

**EUCOR Cross-border Workshop Series:  
The trouble with the state. Boundaries and Networks in Africa**

## Call for Papers

### Topic

The state is a central concept for the study of power, domination, and socio-political change across the social sciences. Its usefulness is however contested (Abrams 1988), especially in African contexts where the Eurocentric ideal-type of the state stands in marked contrast to political realities on the ground. This raises a number of crucial questions: Through what concepts can one grasp the prominent role of trans- and international connections, networks, and NGOs that influence what statehood stands for? What is the territoriality of the state in view

of the importance of transnational social spaces? How are the physical and/or discursive boundaries of states contested, changed, and reenforced in the context of migration? How can general concepts like boundaries and networks advance an understanding of politics that goes beyond both Eurocentric universalism and Africanist exceptionalism? And what are the implications of such theoretical considerations for development and peacebuilding practitioners working in Africa?

### Workshops

To address these timely questions among young researchers working on Africa, an international consortium of research institutes in Basel, Freiburg im Breisgau, and Strasbourg is organising three consecutive one-day workshops dealing with particular topics in this debate. In each workshop, leading scholars of international standing will present their research and discuss workshop participants' papers and presentations. The workshops will provide doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers, as well as outstanding MA students, with an opportunity for a thematically focused exchange across the fields of political science, sociology, history, African studies, anthropology, international relations, and peace and conflict studies. The goal is to advance fresh analytical perspectives and methodological reflection, making links to concrete cases, and to provide one another with constructive feedback on ongoing research projects.

#### Dates:

23 April 2020, 10-18h, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute (ABI), Freiburg, Germany

**Convenor:** Andreas Mehler (ABI)

28 April 2020, 10-18h, Institut d'études politiques des Strasbourg (IEP), France

**Convenor:** Virginie Roiron (IEP)

5 May 2020, 10-18h, Centre for African Studies Basel (ZASB), Switzerland

**Convenors:** Claudia Baez-Camargo (Basel Institute on Governance) and Joschka Philipps (swisspeace)

Successful applicants can apply for financial support by their university's EUCOR office for traveling to the respective workshop venues: [www.eucor-uni.org/en/studies](http://www.eucor-uni.org/en/studies)

## Call for abstracts

We welcome abstracts of around 200 words for a proposed paper and presentation. Your abstract should be written in English. In the online application form, please also provide your contact information, key disciplines, institutional affiliation, and a short bio (including previous studies, publications, research interests). Abstracts should speak to the overall theme outlined above and focus on at least one of the following fields:

- Migration and contested governance of migration
- Inter- and transnational politics in Africa
- Borders and border conflicts
- Transnational social spaces
- Methodologies of political network analysis
- NGOization of statehood
- Geopolitics and foreign intervention
- Knowledge transfer between research and policy

### Submission

Submit your abstract via the online form:  
<https://forms.gle/BVAaSNJkc3bLQrGr5>

**Submission deadline: 13 December 2019**

### Contact/enquiries

Pascal Schmid  
Centre for African Studies Basel  
[pascal.schmid@unibas.ch](mailto:pascal.schmid@unibas.ch)  
+41 61 207 34 82

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Funding from:

- Eucor – The European Campus

Partner institutions:

- Arnold Bergstraesser Institute & University of Freiburg
- Basel Institute on Governance
- Centre for African Studies Basel
- Institut d'études politiques de Strasbourg & SAGE - Sociétés, Acteurs, Gouvernement en Europe
- Swisspeace – Swiss Peace Foundation

