

From a bridge in a twin town to a border between states. The Polish-German border in the consciousness of the inhabitants of divided cities in the light of memoirs

The inhabitants of Ślubice, Zgorzelec and Gubin – experiencing an open border for several years, living in centres integrating with the neighbouring German cities across the river, referred to as Europa/Euro-City or Twincity – have been facing border crossing restrictions, actually border closures, since March 2020, which the rulers justified by their will to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Reborderisation decisions taken centrally (in many EU countries and beyond) have had a strong impact on cross-border economic relations (including consumption and use of services), the labour market, leisure activities and the possibility of contact with people across the border, and have thus negatively shaped the daily lives of borderlanders. The aim of the project is to investigate how changes in the degree of border permeability have been recorded in the consciousness of those living in the Polish parts of largest divided cities in the western borderland. The project will use the method of personal documents, and research data will be collected through a diary competition. According to the assumptions underlying this method, the written diaries will provide a broader, more complete insight into the world of experiences of the borderlands' inhabitants in the everyday reality of the changing border than the scattered comments on websites and statements in the media. They will also enable reflection on the experience of borders in a long-term perspective.