The latter were commonly derided by the self-conscious cosmopolitans as ethnic-parochial - as 'clannish' or 'cliquey' - and were implied to be having a 'less worthwhile' experience in the UK.

The paper examines how this varied reality of social lives and networks in the UK setting is negotiated in relation to the professed cosmopolitan ambition, and asks whether a co-ethnic UK social network necessarily places limitations on the cosmopolitan experience, or whether this reflects an unduly narrow understanding of cosmopolitanism which excludes the 'ordinary' cosmopolitan encounters of everyday UK life.

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Benjamin Etzold, PhD

Migration, Informal Labour and Translocal Productions of Urban Space – The Case of Dhaka's Street Food Vendors

Dhaka is the most important destination for migrants in Bangladesh and has itself been fundamentally transformed through rural to urban migration that is directly linked to global labour relations – most obviously in the garments industry. Through their labour, migrants literally make the city work; they live and consume in the city; they give the city its meaning as a site of interaction and communication; and they are (re)producing the urban space in all its physical, economic, social and cultural dimensions. Yet, there is 'no place' for many migrants in Dhaka. Poor migrants thus live in slums and many encroach on public space to sustain their lives – the new urbanites are taking their 'right to the city'. In order to do so, they not only draw on local resources. Their subaltern production of space often relates directly to their migration trajectory, their translocal networks, and their simultaneous situatedness at multiple places. Migrants connect 'the rural' and 'the urban' and constitute translocal spaces, which reach far beyond the city, and which contribute to re-making Dhaka from below.

Shifting the focus from *transnational* migration and *global* work, this paper integrates current debates on *translocality*, informal labour, and subaltern urbanism to address two key questions: How do migration trajectories and translocality structure the urban poor's lives?

How do migrants make use of *local* networks and *translocal* social relations to find work and appropriate 'their place' in the city? Qualitative and quantitative research on street food vendors in Dhaka, almost all of whom are internal migrants, builds the empirical basis for my argument. I show that 'translocal social capital' and home-bound identities can be important resources to gain access to urban labour markets and to appropriate one's place in the city. The paper argues that the poor use translocality for their livelihoods and thereby continuously re-shape the face of the megacity of Dhaka. The urban (work) space and migrants' translocal spaces are mutually constructed.

**Keywords:** translocality, migration, subaltern urbanism, production of space, informal labour markets, street vendors, Bangladesh

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Lisa Berntsen, PhD student

Strategic acceptance and mobility: On the agency and everyday social practices of migrant construction workers

This article analyses the agency of migrant construction workers working within transnational precarious employment relations in Europe. It moves away from the organized and collective resistance focused approach of labour agency, towards a refined understanding of individual acts and small-scale everyday social practices of migrant workers through which the workers shape their working lives. These working lives are embedded within a highly flexible and mobile employment regime that is characterised by insecure, unpredictable, risky, and short-term employment relations. The workers find employment in casual forms of work, most often via subcontractors or temporary employment agencies. The analysis is based on qualitative interviews with workers, unionists and employers. It shows that workers are strategic actors who utilize their labour power through small-scale acts that sustain and improve their position within the precarious transnational employment relations. Even though certain critical consciousness exists among the workers, it typically does not translate into overt oppositional acts. For these workers, the ability to strategically (threaten to) exit the employment relationship is an importance source of power to improve their conditions and a preferred option to challenging current labour dynamics.

**Keywords:** agency, construction, flexible employment, migrant workers, mobility power

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Sophie Cranston, PhD

'Imagining Global Work' Producing Understandings of Difference in 'Easy Asia'

In this paper, I explore the imaginative geographies of Singapore for the British expatriate. The expatriate is a common nomenclature denoting a form of global work— the temporary migration of people for work placements abroad. This form of migration is argued to be becoming more common, with management consultants PwC (2010) arguing that it will be the 'new normal' by 2020.

In the paper, I look at how the experience of expatriation is mediated by international human resource management, the managerial discourses which inform the expatriates move. In the first part of the paper, I draw upon empirical research conducted with the managers of expatriates going to Singapore. I look at how they produce an imaginative geography of how the abroad will be experienced by expatriates, how 'space acquires emotional or even rational sense by a kind of poetic process, whereby the vacant or anonymous reaches of distance are converted into meaning for us here' (Said 2003 55). In particular, I focus on the spatialisations (Gregory 2004) that are produced through discussions of global work roles that expatriates are seen to fulfil. These spatialisations are ways in which distinctions are made between the UK and Singapore, 'home' and 'abroad' and Singapore and other destinations in Asia in expatriate managerial discourses. Although global work is often discussed as producing a cosmopolitan impulse in expatriates (c.f. Beaverstock 2002), I argue that distance becomes practised as difference within international human resource management, one which works to produce the expatriate in terms of superiority.

