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Boring European Borders?! Integration and Mobility across Borders[1]

Martin van der Velde[*]

Abstract

This paper discusses the apparent stubbornness of immobility that exists in the European Union. It starts from the observation that the apparent abolishing of borders has not led to the supposed increase in cross-border interaction. Two concepts are introduced, indifference and unfamiliarity, this way trying to understand border effects, especially in Europe and the European Union. From this it is concluded that borders are much more than only technical barriers. Also prominent EU discourses in which debordering and homogenization will lead automatically to an increase in mobility and higher levels of interaction are challenged. It is concluded that it is important to make people to consider the "other" side of the border, including its differences and (un)familiarity, as a relevant precondition for interaction.

Introduction

This somewhat provocative title attempts to highlight the ambivalence towards borders and what they stand for in the European Union (EU) and Europe (which of course are not the same). When confronted with other borders in the world, EU inner borders seem to be particularly boring, as for many (especially when coming from outside the EU), they seem to have become almost irrelevant. Of course a completely different story can be told when dealing with the outer borders, which have hardened and become more significant in recent years. In our perspective, however, EU inner borders are also still very relevant when trying to understand the dynamics of, and within the EU. This paper therefore would like to address especially two subtle aspects tied to borders, indifference and (un)familiarity, which in this paper are considered to be crucial to understanding the dynamics at and across borders and seem to be in particular pertinent in the EU.

The notion of borders plays a central role in the origins as well as the dynamics of the European Union. Borders (not only in Europe) can be considered to be the scars of history.[2] The original goal in establishing the EU was to prevent new conflicts by stimulating the integration and cohesion of and cooperation between the countries of Europe. Immediately this was translated into a desire to eliminate the inner borders of what eventually was to become the EU. The main reason for

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[1] The title is based on the dissertation "Stories of the 'Boring Border'" from Anke Strüver (Münster: LIT, 2005).

[2] Alfred Mozer, "Entwicklungspolitik zu Hause" in Claus Schöndube (ed.), *Entwicklungsregionen in der EWG: Ursache un Ausmaß der wirtschaftlichen Benachteiligung* (Bad Honnef: Osang Verlag, 1973).

this was that they were considered to hamper the integration process, mainly because they had a negative influence on mobility. Border regions became the laboratories of EU-integration, resulting in for instance the establishment of special programs specifically aiming at cross-border cooperation in border regions. Here probably the most well-known is the Interreg-program, which is currently in its fourth cycle and has been renamed into European Territorial Co-operation objective.[3]

One important reason for the European Commission (EC) to stimulate mobility and interaction and therewith to strive for the breaking down of borders is that this is considered to be an important instrument to create economic development and cohesion (Figure 1). From the observation that EU-territory is still prone to economic disparities, it should come as no surprise that much effort is put into facilitating mobility. As borders are considered to stand in the way of this effort according to the European Commission, they should be eliminated. In an EU-discourse this should automatically increase the level of interaction and consequently economic development and cohesion.

Notwithstanding this discourse mobility levels have not risen to the level the EC had wished for. 2006 was even declared the year of workers' mobility, in order to stimulate mobility and get it closer to the levels witnessed in the U.S., where it is much higher. The high levels of **IM**mobility on the labour market have even been called "labour mobility," Europe's economic oxymoron.[4] Apparently eliminating borders is not enough to get the people on the move. People are still rather immobile. This leads us to the two central questions addressed in this paper:

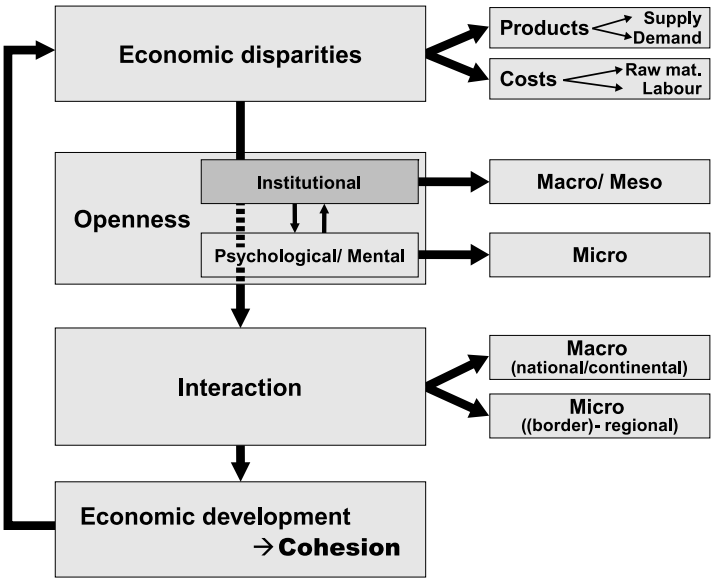

Figure 1 Cohesion through Interaction

Source: Martin van der Velde, and Egbert Wever, "Border and Labour Market,"*The Romanian Economic Journal*, 8 (2005) pp.139-151.

