

Martina Ukowitz, Ruth Lerchster

Intraregional alliances and sustainable regions: Creating a culture of internationality through transnational knowledge exchange

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Traditionally the main actors in regional development affairs are representatives of the local and regional politics, acting between the possibilities and constraints deriving from national and European guidelines, and public institutions that have the task to implement policy decisions in various fields of action. Over the last years on the one hand participative processes that include selected actor groups or civil society are gaining more and more importance and on the other hand actor groups or civil society alliances themselves launch initiatives with the intention to foster sustainable regional development. These alliances are more or less stable, they often depend on limited project funding, and they can be structured in terms of organisation differently.

This contribution as an example picks up one initiative of a network-like cooperation between entrepreneurs respectively managing directors of enterprises in Carinthia (Austria). They partly are organized in a registered association, partly they work on specific topics in different group compositions. The cooperation exists since more than fifteen years and the entrepreneurs work together on various topics with the overall idea to integrate two goals: they want to ensure economic stability and success and a sustainable socio-cultural environment. Since the activities of the network lie near by the economic and the political sphere, representatives of local politics are also part of the network. From time to time, scientific research teams are part of projects or they even point out topics that could be worth to be treated.

The project activities described here are focused on internationality and transnational relationships. In a globalised world, regions act in the field of tension between the local and the global. Dynamics on site have to be handled focusing on local strengths and at the same time a high advertency on global innovation is needed. It is a continuous switchover between perspectives that in the best case lead to the integration of the best from different worlds. Activities on various societal levels are necessary to make this happen. The research and intervention project starts from the assumption that internationalisation, a transnational attitude and transnational activities, are crucial for a sustainable regional development and that at the same time globalisation implies new challenges for institutions and people. From the perspective of politics, the sustainable future of the region is at stage. Entrepreneurs obviously are interested in economic success, but they are also conscious of the fact that the general local situation, influenced by soft facts like a lively, innovative atmosphere, is an important factor.

In a transdisciplinary project, organized in two phases, researchers and local stakeholders focus on a deeper understanding of the significance of transnational relationships and mobility in a globalised working environment, on the fields of tension that might go along with it and on developing collective strategies to tackle it.

Project goals and background themes

The two-staged-project “Carinthia International” was on one hand based on a concrete goal and on the other hand on three central background themes which will be explained.

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Project goals

- Sensitisation of the topic internationalisation; Understanding of regionality and globalised life- and work contexts
- Strategies to support internationalisation (regional and nationwide)
- Knowledge of good-practice-examples
- Knowledge of institutions and programs that support internationalisation
- Improve visibility and usage of (international) contacts
- First steps to the development of new networks and collaborations (e.g. based on a research of successful migrated people)
- Prepare concrete measures

Background themes

1. The demographic development

Due to the demographic trend of an aging population, the tendency of leaving the rural, peripheral regions and people moving into central regions, the politicians and the administration as well as local companies face certain challenges¹. Companies need qualified and skilled employees. The emigration of young well qualified people is one major problem for the companies because potential workers are leaving the area. Emigration and the demographic trend in general are not the only reasons for the shortage of skilled professionals but they are one of the main ones (Lacking interest in technical professions but also information deficits have to be mentioned as reasons as well). Politicians and stakeholders call the emigration and the resulting shortage of skilled professionals alarming. The resulting negative consequences of the mentioned development require an amount of measures to adapt to the structural change but they need also to counteract. The significance of young people for a sustainable development of a region is seen as very important.

Current studies on the theme of emigration² are focussing on the motivation of young people to move within Carinthia and to relocate themselves to central regions or to leave Carinthia. Relevant aspects for the decision were:

- The urge for qualitative education
- The search for an appropriate working place and the desire for good working conditions
- The need for a high-quality living environment (nature, infrastructure, social contacts, cultural offers, safety)
- Personal and familial reasons (partnership, proximity to family members)
- The urge for a change and to broaden one's mind

The relevant phases for young people for the decision where to live are in particular the time during which it is decided at which place the education will be and the time after finishing the education when young people start to look for a job and eventually start a family and settle at a certain place.

¹ This trend does not only affect Carinthia but also other regions in Austria or Europe. For the current situation see Aigner-Walder, Birgit / Bliem, Markus Gilbert: Demographie und Daseinsvorsorge in Kärnten. Herausforderungen und Lösungsansätze auf kommunaler Ebene. Institut für Höhere Studien Kärnten, 2012.

