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Regional and local border effects after two decades of Central European unification. What matters?

Abstract
This article deals with the border effect phenomenon affecting the mobility of inhabitants in border regions. It aims to identify the determinants of the border effect in transport at the municipal level, considering the distance from the border, the populations and the characteristics of the closest bordering country. The survey in the Czech Republic eventually involved 675 representatives of municipalities who answered questions on inter-municipal mobility. The results confirmed that the most substantial handicap was population size, with small populations corresponding to the limited use of public transport when travelling beyond a given border. The results confirmed that the characteristics of the state or region that shares the border must be considered when assessing border regions. Therefore, the solution to the problems of individual border regions cannot be viewed with a single instrument. It is necessary to consider substantial differences resulting from the economic level of neighbouring countries.

Keywords
Border • regions • mobility behaviour • border effect • inter-municipal cooperation • cross-border transport

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Introduction

Since the beginning of the 21st century, there have been substantial changes in the concept of borders in continental Europe, mainly due to the European Union and its major eastward expansion in 2004. A border as a concept can be understood very broadly as a specific imaginary line, which is usually drawn on maps across the Earth's surface, delimiting a natural or social entity, or separating two entities that are somehow different. In the definition of a boundary so understood, it is appropriate to emphasise the expression "imaginary line". A boundary is only a concept imaginatively delineated by a particular social mindset of a selected part of the inhabitants of this world. Although boundaries often correspond to natural features such as rivers or mountains, what is crucial for these natural boundaries is their acceptance at the level of the society, where these natural boundaries are treated with respect and there is some fear of crossing them. Therefore, to cross to the other side of the boundary means to overcome the fear and respect of something unknown, or to step out of a specific comfort zone.

The enlargement process of the European Union needs to be placed in the broader context of the gradual globalisation that started in the 20th century. Globalised international trade has brought a range of benefits but, at the same time, in a just-in-time system, it encourages companies to avoid holding stock and to use the most efficient or cheapest suppliers. This combination can be fatal when sudden changes occur, such as a natural disaster, a traffic accident at a critical transport hub, or a war. Therefore, this global market interconnectedness makes individual economies more vulnerable, and the more open their economies are to global markets and the smaller their domestic economies, the more vulnerable they become. This fact can be identified as a critical motive for the expansion and unification of European Union markets across different sectors, from trade and services or financial markets, through the transport services market, to the most protected part of the economy in the form of student and labour markets or susceptible social and health insurance systems.

Despite the long-term processes in the European Union that have led to the gradual unification and increasing permeability of these markets and of parts of the economy of the European Union member states and third countries with which international treaties have been signed, borders as "imaginary lines or limits" remain in the minds of the population. This article is concerned with searching for the factors that play a crucial role in crossing national borders within the European Union, using the example of the Czech Republic and its neighbours. The paper aims to identify the determinants of the border effect in transport at the municipal level, taking into account the distance of the municipalities from the border, their population and the characteristics of the country the municipalities most closely border. The research is based on an extensive survey conducted among mayors of municipalities representing more than one tenth of the municipalities in the Czech Republic.

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Literature review

Borders are human creations (Hataley & Leuprecht 2018). According to Medeiros et al. (2021), cross-border regions are the "laboratories of European integration" thanks to the interactions of border inhabitants across European borders. There are, however, still some constraints that limit the benefits of border regions, such as the insufficient supply of cross-border public transport services. Border regions represent 40% of European Union territory and one third of the European population (Camagni et al. 2017). To take full advantage of cross-border regions, the Interreg initiative established the concept of cross-border cooperation in 1990 (Reitel, Wassenberg & Peyrony 2018, in Medeiros et al. 2021). The purpose of Interreg was to set up a community without internal borders (Milenković 2012). Euroregions are an important element in the coordination of cross-border cooperation, which covers entities at both the regional and local levels (Studzieniecki 2016). The first Euroregion in Central and Eastern Europe was called Nisa–Neisse–Nysa and includes parts of Germany, Poland and Czech Republic (Drápela & Bašta 2018). There are currently 13 Euroregions in the Czech Republic, three of which are shared with Slovakia, six with Poland, three with Austria and five with Germany.

The European Union supports a specific research programme called European Observation Network on Territorial Development and Cohesion (ESPON), which dates back to 2002. Since then, the programme has gone through four programming periods – it is known as ESPON 2030 in the 2021–2027 programming period. ESPON 2030 aims to provide information, analyses, scenarios, maps, databases and indicators that contribute to the balanced development of regions or larger territorial units (Institute for Spatial Development, 2023). As regards cross-border public services (CPS), the ESPON Targeted Analysis "Cross-border Public Services" was created under the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme, the objective of which was to support a better delivery of CPS and to improve awareness of the added value of CPS. The analysis has, among other things, pointed out barriers in implementing CPS; special attention has been paid to good practice examples of CPS that could inspire other stakeholders and serve as knowledge transfer. In terms of cross-border transport, few CPS exist at the Portuguese–Spanish border, the Austrian–Italian border and the Estonian–Latvian border. On the other hand, regions with existing transport CPS plan to offer more links and further integrate the public transport systems – for example, through common ticketing (ESPON, 2018).