[3] http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/index_en.htm accessed August 25 2011.

[4] http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/economy/economy-lab/carl-mortished/labour-mobility-europes-economic-oxymoron/article1727275/ accessed August 25 2011.

- How can this relative immobility be explained in relation to borders?
- How can cross-border mobility be supported in ways other than through "traditional" EU-practices?

EU Borders

But before doing that it might be good to address the different kind of borders we see in Europe. In general, referring to Oscar Martinez's attempt to categorise borders,[5] we distinguish four types of borderlands.

- "Alienated borderlands," created by a border that does not allow any cross-border interaction. This situation exists when neighbouring countries have serious conflicts, the border between North and South Korea being an example. There are not many cases of these kinds of borders, though for short periods of time, certain borders may be completely sealed.
- "Coexistent borderlands," a border where in a certain sense there are conflicts or different interests too but they are less problematic, and manageable. Such borders allow for controlled cross-border interaction.
- "Interdependent borderlands" are regions with a border between neighbouring states that have stable relations. This border allows for a significant amount of exchange, although there is not yet a situation of free flow of goods or persons.
- "Integrated borderlands," a situation where a border has in fact been eliminated, implying the free flow of goods and labour.

Following this taxonomy of borderlands, in Europe there are mainly interdependent and integrated borderlands.

The EU interdependent borderlands

Within Europe at least four cases of "interdependent borders" do exist. An analogy of the "mother of all borders," the US-Mexican border, is the Spanish-Moroccan border surrounding the Spanish enclaves in Africa. This is a heavily protected and militarised border. Maybe it is even better to call this border co-existent, in the sense that there are clearly differing interests. Official interaction across the border is very limited and controlled.

We find examples of the second case in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean, where the authorities in countries like Spain, Italy and Greece desperately try to prevent illegal immigration largely from North Africa. In recent years the EU-border police FRONTEX (European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the

[5] Oscar J. Martinez, *Border People. Life and Society in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1994).

European Union) has been relatively successful (of course depending on the perspective) in closing the route via the Canary Islands.[6] Some years ago tens of thousands of undocumented migrants used this route to try and get into the EU. The route via Lampedusa towards Italy has until recently been drastically curtailed through bilateral agreements with Libya for instance.

The third case of interdependent borderlands is the new EU outer-border at the Eastern fringe, where massive investments are implemented to help the new member states in reinforcing "Fortress Europe." Here recently the Greek-Turkish borders have attracted much attention, where Greece asked for FRONTEX assistance to assist them in guarding the outer border. For the first time the Rapid Border Intervention Team (RABIT) was deployed.[7] This "unit" was established by the EU to assist member states in case of acute problems with regard to controlling especially undocumented migration. The pressure on this land border is partly the consequence of sealing other routes and options.

A fourth type that at least looks less grim and is supposed to be temporary are parts of the new inner-border, which came into existence with the entrance of new member states 2004 and 2007. For these countries, although within the EU, labour-mobility in particular is in some cases still controlled. Along all four types of "interdependent borders" we see that just as in the US, the EU-member states fear that a big influx of workers will disturb their "home" labour market, resulting in the unemployment of their "own" workers.[8] Discussions around the recent EU expansion illustrate these fears. Although the EU stands for free movement of goods, capital and labour, the old EU members (EU-15) decided that individual countries could establish a transitional period of several years (Germany and Austria seven years) in which they could restrict the inflow of workers from new member states that acceded in 2004 like Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. The 2007 accession states, Romania and Bulgaria, are still confronted with transitional measures. The fears are even bigger for the inflow of African workers. As along the Mexican border, many of these African workers risk their lives in this case by crossing the Mediterranean in small unsafe boats to reach the "right side" of the border. For them too, the supposed availability of jobs is the main motive to take this dangerous and unsure step.

