

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Culture Meets Region**

Due to globalisation processes, towns and regions are experiencing intensified global competition. In the framework of these global trends, not only the settling of companies and the sources of raw materials, which were the most significant locational factors during the industrial era, play an important role. The acquisitions of private and public investments, cultural and sporting events of global relevance and highly qualified creative workers have become key factors. Soft location factors such as education or the natural environment have become increasingly important. Especially, factors like culture and creativity influence the regions and form innovative and creative milieus. These milieus are "breeding grounds" for technical and social progress. They also generate images of cities and regions, which strengthen their position in the global competition and attract highly qualified employees. In his bestseller "The Rise of the Creative Class", Richard Florida shows (cf. Florida 2002) that culture and the related creativity related to it have deep impacts on the social and economic growth of regions and therefore are good opportunities for regional development.

### **1.2 Culture Meets Europe**

Culture and creativity, however, do not only play an important role for the regions themselves and their development, but also become more significant in the context of European integration and territorial cohesion. The cultural dimension of the European integration was already implemented in the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 (cf. Maastricht Treaty art. 128).

Against the background of cultural diversity and the concurrent awareness of a common European cultural heritage, the dialogue between the EU member states should be enhanced. It is the aim of the European Union to maintain the cultural diversity of the regions, to support them in protecting their cultural uniqueness and to promote the intercultural dialogue, thereby bringing them closer together.

These objectives, however, do not only affect the collaboration of the EU member states, but also have far-reaching consequences for the external relations with countries outside the EU. In the "Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the promotion of

cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in the external relations of the Union and its Member States" from the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2008, the policy objectives are defined as followed:

- "strengthening the place and the role of culture in the policies and programmes conducted within the framework of external relations and promoting cooperation with third countries and international organisations with responsibility in the field of culture, in particular UNESCO and the Council of Europe, in order to improve the quality and diversity of the cultural activities carried out, and, more generally, contribute to the attainment of external policy objectives and to sustainable development;
- promoting the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions of 20 October 2005;
- promoting intercultural dialogue through the pursuit of specific projects, awareness-raising activities and exchanges of good practice carried out successfully in the Member States and outside the Union in the framework of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008), in particular in the light of the stock-taking exercise on that Year that will be carried out by the Commission" (cf. European commission, 2008).

Especially border regions, as hinges between different national states within the EU as well as hinges at the external boundary of the European Union, have a special role in the context of the European integration. In these areas cross-border cooperation is experienced every day, e.g. via economic integration, commuting, mobility or cultural networks.

Based on these considerations, a PhD thesis is being carried out at the Geography Department of the University of Innsbruck since January 2010. The aim of this thesis is to analyse the connections between culture, creativity and regional development in border regions. Furthermore, the dissertation seeks to develop visions and strategies for a sustainable cultural development. As the research process is rather young, the paper proposed for the Regional Studies Association International Conference 2011 in Newcastle presents first insights and provisional results of this doctoral thesis.

Firstly, the paper considers the relevant theoretical framework regarding culture, creativity and regional development. It focuses on the concepts of "sustainable regional development" and "regional governance in the cultural field". Secondly, the key research questions and the methodology are presented. Finally, the main part of the proposed paper includes the presentation and the discussion of first results of the field research in the area of investigation – the Alpine Rhine Valley.

## 2 Culture Meets Theory

From a geographical perspective, different theoretical approaches regarding the relationship between culture, creativity and cross-border development exist. Examples are "creative milieus, "regional identity", "regional governance" or "sustainable regional development". Based on the topic of the proposed paper, the theoretical reflection is limited to the two concepts "sustainable regional development" and "regional governance in the cultural field".

### 2.1 Sustainable Development

"Sustainable development" is the first relevant concept, which forms the basis for the following remarks. This theory summarises concepts and measures which support the economic, social and cultural development of regions for several generations. Sustainable development aims at compensating for regional disparities to ensure equal living conditions, and requires the systematic coordination of regional planning and policy (cf. Alisch et. al., 2005, p. 2514).

