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## Borders And Shopping: Business As Usual Or Ever-Changing Moods

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Paper to be presented at the 40th European Congress of the Regional Science Association  
Aug. 29 - Sep. 1, 2000, Barcelona, Spain

## **BORDERS AND SHOPPING: BUSINESS AS USUAL OR EVER- CHANGING MOODS?**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

By opening up the borders within the European Union, new opportunities for previously non-existent consumer-flows came into existence. Hypothetical market-areas for shopping facilities as well as activity-spaces of consumers that were cut off by border-effects of all kinds, theoretically should take a form as if no borders exist at all. Empirical evidence from the Dutch-German border-region Rijn-Waal, however, clearly shows that this is not the case. The spatial shopping patterns of the inhabitants of two comparable border towns, one in the Netherlands and the other one in Germany, still are very much drawn towards the home country.

This paper tries to make a start with the explanation of why these striking differences still can exist, also in an already much united Europe. A central role is given to the motives and rationales behind shopping behaviour. Crucial in this respect is how and to what extent country-borders within the European Union, which are no longer barriers in an institutional sense, are still exerting an influence upon the spatial dimension of the effects of these motives and rationales.

Two theoretical approaches are going to be used in this attempt to gain insight in the role of the border in shopping behaviour. The first approach can be characterised as behavioural, while the second one is more action-oriented. In the first approach the shopping facilities are put in the forefront, while the second approach pays more attention to the individual consumer.

This paper is the second in a row. The first one dealt with the questions, which should be asked in order to test the applicability of the two discerned approaches (Van der Velde, 1999b). The short theoretical discussion in this paper is stemming from this source. Furthermore the central issue in the empirical part will be to present a first analysis of the empirical data at hand. Within this presentation, which will be largely of a descriptive nature, the perception of the border and the cognition and affection with regard to the 'other side' will be confronted with actual behaviour. Furthermore this actual behaviour is associated with a large set of theses that tried to grasp the intentions of the respondents with regard to shopping.

## **European Union and integration**

One of the goals of the present-day Europe is striving for the integration of regional and national markets into one common market, which enables a free movement of goods, services, people etc. The main reason for this effort is the supposed impulse for increasing efficiency and regional economic development. Next to this largely economic impetus, the European Union originally came into being as an antidote to mistrust, which gave rise to two world wars in the twentieth century. By increasing cross-border interaction in every sense mutual understanding was thought to be encouraged. To reach this goal of increased interaction, the European Union has implemented already a vast amount of measures, which are supposed to decrease the (objective) institutional barriers for cross-border interaction. Because of this, the objective possibilities for cross-border interaction of market actors have increased, but nevertheless are still not revealed to the same extent in overt activities. Next to institutional barriers obviously other factors exist, which are in the way of complete integration. The assumption is that individual actors first have to change the spatial frames of observation, experience, appreciation etc. and finally their action spaces, to reach a stage of full integration.

Gaining insight in the interaction between all these factors is the main goal of the research program '*Borders and Interaction*', which has been established at the Nijmegen Centre for Border Research (Van Houtum, Van der Velde and Boekema, 2000). Within this research program, influences of the border are divided in two broad groups. The first group can be characterised as 'objective' or (to the actor) exogenous factors, the second as 'subjective' or endogenous factors. The first group of factors imposes physical and institutional constraints upon the actor's cross-border activities. With regard to shopping, import regulations, but also limited (public) transport facilities and language problems can be mentioned.

The second group of factors concerns not only the value and meaning given to cross-border activities, but also the subjective perception of the differences on both sides of the border and the hindrances or opportunities because of the border. In this case past experiences and experiences with other kinds of cross-border interaction are of relevant importance. In this paper the main attention will be focussed on this second group of factors.

## **Consumer behaviour**

Next to major changes in institutional Europe, on an individual base also major changes have occurred in shopping activities. It is by no means obvious to shop (in a Christallerian way) in the hometown or the nearest town suitable any longer. One of the main reasons can be found in the increased mobility of consumers. Next to this consumers have emancipated and are more demanding with regard to the shopping facilities. When other places offer cheaper and more efficient shopping or a better ambience, they will not hesitate to go there. In general one could suppose consumers prefer quick and efficient shopping when buying daily goods and other articles needed on a frequent base ('one-stop-shopping' or 'run-shopping'). Important conditions to enable this efficient shopping are facilities, which cover a suitable range of products, that are accessible and have good parking opportunities. Because of this need for 'one-stop-shopping', consumers have oriented themselves more and more towards the bigger towns and shopping malls in the suburbs and periphery of these towns. With regard to the non-daily products, the consumers tend to patronise locations, which provide shops matching his lifestyle.

As a consequence of an increasing individualising society and greater amounts of spare time, shopping, especially for non-daily goods, is more and more regarded as a leisure activity ('fun-shopping' or 'recreational shopping'). For this kind of shopping it is important to offer an agreeable atmosphere and to try and make the visit an experience. Next to an ample and diverse supply of shops, also complementary facilities, like bars, restaurants and cultural opportunities have to be present. Because the needs of consumers are different one day from the other, he or she will also choose different places to shop one day from the other (Miller et. al., 1998). Evidence exists that visiting places 'on the other side of the border' plays an important role in these activities. Earlier research from the department of Human Geography in Nijmegen shows that the German town Kleve is more important as a shopping place for the inhabitants of the Dutch city of Nijmegen, compared to the Dutch town Uden, which is comparable in size and distance (Van der Velde and Vergoossen, 1995).

## APPROACHING CONSUMERS AND THEIR CROSS-BORDER BEHAVIOUR

In explaining the spatial patterns of shopping activities, several approaches and models can be used. To name but a few: a Christallerian approach, gravity models, models concerning human behaviour, like rational choice models etc.