The EU integrated borderlands

In general we can regard especially the "old" inner borders very much as integrated borderlands. The countries involved are not a homogenous group though. Some compare Europe with a Medieval Empire,[9] where there are shifting "loyaties" and memberships. When looking at three major agreements: the EU, Euro, and Schengen, we see different alliances, with different

[6] http://www.frontex.europa.eu/newsroom/news_releases/art68.html accessed August 28 2011.
[7] http://www.frontex.europa.eu/situation_at_the_external_border/art25.html accessed August 25 2011.
[8] Roos Pijpers, "'Help! The Poles are Coming': Narrating a Contemporary Moral Panic," *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 88 (2006) pp.91-103.
[9] Jan Zielonka, *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

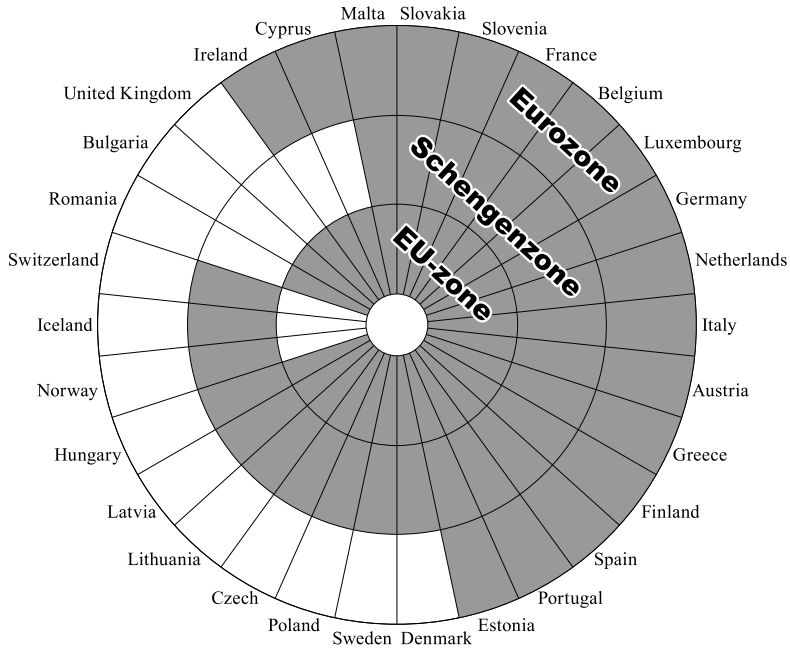

Figure 2 Member states of the EU-, Euro-, and Schengen-zones

Adapted from the "Passport to Europe" (part of the Exhibition "The Image of Europe" 2004)

consequences for the borders that are involved (Figure 2).

But even if we look at the most "integrated" countries an interesting picture can be seen when looking at mobility patterns. Regarding the mobility in Europe in general and the levels of cross-border mobility in particular, it is obvious that Europeans are not "particularly nomadic."[10] One even could say that immobility is "…a strong and persistent behavioural strategy for the large majority of the population."[11] This statement is confirmed by the results obtained from the regularly updated Eurobarometer on the opinion of the citizens of the EU. From one of the 2001 barometers, it appears that no more than 1.7 per cent of all respondents had moved to another country within the EU in the past decade.[12] However, there are considerable differences between the member states with the lowest figure in Ireland (less than half a per cent) and the highest in the Scandinavian countries (Finland 3 per cent, Denmark a little over 4 per cent and Sweden 5 per cent). Given this low level of mobility it is no surprise that less than 2 per cent of the working population in the member states of the EU comes from other EU countries.[13] Although this share has witnessed a steady increase, it is

[10] European Opinion Research Group, *The Social Situation in the European Union* (2001), http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/ ebs_148_en.pdf accessed August 6 2005.

[11] Peter A. Fischer, Einar Holm, Gunnar Malmberg and Thomas Straubhaar, *Why do People Stay? Insider Advantages and Immobility*, HWWA Discussion Paper 112 (Hamburg:Hamburgisches Welt-Wirtschafts-Archiv, 2000) p.32.

[12] European Opinion Research Group, *The Social Situation in the European Union* (2001), http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/ ebs_148_en.pdf accessed August 6 2005.

[13] Eurostat, *Labour Force Survey: Results 2001* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European

still not very impressive. More recent data does not show major changes.