Culture - in all its facets - influences the regions in many, very different ways, and contributes to a sustainable development in manifold manners. On the one hand, quantifiable factors such as the contribution of cultural industries to the GDP or the contribution of cultural heritage sites to regional tourism play an important role for the described processes. On the other hand, indirect effects which are hard to measure are often connected to these processes as well. According to Martin Heller, director of the European Capital of Culture Linz 2009, it is not just about "strengthening the economy in the classic sense, but to develop factors that economically play an important role today: such as education, openness, cultural life" (Heller, 2009, p. 63).

The different dimensions of culture as potential drivers for regional development are multifaceted and are explained in the following part (cf. Kunzmann, 2006, p.3).

**Culture creates identity:** Inhabitants of a city or a region primarily identify themselves with the cultural heritage and its traditions. Images of buildings, cityscapes and landscapes are reflecting this identity. But there are also events supporting this visual image which create a specific local and regional identity.

**Culture shapes the image:** Culture has become an indispensable part of urban or regional marketing. Cities and regions merchandise their cultural infrastructure, their creative milieus and their cultural events to attract investors, institutions, highly qualified employees and tourists.

**Culture creates work:** Cultural and creative industries have become an important economic sector. The presence of "creative minds" as a central feature for the innovative capacity of regions has gained importance in the scientific and in the political-economic discussion. Questions such as, "which factors attract a certain creative class or which impacts have these creative minds on the regional development" arise.

## 2.2 Regional Governance in the Cultural Sector

"Regional governance" is the second relevant concept – presented in this paper". Regional governance, as a collective term, includes all changing forms of regulation for regional development and stands for network-like, weakly-institutionalised forms of control, in which governmental, economic and civil-society actors interact (cf. Alisch et al., 2005, p. 2515).

Border regions such as the Alpine Rhine Valley are particularly challenged to coordinate spatial development and processes across national boundaries. Therefore, governance is a fundamental concept for their cross-border capacity to act.

While in many fields of research (such as spatial planning) the governance concept has been taken into account for quite some time, in the cultural sector it is a relatively new concept. Innovative inputs were given by the final report "Kultur in Deutschland" of the Enquete Commission of the German Bundestag (cf. Deutscher Bundestag, 2007). The report develops an integrative perspective on all three sectors: state, market and civil society and their relationships in the cultural field. The overall concept of an "activating cultural state" aims at a new, holistic understanding of cultural policy. Cultural policy is not only limited to public institutions, but it is generated by the interaction between different actors (associations, businesses, foundations, churches, etc.) (cf. Knoblich / Scheytt, 2009, p. 35).

Regional governance in the cultural field, however, does not only refer to the cooperation of various actors, but is also longing for balanced cultural offerings for all population strata. "Participation, contribution and cooperation are essential elements of governance [...] (cf. Knoblich / Scheytt, 2009, p. 37). Regarding "culture" it means, that on the one hand, networks must be maintained to support "breeding grounds" for new ideas and innovations in the cultural sector at regional level. Isolated activities are linked to common events with nationwide visibility. On the other hand, the periodic organization of events also needs strong institutions. Therefore it makes sense to amend network-like bottom-up governance patterns by top-down government structures, i.e. through the creation of institutions that handle problems in a long-term perspective (Diller 2003).

Clear objectives are the common basis for a successful partnership between cultural actors. For this purpose, stakeholders should work out cultural development strategies

aiming at combining creative and monetary resources and developing common visions and strategies for a sustainable cultural work.

At the same time creating agencies for honorary offices and concrete cooperation projects, i.e. cooperation between theatres or museums, can be mentioned. This applies equally to the changing roles of public, private non-profit and private-sector actors and institutions (cf. Föhl, 2009, p. 16).

### 3 Research Questions and Methods

Against this theoretical background three main questions arise, which will be answered in the proposed paper:

- Which actors influence the creative milieus and for which purpose? Do any transnational cooperative efforts or social networks exist?
- How does the external frontier of the EU influence the creative milieus in the "Alpine Rhine Valley"?
- What are the cultural potentials for a sustainable development / a creative environment and which conditions have to be created to achieve this?

