

Call for papers



b — shapes
Borders Shaping
Perceptions of European Societies



**Narratives of Europe in
uncertain times. Perceptions
of Europe in trans-European,
national, local discourses and
borderlanders' stories**

**B-SHAPES/NARDIV
conference, Warsaw, Poland**

5-6 March 2026

Europe has recently been confronted with several crises. Brexit, migration, the pandemic, rising populism and Russia's invasion of Ukraine have all contributed to a resurgence in cultural and national stereotypes and divisions. These developments have deepened the divide between Eastern and Western Europe, leading to a growing sense of alienation from European identity and shared values. These challenges highlight the need to reconsider narratives about Europe and borders, in order to move beyond traditional national perspectives and foster a more inclusive European identity.

This conference is organized jointly by the Horizon Europe Research and Innovation actions Borders Shaping Perceptions of European Societies ([B-SHAPES](#)) and United in Narrative Diversity? ([NARDIV](#)). It addresses several crises facing Europe. Borders – both physical and symbolic – play a crucial role in this dynamic and influence attitudes towards the European project. In this context, topics such as exchanges on shared cultural heritage, Euroscepticism in border regions, the experiences of minorities living in border regions, and the cultural significance of border landscapes as cultural heritage have gained importance. The conference will also include colonial and postcolonial discourses in order to answer the question of whether the West and the East share the same understanding of 'Europeanism,' 'European values,' and 'European heritage.'

The conference offers an opportunity for scholars of different disciplines in European Studies, Regional Studies and Border Studies to join us in presenting and discussing the latest research in these fields. We also aim to attract policymakers and other stakeholders to ensure both scientific and societal impact.

The theme of the conference will be centered around the empiric and theoretical work packages of B-SHAPES and NARDIV, but we also welcome relevant papers with a different focus/empiric base relating to our central research questions. Presentations should address the following topics/issues:

- Euroscepticism in border regions
- Minorities in border regions
- Border landscapes as heritage
- Narratives as a methodological approach in European-, Regional- and Border Studies
- (Post)Colonial Narratives in Trans-European Relations
- Border Studies and European integration theory
- European, national and regional heritage policies and borders
- From research to political and societal impact (with relation to borders, border regions)

We also invite PhD students based in Germany or Poland researching on these topics to a special, fully funded (conference fee, travel and accommodation) PhD-panel. Furthermore, we invite for a fully funded (conference fee, travel and accommodation) panel of researchers based in Poland or Germany presenting papers on issues relating to national minorities in border regions.*

Interested participants are kindly asked to submit a max. 200 words abstract to the organizing committee by **30 September 2025**, using this form:

<https://forms.gle/qEcqGnAuFNRqybhp7>

Selected presenters will be informed by 1 December 2025. There will be a **conference fee of 120 €** for participants not affiliated with B-SHAPES or NARDIV.

For further information and questions contact the B-SHAPES coordinator Martin Klatt at mk@sam.sdu.dk

* Depending on the approval of an application to the Foundation for German-Polish Scientific Cooperation



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