In the second part of the paper, I draw on ethnographic work carried out in Singapore, I look at how this difference becomes felt in the everyday practices of the British Expatriate in Singapore. I argue that within these managerial discourses, Singapore as 'easy Asia' sits uneasily and ambivalently. That is, the global narratives produced through international human resource management can be interrupted and contested by the way in which expatriates understand place. Within these felt experiences, I argue that rather than Singapore as a place being imagined as different, Singaporeans are. This Othering of Singaporeans works to produce understandings of superiority in a different way, setting up encounters by legitimizing the distance from the local population by the expatriate.

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Theodora Lam, M Soc  
Sc, Research Associate  
and Brenda S.A. Yeoh,  
Professor

Caring for Left-Behind  
Children at the South-  
ernmost End of the  
Global Care Chain

The distinct feminization of labour migration in Southeast Asia – particularly in the migration of breadwinning mothers – has led to both heightened anxieties about the ‘care deficit’ experienced by left-behind children and also, hopeful anticipations that this phenomenon will lead to a renegotiation of the patriarchal bargain and more egalitarian gender division of household labour and carework. While work on ‘long-distance mothering’ has reinserted migrant mothers’ roles in building care relationships with their children and reminded us of the durability of mothering identities, it has less to reveal about the changing web of care that develops around left-behind children in her physical absence over considerable periods of time. Currently, the limited literature on carers of left-behind children has focused primarily on the role of ‘other-mothers’ (grandmothers and aunts), although some work is beginning to focus on left-behind fathers as their children’s carer. Using quantitative and qualitative data collected from both left-behind carers and their young charges in the Philippines and Indonesia, we investigate (a) who assumes the migrant mother’s primary caring role and how this is negotiated among possible care substitutes; (b) how carework is divided and care relationships negotiated between the child and different carers; and (c) how children cope with a care deficit. Our work contributes to understanding both the relational and non-relational aspects of care, and the implications of the shifting care regime for the gendered subjectivities and the gender order at the Southernmost end of the global care chain.

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Sanna Saksela-  
Bergholm, PhD

Defining Mutual  
Belongings through  
Transnational Practises:  
A Case Study of Fili-  
pino Labour Migrants in  
Finland

The objective with this paper is to show how mutual belonging can be created and maintained through active participation in practices, which strengthen the hybrid collective identity of the Filipino labour migrants living in Finland. Labour migration is not always a win-win situation for migrants and often requires different kinds of adaptation strategies. Filipino labour migrants, who have been recruited to Finland as cooks, cleaners and nurses amongst others have faced several obstacles during their migration trajectory and adaptation into the Finnish society. Several of them have tried to solve their problems beyond formal contacts and with the support received from their compatriots, religious congregations and ethnic associations. This paper analyses sociocultural, religious and economic activities, which express the transnational belonging of Filipino labour migrants to the Finnish and Filipino society. The material consists of twenty open-ended interviews conducted with the previously mentioned occupational groups in the capital area of Finland.

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## Abstracts

### Working group B

Linn Axelsson<sup>1</sup>, PhD

On tempos, work time and imagined futures: theorizing the times and temporalities of precarity among Chinese workers in the Swedish restaurant industry

Linn Axelsson<sup>1</sup>, Qian Zhang<sup>2</sup>, Charlotta Hedberg<sup>3</sup>, Bo Malmberg<sup>4</sup>

In this paper we explore the times and temporalities involved in creating precarity among Chinese restaurant workers in Sweden, a country considered having Europe's most liberal policies towards labor migration from third countries Europe (OECD 2011). The analysis includes, first, the variety of tempos associated with entry and conditions of stay involving the tension created between the speedy decision-making process used in an attempt to increase the volume of labour migration to Sweden and the suspension of time experienced by Chinese restaurant workers as they wait to meet Sweden's four year eligibility requirement for a permanent residence permit. Second, the translation of rhythms of permanence and temporariness into excessive working hours and, third, the role played by the Chinese restaurant workers' imagined futures (e.g. as permanent residents) in ordering and controlling relationships within the workplace. Combined these times and temporalities create the precarious working conditions of Chinese restaurant workers in Sweden. The paper addresses the issues of time, temporalities and precarity from the perspective of migration policy as well as the experiences of migrant workers. It draws upon mixed methods including policy analysis, register-based data and interviews with Chinese restaurant workers and employers.

**Keywords:** Chinese migrant labour, temporalities, precarious working conditions, Sweden, permanent residence

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  4. Bo Malmberg, Professor, Dept Human Geography, Stockholm University
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Anna Lipphardt, JProf. Dr.