In identifying potential barriers, which are an essential issue in border areas, the literature discusses the phenomenon of the border effect. The border effect was originally defined as reduced trade caused by the existence of international borders (Havranek & Irsova 2016) and the first author who formulated the idea of the border effect was McCallum (1995). Within Central and Eastern Europe, the border effect was higher before the Velvet Revolution due to the low permeability of borders. In the 1990s, cross-border cooperation emerged in the Czech Republic with the establishment of Euroregions and the abolition of border controls, and developed further thanks to the accession to the Schengen Area in 2007 (Drápela & Bašta 2018). Technical barriers and regulatory asymmetries across countries may explain the border effect, though that is not the case for the European Union (Turrini & van Ypersele 2010), where the effects of negative borders seem to be in decline since the creation of the common market (Rietveld 2012). Moreover, it has been acknowledged that consumers prefer goods from their home region rather than products from other regions (Balaguer & Ripollés 2018). The border effect is usually quantified by a gravity model of spatial interactions among countries (Klodt 2004), which successfully explains trade flows (Hazledine 2009).

The border effect was initially studied in air transport, where it was shown to lead to diminished volumes of flights on international airline connections. Zijlstra (2020) examined the border effect in airport choice in Western Europe and confirmed the expectation of a negative barrier effect of national borders in transport geography. People preferred to choose a departure airport situated in their own country. Similarly, Klodt (2004) found a negative border effect of German borders on departures from German airports. He came to the conclusion that geographical distance and national borders continue to matter (2004: 526). Hazledine (2009) assessed the border effect using the example of Canadian air travel and found that Canada is consistent with the effects of borders determined in other studies of international merchandise trade. Medeiros (2019) dealt with cross-border mobility that would be increased with the presence of cross-border transport. However, cross-border transport is not yet sufficiently developed to satisfy the increasing needs of European citizens to cross borders, and cross-border commuting is still at a low level (Buch, Schmidt & Niebuhr 2009). Last but not least, the degree of cross-border transport, namely bus and train connections, needs to be improved in the cross-border regions of Poland–Czech Republic, Poland–Slovakia and Hungary–Romania. Nevertheless, there are places, such as the Luxembourg region, the German–Dutch area and the metropolitan areas of Basel and Geneva, where cross-border commuting is particularly high compared with Central Europe (Cavallaro & Dianin 2019). Thus, even if the European area is achieving its first signs of success in integration through the common market (Rietveld 2012), breaking barriers in cross-border mobility is still a persisting issue in individual mobility decision-making (Medeiros 2019).

In this context, an initiative called b-solutions, which originated directly from the European Commission (EC), or more specifically from the EC Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO), aims to identify legal and administrative obstacles to cross-border cooperation. The initiative is going through its second phase (2022–2023) with a budget of €2,105,263 There have been 90 obstacles and b-solutions advice cases since the launch of the initiative at the end of 2017. This EU initiative has identified cross-border barriers in areas such as cross-border mobility, access to health services and public transport planning. According to Medeiros et al. (2022), there have been fifty-six cases (out of a total of ninety) that are specifically relevant for one or more aspects of cross-border commuting. Medeiros et al. (2022) divide the issue of cross-border commuting into four categories: cross-border workers, tourism, cross-border shopping and cross-border services. For these categories, the institutional, physical, socio-cultural and economic/technological barriers have been concretised and analysed. It is clear that the lower the barriers, the higher the level of cross-border commuting (Medeiros et al. 2022).

Data and methods

Within the research framework, a survey was conducted among mayors of municipalities in the Czech Republic during 2020. A standardised questionnaire (quantitative approach) was used to address the issue. A pilot study validated the questionnaire. The findings of this pilot survey were then incorporated into an updated version and the questionnaire was subsequently optimised. The survey in the Czech Republic eventually involved 675 representatives of towns and municipalities who answered questions on inter-municipal cooperation with an emphasis on its cross-border nature and possibilities. The minimum sample size was set at 625 respondents, representing one tenth of the municipalities in the Czech Republic (this minimum limit was thus surpassed by 8%). The rate of return was 10.79% (6,255 municipal representatives were sent questionnaires but only 675

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Table 1. The Survey Sample Structure

population category	0–300	301–500	501–1,000	1,001–3,000	3,001–5,000	5,000–10,000	10,001+	Total
number of municipalities	149	115	149	149	47	33	33	675
of which, from border regions	*21*	*23*	*39*	*54*	*19*	*11*	*9*	*176*

Source: Own survey (2020)

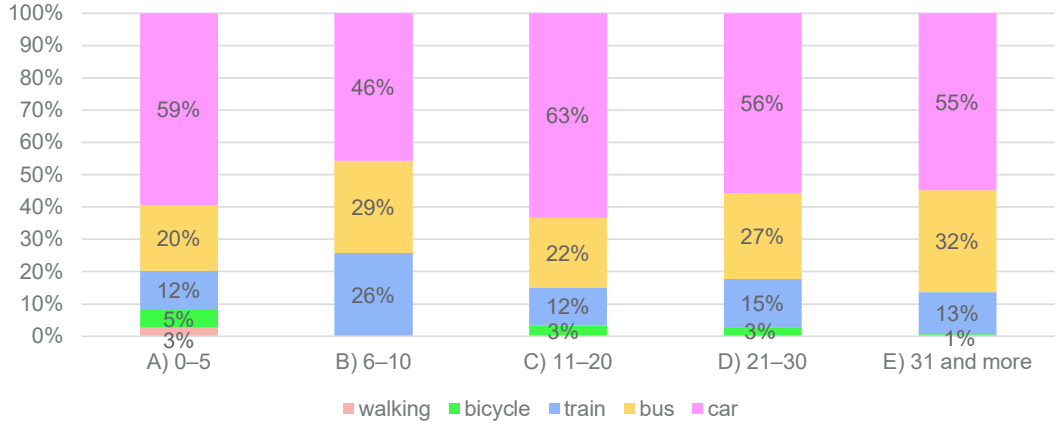


Figure 1. Combination of modes of transport used in cross-border mobility by distance to a border
Source: own survey, own processing

