

Call for Papers

CROSS-BORDER WORK IN EUROPE: REGIONAL PRACTICES AND REALITIES

International conference in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
5 and 6 May 2022

Conference location:

Chambre des salariés du Luxembourg (CSL),
2-4 Rue Pierre Hentges
Luxembourg-Ville



Topic of the conference

Living in one country and working in another is a daily reality for thousands of people in Europe. Taking into account the EU-28 countries and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries, the total number of frontier workers in Europe was 1.9 million in 2017 (European Commission, 2018). The growth of flows of cross-border work, as well as its socio-economic, political and legal dimensions, are increasingly relevant to further analysis. It is a subject at the center of much analysis in different disciplines in the social sciences, humanities and environmental studies.

Cross-border work has developed between European countries long before the foundation of the European Economic Community established by the Treaty of Rome (Lentacker, 1973; Ricq, 1981). Cross-border work has become an important economic, social and human phenomenon within border territories in Europe (Van Houtum, 2000; Haas and Osland, 2014; Rietveld, 2012), the characteristics of which will be questioned during the conference.

The main countries of residence of cross-border commuters are France (405,000 or 21% of the total number of cross-border commuters), Germany (249,000 or 13%) and Poland (202,000 or 11%) (European Commission, 2018). The main countries of employment are Germany (391,000), Switzerland (387,000), Luxembourg (186,000) and Austria (175,000) in 2017.

As shown by studies on the Greater Region (Saar-Lorraine-Luxembourg-Wallonia-Rhineland-Palatinate), one of the most important areas of cooperation in Europe (Wille, 2012; Belkacem/Pigeron-Piroth, 2012; Wille, 2016; Wille/Nienaber 2020), the geographical situation on the border, the regulatory standardisation of cross-border work, the connection of spaces by traffic infrastructures, etc. have encouraged the development of cross-border workers' mobility. Within this cross-border region, approximately 240,000 cross-border commuters are registered (OIE, 2019).

Cross-border work shows a great heterogeneity in use and forms. Certain specificities become visible according to the socio-economic characteristics of the territories in which cross-border work operates and develops (e.g. more industrial towards Germany, more service-oriented in Luxembourg and Switzerland).

Objectives of the conference

The flow of workers between the various European countries has not only increased, but has also become more diversified. Behind the cross-border work are men and women, young and old, with very different economic and social situations and motivations. Cross-border work in Europe therefore encompasses very diverse economic, social, human and legal realities that we would like to identify more clearly in order to detect similarities but also differences. The identification of common challenges will also make it possible to analyse the elements that can be transposed to other regions or not, depending on the context.

In addition, this colloquium also wishes to address the issue of cross-border work in small European states. Although data on these flows of workers are particularly well known in Luxembourg for example where 200,000 cross-border commuters work, we still have little information on the everyday realities of cross-border workers in the microstates of Europe (Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Vatican, San Marino).

The questions we wish to address by this conference are divided into 4 specific topics:

- TOPIC 1: Legal aspects related to the presence of a border between the country of residence and the country of employment (taxation, social contributions, teleworking, etc.)
- TOPIC 2: Economic aspects (organisation of labour markets, profiles of cross-border workers, training, etc.)
- TOPIC 3: Issues related to the socio-cultural practices of these commuters (multilingualism, interculturality, perception, social cohesion, etc.)
- TOPIC 4: The territorial impacts of these cross-border flows (traffic, transport infrastructures, mobility, cross-border governance, etc.).

This colloquium addresses all researchers (geographers, economists, sociologists, legal experts, etc.), and economic and social actors from various cross-border regions of Europe who have elements to contribute on one or more of the above-mentioned topics. We are expecting lectures and talks on the situation of cross-border work in Northern, Eastern, Southern and Central Europe, as well as in microstates.

Important dates

Proposals for presentations should be sent by e-mail by 30 June 2021 exclusively to Franz Clément (franz.clement@liser.lu).

The decision on the acceptance of the presentation proposals will be communicated to the authors around 30 September 2021.

Information for speakers

Proposals for presentations, written in English or French, should not exceed 400 words and include:

- A title
- The precise contact details of the author(s)
- The status or function of the author(s)
- An explicit problematic, elements of methodology
- The topic which fits with the presentation (1. legal aspects, 2. economic aspects, 3. socio-cultural aspects or 4. territorial impacts) and its geographical scope.

Written papers will be requested after the colloquium for publication.

The working languages of the conference will be English and French (with simultaneous translation).

Scientific board

Andrea Albanese, Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER)
Rachid Belkacem, UniGR-Center for Border Studies (University of Lorraine)
Franz Clément, Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER)
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Illustrative bibliography

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