

# Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



## Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners ([Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl](mailto:Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl)), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Divya Agarwal
Student number	5793467

Studio		
Name / Theme	Planning Complex Cities	
Main mentor	Dr. Ir. Verena Balz	Regional Planning and Strategy
Second mentor	Ir. Tess Broekmans	Urban Design
Argumentation of choice of the studio	This studio takes a stand for spatial justice for seasonal labourers at the forefront which this project promises. This project seeks to illuminate the multifaceted nature of seasonal labour movements within Europe, where I metaphorically agree with the term "Europe as a Chessboard". The Netherlands, with its unique labour policies and market, become the case study for this investigation. My objective is to unravel the complex interdependencies between labour mobility and the transient employment opportunities that characterise Europe's increasingly flexible workforce. The complex socio-spatial migration debate in Europe coincides with the theme of the studio.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Temporary People</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Understanding the spatial impact of <i>invisible</i> liquid migration into the Netherlands</p>
Goal	
Location:	The Netherlands
The posed problem,	<p><b>Problem Context</b></p> <p>The notion of temporary mobility workers derives from Europe's distinctive free-movement area which has substantially reduced migration and mobility barriers, a concept initially introduced to promote blue-collar cross-border employment for industrial work (Koikkalainen, 2021). The temporary work regimes now primarily enable low-skilled labour migration from CEE countries to higher economic areas in the Netherlands, a move that is, for many, less about opportunity and more about survival under dire conditions for minimal wages. This situation epitomises the Marxian "reserve army of</p>

	<p>labour”, that is pertinent to contemporary Europe (King, 2018).</p> <p>Temporary mobility workers refer to individuals taking on short-term employment in foreign countries and their proliferation in the Netherlands correlates with the country’s high demand for labour in the agricultural and logistics sectors. The precariousness of these positions, often with inadequate job security, low wages and limited career progression is a stark reality for these individuals (Booth, Francesconi, &amp; Frank, 2002; Giesecke &amp; Groß, 2003; OECD, 2014). Furthermore, this employment trend is increasingly associated with the rise of social inequality (Gash &amp; McGinnity, 2007).</p> <p>Housing represents a significant plight for temporary mobility workers whose accommodations are generally isolated within the urban periphery and may be substandard, posing severe challenges to their quality of life and social inclusion. This situation is paradoxically juxtaposed with the positive portrayal featured on temp agency or <i>uitzenbureau</i> websites which often belies the harsh living and working realities of these labourers.</p> <p><b>Problem Statement</b></p> <p>In the Netherlands, approximately 60% of the land is allocated to intensive agricultural use and logistics infrastructure, integral to the country’s export-led economy. The burgeoning demand for labour in these sectors is largely met by low-skilled workers from CEE nations such as Poland, Romania and Bulgaria. These individuals are frequently subjected to substandard housing conditions, labour exploitation within seasonal work programs and their essential role in supporting the economy contrasts sharply with the unsatisfactory conditions and rights they endure.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p><b>Sub Question 1:</b> What are aspects of the system of ‘temporary’ jobs in the EU? How does it function in the Netherlands?</p> <p><b>Sub Question 2:</b> Who is the contemporary temporary worker? What are their lifestyles and living environments?</p> <p><b>Sub Question 3:</b> What are the current housing environments of the migrant worker? What aspects of spatial justice are at stake in <i>flexwonen</i> for the contemporary workers?</p> <p><b>Main Research Question:</b> How can the design and implementation of a flexible housing</p>

	<p>typology cater to the demands of temporary mobility workers in The Netherlands?</p> <p><b>Sub Question 4:</b> What is the future of housing for flexible workers in The Netherlands observing the emerging technological landscapes?</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	
<p>The project sets out to provide an in-depth exploration of the intra-European Union mobility networks, specifically regarding temporary or on-call workers. The core aim is to scrutinise the implications, nuances and economic dependencies of these labour networks. It emphasises the exploitative conditions often encountered by these workers within controlled setups orchestrated by temporary employment agencies with a special focus on housing in the Netherlands. The project seeks to bridge the gap between workers' expectations and the realities of labour fulfillment highlighting the differential of promises versus actual conditions.</p> <p>The first (research) chapter 'Contextualise' sets the contextual basis by answering SQ1. It understands the systematic functioning of the networks and relationships of the 'temporary' jobs landscape including temporary agencies or <i>uitzendbureau</i>, labour and other stakeholders involved. The historical review of the seasonal worker regime would underpin the importance of these regimes to understand the old and continuing cross-geographical operation of this system within the European Union.</p> <p>The second (research and design) chapter 'Analyse' in response to SQ2 shifts its focus to the contemporary temporary worker in legal terms. It will highlight the image of the invisible worker to document the problems faced providing a contextual yet analytical understanding of their challenges. Spatial aspects such as living conditions and preferences will be investigated to understand the spaces in which these workers reside.</p> <p>The third (research and design) chapter 'Explore' responds to SQ3 to understand the current controlling nature of the <i>flexwonen</i> - the housing provided and exclusively built for the workers in The Netherlands. The aim is to study its geographical distribution in the 'hidden' production landscapes which highlights how the situation of the worker is at stake for their spatial justice, gain insights into gender roles, living conditions and the scale of housing compared to the needs and demands of the workforce to understand their impact on the overall spatial dynamics.</p> <p>This information altogether gears up for the main (research and design) research question as 'Propose'. It integrates the understanding of worker's housing in The Netherlands and proposes a sustainable neighbourhood design. This will be explored to address challenges and leverage opportunities translated into tangible representations through physical models and sketches. The research aims for a precise, well-informed exploration of the research question integrating design thinking and policy insights.</p> <p>The fifth (research and design) chapter 'Reflect' understands the nuances of these design and policy solutions to the upgrading and fully-abled technological landscape in The Netherlands. It proposes the state-of-art argued as future-work technologies specific to the production landscape case in The Netherlands.</p>	