² Sting, Stephan / Leitner, Sylvia: Zurück nach Kärnten? Eine Studie zur sozialräumlichen Selbstverortung von jungen Erwachsenen aus Kärnten. Forschungsbericht Klagenfurt 2013; Aigner-Walder, Birgit / Klinglmair, Robert: Brain-Drain in Kärnten. Empirische Analyse der Abwanderungsmotive. Institut für Höhere Studien Kärnten, 2014.

2. The globalisation

A second relevant topic for this social development is the on-going globalisation. It influences and changes everyone's life (often without being aware of it) and it makes it necessary to create new ways to deal with the regional bond and with international elements. Following theses and questions serve as a first approach in the project:

- Living and working in local communities and in a globalised society requires new individual and collective strategies as well as the development of a culture of integration of international and local things
- Individual and collective mind-sets are influencing a sustainable development: Ideologies, imagination and pictures of mobility, of leaving and of staying have an effect without being reflected
- Companies face new challenges concerning this situation
- Regional economy development has to deal with this area of a regional bond and internationalisation

The globalisation offers several internationalisation possibilities but it also brings the pressure to internationalise along. The forms of "regional internationalisation" attract special attention, e.g. relations with the (German speaking) neighbouring countries or the Alpe Adria region. As a consequence, a new exchange of experience with international contacts and collaborations develops, as well as the development of international cooperation and the establishment of contact and cooperation with foreign living Carinthians.

3. The Internationalisation

As a third central theme we see the internationalisation of the working life and the economy as an answer to the new circumstances of a globally networked world. Internationalisation can be seen as an active shaping of (social) relations across borders. It includes outgoing and incoming activities which means that humans and new impulses from outside affect the region and people from the region look for new places to gain experiences and impulses which then again are important for the companies and the home region. The goal is to strengthen the capacity for innovation (technological, organisational and social innovation), to enable learning and further education and last but not least to enable business relationships. In connection with KMU, internationalisation is mainly associated with direct investment abroad (establishment of new locations) respectively to open up new labour markets³.

The here explained intention addresses especially the (potential) international activities of the employees and the management respectively the owners. Furthermore the question of to what extend and under which circumstances small steps of internationalisation positively affect a company (and also the region) is considered. It is about border-crossing research and technology collaborations,

³Concerning internationalisation of small- and middle-sized companies and the relevant decision-making processes see Juritsch, Erhard: Internationalisierungsentscheidungen von kleinen und mittleren Unternehmen. Bedingungen und Möglichkeiten internationaler Unternehmensentwicklung. Wien, New York: Springer 2011

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training and further education, recruiting new employees etc. – activities that enable new international business relations⁴.

Project content and participants

Concerning these circumstances the research team focuses together with the regional institute for economic promotion and the involved companies on the following areas:

1. Migration of adolescents from the rural regions and Carinthia
2. Shortage of skilled workers due to the migration and the focus on potential reverse immigration
3. Internationalisation possibilities and necessities in the working and economic life in a globally networked world

These three areas are mainly observed concerning the connections between them.

- Based on the survey of the status quo which is based on the experiences of the participants,
- Strategies and measures will be developed which should then
- Be implemented as pilot projects

In order to develop practical suitable approaches and to meet the requirements of the complexity of the topic, attention is paid to the experiences of the participants and the already named background dynamics. The main aim is to sensitise the topic of migration and internationalisation and the resulting fields of tension. The personal experiences of the participants concerning questions about the geographical centre of life, mobility and organizing the working life as well as experiences as functionaries in companies and organisations are an important starting point for the sensitisation.

System environment and participants

For the assessment phase planned in phase 1 of the projects, the focus lies on the system environment and on the participants. The system environment includes the institutions which are dealing with the concerns of the business enterprises and support the internationalisation efforts. Such institutions are for example the economic chamber, the chamber of labour, the Carinthian Economic Promotion Fund, enterprise clusters, regional associations and industrial estates as well as training centres for apprentices. The stakeholder's interests, opinions and future visions will be collected and included in the analysis. It will be researched which facilities, programs etc. exist, what they offer, which experiences concerning these offers exist, what is expected from them in the future and how is the communication from regional to supra-regional organised.

In further consequence the focus of the project lies on the directly involved participants.

⁴ Personal contacts abroad, international networks, experience with international projects ease to build further international relations see Juritsch 2011, p. 73. To establish new collaborations and to implement projects often means to overcome difficulties. See the dissertation project from Eva-Maria Wutte-Kirchgatterer concerning the topic of boundless cooperation between Austria and Slovenia within the frame of the European territorial Cooperation.

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We focus on the perspectives of (potential) employees: the interests and needs of young people which aspire an education or look for work after their education as well as the needs of people already working. Especially the question which contribution internationalisation can make in order to satisfy the need for change and to broaden one's mind is pursued.