responded). Regarding the 95% confidence level, the sample had a confidence interval of 3.56. Table 1 shows the basic structure of the sample. The survey thus reached a representative sample of mayors and municipal representatives from different places, representing both regions that contain border areas and other entirely interior regions that don't share a border with a foreign country. Data collection took place during September 2020, thus avoiding the COVID-19 pandemic situation as much as possible (there were no general restrictions in the Czech Republic during this period). Furthermore, the questionnaire focused on usual cross-border transport behaviour, reflecting a long-term overview of mobility habits. Thus, the questionnaire was not affected by pandemic restrictions or related mobility changes. As part of the survey, each respondent had the opportunity to enter their contact email to express an interest in receiving the survey results. This procedure aimed to eliminate errors due to human failure. Throughout all stages of the survey, the potential for bias in the results was minimised. The reliability and validity of the data were maximised through several procedures. Given the quantitative method used, the respondents' responses were stored in a primary data matrix in Excel format and evaluated using SPSS statistical data analysis software. The results are presented for the entire national sample and the border zone, which consists of municipalities belonging to border regions.

Results for modes of transport

In the following sections, the survey results are presented according to the individual factors examined, namely the distance from the border, the population size and the role of the neighbouring country or common language.

Distance

The first part focuses on the influence of the municipality's distance to a national border on its residents' transport behaviour. Figure 1 shows the differences in traffic mode structures when travelling to the other side of the border. The results show that, for transport across a national border, cars are very often (59%) used in those villages that are closest to such a border, namely within 5 km. However, cars are used most frequently (63% of trips) in villages that lie between 11 and 20 km from the border. A fascinating finding is that municipalities that are between 6 and 10 km from the border reported the most frequent use of public transport to travel across the border, representing (taking into account the sum of bus and train routes) 55% of trips, a level that is not seen for municipalities in any other distance category. Conversely, communities with the smallest distance to a national border had a level of public transit use of only 32% (the lowest level of any of the categories surveyed). Taking into account public transport, walking and cycling, for which these nearest municipalities have the best conditions, the levels are consistently only 40%.

These facts lead us to conclude that not all municipalities in border areas are located in a transport periphery with a low level of accessibility or serviceability of public transport. Limited public transport accessibility mainly affects municipalities within 5 km of a border. Municipalities between 5 and 10 km from a border have better-than-average public transport service.

Figure 2 focuses on the purpose of the trip to or from another country. Interestingly, a relatively higher percentage of people arriving, compared with those departing, made such a trip for family reasons. However, the survey was conducted with representatives of municipalities in the country, who may thus unconsciously and subjectively distort the need to return to their municipality to visit family. This need to return home to see family may be relatively overestimated compared with the need to see relatives abroad.

Between 16% and 34% of respondents travelled to or from another country and spent at least one night abroad.

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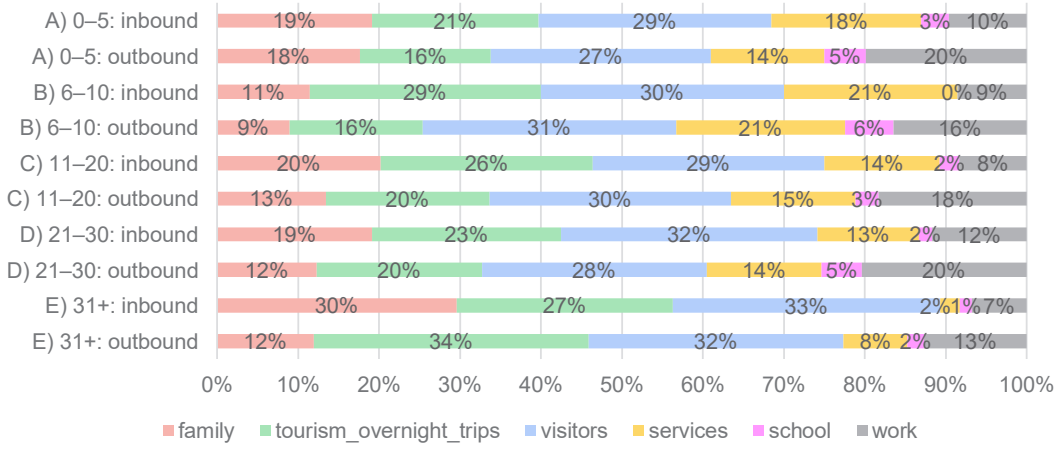


Figure 2. Outbound and inbound cross-border mobility motivation by distance to a border
Source: own survey, own processing

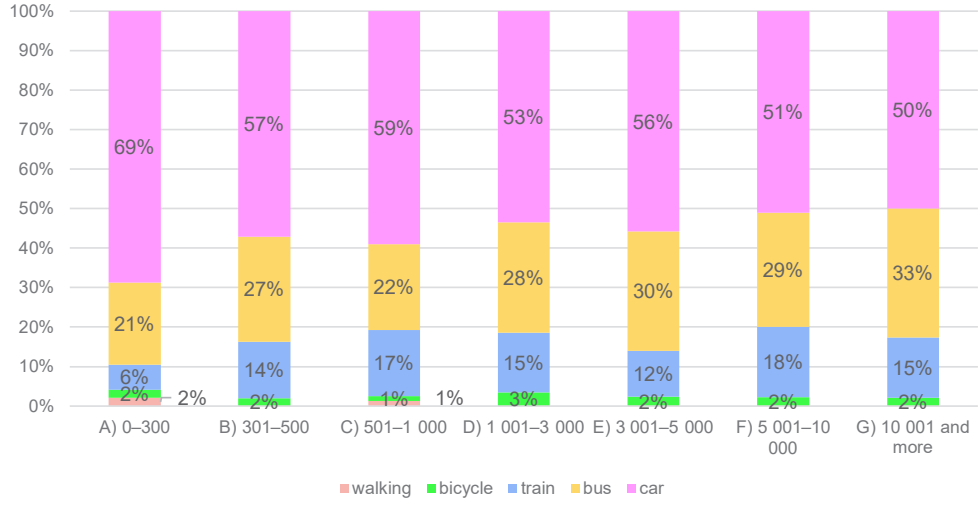


Figure 3. Combination of modes of transport used in cross-border mobility by municipal population size
Source: own survey, own processing