In these figures only migratory patterns are represented. However, even when cross-border commuting is added, the picture does not really change. In a border region defined as the NUTS-3 regions (the smallest administrative region for which Eurostat provides statistical data), located immediately at a national border, only about 2 per cent of the labour force in the EU-15 commutes across borders. In absolute figures in 2007, only 660,000 workers commute to another country.[14] Here too, considerable differences can be noticed. If this is the case in the EU-15, with a quite long history of debordering, it might be expected that this might also happen in an enlarging EU. In the accession states that joined the EU in 2004 commuting is higher. About 7 per cent of the workers commute across the border. This however could be a temporary effect of opening the border. In general the overall picture is one of low intensities across the inner borders of the EU.

As this is still considered to be a major obstacle for European integration, this paper would like to discuss the two concepts mentioned in the introduction: indifference and unfamiliarity. Both concepts are linked to a conception and interpretation of borders, where they are regarded as dynamic instead of "static", as mental constructs or borders in the mind, and provide the region with an ambivalent, Janus-faced character. They can both be repelling and attracting, barriers and opportunities.[15]

Indifference[16]

The reason why we have introduced the issue of indifference can be found in our conviction that it is important for understanding the relative low levels of immobility in the EU. This concept has been discussed and illustrated several times.[17]

Often theories explaining mobility are used in order to explain a picture of high immobility. Most of the time, the labour market is regarded as a kind of system that is in the process towards a state of equilibrium between supply and demand. Viewed in this perspective, disequilibria are regarded only as a temporary phenomenon. They will be levelled off in due course by some kind of mobility. Mobility is thus regarded as the "big equaliser," playing a crucial role in the functioning of labour markets. Often the mobility-approach departs from the assumption formulated in the 1880s by

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Communities, 2002).

[14] MKW/Empirica, *Scientific Report on the Mobility of Cross-Border Workers within the EU-27/EEA/EFTA Countries* (2009), http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=3459&langId=en accessed December 18 2011.

[15] Henk van Houtum, Olivier Kramsch and Wolfgang Zierhofer, "B/ordering Space" in Henk van Houtum, Olivier Kramsch and Wolfgang Zierhofer (eds.), *B/ordering space* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005) pp. 1-13.

[16] This part is a slightly adapted part of a chapter in an edited volume on borders and economic behaviour, Martin van der Velde, Manfred Janssen and Henk van Houtum, "Job Mobility in the Dutch-German Regional Labour Market. The Threshold of Indifference" in Gerrit van Vilsteren and Egbert Wever (eds.), *Borders and economic behaviour in Europe* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2005) pp.77-96.

[17] See e.g. Martin van der Velde, and Henk van Houtum, "The Threshold of Indifference; Rethinking Immobility in Explaining Cross-border Labour Mobility," *Review of Regional Research* 24 (2004) pp.39-49; Henk Van Houtum and Martin van der Velde, "The Power of Cross-border Labour Market Immobility," *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 95 (2004) pp.100-107.

Ravenstein[18] that: The basic principle for migration-models is regional wage differences. Since then, migration-models and mobility-models have become increasingly complex (e.g. by including concepts such as human capital, risk of not achieving success, and bounded rationality), but they still depart from the assumption that an actor is to be regarded as an *homo economicus*, acting upon impulses (such as wage differences) in a rationally predictable way. The result is basically a push-pull model, in which factors are taken into account, that make people move from one place to another. In general these kinds of models overestimate the level of mobility. Given the fact that the border is still a (mental) barrier, cross-border mobility is overestimated even more.

When immobility is indeed the rule, it certainly would make sense to emphasise the factors that make people stay. Based on the seminal work of Straubhaar from 1988, an interesting and promising attempt was the development of the "insiders" advantage approach.[19] This approach tries to attach a particular economic value to being immobile, by introducing "keep"-factors. First of all these factors are related to working-practices. In this respect someone experiences all kinds of "sunk-benefits," such as routines, corporate embeddedness, insider knowledge, etc., when staying in a certain place for a longer period. Binding forces are also supposed to come from being socially embedded. In addition to these keep-factors, we made a plea for including repel-factors as well. These would be factors that can be linked to a potential destination region, such as resentment towards foreigners, unfavourable regional images, and these factors might prevent people from going there.