Between Privilege and Precarity – Transnational Mobility in the Art Sector

Over the past 20 years, artists have been promoted and supported as 'talent migrants' by policy makers and the art market alike – particularly in the EU. While politics and the scholarship on the so-called 'highly-skilled migration' often refer to artists as the mobile success story par excellence, the lived realities of most artists are more ambivalent as the high frequency of relocation, fierce competition, and employment unpredictability often result in precarious working and living conditions. To explore these ambivalent mobilities, the paper proposes to employ four different analytical strategies:

1. a phenomenological perspective focusing on the interrelation of mobility/migration, the creative process and artistic labor within different disciplines,
2. a policy-oriented perspective discussing intentions and effects of EU mobility schemes and intersecting national mobility schemes for the arts, and, in close connection to that,
3. an investigation of the aims and results of commissioned evaluation studies and statistical analysis of mobility and migration in the arts sector, and, last but not least,
4. a long-term analysis of artists' biographical and career courses under mobile circumstances.

Only through an intertwined perspective, this conceptual paper argues, is it possible to critically explore the efficacy, biases, blind spots, and side-effects of current EU and national mobility regimes in the art sector, and to move beyond the highly politicized and economized discourse on mobility schemes for the 'highly-skilled' towards a more differentiated understanding of the challenges they entail for those who move.

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Catherine Harris, PhD and Gill Valentine, PhD

Attitudes towards transnational migration: reactions to East European migrant workers in the UK

Europe has recently witnessed migration of an unprecedented scale. In this context, processes of globalization and accelerating social and geographical mobility mean that individuals are now exposed to a much wider range of lifestyles. One consequence of this is that activities of work are becoming more global in nature and increasingly involve transnational migration flows. Individuals are therefore increasingly likely to encounter different groups and are therefore required to negotiate discontinuities and contradictions between the values that are transmitted through different sites. In response, the paper explores attitudes towards migrant workers through original data collected in the UK. This is part of the ERC funded research project LIVEDIFFERENCE. Biographical interviews are used to explain when, where and how, attitudes towards migrant workers develop over time and how these encounters are negotiated.

The paper suggests that for UK born respondents the title of 'migrant worker' is synonymous with East European origin. The reason for this being that EU accession in 2004 brought about unprecedented flows of migrant workers to the UK, which has changed the nature of the working environment for many UK born workers. In the research, respondents initially displayed negative attitudes towards East European migrant workers. Such concerns were often situated in the transnational nature of East European migration, such as migration taking place for seasonal work causing instability and transience in local communities, and transnational flows of money being sent to family who remain in Poland which could have been spent within the UK economy. However, in many cases respondents reported that following encounters with migrant workers, often in the workplace or in the local neighbourhood, their negative attitudes were often transformed into positive ones. Interestingly, this was also justified through the transnational nature of migrant workers with the benefits of them bringing new skills, enriching the culture of local communities through sharing East European cultural traits and fostering business links between the homeland and the UK.

In this way the paper explores the issues brought about by the implementation of global migration regimes by political institutions such as the EU, but also the ways in which, and sites where, such attitudes towards migrant workers are transformed through the benefits offered by transnational activities.

**Keywords:** transnational migration, migrant workers, East European, attitudes

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Alice Kern, Research associate/PhD lic.

"I'm not a broker... but basically that's what I do": Contested perceptions and multiple functions of transnational labour recruiters in Nepal

Globalization and marketization highly influence international labour mobility, establishing a migration industry (Gammeltoft-Hansen & Nyberg Sorensen 2013). Recruitment agencies have become driving forces of global work and "manage all the practicalities" (Adhikari 2010: 122). However, the structural conditions of migration remain unclear. How do brokers mediate international labour migration? This paper aims at "opening the black box of migration" (Lindquist et al. 2012) and highlights the important roles of labour brokers for transnational migration and global work.

During the last decade, the number and importance of labour brokers and recruitment agencies in Nepal has increased considerably. Yet, they suffer from a negative reputation. The government attempts to regulate the market and contribute to an ethical recruitment. In addition, the newly formed Agent Association strives for a better recognition of brokers and clear conditions. Another key player in the recruitment process is the Nepal Association of Foreign Employment Agencies. On the one hand, it provides a visible platform of transnational migration infrastructure and importantly shapes official regulations. On the other hand, the institution itself is constantly changing and contested.

This paper analyzes the ambiguous perceptions of labour brokers in Nepal and their multiple functions in transnational migration processes. While many recruiters present themselves as social workers, they are often perceived as selfish businessmen. In practice, recruitment agencies importantly shape transnational networks and significantly enable global work. Migration brokers act as important middlemen between Nepali migrants and international companies, between rural and urban spaces, between the poor and the rich (see e.g. Agunias 2013). While providing necessary migration infrastructure, labour recruiters also make money by selling a dream. This paper looks behind transnational migration networks and describes how labour brokers both facilitate and constrain global work, despite and because of their contested roles.