Again, inbound traffic flows showed higher rates, except among municipalities more than 31 km from a national border. A purpose of travel that was relatively common across the entire sample for both arrivals and departures was overnight visits without overnight stays (visitors), ranging from 27% to 33%, or roughly one third of trips. As the distance from a national border decreased, the need to leave or commute for services also increased, reflecting the fact that those interior entities do not adequately saturate the availability of services near the border. Between 13% and 20% of respondents travelled abroad for work, but it is important to note that commuting out was more substantial than commuting in across distance categories. This fact may indicate poorer job opportunities in the Czech border areas compared with these areas abroad.

Population

The following section looks at the importance of the population size of a community on the use of different modes of transport to travel abroad, considering the different motivations for this travel. Figure 3 shows that the municipalities with more substantial populations had public transport provision to and from other countries that increased in correspondence with the population. Conversely, the municipalities that were the least substantial in terms of population relied to a large extent on transport by car.

Next, Figure 4 shows the following results. Going abroad for work was the most important reason for travel for population size categories below 1,000 inhabitants, and ranged from 17% to 21% of responses. For municipalities with 1,000 inhabitants, this reason was recorded in 12% to 14% of responses. However, there was an exception in the category of 10,000 inhabitants, where the reason appeared in 18% of responses. This chart shows the overestimation of inbound tourism for family reasons, which was substantially more common than outbound tourism in most categories (except for the category of municipalities with 10,000 inhabitants).

Characteristics of the border, region and country

The following section focuses on the fact that the boundary cannot be treated in the same way in all cases, as the effect depends very much on what kind of boundary it is. The border itself can have very different characteristics, which are determined

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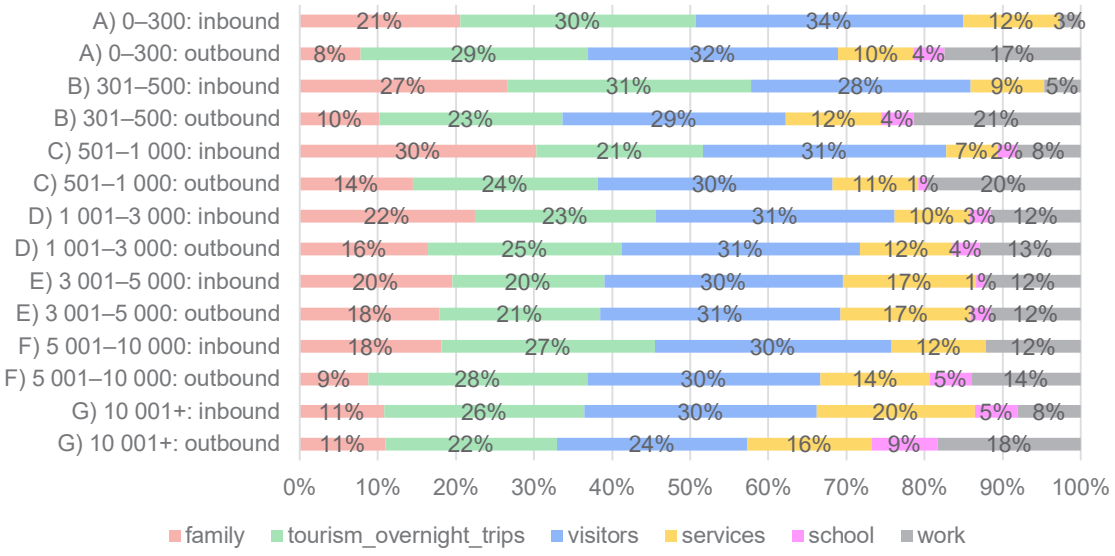


Figure 4. Outbound and inbound cross-border mobility motivation by population
Source: own survey, own processing

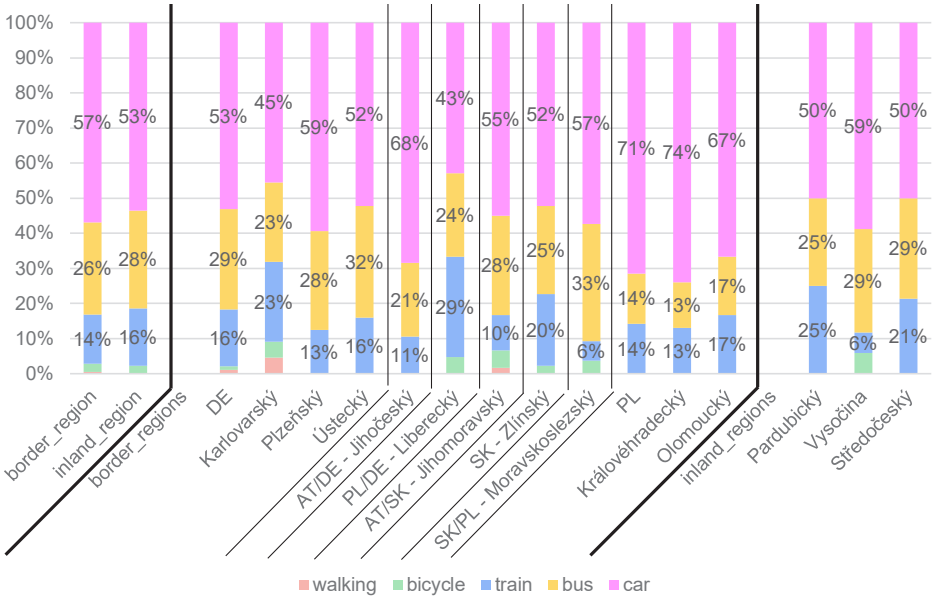


Figure 5. Combination of modes of transport used in cross-border mobility by border and region
Source: own survey, own processing