Additionally, the project includes the perspectives of the companies: companies need well educated, dedicated and satisfied employees which can contribute to the economic stability at the end. Change, mind expansion and a moderate culture of innovation are important for companies. Within this project it should be clarified to what extent internationalisation can contribute to a culture of openness and innovation and how it promotes the economic success of companies and at the same time how it influences that skilled employees stay in a company or well-educated ones come to a company. Within this corporate landscape the size of the enterprises is significant and additionally it is important to differentiate between start-ups and established and experienced companies.

Project organisation and methods

Phase 1 of the project "Carinthia International" serves mainly for the identification of cooperation possibilities as well as the survey of the status quo and the definition of thematic focuses for phase 2.

- At the beginning a comprehensive research as well as a
- System environment analysis is conducted
- Based on this analysis, partly structured and qualitative interviews are held with selected stakeholders which will be evaluated from the research team. The goal is to collect the opinions from the involved people concerning the topic, their needs, wishes and fears and to understand which topics bother the participants and should be the subject of further study.
- The summarised and categorised results will be presented to all interviewees and participants during a half-day feedback-workshop in order to (ideally) organise new themes and their further treatment.

Listed below is an overview of the most important thematic emphases from phase 1 in order to explain then the transfer to phase 2.

Results of project phase 1 and emphasis

Migration and shortage of skilled workers

In connection to the topic of migration, young people have to face a double-bind, which becomes obvious in some conversations: "You have to stay at home and contribute to a sustainable development of Carinthia" – "You have to leave and broaden your mind".

In order to counteract the migration, remigration and immigration are mentioned. Companies have also experiences with models of temporary mobility (dual education models, dislocated workplaces). Furthermore entrepreneurs suggest measures in the following areas:

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- Initiatives and projects to strengthen the bond of young people with the region (customised concepts in the companies – holiday work, internships, dual education)
- Public relations (information regarding companies, job opportunities, quality of the region)
- Measures concerning education policy (strengthen the university, university collaborations, cooperation with vocational schools)
- Create attractive job possibilities
- Active recruiting nationally and internationally (e.g. cultivate contacts with universities and schools)
- Support of start-ups in the region
- Create networks with expatriates and cultivate them

Furthermore the immigration of qualified and skilled workers is seen as an opportunity. Measures of integration are important (social integration, integration in the working processes). The associations play an important role here.

Qualifications / education and further education

Shortage of skilled workers is not only discussed in the context with the demographic development but also in context with (lacking) competences of potential employees. The quality of education, especially in the area of the basics (reading, writing and calculating competences) is of high importance.

Due to the rapid technological development the qualification profile changes constantly. Professionals should already have or develop hybrid qualifications. Training facilities and companies with internal further education and specific curricula are challenged. To adopt the further education to the increasing demands is one major issue for the future. In general, the interviewees think that professionals need more competences in the areas of automation technology, IT-skills and mechatronics. Concerning the employees respectively the management, languages, cultural competence and organisation competence is important. Trans-regional cooperation and cooperation with schools and universities in the field of education and further education are seen as important as well, since the motivation and possibility to educate and train employees intern varies. Concerning the education of apprentices the following tension areas are revealed: apprentice education as an important task for companies versus it is more and more difficult to uphold (time wise)and hardly to afford by the companies; apprentice education versus temporary workers; desire for educated employees versus the desire for solid basic education and specialisation and development intern. Traineeships abroad for younger employees are a rarely used way of further education. Promotional instruments in this area are barely known.

Labour markets and employee mobility

Beside the tendency of internationalisation of labour markets, the regional labour market is still important. In the opinion of the entrepreneurs, the best employees are acquired through recommendation in the personal and work-related environment. Spatial different labour markets are identified

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depending on the qualification level: for professionals is the local labour market of higher significance. The higher the qualification the more international is the labour market.

For recruiting employees from abroad administrative barriers are described as a problem. Concerning the willingness of mobility (commute, change the place of residence) crosscurrent trends are described. Employees are partially willed to travel longer distances. The change of the place of residence is linked to the attraction of the environment.

Internationalisation

Internationalisation is described as something important and positive: Internationalisation is the engine for innovation, for Carinthian companies it is essential, it provides good perspectives, sources of income and it increases the attraction of companies.

In the interviews, the expansion into new markets abroad and trans-regional, the development of international cooperation (e.g. licences), to launch companies abroad and the recruitment of employees trans-regionally and internationally are named as important fields of activity within the context of internationalisation.