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Pekka Rantanen, PhD student

Coordinating Globalisation: Informal recruitment agencies managing seasonal Thai-migrants to the Finnish wild berry industry

Many studies have investigated recruiting processes of temporary work migration, but less attention has been paid to functions that non-state recruiting actors have in regulating conditions of work. Roos Pijpers argues that 'constitutive role of employers and recruiting actors remains underexposed' in literature on migrant networks. She argues that non-state international employment agencies (IEA) are important anchors of the transnational circular labour migration. The Finnish wild berry industry has become dependent on the work of seasonal migrants. The largest group travels from Thailand. The number of pickers has risen from 88 in 2005 to 3200 in 2013. The pickers are not employees, and their right to pick and sell wild berries is based on the Finnish customary practice of universal right to public access to forest. Recruiting costs, travel, accommodation and food are paid by the temporary workers which make their, often loan based, work precarious. Between the wild berry companies and Thai-pickers operates a number of informal recruiting agencies, operated by people called as coordinators. The article investigates functions of 'coordinating'. The research shows that informal IEA's manage not only the recruiting of workers in Thailand but have a significant role in managing work processes in Finland.

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Barbara Hobson, Professor, Susanne Fahlén, Postdoc, Luwam Bede, researcher

Do welfare Regimes Matter: A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Migration and Care/Domestic Work

Two general patterns can be observed in European societies that reflect the intersections of migration and care: an expansion in privatization/marketization of care/domestic work and the use of migrants to perform these tasks who comprise a low wage sector, many of whom work informally and lack the social benefits and rights and protections of the majority in the receiving country. Within this ostensible convergence in trans-national migration and care/domestic work, there is heterogeneity and diversity reflected in the patterns in formal/informal care markets and the regulation in the employment and conditions of work of migrants. These results from multiple factors: who is migrating: the why when and from where; and the layers of social/institutional context in receiving societies: welfare/care regime, migration regime and the formal/informal markets for care/domestic work

Fiona Williams has set the research agenda in migration and care/domestic work: to develop multi-dimensional frameworks that incorporate macro, meso and micro levels. This project with its multi-dimensional design takes up this challenge. We compare Sweden and Spain, who differ along many macro/institutional dimensions: care/welfare regime, regulatory systems and tolerance for informal labor (expressed in the migration regime) and markets for care. We also engage with the effects of the recession on migrant/care workers, particularly in Spain, in light of the high levels of unemployment and precariousness. At the micro-level, we have conducted semi-structured interviews with migrant women working the care/domestic sector in three cities, Madrid, Barcelona and Stockholm using similar criteria for selecting groups to be interviewed based upon register and census data. In addition we have conducted a web-based survey of buyers of these services in Sweden that explores practices, experiences and attitudes toward using services; for instance how contact was made, why they are purchasing services, preferences regarding the background of those who perform the services and the importance of RUT for their use of these services. A survey module has been included in a national Spanish survey structured around our survey. As we have recently completed the data collection, our presentation will address the conceptual framework and multi-level design of the project, the methodological challenges and strategies used for the survey and some preliminary findings.

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## Abstracts

### Working group C

Östen Wahlbeck, Associate Professor

Transnational Social Capital and the Mixed Embeddedness of Turkish Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Finland

The focus of this paper is on the dynamics of transnational social capital that can explain how Turkish immigrants in Finland become self-employed and why they have established themselves within a particular economic sector. The so called “mixed embeddedness perspective” on ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurship is utilised to achieve a better understanding of these processes. The presented interview study indicates that immigrants are able to establish ethnic economies also in countries with relatively small and geographically dispersed immigrant populations. Immigrant entrepreneurs can mobilise transnational social capital for the establishment of businesses, but only under circumstances where transnational resources can be utilised as a local resource. To understand the dynamics of immigrant self-employment requires an analysis of the mixed embeddedness of immigrants in a simultaneously transnational and local social context.

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Anthony Ince<sup>1</sup>, PhD

Worker organisation, community, and varied mobilities in global industries: three cases from the UK

Anthony Ince<sup>1</sup>, Andrew Cumbers<sup>2</sup>, David Featherstone<sup>3</sup>, Danny MacKinnon<sup>4</sup> and Kendra Strauss<sup>5</sup>

In the UK, the last 30 years have been characterised by a process of neoliberal globalisation that has given rise to a labour market with a heavy reliance on global industries, with typically low levels of unionisation and high labour market precarity (Wills et al. 2009). This neoliberalisation has led to deepening inequalities and social-economic problems among settled and migrant communities who must negotiate the uncertain, uneven and exploitative dynamics of these processes (MacKinnon et al. 2011). This paper discusses collective negotiations of mobility, migration and settlement in labour markets through the lens of three UK case studies: two recent labour disputes in globalised industries, and one study of unemployed youths living in an ex-industrial community struggling with the impacts of labour market change.