by its historical development and the relationship between the two countries on either side. Furthermore, the current state of the border and its institutional arrangements is relevant – for example, whether the labour market is open to foreign workers. Of course, the typical characteristics of the country or region with which the border is shared are also fundamental – the economic level, unemployment and average wages. These factors are then key motivators that can influence the population, and especially the workforce living in its vicinity, in terms of commuting abroad; it can also determine the primary direction of, for example, commuting for work.

The Czech Republic shares a border with four countries: Austria, Germany, Poland and Slovakia. These borders are currently entirely open for mobility, including for labour markets, thanks to membership of the European Union. However, these borders are of a very different nature. The border between the Czech Republic and Slovakia has long been very porous for historical reasons and because of a previously united Czechoslovakia. Even after the division of Czechoslovakia, this border remained very permeable for mobility and work, and very important for family ties between people living in the border regions. In contrast, the border with Austria was marked by a border zone before 1989 and was relatively impermeable in terms of participation in labour markets even after the Czech Republic joined the European Union. A particular case is Germany, where a distinction has to be made between the border with Bavaria

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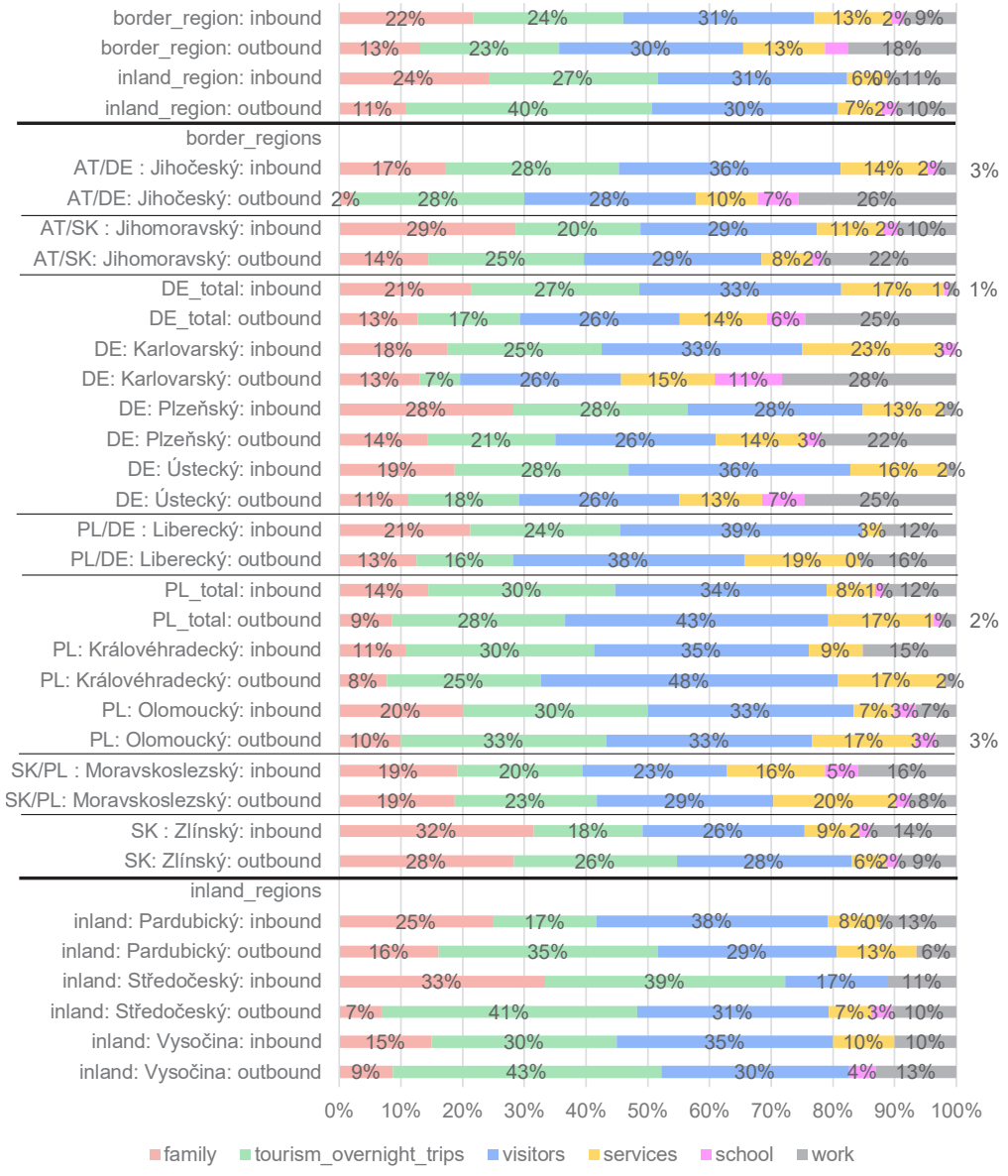


Figure 6. Outbound cross-border mobility motivation by border and region
Source: own survey, own processing

(representing the former West Germany) and the border with Saxony, which can be compared to some extent with the adjacent shared border with Poland, as this border was part of the Eastern Bloc. Considering the border effect viewed in this way, one can see both expected and somewhat surprising phenomena, as shown in the following two figures. Figure 5 shows the modal distribution of traffic and Figure 6 the motivation according to the country with which the border is shared.