The following themes seemed to be relevant for the surveyed companies:

- Develop international contacts – from the initial (business) contact to a productive (business) relation
- Prepare the market entry – export of products/services, help and support for the market development abroad
- Cultivate international contacts and develop them to a productive relationship (e.g. customer driven innovation, F&E-projects)
- Cooperation among companies of a region in the internationalisation activities
- Internationalisation and company organisation

Particular challenges are identified in the areas of language competence, organisation of internationalisation activities in companies, approach to legal framework conditions and insufficient infrastructure (technology, traffic). Less attention is currently given to the topic of internationalisation in the context with staff developing strategies and human resource management (e.g. education and further education through traineeships abroad).

Carinthian perspective – what does the country need?

The interviewed entrepreneurs as well as the representatives of the institutions consider it as important that internationalisation should not only be linked to companies but also to the development of Carinthia in general.

The following is considered as important:

- A future oriented strategic alignment of the country with perspectives for companies of different size

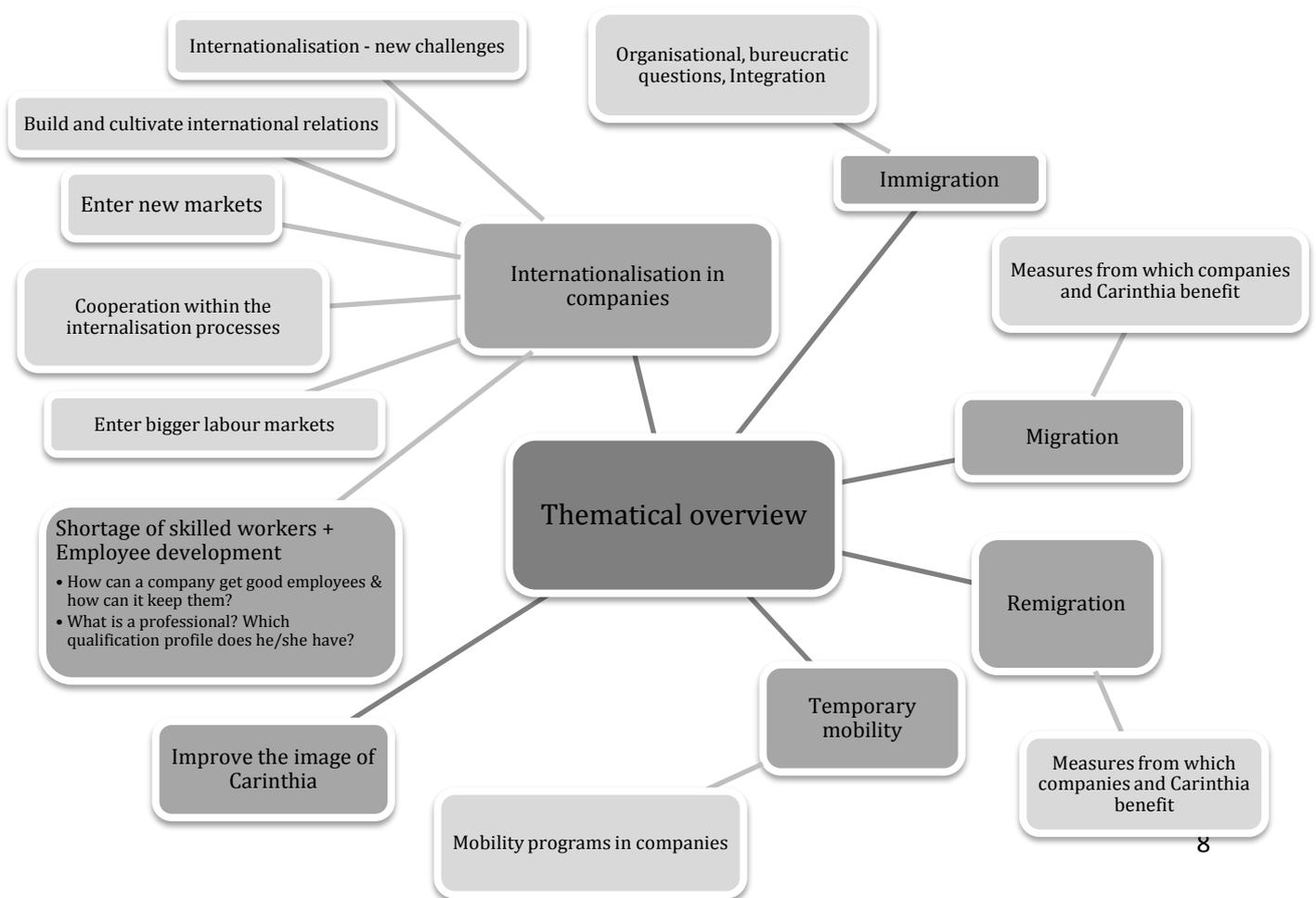
- A positive image of Carinthia and the regions in Carinthia has to be developed (focus on the images conveyed)
- Carinthia needs a business-friendly culture
- Carinthia needs a culture of openness
- Carinthia needs good technical infrastructure and a good traffic infrastructure

Connected institutions

In connection with the topic of internationalisation, several groups (stakeholder, associations) engage with the individual segments of the topic. Coordination between the activities and ideally cooperation between stakeholders can create synergies and strengthen the efficiency.

