

# A Borderless Europe?

International Conference SDU Sønderborg 2010, Sept. 30. – Oct. 2. 2010

## Call for papers

On the threshold of a 'borderless Europe', research on every day life experiences with borders and border issues has become more relevant than ever. The mobility of everyday life reflected in increasing migration rates and cross-border commuting implies movements and activities crossing national, administrative, cultural and mental borders challenging dividing lines between European states, East and West, center and periphery, rich and poor within as well as conceptions of internal and external Europe.

Since the late 1990s, the European Union has had a new focus on the peripheries and borderlands of Europe. From considering them enclaves of stagnation and as more or less passive recipients of subsidies, the new profile in EU regional policies is that border regions are motors in the European integration process and encouraged to act as entrepreneurs of their own and the European developments. This shift marks new possibilities for cross-border and inter-regional cooperation.

However, even in today's Europe, where we conceive the European state borders as more permeable than before, particularly within the 'Schengenland', the unambiguous absence of borders can prove hard to find. Historical conflicts, as well as politically discursive and mental barriers between the European populations seem to be more persistent than EU attempts to demolish border and integrate Europe. As for the European integration process, this point can be taken further, that integration is not a matter of overcoming the borders in Europe; rather it is a question of acknowledging the co-existence of many different versions of the European borders.

In contrast to considering borders to be mere physical dividing lines or easily dissolvable, this conference takes a cross-disciplinary perspective on borders and borderlands, discussing them as socially constructed, multiple practices and complex psychological patterns. Borders may thus represent boundaries as well as thresholds of passages, they can be symbolic or material, soft or hard, and they can appear permeable or extremely solid. This ambivalent character makes it crucial to investigate how the people of Europe practice and experience borders in everyday life.

This conference invites contributions that empirically as well as theoretically reflect on the challenges associated with living on, by, with and across the European borders. Contributions can have both contemporary and historical outlook. The conference committee welcomes contributions from all disciplines related to border issues (such as Ethnology, Anthropology, Sociology, European Studies, History, Political Science, Law, Economics, Geography, Business Studies, etc.)

The question of a 'borderless Europe' will be addressed from theoretical and empirical as well as practical perspectives:

1. How can we theoretically as well as methodologically conceive and conceptualise the complex character of European borders?
2. How are borders experienced in European every day life – not least among those living outside or at the external EU-borders?
3. Which kinds of challenges are connected to the governance of regions and cross-border cooperation?
4. How persistent are historical memory, discourse and imaginings in maintaining European borders?
5. What effect does EU's regional policies have on cross-border mobility and the economic landscape of regional disparities in Europe?
6. How does new external EU-borders (Schengen) influence everyday life in border-regions?

The conference will be grouped into following themes:

- I. Borders and regionalisation. Cross-border cooperation.
- II. Borders and mobility. Migration and commuting.
- III. Borders and Europeanisation/globalisation. Tracing links.

Abstracts should be between 300 – 500 words and send to the organising committee no later than April 15. 2010.

We intend to publish an anthology based on revised versions of selected conference papers. If you are interested in contributing to the anthology, please send full papers to the organising committee no later than September 1. 2010.

## Keynote speakers:

To emphasise the intra-disciplinary scope of the conference, we have invited keynote speakers from different areas of regional studies. We are pleased to announce that so far five renowned researchers have confirmed their participation in the conference.

- Ulf Hedetoft, Prof. of Nationality and Migration Studies, Saxo-Institute, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
- Jouni Häkli, Prof. of Regional Studies, University of Tampere, Finland
- Michael Keating, Prof. of Regional Studies, EUI, Italy
- Doris Wastl-Walter, Prof. of Geography, University of Bern, Switzerland

- Tom Wilson, Prof. of Anthropology, University of Binghamton, USA

Moreover, Friday afternoon associate professor Martin Klatt from the Department of Border Region Studies, SDU, will conduct an excursion into the history of the Danish/German borderlands. The Conference dinner Friday evening will take place in Flensburg, on the German side of the border in connection with the excursion.

#### Organisers:

The conference is a collaboration between the Department of Border Region Studies, University of Southern Denmark, and the Saxo-Institute & Centre for Modern European Studies (CEMES), University of Copenhagen. It is sponsored by the Department of Border Region Studies and CEMES.

The organising committee:

- Marie Sandberg, Assistant Professor, Saxo-Institute, University of Copenhagen: [sandberg@hum.ku.dk](mailto:sandberg@hum.ku.dk)
- Martin Klatt, Associate Professor, Department of Border Region Studies, University of Southern Denmark: [mk@sam.sdu.dk](mailto:mk@sam.sdu.dk)
- Dorte Andersen, Assistant Professor, Department of Border Region Studies, University of Southern Denmark: [doa@sam.sdu.dk](mailto:doa@sam.sdu.dk)

#### Logistics:

The conference is held from September 30. - October 2. at Alision located in Sønderborg. The building houses a research park, a concert hall and three departments of the University of Southern Denmark. It was awarded several international prizes for its architecture and is decorated with Olafur Eliasson's installations.



Sønderborg airport (SGD) is located sixteen kilometres from Alision. There are up to five daily connections to Copenhagen. Hamburg airport is 200 km from Sønderborg. Cross-border train connections are not advisable, but it is possible to catch a train to Flensburg via Hamburg Central Station (check [www.bahn.de](http://www.bahn.de) for connections). A shuttle from Flensburg can be arranged if there is demand.

The train station in Sønderborg with connections from Copenhagen every second hour is located just outside Alision.

There are several options for accommodation in Sønderborg and surrounding areas, ranging from 4 star hotels to hostels. If you are in need of information about options and facilities, please contact our secretary [Janne Hobson](mailto:Janne.Hobson).

#### Fee and registration:

The conference fee is 200 euro, which includes lunches, refreshments, the conference dinner and the excursion. There is a reduced fee of 150 euro for early registration (first 20). The fee for students is 50 euro, including meals and 15 euro, excluding meals. To register for the conference, please follow the link below:

[http://www.sdu.dk/Om\\_SDU/Institutter\\_centre/I\\_Graenseforskning/BorderlessEurope.aspx?sc\\_lang=en](http://www.sdu.dk/Om_SDU/Institutter_centre/I_Graenseforskning/BorderlessEurope.aspx?sc_lang=en)