To answer these questions properly, the presented doctoral thesis uses a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods. The investigation focuses especially on qualitative interviews with various stakeholders in the cultural sector and in cross-border regional development. In terms of the regional governance approach the doctoral student

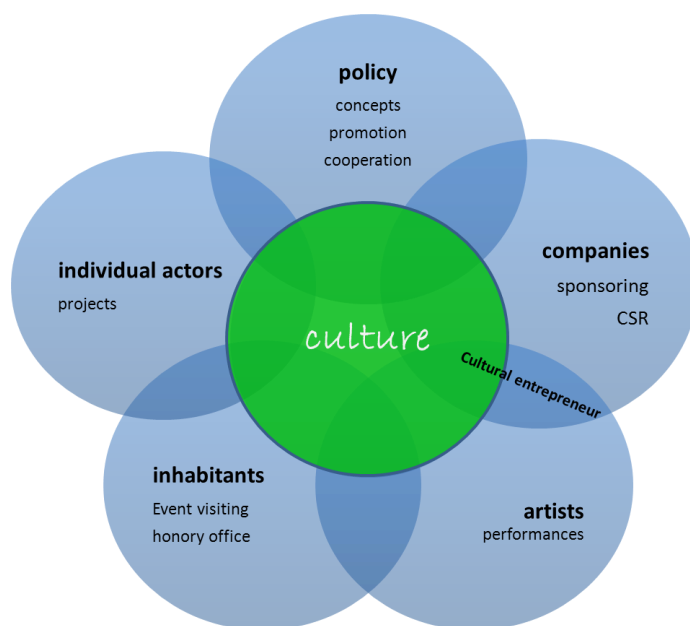


Figure 1: Actors influencing culture

interviews different actors and stakeholder groups with regard to their influence on culture in the region (cf. Figure 1). The results presented in this paper are based on the first stage of exploratory field research, carried out from July to October 2010. The scientific objective of the first phase was to capture the cultural situation in the area of investigation. Therefore it was necessary to identify cultural places and cultural offerings. For this purpose the author carried

out an archival analysis, i.e. the collection and analysis of documents concerning cultural events.

The second phase of the survey consisted of interviews with regional stakeholders. In this stage actors from the cultural, economic, political and touristic fields were interviewed regarding the "cultural region Alpine Rhine Valley". The interviews focused on the existence of networks and their cooperation within the region. For the interviewer it was relevant whether cross-level, cross-sectoral and/or cross-border linkages and the integration of the population in these networks existed. These conversations were transliterated by using the f4 program and subsequently evaluated with the MaxQDA software. The results of these analyses are the basis for the following statements. Because of the early stage of the thesis, the presented results should be seen as first insights in the research process. The results have to be supplemented by further surveys. A workshop with inhabitants of the Alpine Rhine Valley is planned for May 2011.

#### 4 Area of Investigation: Alpine Rhine Valley

The Alpine Rhine Valley (see Figure 2) is an alpine valley with a length of 90 km, which reaches from the confluence of the "Vorder-" and the "Hinter-" Rhine to the embouchure

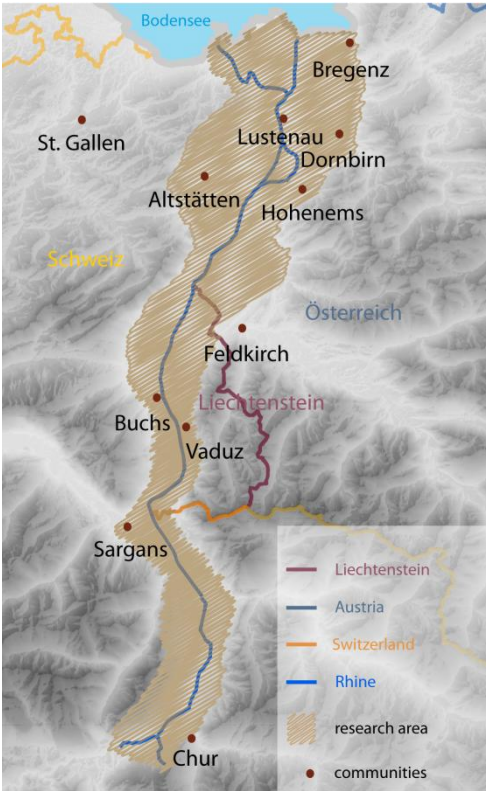


Figure 2: The Alpine Rhine Valley

of the Rhine into the Lake Constance. It is the meeting point for the cantons of St. Gallen and Graubünden (Switzerland), the federal state of Vorarlberg (Austria) and the principality of Liechtenstein (Liechtenstein).