The example of “Carinthia international” reveals that in order to work on relevant topics it makes sense to integrate the perspectives of several institutions of the public administration. Especially in a time where more and more initiatives are financed and organised project-based – it can be observed that many projects are discontinued as soon as the financing comes to an end – long-term secured institutions play an important role. At the same time the institutions face major challenges. Besides an increasing pressure on the legitimacy from the society and the limitation of resources, it is not easy to keep the expectations of the stakeholders in mind. The bigger and in terms of organisation more complex the institutions are, the more difficult it is to respond according to the needs of the stakeholders.

The following graphic provides a summarised overview of the discussed topics in project phase 1:



Project Phase 2 – Towards lively transnational relationships

The first phase of the project picked up the topic globalisation and its consequences in a quite open way. From an enterprises' perspective processes of internationalisation within their organisation are one important aspect, but the results of the first project phase show that entrepreneurs also have an eye on regional development questions. It is the interdependence of economic success of singular enterprises and the political, cultural frame conditions, which has turned out as crucial. Since not all of the identified topics could be followed within one project, decisions about relevance and priority of topics had to be made. Step by step, along the experiences and interests of enterprises and their employees the work packages of phase 2 were shaped.

Thinking about the field of tension between concentrating on and acting in the local sphere and awareness for the global remained in the centre of interest. In light of the observation that transnational relationships are important for enterprises, as well as for regions, it was a concern to find ways to foster internationality. At the same time, the effort should not mask the challenges that derive from thinking and acting between different societal spaces, described by Dieter Läßle as the micro-, meso – and macro-space⁵. Right from the beginning, the necessity of mediation between the singular spaces should be considered. According to that, building bridges between the local and the global is conceptualised as a process of institutionalisation.

After the first phase of exploration of experiences with and the significance of transnational activities for enterprises the transdisciplinary consortium decided to formulate two working packages that both focus on mobility in further education and professional life. In both of the working packages, researchers and local stakeholders focus on a deeper understanding of the significance of transnational relationships and mobility in a globalised working environment, on the fields of tension that might go along with it and on developing collective strategies to tackle it. The first one focusses on the development of a mobility program for Austrian and foreign enterprises, which in a pilot phase comprises the employees at the enterprises directly involved in the project consortium.

In order to face also the level of regional development, the initiative is organised in cooperation. It will be accessible for all interested enterprises in the region after the pilot phase. In this sense the initiative should contribute to foster a culture of openness and mental dynamic, not only within single enterprises but also in the region as a whole. The program arranges not only intercultural exchange but it focusses on further professional training based on knowledge exchange. Further professional training in this program is a way to support a lively relationship between the local and the global. The program itself is a way to foster transnational activities.

The second working package is a qualitative research on motives for mobility and the dynamics of going out, staying away and returning back home. The research also focuses on benefit, challenges and the significance of mobility for employees.

⁵ Läßle, Dieter: Essay über den Raum: für ein gesellschaftswissenschaftliches Raumkonzept. In: Häussermann et al. (Hrsg.): Stadt und Raum. Freiburg im Breisgau: Centaurus-Verlag, 1991, p. 197

“Organising” the field of tensions by creating a mobility program for transnational knowledge exchange

Through semi structured qualitative interviews, focus group meetings and a following qualitative content analysis⁶, educational and vocational biographies in the tension between regionalism and internationalisation are explored and individual and collective attitudes, experiences and expectations are reconstructed. The leading questions are: What is the significance of temporary international mobility and regional bondage in further development and professional life? What motives are there to be mobile or sedentary? The interviews are conducted with members of the managerial board and employees of small and medium sized enterprises. In an additional online-survey employees were asked for their visions of a mobility program and for their willingness to participate. It is important to explore and understand latent structures of meanings and various dimensions of significance and to integrate the results of the research on the motives into the development process of the mobility program that itself is a transdisciplinary one, since the representatives of the enterprises are involved⁷. Following that participative approach the development is oriented on demands and needs of the concerned actor groups. Topics which turned out to be important regarding the mobility program are:

The personal and professional benefit on the employee’s side

The interviewees mentioned a lot of positive aspects of temporary professional mobility: it contributes to an expansion of the horizon and to a reflection of the own culture and attitudes. An attitude of openness is promoted and it fosters dealing creatively with uncertainty and unpredictability. People feel joy and pride because passed adventures make themselves proud and strengthen them. Social benefit is expected. Staying abroad helps to get valuable contacts and new friends and helps to build trust in existing cooperation. It contributes to an enhancement of language skills and it is useful for the career.