Even this extended approach, however, would still fit into the tradition of rational choice approaches. It presupposes that there are actors who are constantly in a process of deliberation, who are engaged in weighing the pros and cons of different places or regions. In other words, it supposes in our case that there are actors who are willing and also able to evaluate between the difference in the HERE and THERE (on the other side of the border). We would like to qualify this image of economic rational actors. In everyday life, most workers do not continuously make a rational cost/benefit-analysis based on some kind of choice between staying at home or going abroad. To cope with this second fallacy, we would like to make a plea for including a threshold of indifference in the explanation of labour immobility.

The importance of indifference

In order to explain what is meant by indifference, it is important to elaborate first a bit on the rationality of belonging. Within the EU the urge of people to claim a part of space as theirs is very strong.[20] This can be explained by the strong need to belong somewhere or to feel at home in a place. An ever expanding EU seems increasingly less capable of playing the role of a place of belonging.

[18] Ernst G. Ravenstein, "The Laws of Migration," *Journal of the Statistical Society* 48 (1885) pp.167-235; Ernst G. Ravenstein, "The Laws of Migration," *Journal of the Statistical Society* 52 (1889) pp.241-305.
[19] Thomas Straubhaar, *On the Economics of International Labour Migration* (Bern: Haupt, 1988).
[20] Henk van Houtum and Ton van Naerssen, "Bordering, Ordering, Othering," *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 93 (2002) pp.125-136.

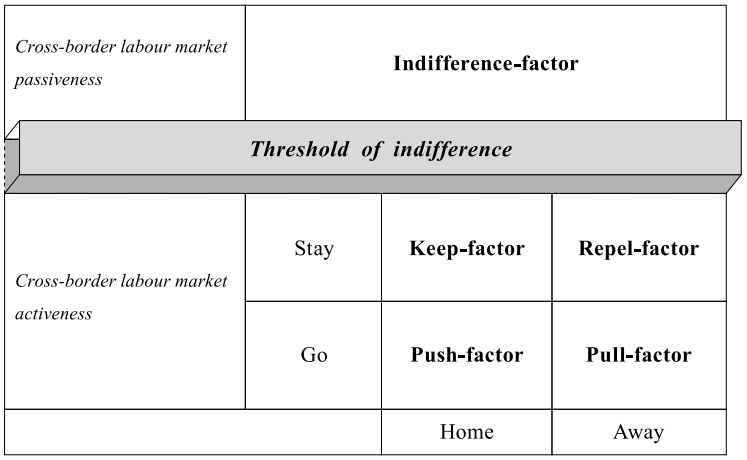

Figure 3 The Threshold of Indifference

Source: Martin van der Velde, Manfred Janssen and Henk van Houtum, "Job mobility in the Dutch-German regional labour market. The threshold of indifference" in: Borders and economic behaviour in Europe (eds.), Gerrit van Vilsteren and Egbert Wever (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2005) pp77-96.

Consequently, people are using other spatial frameworks to project their feelings. When considering this from a constructivist point of view, this feeling can be viewed upon as being based on a common, "natural," internalised and compliant behavioural pattern. This viewpoint does not imply a deterministic standpoint in the sense that everyone should follow this pattern without reserve. It stresses, however, that parts of our everyday practices are unravelling in a very obvious way, without being evaluated, contemplated and deliberated extensively. When placed in the perspective of cross-border labour markets, national borders still seem to act very strongly as the intuitive spatial framework of reference for everyday practices.

These spatial frameworks are important in the context of unfolding what is presumed to be rational behaviour. One of the consequences in this process of defining a space of belonging is that a mental distance is created between places on both sides of a border. At the same time, a space of ease and comfort is created on someone's own side of the border, in which mental nearness exists: WE in the HERE versus THEY in the THERE. Once again we would like to emphasise that we do not want to exhibit a deterministic stance, but nevertheless it is also difficult and even unwise to ignore this process when considering cross-border interaction. One important consequence of this process is that a space of indifference is created;[21] a space that is not (consciously or unconsciously) included in the search for a new job. It creates (consciously or unconsciously) a threshold that has to be overcome before the THERE is included in the search for a job (Figure 3).

This scheme tries to elucidate the spatial "dynamics" of which only one of the possible outcomes is mobility on the labour market. When a large group of people exhibit an indifferent attitude towards job opportunities on the other side of the border, symbolised in the top box of the scheme, then only a small group can "enter" the bottom part of the scheme, the active attitude part.