In order to compare all these approaches in their applicability, we have proposed a simple framework (Van der Velde, 2000). The columns of the framework consist of the two possible approaches in studying human activities, viz. a behaviour-theoretical and an action-theoretical approach. When viewed upon as caricatures, the first approach can be characterised as more or less deterministic and behaviour of the actor and/or change in the societal and spatial structure is purely induced by (perceived) external stimuli. The action-oriented approach on the other hand assumes activities to be reflective and intentional. In this approach, basically absolute freedom of action exists, albeit within existing personal frames of reference.

**Figure 1: A conceptual framework**

	Behaviour-theoretical	Action-theoretical	<i>Notions</i>
Micro-approach			Aggregate activities; Typologies
Meso/Macro-approach			Societal and spatial structures; Norms and values
<i>Notions</i>	Stimulus-response; Deterministic; Perception	Intentional; Voluntaristic; Meaning	

Source: Van der Velde, 2000

The rows in this framework consist of two possible points of departure (e.g. for influencing cross-border interaction), or 'variables' considered as independent, to wit a micro-approach and a meso/macro-approach. Again considered as caricatures, the first starting-point supposes the individual actor is capable of adjusting the societal and spatial meso- and/or macro-

structures, or stated differently the structures is reacting upon the individual actors. In the second approach, the individual is adjusting its behaviour towards the societal and spatial structures. Modifications in these meso- and macro-structures cause changing (spatial) behaviour of the actor. It is important to state that these rows only serve as a starting-point. They are by no means implying the non-existence of any mutual interaction between the micro- and meso/macro-levels.

### **Behavioural approach**

When adopting a behavioural approach, the essence of human activities can be traced back to a stimulus-response model. In its most simple form it can be characterised as behaviouristic (Walmsley and Lewis 1993). To understand the (changing) patterns of shopping-activities, it is sufficient to trace (changes in) the shopping-structure. Consumers are reacting upon (the changes in) the structure of the shopping-facilities. Shopping is done where it is most appropriate and when shops become available which are considered to be more suitable (e.g. nearer, cheaper, higher quality), they will be used automatically. Opening up borders in this respect offers new possibilities on which consumers 'must' react.

The other way round it is also possible to look upon the structure as reacting in a 'deterministic' way upon changing consumer preferences. Consumers are changing their patterns of shopping-activities, for instance by increasing the amount of time dedicated to 'fun-shopping' and the various actors influencing the structure of shopping-facilities are reacting on these changes, for instance by opening, closing or relocating shops. In border areas the 'structure' can react on changing spatial patterns by offering for instance the opportunity to pay with foreign currencies.

### **Action-oriented**

The main notion in action-oriented approaches is the intentionality and reflectivity of human actions (Werlen, 1993). The starting-point in these approaches lies in determining the intentions of the agent. Intentions of agents are influenced by certain circumstances, which can be found in the societal structure. In these approaches spatial structures can be viewed upon as the physical outcome of intentional actions of agents in the past, which took place in the societal structure of that time. The resulting spatial structures are part of the 'frames of reference' in which current actions of agents are taking place.

Changing notions could lead to a changing spatial organisation, which in turn is valued by actors and acted upon accordingly, i.e. reflective and intentional. In a border area the intention to do ones shopping in an area where one feels at home, could lead to low cross-border interaction.

Taking the starting-point of the structure, one could suppose that consumers are changing their preferences concerned to shopping, e.g. the meaning given to inner-city shopping is changing in such a way that it is viewed upon as potentially dangerous because of for instance pick-pocketing and car-jacking. This meaning of the inner-city could lead to an increasing intention to shop in safer places. The actors influencing shopping-structure might react by creating privately guarded out-of-town shopping malls, this way adjusting the structure.

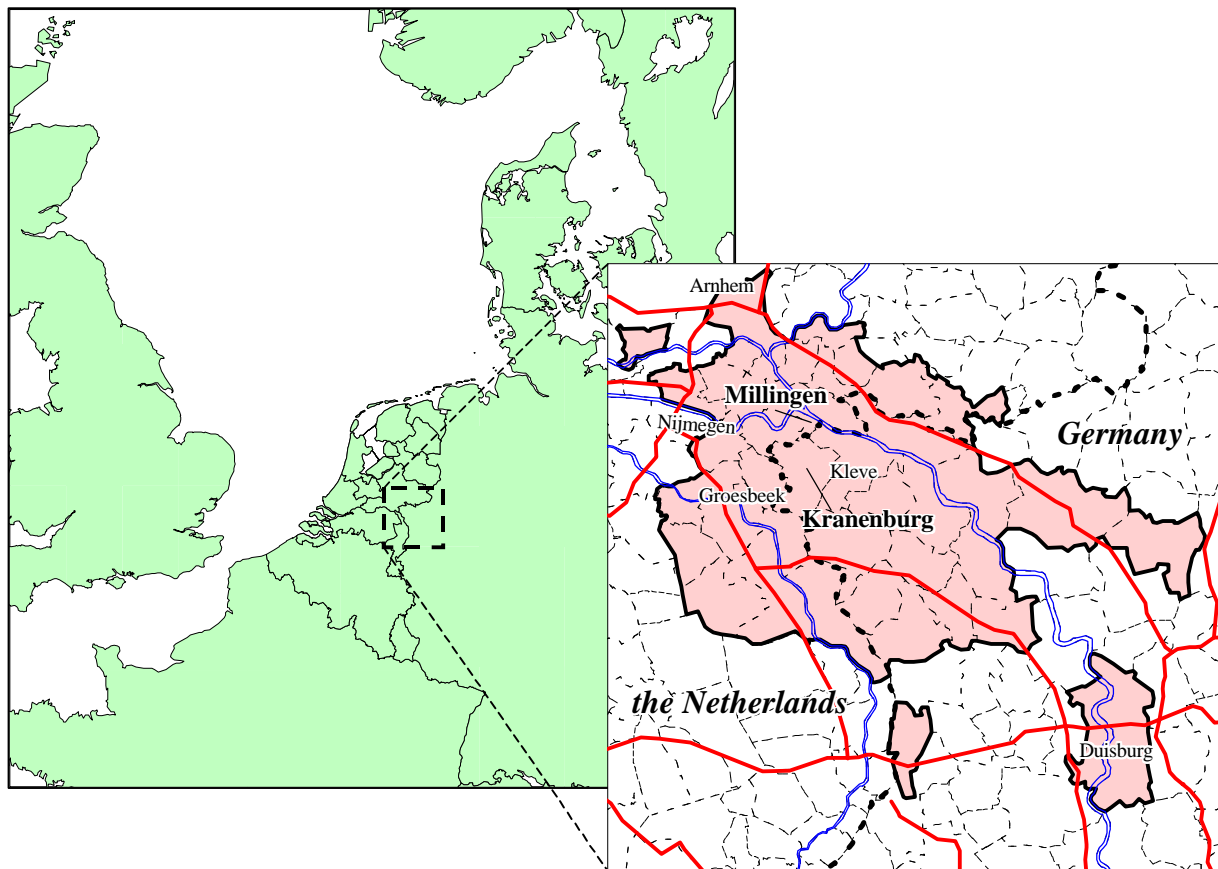
Of course the resulting four quadrants in figure 1 are not able to exclusively accommodate all the models and approaches used for describing shopping activities. Many of them are