Regarding the professional life, the interviewees see the positive effects of interrupting working routines and of reflecting working procedures and a defense of dissatisfaction. The interviewees expect an expansion of the technical and professional know-how. Ability to cooperate grows and skills such as flexibility, solution orientation, strength, cultural competence and leadership can be further developed.

The benefit for the enterprises

The benefit for the enterprises lies in the potential of the program to support personnel development and career planning. Employees can be interested and trained for future activities on the international market. The enterprises can benefit from it as a whole by gaining knowledge about internationalisation dynamics. Knowledge exchange can also contribute to knowledge management and can give impetus to innovation processes. Finally a stay abroad can help building concrete work contacts and relationships, it can be a step of preparation for a foreign project and the contacts can lead to new assignments.

⁶ Froschauer, Ulrike / Lueger, Manfred: Das qualitative Interview. Zur Praxis interpretativer Analyse sozialer Systeme. Wien, WUV-UTB Verlag, 2003; Mayring, Philipp: Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse. Grundlagen und Techniken. 12. Auflage. Weinheim: Beltz, 2015

⁷ For the transdisciplinary approach of the project see: Pohl, Christian / Hirsch-Hadorn, Gertrude: Gestaltungsprinzipien für die transdisziplinäre Forschung. München: oekom, 2006; Ukowitz, Martina: „Wenn Forschung Wissenschaft und Praxis zu Wort kommen lässt. Transdisziplinarität aus der Perspektive der Interventionsforschung. Marburg: Metropolis, 2012

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Challenges and obstacles

Of course the interviewees see also challenges and obstacles. They see a possible "double burden" of daily work and work in the host company, they fear a possible lack of clarity regarding their position in the home company and too big differences between the worlds of work. They also see a possible danger of an unwanted dissemination of information.

On a more personal level they see obstacles through bonding and obligations at home, foreign languages, unknown cultures and emotional challenges (fear, loneliness, anxiety) or fear of financial costs.

The importance of an adequate duration of the stay

In addressing the issue of the ideal duration, a factual and emotional level of consideration could be observed and a significant difference between the answers in the online survey (where people were more generous) and in the qualitative interviews. In the interviews the question of duration got the characteristic of negotiating with oneself. The interviewees signalled that it is important to find an ideal time frame for an absence and they were mentioning "pain barriers" regarding the duration of a stay. The bigger part thinks that about 3-4 weeks are realistic, some can imagine to stay abroad up to three months.

Important framework requirements

It turned out to be crucial that the program, by providing a stable framework, also cares about the emotional level. For the interviewees clarity and certainty in the framework and a well-structured program and sufficient information are important. They appreciate good preparation and good wrapping up: Preparation for the concrete activity in the professional field, linguistic preparation with a basic training and training of specialized vocabulary. The experience and knowledge transfer in the home company should be organised. The aims and benefits should be clearly recognizable and motivating for the participants. Attractive guest positions would be appreciated (interesting companies and activities, a good location, pleasant climate etc.) The participation should be voluntary.

Summing up the expectations, the mobility program should enhance international professional exchange of experiences of staff at different levels and with different activity profiles. Temporary stays which are organised in an inter-enterprises cooperation should provide hands-on- and experiential learning and intercultural exchange. It is seen as a measure of personnel development as well as development and deepening of business relations. It should be profitable for employees and for the enterprises.

In the following a short outline of the program, which was developed on the basis of the surveys conducted within the project phase 2 of "Carinthia International", is given.

On the move – Internationalisation and Professional Development

A program for enterprises and staff members

On the move is a mobility program and a program for further professional development that focuses on experience based learning and inter collegial exchange. In addition to the professional development, the program fosters intercultural exchange and it supports ongoing processes of internationalisation of enterprises. *On the move* is a program for full age employees of Carinthian enterprises in the field of industry and trade. *On the move* has been conceptualized by a group of Carinthian entrepreneurs and managing directors in cooperation with a scientific team – it is a program for enterprises and staff members designed along their ideas and needs.

