

Focus 2020

Borders, Democracy and Security

The unprecedented travel bans and closures of national borders during this time of COVID-19 make borders more visible than ever before. However, the ad-hoc restrictions introduced in spring 2020 were selective: Citizens, permanent residents, migrant workers judged “essential” for health care, social welfare and public services could still enter “sealed” national territories. Other travelers such as temporary residents, visitors, circular migrant workers or refugees were excluded. The numerous images of extensive controls and closed doors, and at the same time, new forms of cross-border political, economic, cultural life that emerged in response, made clear how regionally and globally interdependent we have become.

How does globalization influence the dismantling and the resurrection of borders worldwide, be they political, economic, cultural or intellectual? Which borders and boundaries are shifting and why? What kinds of new pathways of connections and cooperation are emerging in response? What kinds of historical processes have led to the transformation of borders and border regimes? How do these challenge longstanding power hierarchies? To what extent might cultural revolutions transform or pull apart borders and boundaries? Can democracy function beyond national borders? How are the relationships between citizens and state changing with respect to rights and social protection, and how does that differ in different regions of the world?

Questions concerning borders, state transformation, democracy, social welfare, and security are the focus of the current call for applications for Ph.D. scholarships. We encourage applications for projects concentrating on following aspects, although other topics will also be considered:

- - the conceptual construction of borders,
- - the changing nature and functionality of national borders and its effect on regionalization,
- - materiality and symbolism of borders,
- - transformation of border and regional regimes,
- - supra- and sub-national integration,
- - citizenship and belonging,
- - security and securitization,
- - transnational social protection,
- - cultural borders and their manifestation in arts and cultural production.

If you have further questions please contact Dr. Anna Hofmann, Director, Head of Research and Scholarship, E-Mail: hofmann@zeit-stiftung.de, twitter: [@ZSwissenschaft](https://twitter.com/ZSwissenschaft).

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