

Call for Papers, BASEES 2023 Annual Conference, University of Glasgow, 31 March – 2 April 2023

for a panel on:

Border In/securities – at the nexus of space and emotions in Central- and Eastern Europe

Borders, in particular those enclosing larger regions, nation states or supranational unions, are and have always been related to questions of insecurity and security. Recently, various crises and conflicts particularly across Central- and Eastern Europe have highlighted the relevance of understanding the role borders have in geopolitical dimensions as well as in everyday life. They have given impulses to renegotiations of borders, more often than not in relation to aims of establishing security.

As socially constructed spatial structures, borders involve different perspectives and actors creating and negotiating them. This involves political elites in the center of the state, people living close to it or those wanting to cross it for various reasons, e.g. business, travel, seeking refuge. The Russian war in Ukraine, international migration dynamics, pandemics as SARS-CoV-2, climate change, environmental catastrophes, and many other crises have led to increasingly closed borders and/or extremely selective border regimes to overcome them. At the same time, borders have proven to be places of hope generated by a perceived, expected or constructed better life and security on the “other” side.

Experiencing these border changes makes us aware of the complexity and conflicts of bordering and their differentiated entanglements with questions of being or feeling in/secure or safe. While border research has traditionally emphasized larger geopolitical questions of securitization, its regulations and materialisations, more recent social research has increasingly addressed the level of the everyday, the subjects and embodiments of insecurity and security at borders. This session aims at giving impulse to a differentiated debate of border in/securities and their entanglement with current social and political processes in Central and Eastern Europe by discussing the following questions along examples of recent and current research:

- In which way do current developments of borders in CEE – their discursive negotiation, their material representation, the practices, that make the border - relate to dimensions of security and insecurity? How does this nexus impact processes of de- or rebordering?
- In what way are borders entangled with everyday in/securities, ontological in/securities etc.? What other conditions are involved?
- In which way is the aim of ensuring security applied to enforce borders? Which actors are involved? In which way do contradicting effects occur in in/securing the border and how are different levels affected by conflicting concepts and structures of in/securities (e.g. everyday needs vs. national security aims)?
- What emotions are connected or evoked with representations and perceptions of (in/secure) borders by different actors (e.g. individuals close or distant to the border, people crossing it for business, war refugees, border guards, etc.)?
- What are threats different actors related to the border perceive? What role do past experiences play in perceiving border in/securities? Which in/securities matter the most and to whom?
- How can we best explore border in/securities, in methodological and empirical terms?

If you want to participate in this session, please send an abstract of 300 words to sabine.loewis@zois-berlin.de and k_beurskens@leibniz-ifl.de by September 27th. We invite contributions focusing on conceptual questions, methodological issues and thematic inputs regarding border in/securities, whether they present research results, research considerations or work in progress.