Generally, border regions had a higher level of individual car use, which could be attributed to the fact that these regions were located in more peripheral areas within the domestic economic and geographic location. Thus, car use for border regions was four percentage points higher (57% of respondents) than the result for interior municipalities and the region as a whole (53%). This difference (4%) essentially replaced bus and rail transport equally, at two percentage points each.

Regarding the motivation to travel abroad, Figure 6 confirms some expectations: the higher the economic level of the neighbouring country, the higher the motivation to travel across the border to work. The highest level of outbound commuting for work was recorded for areas close to the border with Austria (26%), followed by those near the border with Germany (25%) and then by those near the combined border with Austria and Slovakia (22%). The next imaginary rung was occupied by municipalities close to the Slovak border (9%), followed by those near the Slovak–Polish border (8%) and, last but not least, those near the Polish border (2%). The motivation to travel for work was eight percentage points higher for border regions than it was for interior regions, where it was around 10%.

Looking at the modal split by purpose of travel abroad (Figure 7), there was a clear tendency towards the use of individual car transport (relative to public transport) for regular trips to work

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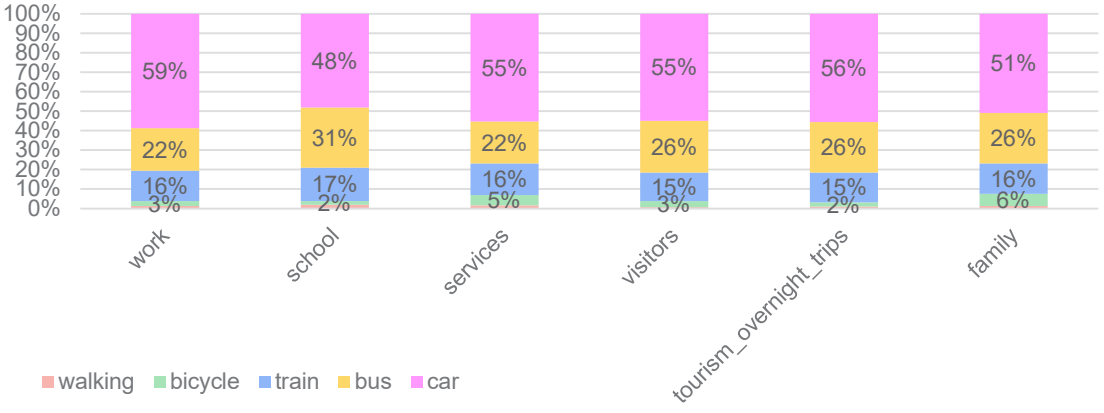


Figure 7. Combination of modes of transport used in cross-border mobility by travel purpose
Source: own survey, own processing

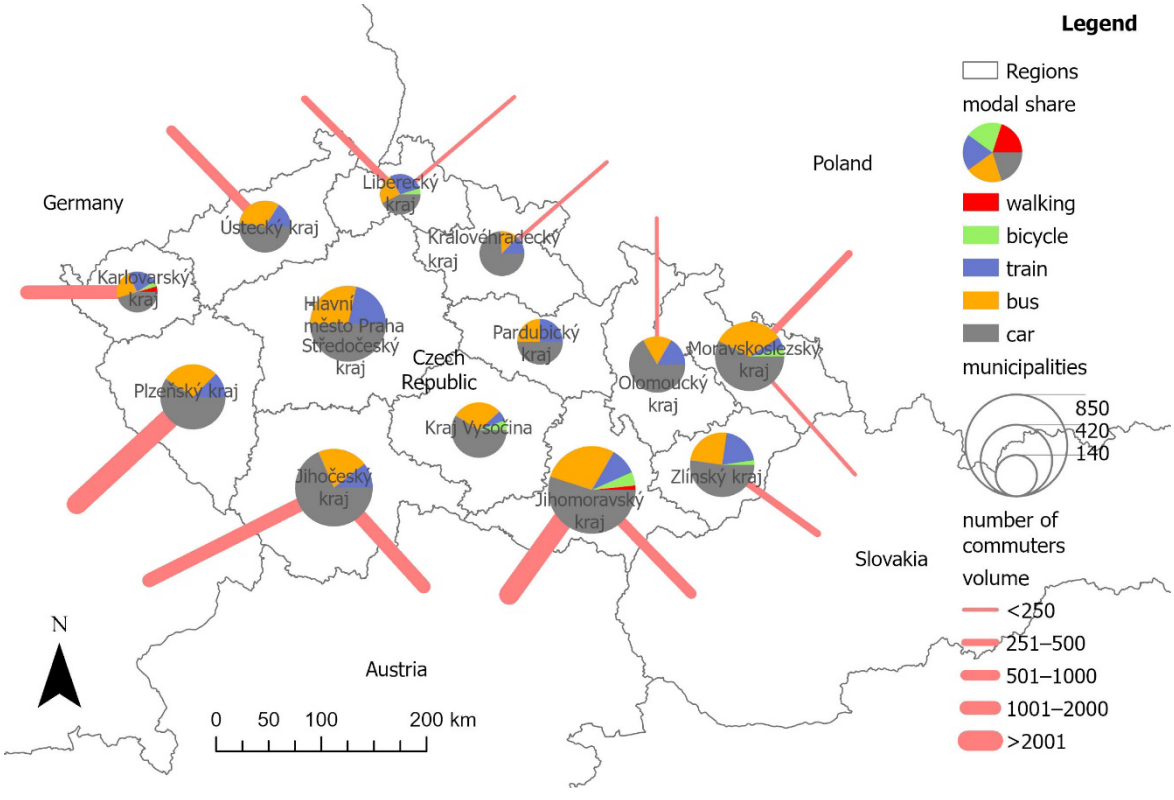


Figure 8. Combination of modes of transport used and commuter volumes in relevant cross-border connections
Source: own survey, own processing