This symbolises what is usually called "rational" decision-making. Based on an evaluation of the characteristics and opportunities of the present (home) and a possible new location (away), a decision is made to become either mobile (go) or to stay (stay). This "model" emphasises the importance of immobility. Immobility is the rule, mobility is the aberration, certainly if we realise

[21] Henk van Houtum, "Borders of Comfort," *Regional and Federal Studies* 12 (2003) pp.37-58.

that in the EU-15 only 2 out of every 100 people are cross-border mobile. Hence, studying immobility might be just as important and relevant to understanding mobility as studying mobility itself. This idea is also supported by empirical data presented in a case study in a small sample of respondents in the Nijmegen region, who were actively looking for a job. Two-thirds indicated being indifferent towards including Germany in their search.

Unfamiliarity

Where indifference can be used to better understand immobility, the second concept of unfamiliarity can be used in the context of (policies to stimulate) mobility.[22] We use the "bandwidth of unfamiliarity" concept in an attempt to scrutinize how and why functional, physical, and socio-cultural differences discourage and encourage cross-border shopping practices, but of course it can be used with other topics as well.

Using unfamiliarity in a "bandwidth" context is not completely new considering that already in 1985 Bauman posited that "the tourist is a conscious and systematic seeker of experience, of a new and different experience, of the experience of difference and novelty – as the joys of the familiar wear off quickly and cease to allure."[23] More recently also Edensor acknowledged that "[t]he strategy … is that difference must be acknowledged but carefully limited and tamed, as in the selective commodification of 'exotic' items throughout spaces of consumption."[24]

In scrutinizing the differences, they are recategorised into emotional and rational differences between countries. This was done for mainly analytical purposes. In fact, it would be almost impossible to draw a clear line between emotionality and rationality. Some shoppers may perceive price differences, for instance, as a rational reason to cross the border whereas others might experience the fun of finding the cheapest price for the same product, pointing at an emotional shopping motive. However, clearly distinguishing emotionality and rationality is not our aim here. The goal is to understand how rational and emotional differences could be used to explain cross-border shopping (im)mobility and the bandwidth is used as an instrument to achieve this.

The "bandwidth of unfamiliarity" consists of two arbitrarily placed and shifting blocks of rational and emotional differences. It shows what level of unfamiliarity shoppers are willing to accept during cross-border practices (Figure 4).

Rational and emotional differences between places falling within their bandwidth function as push or pull factors. These differences are perceived as acceptable as well as appealing and therefore

[22] For a more extensive discussion and empirical underpinnings of the concept, see Bas Spierings and Martin van der Velde, "Shopping, borders and unfamiliarity: Consumer mobility in Europe," *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 99 (2008) pp.497-505; Martin van der Velde and Bas Spierings, "Consumer Mobility and the Communication of Difference: Reflecting on Cross-border Shopping Practices and Experiences in the Dutch-German Borderland," *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 25 (2010) pp.191-205.

[23] Zygmunt Bauman, *Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995) p. 96.

[24] Tim Edensor, "Mundane Mobilities, Performances and Spaces of Tourism," *Social & Cultural Geography* 8 (2007) p.209.

stimulate cross-border shopping. Push factors imply that consumers consider shopping centres at home less appealing than in foreign places. This encourages cross-border mobility. The same goes for pull factors because they imply that foreign shopping centres are perceived as more attractive than shopping possibilities in the home country. Differences falling outside the bandwidth function are keep or repel factors. These differences are perceived as too large and unacceptable. As a consequence, international mobility is discouraged and even prevented. Keep factors imply that shopping centres at home are seen as more appealing than shopping possibilities on the other side of the border. This encourages cross-border immobility. Repel factors also stimulate the immobility of consumers when they perceive foreign places as less attractive for shopping than places at home. The more international dissimilarities shoppers perceive as push and pull factors and the less differences as keep and repel factors, the more cross-border interaction is expected to occur.