In 2005, 670 first and second generation Indian migrant women were sacked by Gate Gourmet, an airline food manufacturer, and replaced by lower-paid agency workers. Their tightly-knit community from the Indian Sikh diaspora strengthened their fight for reinstatement, while also garnering support from largely white British-origin workers at Heathrow Airport. The second case concerns strikes among 4000 engineering construction workers in 2009. These largely white British workers who regularly worked overseas were fighting employers’ undercutting of pay and conditions by exploited migrant workers. However, some deployed racialised discourses through the slogan “British jobs for British workers”. Third, de-industrialisation in Glasgow’s suburbs of Hamilton and Motherwell has led to extreme levels of unemployment and deprivation among its youth. New service sector jobs are low-waged, low-skilled and precarious, while many blame globalisation for migrants seemingly ‘flooding’ the local labour market and broader economic decline.

These case studies shed light on the complex web of relationships between settled and mobile groups and the local impacts of globalised neoliberalism. The disputes illustrate that workers’ positions at key nodes in global production chains can create considerable economic leverage, but this leverage was shaped partly according to their differing relationships to, and constructions of, community. In Hamilton and Motherwell, however, unemployed young people without collective organisation felt their communities were disempowered and ‘under attack’ from the same global forces that, ironically, allowed the workers to organise effectively. These various understandings and uses of ethno-national and geographic community illustrate at once the dangers of defensive localism and the possibilities of forging “ordinary multiculturalisms” (Gilroy 2004) that operate variously through and against globalising processes of neoliberal capitalism.

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Lena Näre, Assistant Professor

Neoliberal Postcolonialism in Skilled Labour Mobility - Filipino Nurses' Coping with Deskilling and Ethnic Hierarchies in Finnish Elderly Care

European societies are facing the crucial question of who will provide care for the ageing populations in the future. In many European countries the answer has been migrant worker force, and Finland has recently started to follow suit. Since 2007, private companies have been recruiting registered nurses from the Philippines to work as practical nurses in Finnish elderly care homes. The paper has two parts. First it argues that the recruitment is based on a neoliberal postcolonial logic according to which the Philippines is perceived an endless source of labour force for the needs of ageing Finnish society and international mobility as individualized risk taking based on economic calculation. Secondly, the paper analyses the everyday strategies and discourses Filipino nurse use when coping with deskilling inherent to the recruitment process and with everyday discrimination and ethnic hierarchies they encounter in the work places. Moreover, the paper explores how nurses find dignity in their everyday work (Stacey 2005). A common strategy is to create a moral hierarchy based on ethnic differences according to which Filipino nurses have a better work ethic based on fictive kinship, while the Finnish nurses are claimed to have an instrumental approach to their work. The old discourse of care as 'labour of love' is then given new meanings in the global hierarchies of care work. The paper draws on ethnographic case study of the Filipino nurse recruitment including qualitative in-depth interviews with Filipino nurses working in Finland (N= 20), representatives of the recruitment company and the private care companies employing the nurses (N=14) and a content analysis of the media coverage of the phenomenon (2007-2012).

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## Abstracts

### Keynotes

Brenda S.A. Yeoh<sup>1</sup>, Professor

Indonesian Domestic Workers and the (Un) Making of Transnational Livelihoods and Provisional Futures

Brenda S.A. Yeoh<sup>1</sup>, Maria Platt<sup>2</sup>, Khoo Choon Yen<sup>3</sup> and Theodora Lam<sup>4</sup>

Doreen Massey (2005) has argued that space and time should not be reduced to a bounded locality of the 'here and now' and instead proposed a geographical imagination of 'space as simultaneity of stories-so-far'. While such an imagination is useful in helping us understand the politics of simultaneity at work in transnational lives and livelihoods which are interconnected across space, an appreciation of migrant aspirations and future trajectories will require not just a consideration of simultaneous 'stories-so-far', but also 'stories-to-come' which may build upon, divert from, or even unmake the 'stories-so-far'. In this paper, we apply these ideas to our study (involving a questionnaire survey (n = 200) and in-depth interviews (n = 40)) of the transnational journeys traced by Indonesian domestic workers employed in middle-class homes in Singapore. By taking seriously the embodied experiences and place-based imaginings of these migrant women as they unfold in multiple temporalities and spatialities, we begin to better understand their motivations in persevering to continue in a retrogressive '3D' occupation with severely constrained working conditions. By considering how notions of risk and hope feature in the making of provisional futures, we glimpse the way the migrant domestic workers cope with the 'technologies of servitude' while shaping their own mobile pathways across space and time, albeit under the strictures of a disciplinary migration regime characterised by asymmetrical power geometries.