amalgamations between two or more approaches and should be positioned at the dividing lines between the quadrants.

## **CROSS-BORDER SHOPPING ACTIVITY-SPACES IN THE EUREGIO RIJN-WAAL**

The empirical data presented in this contribution are partly stemming from a large-scale investigation into shopping behaviour of the inhabitants of the Euregio Rijn-Waal (Van Middendorp, Van der Velde and Vergoossen, 1999). This cross-border region is located at the Dutch-German border, where the river Rhine crosses it (fig.2).

**Figure 2: Euregio Rijn-Waal**



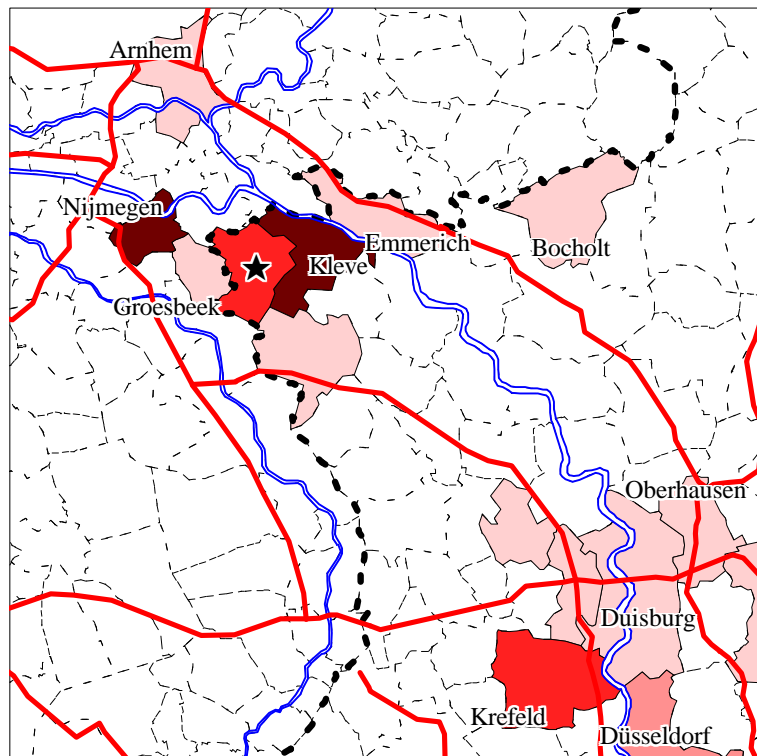
In an earlier phase of this project, the results of this large-scale, but purely descriptive, study were used to determine the activity-spaces of the inhabitants of two small towns, located right on the border, Millingen aan de Rijn in the Netherlands and Kranenburg in Germany. These two towns were picked because, apart from being located in different countries, the characteristics, with regard to size, supply level and accessibility etc., are similar. In comparing the patterns of the inhabitants of these two towns, maybe the role of citizenship could be revealed. Regarding the influence of borders this is supposed to be important still, being the result of a long-lasting history.