Although, the valley forms a natural geographic unit, there does not exist ONE Alpine Rhine Valley from a political or economic point of view. As a border region, the area is characterized by the tension between political boundaries on the one hand, and close functional linkages and mutual dependencies on the other hand. From a political perspective the valley is a very complex formation, because authorities on different hierarchical levels meet each other. The EU's external border, national, cantonal, and community borders create a small-

chambered region. In the recent past, developments can be observed, i.e. the European integration, technological innovations or globalisation processes, which make the boundaries between the neighbouring states "softer" (cf. Meier 2009).

### ... Spatial Structure

The settlement patterns in the Alpine Rhine Valley are characterised by a "zwischenstädtische" (cf. Sieverts, 2001) structure, which means compaction, on the one hand and fringing, on the other hand. The spatial structure consists of small and medium-sized towns. Clear distinctions between local communities and associated natural areas cannot be seen anymore. The region is branded by a polycentric basic structure, which means that important institutions and companies are not concentrated in one centre. They are distributed in the whole region and well interconnected. The Alpine Rhine has about 450,000 inhabitants. Dornbirn with 46,000 inhabitants is the largest settlement in the area of investigation, followed by Chur with approximately 34,000 and Feldkirch with around 31,000 inhabitants.

### ... Trends

Generally, it can be established that from an economic and demographic perspective, the Alpine Rhine Valley is one of the most prosperous regions in Europe. In recent decades, however, dramatic changes were performed in the economic as well as settlement structures. These changes have become visible in the structural transformation of the industrial sector, in the lasting tertiarisation, in the expansion of urban and suburban settlement patterns and in the disappearance of traditional rural settlement structures.

### ... Future developments

These identified trends and developments in the study area, therefore demand new solutions and new cross border cooperation. Due to the layout of the region in different political systems with different framework conditions the Alpine Rhine Valley is up to now hardly seen as one geographic unit with one common development strategy. Culture as a "universal good" could make a decisive contribution to the strengthening of regional cooperation and to enable a transboundary development.

## 5 First Research Results

### 5.1 Cultural Region

The first analyses of the "cultural region" have shown that there are many artistic and cultural activities in the Alpine Rhine valley. Both, the "local culture" and the nationwide cultural offers are diverse. So the offers range from local clubs, associations (e.g. bands, choirs, etc.) to nationwide known events such as the "Bregenzer Festspiele". The "cultural landscape" in the region has experienced a strong development, such as Walter Marx, President of the Cultural Foundation of Liechtenstein, describes:

*"I think in the last 15 or 20 years, there was an incredible development in the cultural field – even in small communities. In the past, cultural events were more concentrated in bigger cities such as Dornbirn and Bregenz. Today, if you have a look in the event*

*calendar, you can find events in every village. There are cultural activities in every community – and for the most part of very high quality.”*  
*(Walter Marx, interview on 16th September, 2010)*

To situate cultural events and important centres of culture in the Alpine Rhine valley and to show their spatial distribution, brochures and flyers concerning culture and art were collected in tourist offices and town halls across the region. These leaflets were evaluated and afterwards displayed in a map (see Figure 3).

The first evaluation of the promotional literature shows that the cultural institutions are not concentrated in one town or district in the Alpine Rhine valley, but are evenly distributed over the region. However, a clear dominance of the orographic right side of the Rhine, that means Liechtenstein and Vorarlberg, is noticeable. Schloss Werdenberg in the St. Galler part of the valley can be mentioned as an exception. In recent years many events have been established in this location. Bregenz, Dornbirn, Feldkirch, Vaduz and Chur play important roles in the cultural life of the Alpine Rhine Valley. This can mainly be linked to the population and the centrality of the cities. In this reflection, you have to accentuate Vaduz (with 5,111 inhabitants relatively small) that offers a multiplicity of cultural institutions. Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Kunstraum Engländerbau should be mentioned as examples. This cultural importance of Vaduz is caused by the representative function as the capital of the Principality of Liechtenstein.