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- 

Johan Lindquist, Associate Professor

Organizing Global Work: Migration Infrastructure and the Logistics of Transnational Labor in Asia and the Middle East

This talk takes the concept of *migration infrastructure* as a starting point for conceptualizing new regimes of transnational migration across Asia and the Middle East. These regimes are characterized by growing demands for documentation (i.e. the production of passports and no objection certificates) and stringent immigration controls, as the role of state actors in the migration process has become more extensive, as well as the development of flexible labor markets characterized by sub-contracting and the privatization of migration management. In this context, a wide range of institutionalized services and facilities—such as medical checkups, surveillance systems, temporary housing, migrant training, transportation, terminals, as well as the production of documents—form the basis for contemporary flows of migration.

Transnational migration in this context is increasingly managed through infrastructural development as opposed to the control of bodily movement per se. In this talk I therefore offer *migration infrastructure* as a conceptual alternative to *migration industry*. While the latter highlights the importance of actors and institutions involved in the business of migration—in contrast to state attempts to regulate migration flows and the experiences of migrants themselves—migration infrastructure suggests an approach that engages with the services and facilities that make migration possible in the context of an increasingly complex relationship between state and market.

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## Getting to Geovetenskapens hus (the Geo-Science Building)

**Address:** Svante Arrhenius väg 8-12.

Directions: Geovetenskapens hus is located about three minutes' walk from the metro, buses, and Roslagsbanan. See map on next page.

### **Metro: Universitetet**

The red underground line (number 14) from "Fruängen", passing "T-Centralen", bound for "Mörby centrum", will take you to the station "Universitetet". It is an eight-minute journey from T-Centralen, the underground station at the Stockholm main railway station. If you walk straight ahead from the underground exit you will find the green Geo-Science Building on the left side 120 meters north-east from station.

### **Roslagsbanan: Universitetet**

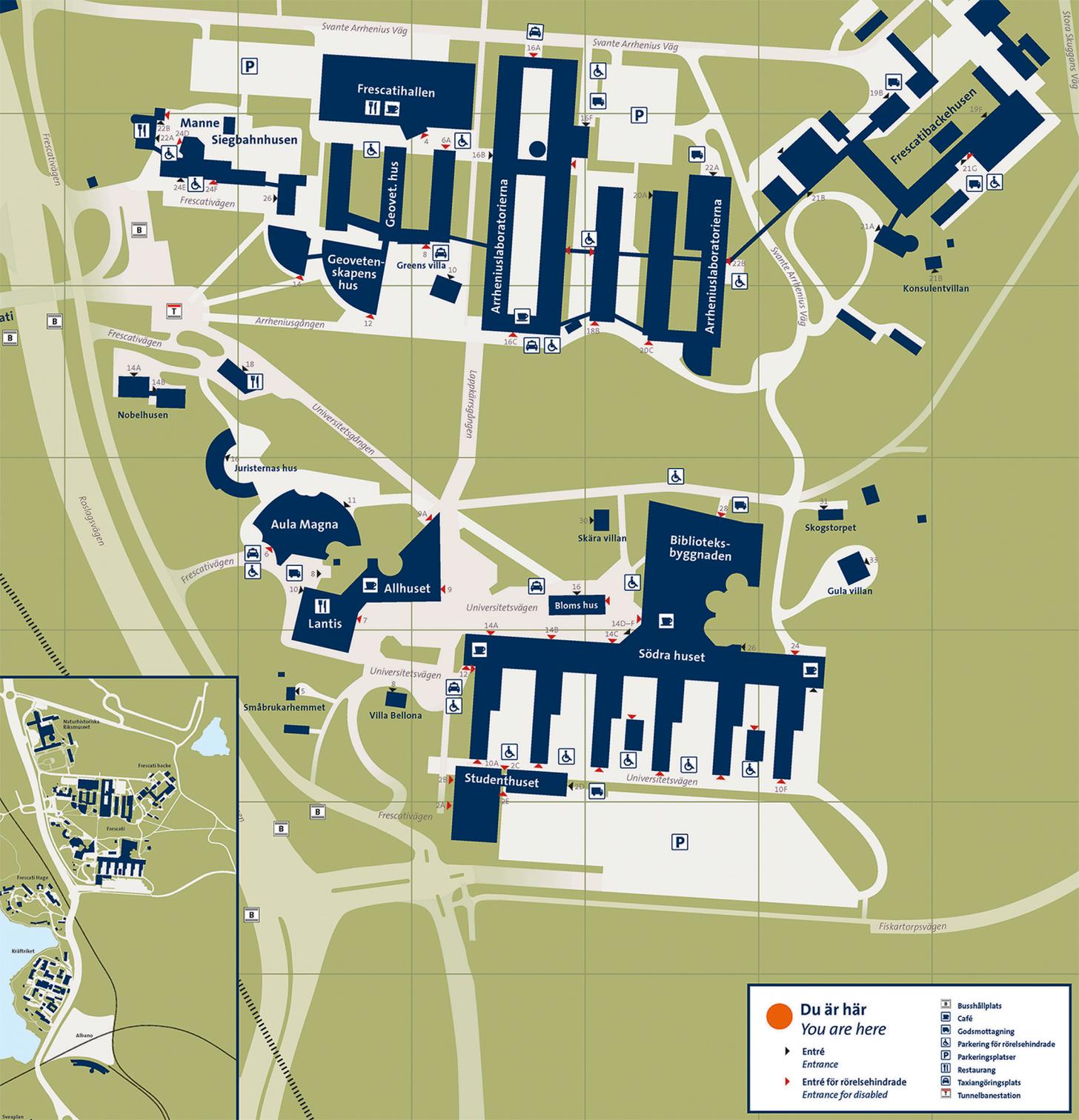
"Roslagsbanan" suburban train from "Östra station", the Stockholm eastern station (or some other stop), will take you to the halt "Universitetet". The Geo-Science Building is situated 300 meters east of the halt. Walk up to the bridge over the tracks and carry on to the right.

