

## Activity 8.4: Europe in the world Area 8.4.2 Conflicts, peace and human rights

### **SSH.2011.4.2-1. „The evolving concept of borders”**

#### **“The Challenge**

Borders can help in regulating neighbourhood and international relations through mutual recognition of sovereign countries, and can also help in developing accountability and solidarity by establishing the scope of citizenship rights or welfare provisions. Or they can exacerbate tensions and conflicts by dividing communities and imposing tight restrictions in ways that are resented as occupation or as discrimination of certain groups on ethnic, religious, economic, gender or other lines. Also, the nature of borders is changing. One may ponder the permeability or impermeability of the electronic frontier: the Internet may cross State lines providing information globally or attempts may be made to block this flow and introduce censorship, monitoring of citizens and protectionism. Globalisation also brings benefits or economic crises rapidly across borders without demanding any State permission though responses to economic crises or bank failures may be found firmly within a State but in other cases in international organisations and rescue packages. This variability gives rise to questions from ordinary citizens and policymakers as to the role and reality of borders in the 21st century.

#### **Why it matters for Europe**

The challenge to be addressed by the EU as well as by other political, economic and civil society actors in Europe and worldwide is how to deal with changing borders and their strategic, economic, cultural implications; how to enhance cross-border cooperation and mitigate factors that may hamper it (e.g. how to develop protective but avoid protectionist measures) in fields ranging from environment and health protection, to justice and home affairs, poverty reduction, human rights, culture and research. For the European Union, the issue of borders has crucial implications for its key policy areas –from enlargement to security, migration, social policy and others- as well as for its own external policies, image and identity in a context of globalisation. While sovereignty and territorial integrity remain key political and legal concepts, the metaphor of the 'global village', the spreading of communication technologies and transportation, of transnational corporations and global trade seem to make the notion of borders almost irrelevant. European integration itself may be considered as part of a process by which borders are re-defined and economic borders partly abolished through supranational law and the four freedoms of circulation of goods, capitals, people and services –with the fifth freedom of circulation of knowledge also on the table.

While partly abolishing internal borders, the EU is moving and reshaping its external borders through enlargement and variable competence –with the 'variable' geometry' in Schengen, and the Eurozone (both external and internal borders since some EU MS are included and others are not) being cases in point. The EU Neighbourhood policy and the pre-accession mechanisms can be seen as ways of extending and limiting boundaries at the same time. In the broader global context, new borders emerge in terms of territorial, geopolitical, economic definition of state or regional integration entities, long standing conflicts over borders remain unsolved while others continue to erupt; some borders disappear or at least become more 'porous', while others become even stronger or emerge anew – with important implications for EU external relations and strategic perspective.

#### **Addressing the challenge**

Research dimensions to be taken into consideration:

- Research could examine bordering, de-bordering and re-bordering processes in a comparative and historical perspective. It could identify and explain how different meanings

and anthropological experiences of borders emerge –including the 'we'/'them' relations within and across territorial, political, linguistic, technological and other borders. The relations between borders, sovereignty and territorial integrity could be considered in legal, philosophical, psychological, anthropological and other perspectives.

- Practices and perceptions of border-crossing (by those who do cross the borders and those who are within or at the borders) may be considered and different functions of borders could be explored: for example, political/legal function of delimiting state sovereignty; surveillance function in checking access and movement, economic function in situating a country in the wider context of trade and competitiveness at regional and global scales.

- The relation between borders (legal, cultural, and others) and the production and diffusion of knowledge could also be considered. Geographical and scientific explorations and the 'pushing forward' of borders could also be considered in historical perspective and with regard to their implications for current perceptions of Europe from within and from outside.

- With specific regard to Europe and the European Union, research could inquire how the borders between these two are defined and change over time in public perceptions, historical accounts, media discourse. More specifically on the European Union, research could clarify the different roots and implications of influential policy notions that implicitly or explicitly refer to borders; among these, the notions of 'absorption capacity', 'fortress Europe', 'neighbourhood', 'ring of friends', 'third countries'.

- Factors that enhance or hamper cross-border cooperation in different fields (e.g. environment protection, justice and home affairs, culture, research) could be identified. New ways of mapping of borders (e.g. using anthropological, psychological and other insights) in addition to geographical, political and historical ones could be developed, also considering a foresight perspective. The spatial dimension of borders, including maritime spaces and borders, could also be explored with regard to their implications in terms of openness/exposure to other cultures.“

**Funding scheme: Collaborative project (large scale integrated research project)**

Für dieses Förderthema ist als Förderinstrument ein **Collaborative project<sup>1</sup> (large scale integrating project)** vorgegeben.

Die **minimale Fördersumme für Projektanträge in diesem Topic liegt bei 6,5 Mio. € pro Antrag.**

Diese Summe stellt eine Mindestanforderung dar. Projektanträge, die eine finanzielle Unterstützung der Europäischen Kommission unterhalb dieser Grenze beantragen, werden nicht zur Evaluierung zugelassen.

An Projektanträgen mit diesem Förderinstrument müssen mindestens 7 voneinander unabhängige Partner aus mindestens 7 verschiedenen Mitglieds- oder Assoziierten Staaten sein.

Dieses Topic ist unter dem **Call-Identifizier FP7-SSH-2011-1** ausgeschrieben.

Projektanträge müssen bis zum **02. Februar 2011, 17:00 Uhr** (Ortszeit Brüssel) per [EPSS \(„Electronic Proposal Submission Service“\)](#) eingereicht werden.

Alle notwendigen Unterlagen zur Einreichung von Anträgen zu diesem Topic finden Sie auf der [Cordis-Webseite](#).

Bitte wenden Sie sich bei Fragen zur Antragstellung jederzeit an die Nationale Kontaktstelle Sozial-, Wirtschafts- und Geisteswissenschaften!

Unsere Kontaktdaten finden Sie unter:

<http://www.nks-swg.de/de/ansprechpartner.php>

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<sup>1</sup> Verbundprojekte („*Collaborative Research Projects*“, CP) sind Forschungsprojekte, die von Konsortien mit Partnern aus verschiedenen Ländern und dem Ziel durchgeführt werden, neues Wissen, neue Technologien, Produkte, Verfahren oder Dienstleistungen zu entwickeln. Größe, Gegenstandsbereich und interne Organisation der Projekte können je nach Förderbereich und thematischem Schwerpunkt unterschiedlich gestaltet sein. Prinzipiell unterscheidet man zwischen kleinen bis mittelgroßen Verbundprojekten („*small or medium-scale focused research projects*“) und großen integrierten Projekten („*large-scale integrating projects*“)