If the sites are compared with regard to their building stock, a wide range of different types will be identified. Old castles, e.g. the “Schloss Werdenberg”, old industrial plants, such as “Otten Gravur Areal” in Dornbirn or the lake stage in Bregenz are used for cultural performances.

Also one can find diverse festivals and seasonal events in the area of investigation. To mention just a few examples of the wide range of events in this area, the Bregenzer Festspiele taking place on the lake stage are of nationwide importance. In the rock/pop field, the “poolbarfestival” or the “Szene-open-Air” in Lustenau attract a supra-regional

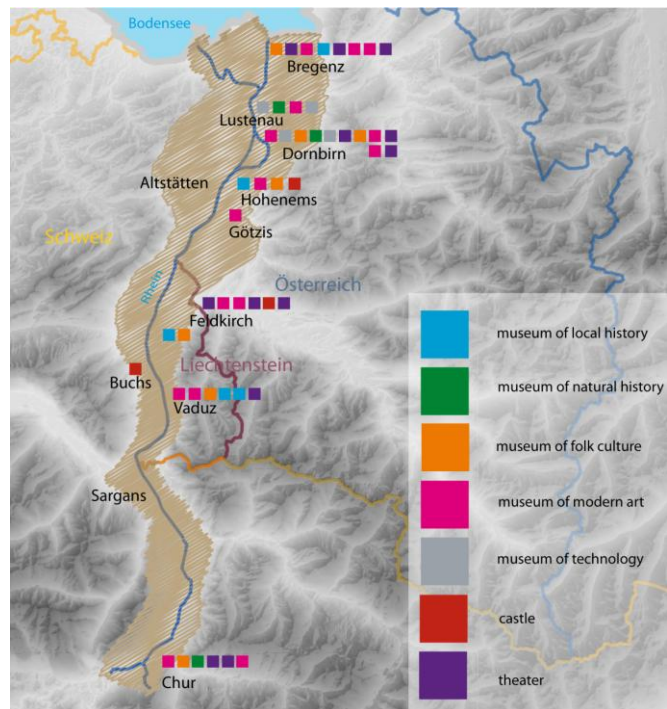


Figure 3: The cultural region



audience. The art and design scene meets every year at the “art bodensee” and the “designforum” in Feldkirch.

## 5.2 Research Question 1: Which Actors Influence the Creative Milieus and for which Purpose? Do any Transnational Cooperative Efforts or Social Networks Exist?

The first research question refers to the actors and the cooperation in the cultural sector. In terms of a regional governance approach you have to analyse, which cultural actors influence the “cultural landscape” and which cooperation between different levels and sectors (state / economy, civil society) exist (see Figure 4). Financial resources, regulatory frameworks or cooperation could be the linkages between the different levels. The following table gives a first schematic overview concerning the relevant actors and actor groups in the research area:

stakeholders	level	Switzerland	Liechtenstein	Austria
political actors	transnational	International Lake Constance Conference (Cultural Commission)		European Union
	national	Bundesamt für Kultur	Stabstelle für Kulturfragen	Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur
	cantone / federal state	Amt für Kultur (St. Gallen, Graubünden)		Amt für Kultur (Vorarlberg)
	regional	regional cultural platform (e.g. Südkultur)		
	community (e.g.)	Buchs	Vaduz	Bregenz
(culture / creative) economy	festivals (e.g.)	St. Gallen Open Air	Liechtenstein Festival	Bregenzer Festspiele
	institutions (e.g.)	Kunstmuseum St. Gallen	Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein	Kunsthaus Bregenz
	sponsors (e.g.)	Migros	Hilti	Hypo Vorarlberg
civil society	association (e.g.)	Kunstverein St. Gallen	Kulturgilde Liechtenstein	IG Kultur Vorarlberg
	individual actors	artists / inhabitants / tourists	artists / inhabitants / tourists	artists / inhabitants / tourists

Figure 4: Cultural actors in the Alpine Rhine Valley

In the table above, actors are divided into three different sectors: policy makers, economic actors and the civil society. Besides the transnational level, the figure differentiates between stakeholders from Switzerland, the Principality of Liechtenstein and Austria. As the relations are very complex in the cultural sector, four special features of the cultural sector are described in more detail. The different examples are indicated in the table above by the numbers 1 to 4.