### **The pattern ...**

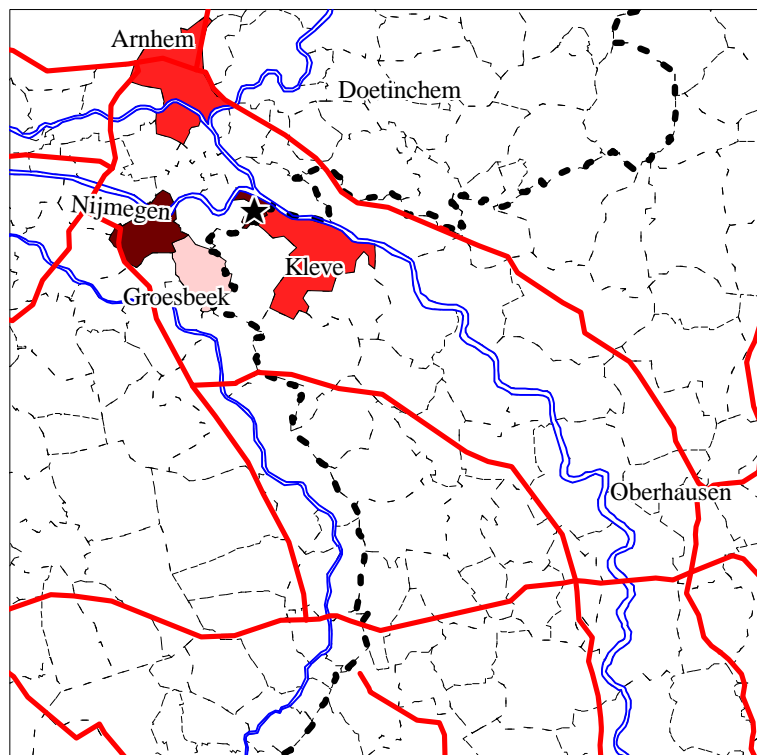
From the first analysis done in the previous paper in this series, came that the spatial patterns of the inhabitants of these two towns could be characterised almost as being mirror images of

each other (fig. 3). The most important results that came from this analysis was that the main orientation still was directed to the home country. Over nine times out every ten the shopping-trips for non-daily goods conducted by the inhabitants of Millingen went to Dutch towns. The inhabitants of Kranenburg went to a German town three out of every four visits.

**Figure 3: Municipalities mentioned as place for doing purposeful shopping for non-daily goods in Kranenburg and Millingen aan de Rijn**



Kranenburg



Millingen aan de Rijn

Source: Van der Velde, 2000

As a first and tentative conclusion from these figures, it may be possible to state that the country border is still a barrier to these kinds of trips. Evidence however also shows that it is less hampering to shopping trips for non-daily goods compared to the daily goods. This is especially supported by the fact that the respondents from Kranenburg are far more oriented towards the Netherlands for these trips than is the case for daily shopping. Still in Kranenburg

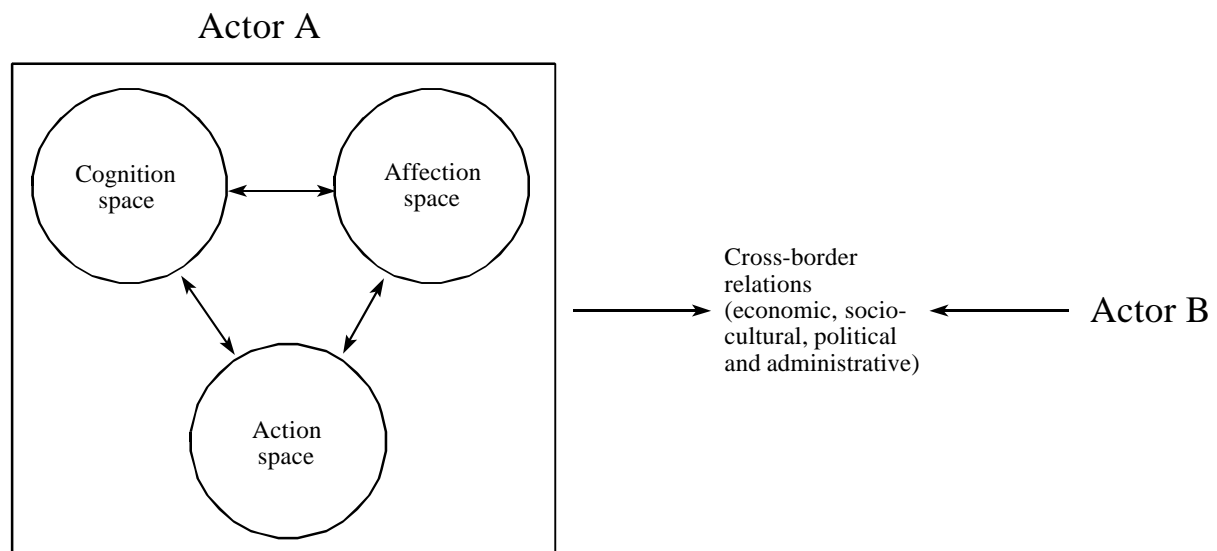


a border effect is also measurable, regarding the orientation on the Ruhr-area. This could be a substitute for Nijmegen, which in absolute terms is closer, but may be mentally further away.

### ... and beyond

These facts were the starting-point for the next phase of this project. The main question in this phase was twofold. First of all an attempt was made to interrelate different personal 'spaces' with each other. In the general framework of the research program, within which this project is embedded, a scheme is presented in which four 'spaces' or regions were discerned (fig. 4).

**Figure 4: Action, cognition and affection spaces of man acting in space**



Source: Van Houtum, Van der Velde and Boekema, 2000

This scheme is largely based on the distinction Van Houtum uses in his analysis of cross-border economic activities at the Dutch-Belgian border region (1998). The *action space* is an expression of the division of space according to the geographical range of activities. In this respect for instance the range of personal visits and the distribution of friends or family can be mentioned. *Affective space* is concerning a demarcation of a region created by the inhabitants of a region themselves, one with which they feel a strong affinity. The consequence of this is the creation of a 'them and us' relationship, which is often accompanied by stereotyping and prejudice (Paasi, 1996). Examples of affective space are the spatial solidarity of the Dutch versus the Germans or, at world level, the affective space between West and East. Finally one can distinguish a third type of demarcation the *cognitive space*. This denotes the region or the space known to the actors. In the first part of the presentation some empirical evidence with regard to these three spaces are confronted with the activity-spaces for shopping, as far as it concerns crossing the border.