### **By bus: 40, 70**

The closest bus stop is "Universitet Norra" (at the underground station, 100 meters west of the Geo-Science Building). The bus routes are: 40 (from a number of stops including Reimersholme, Fridhemsplan (underground), Odenplan (underground), Sveaplan and Stora Lappkärrsberget), 70 (Frösundavik, Odenplan (underground) and Sveaplan).

**By car:** On right of Roslagsvägen, north of Roslagstull, northbound.





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▶ Entré  
*Entrance*

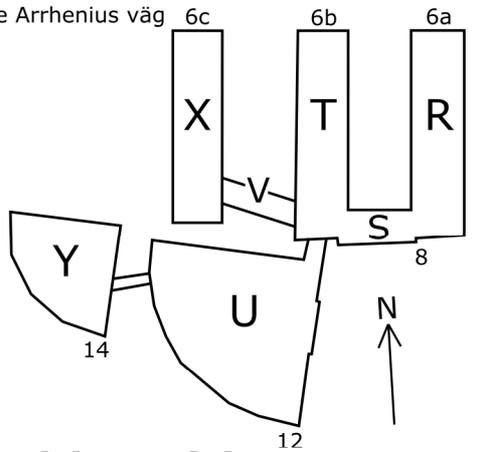
▶ Entré för rörelsehindrade  
*Entrance for disabled*

	Bushällplats
	Café
	Godsmottagning
	Parkering för rörelsehindrade
	Parkeringsplatser
	Restaurang
	Taxiangringsplats
	Tunnelbanestation