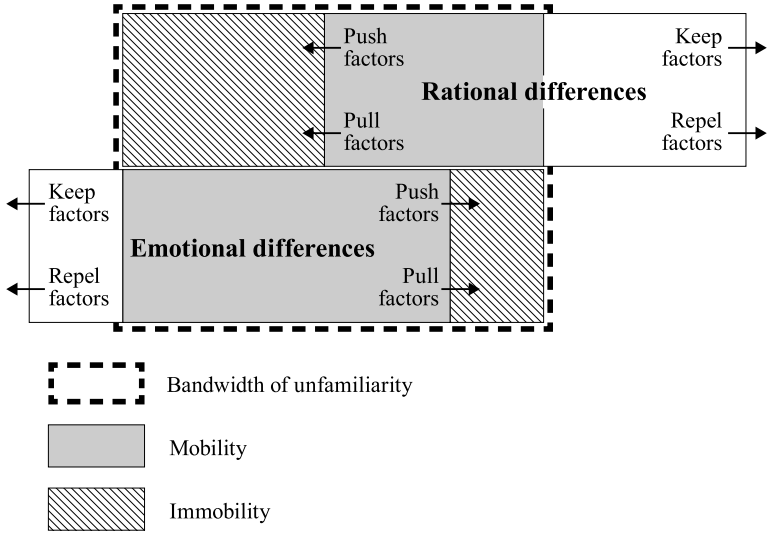

Figure 4 The Bandwidth of Unfamiliarity

Source: Martin van der Velde and Bas Spierings, "Consumer Mobility and the Communication of Difference: Reflecting on Cross-border Shopping Practices and Experiences in the Dutch-German Borderland," *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 25 (2010) pp.191-205.

Different people may have different perceptions of "familiarity" and acceptable "unfamiliarity." There might be dissimilar ideas of what rational and emotional differences operate as push, pull, keep or repel factors. The willingness of shoppers to accept cross-border differences could also change during the course of time. The communication of knowledge of international differences, for instance, may rearrange what people consider as "familiar" and acceptably "unfamiliar." For instance marketing plans for shopping centres "on the other side" could cause the shifting of blocks of rational and emotional differences (pointing at the dynamics of the bandwidth). Communicating cross-border differences may focus on changing unacceptable differences into acceptable differences. In the case of effective communication processes, shoppers will see more reasons to cross borders. The strength of push and pull factors simultaneously grows and the strength of keep and repel factors simultaneously declines, causing the blocks of rational and/or emotional differences to shift to the left and the right respectively. This implies that more cross-border interaction will take place. However, efforts focusing on the insignificance of international dissimilarities and on disappearing acceptable differences could cause the opposite effect. In fact, the strength of push and pull factors together may diminish and the strength of keep and repel factors may simultaneously increase (causing the blocks

of rational and/or emotional differences to shift to the right and the left respectively). This means that cross-border immobility is encouraged. Thus, paradoxically, the construction of borders and "the communication of cross-border" as well as appealing differences seem a prerequisite for sustaining and encouraging shopping mobility. More precisely, foreign shopping centres promising the experience of "familiar unfamiliarity" seem to have an appeal on shoppers and promote cross-border interaction.

Conclusions

Starting from the observation that the apparent abolishing of borders has not led to the supposed increase in cross-border interaction and the notion that borders are not only technical barriers, two concepts have been introduced, indifference and unfamiliarity, that can be used in trying to understand border effects, especially in Europe and the EU.

The concepts are challenging two EU-discourses, firstly that debordering will lead automatically to increasing levels of mobility and interaction. This also puts the mobility paradigm of the EU, where mobility is a goal in itself, instead of a means to reach the ultimate goal of development and cohesion, into a different perspective. Immobility is a strong and persistent strategy.

Secondly, the hypothesis that the current trend and strive for homogenization through integration will lead to the wished for levels of interaction, is questioned. In order to get the people mobile, especially across borders, there should be a reason to do so, in other words, some kind of attracting force is needed.

Efforts for stimulating and enhancing European integration have had until now rather disappointing results in border regions. No real proof of cross-border regional convergence can be witnessed. Some therefore make a plea to downplay the European integration discourse in which borders are almost exclusively understood as barriers that have to be overcome. According to Ernste for instance, borders should be interpreted as a "regional asset," that has to be "cultivated and celebrated."[25] This discourse does not consider the border as something that is irrelevant. On the contrary, the border is regarded as something highly relevant and exploitable. What has to be done is to make the inhabitants of the border-regions aware of these differences along the border, and consequently of each other. The "other" side should stay and/or be made relevant and attractive. In that case people should be encouraged to change their mental disposition towards the border, or to be more precise, towards the other side. To consider the "other" side, including its differences and (un)familiarity, is as relevant as it is a necessary, albeit insufficient, precondition for interaction.

[25] Huib Ernste, "Border Regions Seen in a New Perspective" in Gerrit van Vilsteren and Egbert Wever (eds.), *Borders and Economic Behaviour in Europe* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2005) pp.96-116.