## Process

### Method description

The methodology sets out an empirical methodological approach. Where the first three questions set the contextual base for the main research question to propose design and policy framework solutions.

The following diagram explains this:



'Contextualise' sets to understand the 'temporary' contracts and jobs landscape. A comprehensive exploration of the composition and network of flexible job offers and workers in the EU and an analysis of the historical evolution underpinning the seasonal worker regime in The Netherlands will be explored.

Methods:

Research Using Technology:

- : Social Media Research
- : Website Research
- : Statistical Data Analysis
- : Digital Interview

Research Using Literature:

- : Historical Analysis
- : Literature Review

'Analyse' helps in understanding the lifestyle and working environments of the legally termed 'temporary' worker. This will be achieved by conducting a thorough analysis of legal documents to understand the definition, status, rights and contractual agreements associated with temporary workers. Everyday work and an overview of shifts, seasons, demographic aspects, etc. will be studied.

Methods:

Research Using Technology:

- : Newspaper Articles and Advertisements Analysis
- : Statistical Data Analysis
- : Digital Interview

Research Using Intervention:

- : Worker Interviews
- : Site-Specific Research

Design Research:

- : Storytelling

'Explore' will map the geographical distribution and spatialities of flexwonen in The Netherlands. It will understand the built aspect and where these practices are situated in the production landscapes or hinterlands in the Netherlands. This is the main object of study as this is where the problem lies and the previous methodology will plug into this to understand the issue with these 'units' which have also been compared to exploitative 'labour camps' by several authors mentioned in the next section.

Methods:

Research Using Technology:

- : GeoSpatial Mapping
- : Newspaper Articles and Advertisements Analysis
- : Statistical Data Analysis
- : Website Research

Research Using Literature:

- : Historical Analysis
- : Literature Review
- : Site Specific Research

Design Research:

- : Mapping through Physical Model-Making

'Propose' takes the findings and explorations of the previous methodology into account. Innovative design options will be explored to address challenges and leverage opportunities translated into tangible representations through physical models and sketches. This is the design strategy outcome which would take a 'further to be explored' turn. An essential component involves suggesting policy frameworks aligned with identified needs and objectives.

Methods:

Research Using Literature:

- : Historical Analysis
- : Case Study Analysis
- : Literature Review
- : Site Specific Research

Design Research:

- : Design Proposals through Physical Model-Making

'Reflect' will investigate the future of seasonal workers in relation to automation reviewing automation trends in Dutch sectors. Findings from the previous exploration will help in theorising reflections on the future. Additionally, the research will incorporate speculative assumptions based on identified trends to formulate potential scenarios for the future of seasonal labour amid rising automation. This section would conclude and specify remarks for the future of the project.

Methods:

Research Using Technology:

- : Newspaper Articles and Advertisements Analysis
- : Conversational Feedback

Research Using Literature:

- : Literature Review
- : Case Study Analysis

Design Research:

- : Speculative Storytelling

## Literature and general practical references

Through systematic exploration, these theories offer insights into the nuanced dimensions of the issues at hand, contributing to an in-depth understanding of the complexities surrounding seasonal labour mobilities, arising from an ever-changing geographical boundary. Change and flexibility are inevitable here.

### Ever-changing Definition of the European Union

: Borderless Europe: Seven Decades of Free Movement by Saara Koikkalainen, 2021

-Citizens of EU27 may choose to relocate without hindrance for work, education or pleasure.

-2004 enlargement was controversial, the most significant patterns of movement are from newer Eastern Member States to those in the West.

-Brexit and the pandemic are just the latest developments to test Member States' solidarity and mutual trust, but there will surely be more to come.