The second question is far more difficult to answer. This question relates to the original goal of this project, namely testing the applicability of action-oriented approaches in understanding cross-border shopping behaviour. The behavioural approach, albeit not to the full extent, is more related to the first question. The perception of the border, expressed in affective and cognitive terms is related to actual behaviour. The action-oriented approach goes one step further back in determining what the intention of the actual behaviour is. Fully aware of the fact that determining these intentions requires far more in-depth research, in this contribution

confronting the respondents with a number of propositions, which they could agree or disagree with, assesses the intentions. These results are then confronted with the outcome of the actual behaviour, once again as far as it concerns cross-border shopping.

## EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The figures presented in this section are stemming from a project carried out with undergraduate students in Human Geography in a methodology-course in conducting geographical research. Around one hundred inhabitants in each of the border towns were approached with questionnaires, which were carried out at their home-addresses. Next to an inventory of their patterns in shopping behaviour, the perception of the border and the neighbouring country were registered. Furthermore the respondent was confronted with a number of theses, on which he or she had to react on a five point Likert-scale. Because of the relative small number of respondents, in the next part sometimes the results are aggregated in order to get a large enough number per group.

The basic dependent variable, which is going to be used in this section, is the proportion of the shopping trips per respondent that is crossing the border. In this contribution only two types of trips are considered, first the purposeful trips for buying clothing and second the recreational 'day-out' to do window-shopping, without the explicit aim of buying goods. The purposeful trips were defined so narrow, so that in a later instance the intentions could be determined as exactly as possible. By including other goods, this picture might get blurred.

The respondents were asked where they had been for buying clothing and recreational window-shopping in the last year and how often they had been there. This way the shares of cross-border shopping could be determined (tab. 1).

**Table 1: Share of cross-border shopping trips per respondent**

	Buying clothing		Window-shopping	
	Millingen	Kranenburg	Millingen	Kranenburg
None	72,5%	36,0%	54,5%	17,6%
till 1/3	12,8%	27,9%	22,7%	28,4%
1/3 till 2/3	13,8%	18,6%	20,5%	25,7%
2/3 or more	0,9%	17,4%	2,3%	28,4%
n	109	86	88	74

Source: Questionnaire

Immediately it shows that a far bigger part of the inhabitants in Kranenburg, compared to Millingen, indicated they do cross the national border to buy clothing or go window-shopping. This is mainly because the nearest town of considerable size in the region, Nijmegen, is located in the Netherlands. The greater cross-border orientation of the inhabitants of Kranenburg is induced by the lure of Nijmegen. Nevertheless, as also already became clear from figure 3, there are huge differences between the Dutch and Germans.

In the following analyses this pattern is aggregated in order to split the respondents in two groups. With regard to buying clothing the respondents are split up in a group that is not crossing the border at all and one that is. With regard to the window-shopping the cut-off is one third of the trips being abroad.

When these groups are considered with regard to gender differences it turns out that women are buying there clothing more often abroad. For window-shopping Dutch women are going less frequent abroad than their German colleagues. There are bigger differences when we take into account the age of the respondents. Younger people are more frequently crossing the border, for buying clothing as well as window-shopping. In Millingen the turnover is situated around 40 years and in Kranenburg at 30 years. Carefully put, one could suppose that the older, the more settled the border is in the mind.

## Personal spaces

The three spaces that were discerned in figure 4 can be made operational in different ways. The operational spaces sometimes can be attributed to different 'theoretical' or 'conceptual' spaces as they are appearing in figure 4. For the purpose of this paper, however, it is sufficient just looking at the different operational spaces and their coherence with the level of cross-border activity.

The first proxy of the cognitive as well as the action space is to what extent the respondent is exposed to the 'them' on the 'other side'. The respondents were asked whether they watched the foreign TV-channels, read newspapers and actually visited their neighbours for other reasons than shopping. Furthermore they were asked whether they had family abroad.

**Table 2: Cross-border shopping and cognition and action factors in Millingen**

Dutch sample		Buying clothing		Window-shopping	
		Only domestic	Also cross-border	Mostly domestic	Frequently cross-border
Visiting Germany	3 times or more	50,6%	50,0%	36,8%	55,0%
	1 or 2 time per month	49,4%	50,0%	63,2%	45,0%
Watching German TV-channels	Yes	55,1%	82,1%	45,6%	70,0%
	No	44,9%	17,9%	54,4%	30,0%
Reading German newspapers	Yes	10,3%	27,6%	5,9%	20,0%
	No	89,7%	72,4%	94,1%	80,0%
Having family abroad	Yes	45,6%	63,3%	39,7%	70,0%
	No	54,4%	36,7%	60,3%	30,0%

German sample		Buying clothing		Window-shopping	
		Only domestic	Also cross-border	Mostly domestic	Frequently cross-border
Visiting the Netherlands	3 times or more	32,3%	60,0%	44,1%	72,5%
	1 or 2 time per month	67,7%	40,0%	55,9%	27,5%
Watching Dutch TV-channels	Yes	32,3%	38,2%	26,5%	28,2%
	No	67,7%	61,8%	73,5%	71,8%
Reading Dutch newspapers	Yes	19,4%	58,2%	14,7%	72,5%
	No	80,6%	41,8%	85,3%	27,5%
Having family abroad	Yes	51,6%	70,9%	64,7%	72,5%
	No	48,4%	29,1%	35,3%	27,5%

Source: Questionnaire

Immediately becomes clear that almost all of these factors are positively correlated with the tendency of crossing the border for shopping. Besides some externally induced differences<sup>1</sup> the patterns in Millingen and Kranenburg are more or less the same. There are some differences however between shopping for non-daily goods and window-shopping. It looks as if cross-border window-shopping is more strongly connected with these factors especially in the Netherlands. An explanation could be that these kind of trips are of a less routine nature. More deliberate choices are made and within that process experiences with other actions and knowledge might play a more important role.