### Example 1: Effects of the EU external border

The EU external border, which runs through the Alpine Rhine Valley, has far reaching influences on the cultural networks and partnerships in the area. Caused by the membership of the Republic of Austria in the European Union, art projects and artists

from Vorarlberg may participate in the European programs such as "Culture 2007-2013". Due to the non-membership of their states, Swiss and Liechtenstein artists, however, may only take part in special joint projects and programs.

### Example 2: "International Lake Constance Conference"

Another influential player in cross-border cooperation is the "International Lake Constance Conference". In this committee, cantons and federal states around the Lake Constance work on topics, which are relevant for the cross-border living together. The "cultural commission" of the International Lake Constance Conference is of great importance for art and culture, because it supports cultural dialogs, meetings of artists and financial promotions. However, it has to be mentioned, that there is no common cultural concept neither for the Lake Constance Area nor the Alpine Rhine Valley. While some municipalities are trying to develop their own cultural models, no common strategic paper at regional or interregional level exists.

### Example 3: "Kulturachse"

The so called cultural axis (Kulturachse) is another example of cross-border cooperation between cultural institutions. In 2001, the Kunsthaus Bregenz, the Kunstmuseum of St. Gallen, Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein and the Kunstmuseum in Chur have started a cooperation to reach new audiences and to enter a new market. Visible signs of this cooperation between the four institutions are a common presentation at the "Art Bodensee" and a common advertisement and postcard campaign, which announces the current exhibitions (cf. Figure 5).



Figure 5: Advertisement "Kulturachse"

### Example 4: Regional cultural platform Südkultur"

A model project in the St. Galler Rhine Valley is the regional cultural platform "Südkultur". The project's objective is to develop an independent and confident cultural profile for the region. The focus lies on the cooperation between the municipalities, the canton, the artists and the population. From 2008 to 2011 the platform formulated six general objectives:

- Discover sound culture
- Develop building culture
- Tell Stories
- Care Community
- Appreciate Commitment

- Simplify cultural promotion

The table above and the examples show that the cultural life in the border region is influenced by various actors. Even though, in the course of this paper only a few short inputs could be mentioned, it becomes obvious, that the linkages and cooperation are complex and multilayer. However, it is also apparent that cross-border cooperation is facing challenges due to political and legal conditions. The membership / non-membership in the EU as well as different national structures are also major “barriers” for the artistic and cultural sector and hamper cooperation in the region. The border’s positive and negative impacts on the culture will be discussed in the second research question.

### 5.3 Research Question 2: How does the External Frontier of the EU Influence the Creative Milieus in the “Alpine Rhine Valley”?

The second research question deals with the impact of the EU external border on culture and the cultural networks. The first results on this subject are presented in the following table.

positive impacts	negative impacts
diverse cultural offers	culture as political topic not established; no common cultural concepts
border stimulates cultural competition	cultural policy limited to the territory
border as artistic object inspires artists	different structures in cultural policy and promotion
culture can “break down” barriers	Switzerland & the Principality of Liechtenstein no EU member states
	poor flow of information
	different currencies (impacts on admission fees)
	no cross-border transportation systems, no railway-station in Vaduz

**Table 1: Positive and negative impacts on culture in the Alpine Rhine Valley**

#### Positive effects:

During the interviews with economic, cultural and political stakeholders some positive effects were mentioned. These are caused by the peripheral location of the Alpine Rhine Valley. Due to the “meeting” of different nation states at the border, there are the diverse cultural offers of several states.

As an artistic object, the boundary can be very exciting and stimulating for performers. Thus, an examination of the issues "border and identity" can inspire and challenge artists in many ways. For instance the “artistic border” in Kreuzlingen should be mentioned. There, 22 sculptures indicate the boundary between Germany and Switzerland.