(59%) and relatively frequent trips for services (55%). In contrast, the highest levels of public transport use were recorded for commuting to schools (48%), family trips (42%) and tourist trips with and without overnight stays (41%). For commuting to schools, this is a very natural phenomenon since people do not usually own their own car immediately upon reaching the age of majority, but have to wait until they earn one, so to speak. The use of public transport was relatively frequent for leisure activities, especially in cases where the traveller came from the particular background of the destination (family). At the same time, for regular trips by the working-age generation, there was a clear choice to use the car more often, not only for commuting to work but also for services.

The results of the analysis of specific borders are shown in Figure 8, reflecting the modal share of transport accompanied by information on the number of municipalities with any commuter flow to the relevant country, and the number of commuters from the relevant region to the neighbouring country. The maps show the significant role of economically more vital neighbours, and correspond with previous results.

Findings and discussion

In our research, we looked for the factors influencing the perception of a national boundary as being a barrier to population mobility. We took into account the distance from the boundary,

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the municipal population, the motivation for a given trip and the characteristics of the country with which the boundary is shared. The results showed that communities within 20 km of a national boundary are more likely to rely on individual car transportation to travel across the national border. In these communities, cars accounted for about 60% of the modal share when it came to mobility across the national border. For communities further away from the boundary, this share was about 55%. Exceptions were found for municipalities between 6 and 10 km away, which were conveniently located in connection to important cross-border transport corridors and showed a substantially lower share (46%) of individual car traffic. This finding is particularly inspiring for public policy and transport planning at the regional level. Although the hypothesis that municipalities in border zones have a peripheral position and thus lower accessibility and serviceability for public transport in the cross-border direction was largely confirmed, the finding suggests that a substantial change in the intermodal share of public transport can be achieved by the appropriate connection of local and micro-regional transport to major cross-border transport corridors. This share can even be substantially higher than for more distant municipalities 30 km from the border, precisely because municipalities in the border area are, for various reasons, more intensely connected to the area beyond the border in economic, transport, institutional and social terms.

The results further confirmed that, regarding population size, the smallest category of municipalities was somewhat handicapped by substantially lower potential demand for public transport, which naturally also led to a reduction in the supply of public transport providers. As a result, the residents of these small municipalities of up to 300 inhabitants were motivated, or even forced, to use cars substantially more frequently when travelling across a national border. The smallest municipalities in terms of population also had substantially higher motivation for tourist trips, both day trips and tourism involving overnight stays. Increased trips for services were found only for categories with more than 5,000 inhabitants, which roughly corresponds to the threshold for urban populations. This finding suggests that municipalities with rural populations of up to about 5,000 inhabitants have tended to provide their services in their place of residence or home country, while urban populations have increased their demands and sought services to meet their needs beyond the borders of the country. However, a separate and somewhat differently formulated questionnaire would be required to verify this claim, which may be the subject of further research.

Regarding the characteristics of the borders, the survey results confirmed that border regions cannot be considered as one compact unit; rather, the different areas adjacent to the borders with different countries should be considered separately. As an example, commuting across a border showed that, in municipalities bordering Austria or Germany (i.e. countries with a higher economic level and higher average wages than in the Czech Republic), the willingness to travel for work was substantially higher than in the case of municipalities in areas bordering Slovakia or Poland. On the other hand, this tendency was logically reversed for commutes from a given municipality in the foreign country towards the Czech Republic, namely for foreign workers and residents of foreign countries.

The limit of our research lies in two essential issues based on the achievable data and its collection. First, the size of our sample is significant but it still does not cover all the municipalities in the Czech Republic; thus, the sample could be biased because it represents more active respondents. Second, the questionnaire is based on municipal representatives from local communities. However, they have their own preferences, which they intend to express when they are asked about mobility behaviour. Nevertheless, these preferences do not correspond with all inhabitants in the community (even if they represent the most significant part of the community, their institutional role). It is hard to solve these issues without a much larger data collection process. However, it is imaginable that including more detailed questions on international mobility in the regular population census could help significantly improve this area of interest.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the notion of a border as an imaginary limit that influences people's behaviour remains an ongoing phenomenon that plays an important role in people's decision-making, even after two decades of intense interconnection between different sectors of neighbouring economies in the European Union. This fact relates to people's transport behaviour and thus remains an important factor in creating the border effect in transport, as discussed in the literature. The research results show that distance from a border does not necessarily imply being on the transport periphery of a given region. Indeed, this handicap can be used as an advantage in connection with key cross-border transport corridors through local and micro-regional solutions if the public transport system is set up appropriately. Such a solution motivates people to use public transport substantially more often when travelling across a border than it does in more distant and larger municipalities, as local people are connected to areas across the border by family and other socio-economic ties. On the other hand, it was confirmed that lower-population communities were in a challenging position and people were often forced to make extensive use of cars. Here, of course, one possible solution is to include services such as car sharing or carpooling in the portfolio of services offered by the public transport coordinator, which could substantially improve connections to important transport corridors precisely through these services.

