

## Workshop proposal nr.9

**Title:** Encounters, belonging and welfare services

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### **Encounters, belonging and welfare services**

The aim of this workshop is to bring together scholars who are interested in migrants' welfare services. In this workshop we wish to explore how these services, such as services organized at reception centres, healthcare services (also maternity healthcare), schools, early education, and social work, amongst others, meet the demands of the increasing numbers of people crossing international borders. We are interested in presentations which address migrants' encounters with welfare services. In addition to encounters, we also want to analyse different sites of belonging, where moral hierarchies of citizenship are formed.

By family welfare services, we refer to the welfare state services that everyone is entitled to – or at least should be. In the context of the Nordic welfare state, services such as maternity healthcare and day-care are offered to all families and are, in fact, widely used by those residents and citizens who have access to them. However, not everyone is entitled to these services, and some potential users are met with suspicion or discrimination. Often service users are also required to have a residence permit and/or need to be registered with a municipality of residence. Thus, in the context of the welfare state, the services act as “borderzones”, both excluding those who do not “belong”, and regulating and normalizing those residents and citizens who do have access to them. It is this special role of border building which makes these institutions interesting sites of analysis in terms of encounters, and designating who belongs and who does not, and how belonging can be negotiated.

Furthermore, these services are not the only sites of belonging or alienation that this workshop aims to look at. The presentations can also address a variety of sites and practices that contribute to the forming of moral hierarchies – such as citizenship, work permits, or possibilities for registering with a municipality – by which populations are divided; into those worthy of support and protection, and those that are unworthy and presented as a threat or a burden to society. We welcome presentations which address, for example, welfare services in terms of intersectional boundaries of class, nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, and legal statuses.