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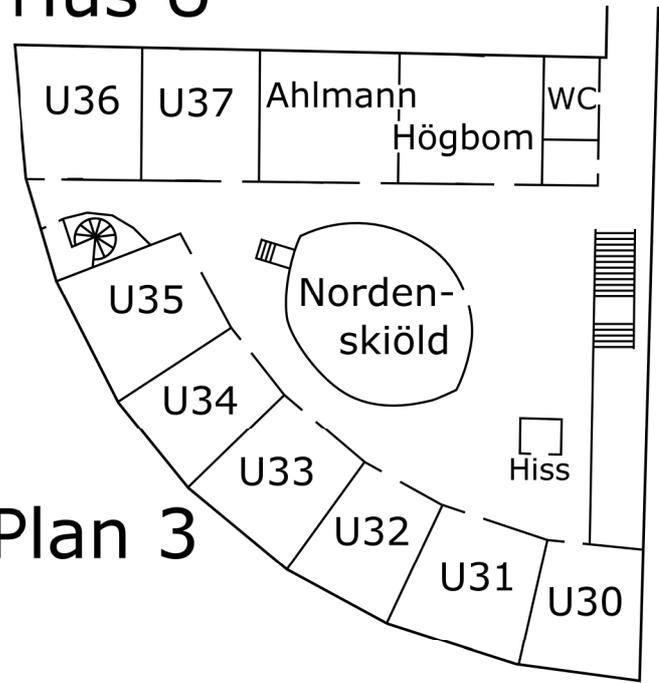
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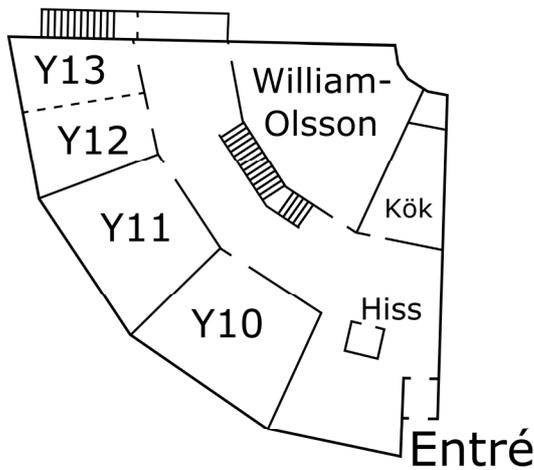
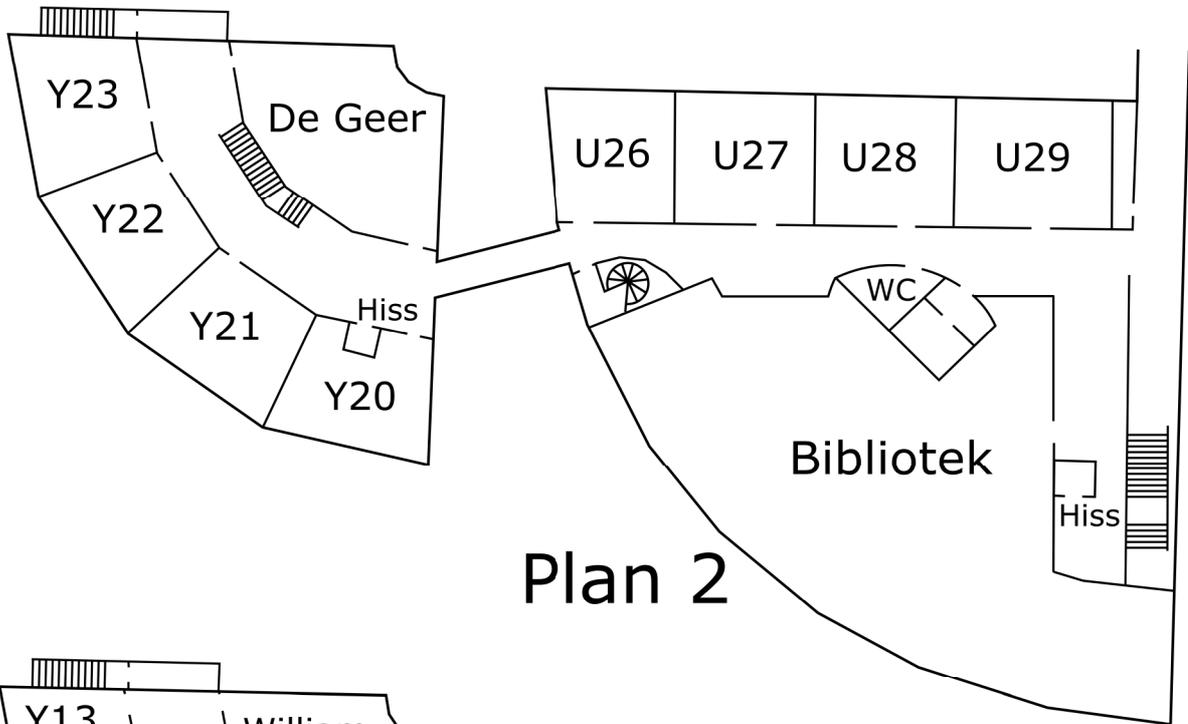
# Hus U

## Plan 3

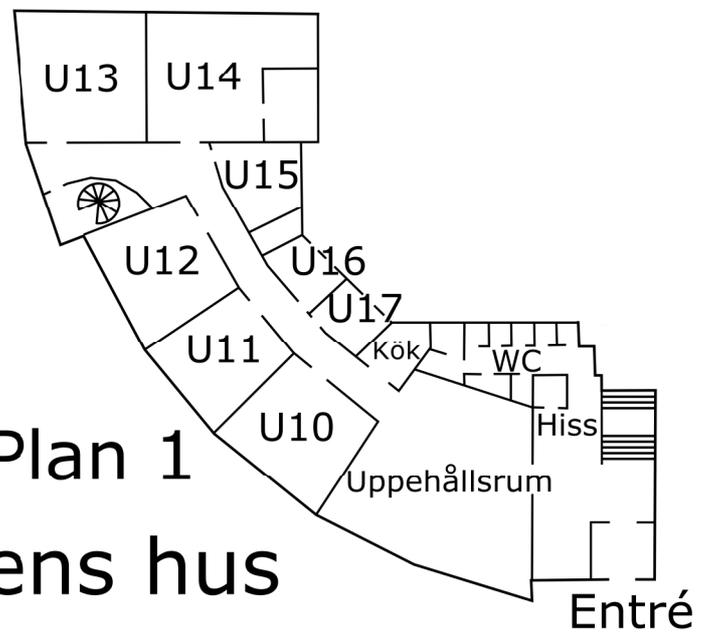


# Hus Y

## Plan 2



## Plan 1



# Geovetenskapens hus

Entré