Another important variable is the knowledge of the language. Generally spoken the Dutch consider themselves as having mastered the German language well. On a ten-point scale listening skills are rewarded with a 7.5, speaking skills with a 5.8 and writing skills with 4.3. The Germans are somewhat less positive about their Dutch language skills. Listening, speaking and writing are valued with 7.2, 5.4 and 3.8 respectively. The results from the questionnaire show that inferior knowledge prevents to a certain extent going abroad for shopping for non-daily goods. This effect is stronger in Germany compared to the Netherlands. Within the Dutch sample language skills are remarkably not correlated with the level of cross-border window-shopping. An explanation could be that these kinds of trips are not necessarily leading to 'confrontations' with Germans. Just browsing through the shops apparently does not require great language skills.

The affection space of the respondent is approximated by the so-called regional identity. To what extent do inhabitants have a bond with the indicated regions? To determine the level of affection of the respondents, they were asked to give notes to several regional identities on a seven-point Likert-scale (cf. Van Houtum, 1998). Regions on several levels of scale were discerned. All of the respondents had to value the border-region as such, the Netherlands, Germany, Europe and the world. In Millingen the province of Gelderland (the second regional level of government in the Netherlands) was added. In Kranenburg the respondents were confronted with the Niederrhein, which is not a political region, but has some meaning as a traditional region, and Nordrhein-Westfalen, which is one of the *Länder* in Germany.

**Table 3: Regional identity**

Do you feel a bond with	Millingen		Kranenburg	
	till 40 years	40 years or older	till 40 years	40 years or older
the border-region	4.8	5.2	5.4	5.2
Gelderland (nl)	4.5	5.3	-	-
the Netherlands	6.4	6.6	2.5	2.7
the Niederrhein (ger)	-	-	3.5	4.0
Nordrhein-Westfalen (ger)	-	-	4.4	5.2
Germany	1.6	1.6	5.2	5.2
Europe	5.2	5.4	5.2	5.5
the world population	5.0	5.6	4.4	4.2

Source: Questionnaire

As a rule of thumb the regional bond with the home country is the strongest. No strong bonds are felt with the neighbouring country. Remarkably strong is the bond that is felt with the

<sup>1</sup> ) Dutch cable-TV companies are obliged to offer the public German TV-channels, whereas in Germany this is not the case. Furthermore the local newspaper in Millingen has a German section and is distributed in Kranenburg as well.

border-region as such. It is even stronger than the one felt with the sub-national regions. Especially within the group of younger respondents even the connotation European and citizen of the world are more favourite identities.

When confronting these regional identity-scores with the actual behaviour there are three conclusions to be drawn. In Germany some coherence can be observed between a stronger identification with the Niederrhein and Nordrhein-Westfalen and a reluctance of going abroad. A stronger bond with the neighbouring country (albeit still relatively weak) is positively correlated with cross-border behaviour, as could be expected. A marked difference between the Dutch and the Germans exists with respect to the notions of European and citizen of the world. Whereas Dutch who consider themselves as such do cross the border more frequently, in Germany it is just the other way round. No real explanation can be given at this moment, but maybe these identities are somehow connected with an urge to go to the 'bigger' and 'greater'.

The final variable in this group of factors is the opinion about the national border between Germany and the Netherlands. To determine this opinion the respondents were confronted with nine adjectives in a positive and negative version (cf. Van Houtum, 1998). These pairs are:

<i>Useless vs. Useful</i>	<i>Unimportant vs. Important</i>	<i>Restrictive vs. Not restrictive</i>
<i>Artificial vs. Natural</i>	<i>Irritating vs. Not irritating</i>	<i>Noticeable vs. Unnoticeable</i>
<i>Abnormal vs. Normal</i>	<i>Hindering vs. Not hindering</i>	<i>Dividing vs. Uniting</i>

Once again a seven-point Likert-scale was used. A factor analysis reduces these nine adjectives into two factors. These two factors explain almost 60% of the variance in the data. The first dimension can be indicated as the 'relevant border' and is composed of the adjectives useful, natural, normal and important. The second dimension indicates the 'border as barrier' and consists of the adjectives irritating, hindering, restrictive, noticeable and dividing. This concurs with the findings of Van Houtum in his research among entrepreneurs in the Dutch-Belgian border-area (1998) and of the author in research into job-search behaviour in a border area (Van der Velde, 1999a).

When these factors are confronted with the distinguished groups, it turns out that respondents shopping for both reasons (with a specific purpose as well as for window-shopping) on the other side of the border both in Millingen and Kranenburg witness a lower average on the factor of a relevant border. At the same time they also have higher scores on the barrier-factor. This seeming paradox can be explained, when one takes into account that crossing borders, still means entering a relative 'unfamiliar' area. As long as one does not enter this area, no actual knowledge of possible hindrances is available. To put it differently, if someone does not see any reason to cross the border (it is relevant), the border is not a barrier in any way.

A final analysis in this section concerns the assessment of some propositions about the 'other side' of the border. The respondents were confronted with the following theses:

- *I consider the other side of the border still as abroad;*
- *The Dutch/Germans are sympathetic;*
- *Visiting Nijmegen/Kleve is still something special because it is abroad;*
- *On the other side of the border it is still difficult paying with my own currency;*
- *I feel myself at in the Netherlands/Germany.*

The first three of these propositions show statistical significant differences at the 95% confidence level, when using a Mann-Witney test. The Dutch respondents consider the other side of the border as abroad and special more often, whereas the Germans tend to favour the second proposition. When accepting a 90% confidence level, also the fifth proposition turns out to significant. The Germans feel themselves at home in the Netherlands more often, than the Dutch do in Germany.