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- The mobility program addresses all segments of staff members (education, position, age). Young employees with potential for future international activities and / or leadership positions are one important target group. In this sense the program is also a measure of personnel development.
- *On the move* provides the announcement and placing of clearly defined “Guest Positions” at Carinthian and foreign enterprises.
- The “Guest Positions” are defined regarding the duration and the learning fields and fields of activities and they are collected in a pool of Guest Positions and announced within the participating enterprises.
- The program is integrated into the enterprises further professional development programs and allocated at the human resource departments. The employees apply for the “Guest Positions” in consultation with the enterprise they are working for.
- Preparation, course of the stay and wrap-up follow a roughly structured design and lies in the responsibility of the enterprises.
- At the hosting enterprises there is a person who cares for the guests. He/she is a contact person for organisational questions, helps to make contacts at the host enterprise, and is responsible for the kick-off and the fare-well meeting or the final workshop.
- The program is driven by a corporate association, which cooperates with the participating enterprises. The duties of the organising institution are the administration of the pool of guest positions, the support of the matching between participants and hosting enterprises, the issue of certificates, the evaluation of guest positions.
- There are two types of stays that differ regarding the duration, the roles participants take at the host enterprises and regarding the learning fields.

Good reasons to be *on the move*

Participants get to know structures and processes at the hosting organisation and they get the chance to enlarge their professional knowledge through an exchange of experience with the respective colleagues in the field of learning agreed upon. In addition to the technical / professional knowledge and know-how transfer also social, cultural and linguistic competences can be developed. Building relationships and contacts can foster mutual trust and support future cooperation.

From the enterprises point of view, the mobility program contributes to a concerted personnel development and it can support the development of business relationships and cooperation between participating enterprises. The gain of know-how, e.g. about internationalisation, about structures and procedures, is another benefit for the participating enterprises.

In order to ensure the high quality of the learning processes *on the move* makes suggestions for the definition of guest positions and for the design for the outgoing and incoming stays.

On the move – small

The duration of the stay: 4 weeks.

Type of Guest Position / Participant’s role:

- Visit of further professional development
 - Learning and exchange of experiences about pre-agreed topics and learning fields
- Benefit/ Learning target for participants and host enterprises:

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- Enlargement of knowledge in the field of the pre-agreed topics via exchange of experiences with respective expert personnel
- Establishing contacts, cooperation development

Design / Activities in the delegating enterprise:

- Preparation in the learning field (in consultation with the supervisor)
- Preparation of presentation material about the company and about the respective professional working field
- Leave-taking
- Welcome back with a short report on the pre-agreed topics (presentation) + Lessons Learned (Learning Journal)

Design / Activities in the host enterprise:

- Preparation in the learning field (in consultation with the supervisor)
- Preparation of facilities (Workplace)
- Kick-off at the host company
- Fare-Well-Meeting at the host company

On the move – extended

The duration of the stay: 1-3 Months

Type of Guest Position / Participant's role:

- Clearly defined learning project (duration, topic) and a clearly defined role in the host company
- Joint project work of the collaborators of both companies or collaboration in a project in the host company

Benefit/ Learning target for participants and host enterprises:

- Clearly defined learning project (duration, topic) and a clearly defined role in the host company
- Joint project work of the collaborators of both companies or collaboration in a project in the host company
- Know-how-Transfer; Enlargement of knowledge
- Problem solving on the project level
- Insight into structures and processes in other enterprises and exchange of experiences with professional personnel
- Establishing contacts, building cooperations
- Intercultural exchange, enhancement of language skills

Design / Activities in the delegating enterprise:

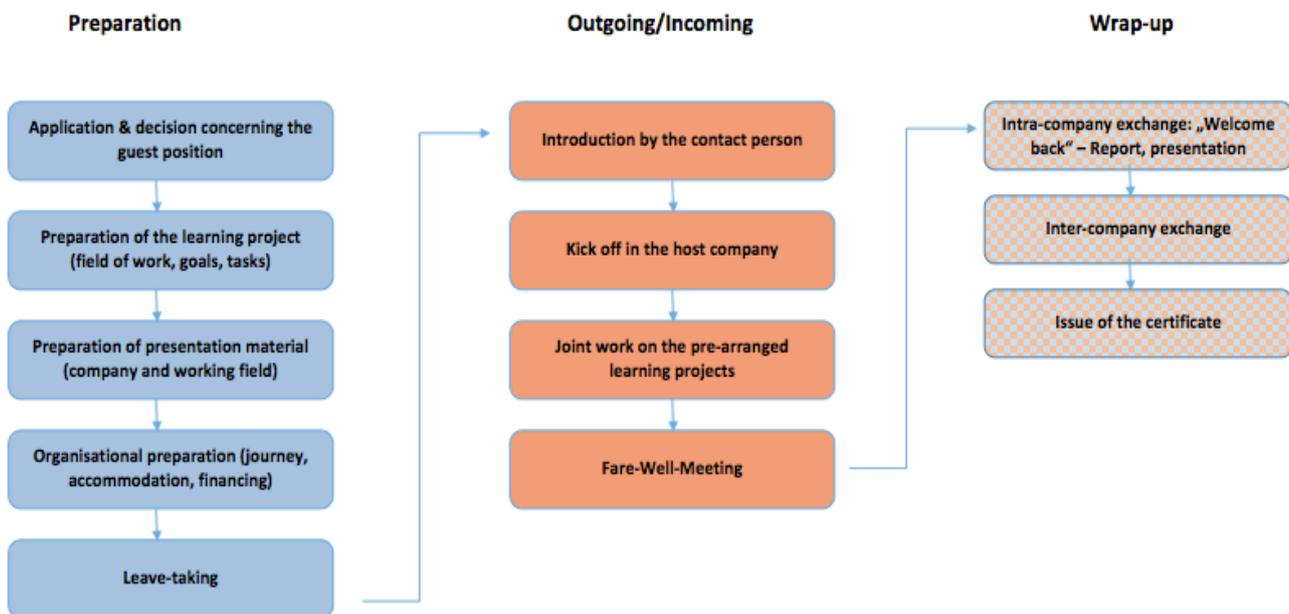
- Definition of a „learning“-project
- Preparation of the project (in consultation with the supervisor and the colleagues in the field of work) – Preparation of contents and working process
- Preparation of presentation material about the company and about the respective professional working field
- Leave-taking
- Welcome back with a presentation of the project results + Lessons Learned (Learning Journal)

- Optional: joint workshop at the host company with the management board – presentation and discussion of the project results
- Documentation of results + Lessons Learned (Learning Journal)

Design / Activities in the host enterprise:

- Definition of a „learning“-project
- Prearrangements for the projects (in consultation with the supervisor and the colleagues in the field of work) – Preparation of contents and working process
- Preparation of the necessary infrastructural facilities (place of work)
- Kick-off at the host company
- Mid-Term-Meeting – discussion of interim results
- Final-Workshop at the host company
- Optional: joint workshop at the host company with the management board – presentation and discussion of the project results

On the move – Program Sequence Outgoing / Incoming



For both programs a certificate is provided which confirms the duration of the stay, the learning fields and topics and the completed design-elements (according to the type of stay). Financing of travel - and accommodation costs is partly supported by funding. In the scheme of on the move small it is suggested that participants respectively the delegating company bear the costs. In on the move extended it is suggested that participants respectively the delegating company and the host company bear the costs in equal parts. The journeys are organised by the delegating company. The organisation of the stay is supported by the host company (accommodation, restaurants, other facilities).

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Intraregional alliances and sustainable regions: Creating a culture of internationality through transnational knowledge exchange

Interim Résumé

The first results of the research project strengthen the hypothesis that transnational relationships and outgoing activities are important for individual development, crucial for economic activities and important for a lively region. The research on the other hand reveals that in fact mobility provokes ambivalences in the moment when people are confronted personally and directly with the question if they would pass some weeks or months abroad. It is interesting that the general positive attitude towards temporary professional mobility, high expectations and demands suddenly turn into severe concerns, when the interviewed persons begin to think about it more in detail.

People see themselves between challenges which are perceived as positive and excessive demands which cause refusal. Particularly if they are not used to outgoing activities or if they had to pass too long phases of temporary professional mobility. To a certain extent the disposition to mobility can be seen as a matter of personality, but the interviews show that it is also a matter of socialisation. The more people are familiar with staying abroad, the more they are open for further outgoing activities. It can be stated that positive experiences, increase the willingness to temporary mobility.

The research shows that in the context of mobility people have contradictory needs. Just to give two examples: To a certain extent they need reliability and the certainty that they can control the situation. On the other hand the positive and exciting experiences derive from the insecure, from the unexpected and from difficult situations, which were managed to overcome. Another example for contradictory needs is that people on a stay abroad search for the feeling of freedom (being on their own, not having any liabilities e.g. towards the family) and equally the need of connectedness (with their families and with other people in the foreign country).

As stated above the disposition to outgoing activities in working life to a certain extent is a matter of socialisation. A commonly designed mobility program for employees can contribute to develop a culture of openness and mental and physical mobility. In this sense it is an offer for personal development and from the perspective of enterprises with transnational business relations it is a measure of human resources development. Nevertheless the ambivalences should be taken seriously and a critical reflection of the balance between the local and the global shouldn't be neglected.

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