

International conference « FOCALÉ »  
« **The Local Fabric of the Border : comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives** »  
*Nice, 26-27 April 2018*

**Call for papers**

The issue of the border is currently a highly topical subject on the international scene. This constitutes both an invitation and a challenge for social researchers, to take a step back and provide a scientific reflection.

Within this reflection, the international conference « FOCALÉ » aims to focus on borderlands, highlighting the local dimension of borders, as well as the « borderizing » processes (Cuttitta 2014). The conference's main goal is to provide an opportunity of dialogue for field research and theoretical reflection coming from different disciplinary approaches of social sciences, focusing on processes and dynamics that make a place a « border », and/or on local actors' « borderwork » (Rumford 2013) in making and shaping the border.

Papers should fit in at least one of the **two main axes** of the conference :

1. What local makes to border. What is the « impact » of the border on borderlands, and in which way is it described, « measured », constructed and politicized by local actors? How does border affect urban and local spaces and maps, for example by constructing camps, barriers, walls...? In which way does it contribute in « racializing » the urban space? In which ways are those transformations represented, described and eventually drawn into maps?
2. What border makes to local. How do political and professional local spaces intervene in shaping the border and its devices? How do political local actors intervene in drawing, building and « managing » the border? What is the role of public action networking and public-private cooperation in the multi-level management of the border? How do « border-workers » professional representations, practices and discourses affect border's functioning and effectiveness?

Four **thematic sessions** are considered, which may vary in number and title depending on the proposals received.

1. Encampment, detention, borderization

Research results from different disciplinary fields will be discussed in this section, focusing on all kinds of official and unofficial camps, shelters, and reception, transit or detention centers for migrants and asylum seekers. Papers should question the role of those places in borderizing territories: how do the building and functioning of those places affect the territories on which they reside? How do local actors intervene in building and managing those places throughout their demands for security, decorum or migrants assistance.

2. Borderwork and border-workers

This session will discuss research works and results from different disciplinary fields focusing on both governmental and non governmental « border workers »: border patrols, frontier guards, customs officers, charities, humanitarian agents... How do these professionals conceive their work and, therefore, the border? How do their professional cultures and representations affect the effectiveness and everyday functioning of border devices? How do they live and perceive the territory in which they operate and what kind of relations do they build with it and with « residents »?

3. Mobilizing for/against/on the border

How do social and political demands coming from different local actors (residents committees, municipal council members, professional associations and other local lobbies) emerge and articulate? How is the border locally contested? Papers should analyze the local conditions, obstacles and opportunities for publicizing and politicizing local issues related to the border and enlighten the processes of politicizing and depoliticizing the border.

4. Border spectacle : narratives and mediatic representations of the border

The social and political local construction of the border is here analyzed through its « mise-en-scene » and spectacularization in mass media as well as in public and political discourse. Papers should present analysis based on press reviews, parliamentary discussions, politicians speeches as well as iconographic, photographic and filmic material. Papers can also bring methodological reflections on how video or photography or other graphic representations of the border are used in journalism and fieldwork.

Suggestions and reflections on theoretical and methodological tools to investigate the border are also welcomed.

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- Guenebeaud C. (2015) « Vivre en voisins à la frontière : Enjeux autour de la présence de migrants sanspapiers dans la ville de Calais », *Belgeo* [En ligne], 2 | 2015
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## **Submission instructions:**

Abstracts (in French, Italian or English – max 4000 characters including spaces) must be sent to [colloquefocale@gmail.com](mailto:colloquefocale@gmail.com) no later than the **16th February 2018**. The scientific committee will examine the proposals, and authors will be informed of the selection by the **2nd March 2018**. Full text papers must be sent no later than the **6th April 2018**.

## **Scientific committee :**

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## **Organising committee :**

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