Furthermore it turns out that most of these propositions do not correlate with exhibiting more or less cross-border activities, with two exceptions. In all instances (purposeful and window-shopping in Germany as well as the Netherlands), people less cross-border oriented, consider the other side of the border more often as abroad. One could say this concurs with the fact that the non-border-crosser considers the border more often as relevant. Compared to the inhabitants that do cross the border, the non-crossers living in the Netherlands more often support the proposition dealing with the very practical problem of still having different currencies. This contradicts somewhat with the fact that it is border-crosser who experiences the border as a barrier, as was the conclusion from the previous paragraph. For the border-crossing inhabitants, other aspects probably outshine these problems.

## **Intentions**

As was mentioned when presenting the conceptual framework, determining the intentions behind cross-border activities is far more difficult, compared to confronting overt behaviour with perceptions and images. These perceptions and images are connected with more or less concrete objects. Intentions on the other hand are connected to actions. This is why no direct reference is possible to concrete objects or destinations. Intentions towards the 'other side' and 'them' are therefore only measurable in an indirect manner.

In the project from which the present data are originating shopping behaviour and spatial patterns in general were at stake. With regard to the two motives at hand some four dozen propositions were presented to the respondents (the complete list is added as an annex; in the tables only the abridged versions are given). The present analysis is restricted to correlating the answers of the samples with their overt behaviour concerning crossing borders.

This paper will confine itself to a small analysis, which comprises three sets of Mann-Witney tests (tab. 4). The first one determines whether there are national differences in the assessment of the propositions. In the first two columns the Z-score for the Mann-Whitney test and the level of significance are recorded. The third column indicates which nationality is more in favour of the proposition discussed.

With regard to buying clothing, out of the 25 propositions eight show significant differences at a 90% confidence-level (of which six are significant even at a 95% confidence-level). Some of these significant combinations can be explained from the local or national situation. The propositions concerning transportation (2, 13 and 19) might be connected to the fact that Germans tend to use their car more often. However, the results of the sixth thesis concerning the length of the travel time to the shops, is contradicting with the greater importance the Dutch allocate to public transport facilities. The propositions with regard to the local supply level (15, 17 and 21) is explainable by the somewhat more isolated situation of Millingen compared to Kranenburg. This may count for the greater importance attached to the local supply-level, but on the other hand encourages the variability of shops present in Millingen.

**Table 4: Assessment of the proposition nationality and cross-border activities**

		Nationality			Border-no/border in the Dutch sample			Border-no/border in the German sample		
<i>Purposeful shopping for clothing</i>		Z	sig.	sign	MW	sig.	sign	MW	sig.	sign
1.	go where cheaper	-1,50		NL	-0,78		-	-1,08		+
2.	good car-park important	-2,17	**	DL	-0,20		+	-0,51		+
3.	go to bigger cities	-0,10		NL	-0,40		-	-1,01		+
4.	prefer shopping mall	-1,28		DL	-0,16		+	-1,49		+
5.	time-consuming no problem	-0,95		NL	-1,75	*	+	-0,17		+
6.	long travel no problem	-3,78	**	NL	-1,11		+	-0,32		+
7.	go to familiar shops	-1,70	*	DL	-0,55		-	-3,25	**	-
8.	go where better prices	-0,66		DL	-0,95		-	-1,38		-
9.	go where success guaranteed	-0,64		DL	-0,58		-	-1,49		-
10.	go where better bargains	-0,53		NL	-1,90	*	+	-1,18		+
11.	shop where happen to be	-1,49		NL	-2,24	**	+	-1,61		+
12.	some clothing better abroad	-6,75	**	DL	-2,13	**	+	-3,69	**	+
13.	only in high-quality shops	-0,08		DL	-0,48		-	-0,96		-
14.	don't like shopping	-1,30		DL	-0,51		+	-3,17	**	-
15.	local stores if possible	-5,76	**	NL	-0,21		-	-2,76	**	-
16.	buy other products as well	-1,11		NL	-0,55		+	-0,60		+
17.	local supply level important	-2,83	**	NL	-1,30		+	-1,80	*	-
18.	good public transport	-2,00	*	NL	-0,88		+	-0,12		-
19.	go to familiar branch stores	-1,35		DL	-2,40	**	-	-2,51	**	-
20.	considered as social event	-0,88		NL	-1,00		+	-0,83		+
21.	can't succeed locally often	-2,60	**	DL	-1,43		+	-0,08		+
22.	high quality more important	-0,37		DL	-0,59		-	-0,12		+
23.	department-store better	-0,26		NL	-1,86	*	-	-1,23		-
24.	as fast as possible	-1,17		NL	-1,97	*	-	-1,97	*	-
25.	only branded products	-0,34		NL	-1,54		-	-0,91		-
<i>Window-shopping</i>										
1.	go to bigger cities	-1,79	*	NL	-0,55		-	-0,01		+
2.	go to historical cities	-2,17	**	DL	-0,11		+	-0,23		-
3.	city-centre outlay important	-0,79		DL	-0,65		+	-0,18		-
4.	go for other purposes as well	-4,80	**	DL	-0,31		-	-0,64		+
5.	go when I need something	-1,29		NL	-0,14		+	-1,52		-
6.	prefer private car	-1,87	*	DL	-0,82		-	-0,23		+
7.	know many cities	-1,02		NL	-0,19		+	-1,35		+
8.	long travel no problem	-0,38		NL	-1,51		+	-0,07		+
9.	strolling is fun	-2,32	**	DL	-1,07		-	-1,20		+
10.	windows-shopping is shops	-2,15	**	NL	-0,01		-	-0,45		+
11.	good public transport	-0,72		NL	-0,89		+	-1,82	*	-
12.	unfamiliar city interesting	-0,09		NL	-0,38		+	-0,46		+
13.	social drink as well	-2,20	**	DL	-0,05		+	-1,82	*	+
14.	abundant shops attractive	-1,02		DL	-0,06		-	-0,08		+
15.	always buying goods	-2,20	**	NL	-0,23		+	-0,25		-
16.	go only when invited	-2,92	**	NL	-1,57		+	-1,38		-
17.	good car-park	-1,26		DL	-1,34		+	-1,26		+