The paper confirmed that despite specific common characteristics of communities in border regions, the characteristics of the borders, and the country with which the given imaginary borderline is shared, are critically essential. Thus, it can be concluded that border regions cannot be treated entirely uniformly; it is necessary to distinguish the characteristics of the areas lying across the border. When there are more advanced economies located across the border, the incentive to travel for work with the prospect of earning higher wages increases substantially. Conversely, the proportion of those who are motivated to commute from abroad to work domestically logically decreases because the domestic economy does not offer sufficiently attractive jobs. The survey confirmed this fact, especially concerning the border areas shared with Austria and Germany. As a result, these border regions should be examined more thoroughly than those near the border shared with Slovakia or Poland.

Moreover, an exciting fact can be seen in the higher levels of inbound tourism with a motivation to visit family compared with travelling abroad to visit family, which encourages residents to overestimate travel to the country from abroad specifically to visit relatives or strengthen family relationships. This fact was confirmed only in the case of municipalities that bordered Slovakia, which can be interpreted as being due to the long-shared history and the de facto absence of an imaginary border between Czechs and Slovaks, who have long been substantially intertwined in terms of study, work and family.

Further research questions for future research arise from our results. Regarding regular commuting for work or school, it is very challenging to persuade people to use shared transport means, which can be coordinated or supported by local or micro-regional transport policy-making instruments. Concerning

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tourism, the crucial issue is whether the modes or means of transport can be made attractive enough for one-day visitors who usually use their own car. In the case of the nature of the border, further research can be performed to identify and compare more precisely the effect of GDP per capita, wage difference or price levels as a determinant for inbound and outbound commuting for services.

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Annex: Survey

A. Municipal cooperation in general

1. Is your municipality involved or has it been involved in any form of municipal cooperation in the past?
(Note: Municipal cooperation includes voluntary associations of municipalities, local action groups, joint companies, various contractual relationships and entirely informal cooperation between two or more municipalities).

a. No: If no, why have you not been cooperating? Or do you see any disadvantages/barriers to municipal cooperation in your case/region?
b. Yes:
   - DSO, LAG, inter-municipal cooperation, etc.
   - If yes, in what form does your municipality implement inter-municipal cooperation or has it done so in the past?
     i. It is/was a member of a voluntary association of municipalities (DSO)
     ii. It is/was a member of a local action group (LAG)
     iii. It has concluded contracts with other municipalities
     iv. It is/was a shareholder in a commercial company with another municipality
     v. Other: .....

2. In which thematic areas is/was inter-municipal cooperation taking place?

a. Waste management
b. Technical infrastructure (e.g. water, sewerage, local roads)
c. Social services
d. Education
e. Culture/sport
f. Administrative activities (e.g. consultancy, spatial and strategic planning, public procurement, grant management)
g. Public transport
h. Cycle paths
i. Mobility of seniors in municipalities
j. Other: .....

3. If this activity or any of your other activities are no longer being carried out in the framework of municipal cooperation, what led you or your predecessors to put an end to it?

4. Do you have or have you ever received a good practice tip within your municipal cooperation (informal, formal: contract, DSO, LAG)?
If yes, what exactly is it?
If interested, could you provide us with a contact to map and describe the practice in the framework of our review/project?

B. Cooperation of municipalities between countries (cross-border cooperation of municipalities)

5. Does your municipality cooperate, or has it cooperated, with a municipality in another (transboundary/border) country (SK, AT, PL)?

a. No
b. Yes
   - If yes, in which thematic area or activities have you implemented this cooperation?
   - If yes, in what form do you implement this cooperation/collaboration?
     i. Informally
     ii. Based on a contract
     iii. Other: .....

6. If you are not a municipality near the border (i.e. cross-border cooperation is not relevant for you), why are you not cooperating? Do you see any disadvantages/barriers to cooperation?

7. Do you see any scope or opportunities for cooperation with local municipalities/municipalities in a foreign (cross-border/borderline) country?

8. If you cooperate or have cooperated with a municipality in a foreign country, what funding do you use or have you used to do so?

9. Have you participated in the preparation of a joint project – for example, in the form of small projects?

10. Do you support or have you in the past supported the cross-border cooperation of other entities within your municipality (NGOs, entrepreneurs, schools, associations)?

a. If so, how?
b. In your opinion, has this had concrete results/impacts and, if so, what?

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11. Do you have a good practice tip within your cross-border municipal cooperation (informal, formal)?

a. If yes, what exactly is it?
b. If interested, could you provide us with a contact to describe the practice in the context of our review?

12. In what way is the public transport service in your municipality provided to the municipalities of the neighbouring state? *(Means: train, bus; method: integrated transport systems, etc.)*

a. Do you use public transport across a border?
   i. Bus
   ii. Train
   iii. Other: .....
b. Are these cross-border connections provided by:
   iv. Regional ITS
   v. Municipality
   vi. Micro-region
   vii. Other (e.g. a combination, such as partly ITS) : .....
c. Is there a demand for cross-border travel in your municipality? What is it motivated by?
   viii. Commuting for work
   ix. Commuting for school
   x. Commuting for services
   xi. Visitors – day trips
   xii. Tourism – multi-day stays for services, family ties, tourism
d. Do you know how many people regularly visit your municipality?
   xiii. Daily:
   xiv. Weekly:
   xv. Monthly:
e. Do people come to your municipality from municipalities across the border in a neighbouring country? And are they motivated by:
   xvi. Going to work
   xvii. Going to school
   xviii. Going for services
   xix. Visitors – day trips
   xx. Tourism – multi-day stays
f. Does your municipality organise a shared form of transport (carpooling, etc.) with the surrounding municipalities?
g. Does the micro-region organise this?

13. If one of your activities is no longer taking place in the framework of cross-border cooperation between municipalities (if it has been terminated), what led you or your predecessors to terminate the activity?