-Schengen and EU FoM are not static concepts

### Free but Regulated Movement and Mobilities in EU

: Opportunity or threat? Public attitudes towards EU freedom of movement by Sofia Vasilopolou & Liisa Talving, 2018

: The Seventh Man by John Berger and Jean Mohr, 1975

### A New Landscape of Trade

: The Dutch 'Gateway to Europe' Spatial Policy Narrative, 1980–2020: A Systematic Review by Merten Nefs, Wil Zonneveld & Paul Gerretsen, 2023

: Globalization: Its Diverse Actors And Spaces by Saskia Sassen, 2008

: Housing Migrant Workers: The Form of the Corporate City Along the Rotterdam-Venlo Logistics Corridor by Renzo Sgolacchia, 2023

### New Networks of Mobilities

: Theorising New European Youth Mobilities by Russell King, 2018

: Between 'Labour Migration' and 'New European Mobilities' by Maricia Fischer-Souan, 2019

: The Mobility of Workers Living at Work in Europe by Antonella Ceccagno, 2019

: Settled in Mobility': Engendering Post-Wall Migration in Europe by Mirjana Morokvasic, 2004

: Integration Processes and Policies in Europe by Blanca Garcés-Masareñas & Rinus Penninx, 2016

### Housing Policies

: The Netherlands as a Country of Immigration by Roel Jennissen, Mark Bovens, Godfried Engbersen and Meike Bokhorst, 2022

### Regulated Labour Market

: How (Seasonal) Agricultural Demands for Labour Are Met by Immigrant Workers in the Netherlands and Germany by Doomernik, Jeroen, Wendelien Barkema and Vincenzo Gomes, 2023

: Flexible Employment Relationship by Statistic Netherlands

: The Effects of Time-Spatial Flexibility and New Working Conditions on Employees' Work-Life Balance: The Dutch Case by Peters, Pascale, Laura Den Dulk and Tanja Van Der Lippe, 2009

### Flexible Housing



: Flex-Housing and the Advent of the 'Spoedzoeker' in Dutch Housing Policy by Oana Druta & Mina Fatemidokhtcharook, 2023

: Beyond the Dormitory Labour Regime: Comparing Chinese and Indian Workplace-Residence Systems as Strategies of Migrant Labour Control by Charlotte Goodburn and Soumya Mishra, 2023

The theories are selected based on the similarities of the conditions and situations observed in The Netherlands.

## Reflection

Relation between thesis topic and graduation studio:

The central question emerged: 'Is migration a territorial conflict?' Through observations of disparities based on my previous projects in TU Delft, I geared towards the conditions of the non-Western labour employed here. This question, however broad, paved the way for a focused exploration of the conditions faced by seasonal labourers (shuttle migrants) in the Netherlands, particularly those from Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. As I delved into the complexities of cross-country migration, triggered by the accession of ten additional countries to the EU, evidence-based research became my compass. The graduation studio aligns seamlessly with the number of migrants, sometimes too many or sometimes too less, in The Netherlands. It elaborates their role as victims as well as contributors to the Dutch society.

Relation between thesis topic and graduation track Urbanism:

The thesis aligns well with the master's approach of exploring critical questions of urbanism with sensitivity to local conditions and cultures, understanding the complex relationships and networks of marginalised user groups. While the project first focuses on the social aspects, it further also moves on to understanding its larger context in the 'Urban Design' profession. Currently, The Netherlands is facing a housing crisis and *flexwonen* is ultimately a result of that. How can we then deal with 'quick' housing in a way that offers spatial justice to its users? Proposing relevant policy frameworks contributes to the philosophy the Urbanism track withholds.

Relation between thesis topic and MSc AUBS:

The thesis fits into the MSc AUBS course as it places itself at the junction of state-of-the-art issues to look at. The ongoing political discourse of migrant workers and new 'temporary' working lifestyles in the country is as much a 'built' form problem that future Architects, Urban Designers and Planners should bravely respond to in their future ahead.

Societal Relevance:

Glamorous advertisements enticing flexible labourers often divert attention from the harsh ground realities they encounter. Employment agencies, in their promotions, extend invitations to what proves to be highly controlled environments. Within these settings, labourers are frequently objectified and reduced to mere components of an assembly line with their needs and demands routinely disregarded. The intricate interplay of labour supply and demand circuits is deeply entwined with broader globalisation dynamics, encompassing the formation of global markets, the intensification of transnational and trans-local networks and the geographical realignment of an expanding array of economic and financial activities (Sassen, 2008). Portraying such a lifestyle as "regular" and "normal" argues to normalise the networked system underpinning the FoM in a highly globalised economy. It is imperative to recognise and safeguard the highly vulnerable position of working migrants by acknowledging their contributions and opportunities within society.

Scientific Relevance:

This project employs design typologies and storytelling as methodological tools to unravel the complexities of "temporary" migration in a society that predominantly values permanence. It fills in this knowledge gap specific to the Dutch case by critically assessing the housing conditions of this often-invisible group aligning their needs to identify areas for improvement. Emphasising on the relevance of flex work in the contemporary Dutch landscape as a novel opportunistic trend contributes to the limited research on these emerging mobilities as a lifestyle choice for few but a way of living for many.

