

The **EXZELLENZLABOR EUROPA** (European Laboratory of Excellence) was launched in 2021 by Saarland University and Villa Vigoni e. V. – German-Italian Centre for European Dialogue. It is coordinated by Saarland University's Cluster for European Research (CEUS). The aim of this long-term cooperation is to organize joint events that promote academic discussions on Europe with special foci on Europe's relations with the world and the question of how 'concepts' of Europe are projected, transformed and reflected. In particular, the cooperation is intended to support early career researchers.

The **EXZELLENZLABOR EUROPA 2025** focuses on persistent inequalities in border regions within Europe to understand the complex interdependencies and entanglements between coexisting forms of inequalities as both conditions and outcomes of integration processes across borders. Contributions address the paradox of integrating and dividing processes, exploring the socio-economic, spatial, and political dynamics that shape these processes. The workshop underlines the multifaceted forms of cross-border inequalities, drawing on perspectives from various disciplines such as sociology, geography, political and social science, law, planning, history, and regional studies. Key questions include: How have dimensions of inequalities evolved across borders? What social, spatial, economic, political, and historical processes contribute to division or integration in cross-border contexts? How can situated and comparative approaches enhance our understanding of inequalities across borders from a European perspective?

#### CONCEPT AND ORGANIZATION

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Exzellenzlabor  
Europa 2025

Universität des Saarlandes | Villa Vigoni

## European Inequalities across Borders: Dividing and Integrating Processes

October 8–11, 2025 | Villa Vigoni



International Conference

## OCTOBER 8TH, 2025

5 p.m. Arrival  
5:30 p.m. Welcome and introduction  
7 p.m. Aperitivo  
7:30 p.m. Dinner

## OCTOBER 9TH, 2025

8 a.m. Breakfast  
9 a.m. Border permeability and inequalities across European border areas: a retrospective study (1950–2020)  
*Andrzej Jakubowski, Piotr Rosik & Tomasz Komornicki*  
9:40 a.m. Minorities in border regions – representing inequality, or promoting a process to equality? Some lessons from B-SHAPES  
*Martin Klatt*  
10:20 a.m. Coffee break  
10:50 a.m. Social inequalities in Europe's border regions – the example of the coal and steel crisis in the Saar-Lor-Lux region  
*Birgit Metzger*  
11:30 a.m. Inequalities and cross-border care ecologies: the case of early childhood education and care in the Greater Region SaarLorLux  
*Sabine Bollig*  
12:10 noon Towards the generalization of sociospatial inequalities in the Greater Region?  
*Alexis Gumy, Antoine Decoville & Frédéric Durand*  
1 p.m. Lunch break

2:30 p.m. Mobility injustice and agency: how crises unveil border asymmetries  
*Elifcan Karacan*  
3:10 p.m. Transit-oriented development (TOD) in asymmetrical cross-border contexts  
*Flore Guichot*  
3:50 p.m. Coffee break  
4:20 p.m. Turbulence, resilience, and everydayness in borderlands: tackling cross-border imbalances in three Italian borderlands  
*Alice Buoli, Raffaella Coletti & Ingrid Kofler*  
5 p.m. Exploring the polycrisis – borderscape nexus in Adriatic micro-islands  
*Isabella Traeger*  
5:40 p.m. The ongoing re-bordering process and growing inequalities in the peripheral borderlands. Insights from the Polish borderlands with Belarus  
*Dominika Studzińska*  
6:20 p.m. Discussion and summary of the first day  
7:30 p.m. Dinner

## OCTOBER 10TH, 2025

8 a.m. Breakfast  
9 a.m. Asymmetry as a framework for understanding cross-border inequalities: conceptualization and empirical insights from the German-Polish borderland  
*Jarosław Jańczak*  
9:40 a.m. Bridging gaps of different sizes and kinds: Is political asymmetry mitigated by institutional integration?  
*Tobias Heyduk*

10:20 a.m. Coffee break  
10:50 a.m. Managing legal and institutional inequalities in the France-Spain border: the case of the Basque cross-border area  
*Iban Larrandaburu*  
11:30 p.m. The paradox of integrating and dividing processes: A comparative dynamic mapping for cross-border inequalities through the INTERREG projects in the EU  
*Ahmed Osama Abdelhamid Bakry*  
12:10 noon Discussion  
1 p.m. Lunch break  
2:30 p.m. Old narratives, new realities: The emerging mismatch of border inequalities and their policy discourses in Central and Eastern Europe  
*Ferenc Gyuris & Andrzej Jakubowski*  
3:10 p.m. Thinking Europe differently: challenging European inequalities through literary representations from Euro-Caribbean countries  
*Tobias Schank*  
3:50 p.m. Coffee Break  
4:20 p.m. Discussion and future outlook  
5 p.m. Guided tour of Villa Vigoni  
7:30 p.m. Dinner

## OCTOBER 11TH, 2025

8 a.m. Breakfast  
9 a.m. Departure