\* significant at a 90% confidence-level (two-tailed)

\*\* significant at a 95% confidence-level (two-tailed)

Source: Questionnaire

Concerning window-shopping, it shows that no less than nine out of the 17 propositions are statistical significant correlated to nationality. In general it seems the German respondents consider window-shopping far more as a recreational outing. They favour historical cities, regard window-shopping as a multi-purpose trip, like strolling and patronise the bars as well. The Dutch concur to a greater extent with the theses that bigger cities are more attractive for

window-shopping, that window-shopping is connected explicitly with shops and the proposition that one ends up with buying goods most of the time. All these theses tend to characterise window-shopping as more practical.

The next two sets of Mann-Witney tests consider the Dutch and German respondents respectively, with regard to how much of a coherence is present between the assessment of the propositions and whether or not clothing are bought abroad. In the sixth and ninth column the pluses and minuses are indicating whether a positive or negative correlation exists between a more positive assessment of the thesis and the level of cross-border interaction.

When we first look into the signs of the correlation, one could state in general that most of them are as could be expected. Immediately we have to issue the warning that, considering the relatively small number of respondents and some very small Z-scores, not too much value may be contributed to some of these signs.

Letting the table further speak for itself for most of its content, again only the number of the statistical significant correlations is dealt with at this moment. As well as already was mentioned in the section about personal spaces, there is a relative strong difference between the two motives discussed in this paper. In shopping to buy clothing, there are much more statistical significant differences between the two groups of respondents. This might serve as an indication for the fact that consumers spatially are acting more consistent for these kinds of trips, compared to window-shopping. As was stated earlier, the latter may be of a lesser routine nature, so that each time a decision has to be made, other factors are taken into account. The same intention may lead to a cross-border trip the one time, but not the other.

## CONCLUSIONS

Coming back to the title, the somewhat hazy question in the subtitle can be read in at least two ways. First of all one could interpret it with regard the issue of borders and shopping in a EU-internal border region, whether the patterns have changed or still are very much the same. Based on the results presented in a previous paper (Van der Velde, 1999) one could observe that 'historic' patterns still prevail in the spatial patterns of consumers. The inhabitants of Millingen and Kranenburg reveal patterns in their shopping trips, which are more or less mirror images of each other. Both groups are to a large extent oriented towards the nuclei in their home country. The most outstanding difference in this respect is the relative important role the cities in the Ruhr-area are playing for the inhabitants of Kranenburg, whereas it is no importance whatsoever for the inhabitants of Millingen.

The second interpretation of the subtitle '*business as usual or ever-changing moods*' is connected to the individual consumer. It is also related to the more theoretical questions of how to interpret basic human behaviour. Is this behaviour of a more or less stimulus-response nature ('business as usual') or is it better understood from an intentional point of view ('ever-changing mood')? Based on the results presented in this paper, the answer has to be neither nor. It is suggesting that the nature of the activity is of essential importance when trying to understand the spatial patterns in this behaviour. When comparing purposeful shopping with the more recreational window-shopping, more 'consistency' between consumers can be witnessed in the former. This gives rise to the thought that especially the level of routine of a specific action determines to a certain part the applicability of behavioural and action-oriented models. Especially the results of the second part, are pointing in the direction, that spatial



consumer-behaviour which is not characterized by routine and standardisation, is becoming fuzzier. With regard to the cross-border nature of window-shopping (which can be considered to be of less routine-like), the same attitude seems to lead to different spatial patterns.

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## ANNEX

### *Propositions concerning purposeful shopping for clothing*

1. It is a challenge to buy as cheap as possible
2. It is important for me to be able to park my car easily
3. I prefer bigger cities
4. For me a shopping mall is an attractive place
5. I find it annoying when buying takes a lot of time
6. I don't mind a long travel
7. Most of the time I buy in familiar shops
8. Good prices are important
9. I prefer shops where I have a good chance of succeeding
10. I visit especially shops that offer bargains
11. I shop in those places where I happen to be
12. Some clothing are better bought abroad
13. I patronise only high-quality shops
14. I don't like shopping
15. I buy in local stores whenever possible
16. It is not annoying when I return with other products than planned
17. A good local supply level is important
18. Good accessibility through public transport is important
19. Being in another town I prefer shopping in familiar branch stores
20. Shopping is a social event
21. I often cannot succeed in the local shops
22. I don't mind where I buy as long as it is of high quality
23. A department-store is the right place to shop
24. I try to shop as fast as possible
25. I am only buying branded products

### *Propositions concerning window-shopping*

1. The bigger cities are the better places
2. I am often going to historical cities
3. The outlay of a city-centre is determining my choice
4. I am combining my trips often with other purposes
5. I am only shopping when I need something
6. I prefer to private car for travelling
7. I know many cities to go shopping
8. I don't mind a long travel
9. Strolling through a city is fun
10. I am associating windows-shopping only with shops
11. Good accessibility through public transport is important
12. Window-shopping is more fun in an unfamiliar city
13. Window-shopping means also having a social drink as well
14. An abundance of shops makes a city attractive
15. When window-shopping I always end up buying something
16. I am only going when someone invites me
17. It is important for me to be able to park my car easily