In addition, culture can be seen as process, which from a “user perspective” is not limited by borders. Klaus Schnell, president of the International Lake Constance Conference described this in the following way:

*“... culture is something, which functions relatively borderless. In their leisure time, inhabitants move and experience the region without boundaries. In the cultural field, there are less “barriers” than e.g., in the economy.”*

*(Klaus Schnell, interview on 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2010)*

### **Negative Effects:**

However, the interviewed experts also pointed out a range of negative effects which were related to the border and the influence on culture in the Alpine Rhine Valley (cf. Table 1).

In general, the topic “culture” is no fixed agenda item and not established in the political discussions between the neighbouring states. Economic or spatial planning oriented questions seem to be major challenges and are therefore important in political debates than cultural issues. That is also one reason why there is no common cultural concept for the whole region.

Another negative effect is related to the political structures in the Alpine Rhine Valley. In the border region three nation states with three different political structures and philosophies meet each other. While Switzerland, that means in this case the canton of St. Gallen, tries to decentralize culture via regional cultural platforms (i.e. Südkultur), the cultural departments of Austria and Liechtenstein have strong positions regarding the organization and promotion of art and culture. Due to the smallness of the country (35,000 inhabitants), there is no federal state / canton level in Liechtenstein. Nevertheless arts and culture play important roles in the external representation of the country.

As already described, the possibilities for the participation of Switzerland and Liechtenstein in common EU programs are very limited. Many cross-border projects are therefore facing major administrative challenges.

As another negative impact, an information lack between cultural actors was mentioned. A better adapted information flow could combine cultural activities, could enable better marketing strategies and tie together financial and human resources.

Finally, the missing cross border public transportation links- should be pointed out. As already discussed, the cultural offers are equally distributed in the region. The research area can be characterised by typical rural features and therefore the public transportation systems cannot be compared to those of urban areas. Especially the trans-border transportation systems are not well established. That is why, visitors of cultural sites who want to use public transportation systems, meet the “limits” of their mobility very easily.

In addition, Vaduz has no railway station, which has negative effects on the accessibility of the local cultural institutions, such as the Kunst Museum.

#### **5.4 Research Question 3: What are the Cultural Potentials for a Sustainable Development / a Creative Environment and which Conditions Have to be Created to Succeed this?**

The last research question considered in this article refers to the potential and the enhancement of cultural frameworks.

As a general precaution for the positive development of the "cultural landscape" in the region, all stakeholders, meaning not only artistic but also economic, political, civil society ones, have to rise their awareness for cultural and artistic questions. Culture and art can -next to economic or political decisions- play an important role concerning the regional, transboundary development. Culture should not be seen as "luxury good", but rather as part of the basic needs.

In the expert interviews, however, all stakeholders raised their concerns over a new "institutionalisation of culture" in the Alpine Rhine Valley. Especially, the formalisation of cultural processes would limit the flexibility and creativity which is seen as the "power" of arts and culture. Thus, it would be more effective to strengthen the project based cooperation.

In the context of regional governance approach, culture should not be seen as a top-down driven process, but specifically promote small projects at the lowest level. Thomas Büchel from the "Office for Cultural Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein" declared, *"You can improve a lot in this area, i.e. you can make small projects at the lowest level. The state does not always have to be the initiator. There should be many projects at the level of artists. [...] And if you notice, that there are some inputs on this level, you can pick up the ideas and use them well. [...] You should not wait until Liechtenstein or Vorarlberg initiate a large-scale project together, it is much livelier and natural if the project "grows from the bottom"."*

*(Thomas Büchel, Interview 24. August 2010).*

The networking of different actors on different levels can therefore make a significant contribution to a shared responsibility for culture in the Alpine Rhine Valley. The above-mentioned regional cultural platform "Südkultur" serves as an example for this regional linkage. A desirable goal would be the implementation of such an initiative in the region. Even though stakeholders do not want new cultural institutions, cultural policies can help to create platforms, bring people together, promote dialogues, enable networks and accelerate the information exchange on common issues.

## 6 Conclusion

During the first stage of the presented doctoral thesis the field studies have shown that the cultural life in the Alpine Rhine Valley is very diverse. From the "cultural primary care" to nationwide known events a broad spectrum of cultural activities is shown in the Alpine Rhine Valley. Particularly Austria and Liechtenstein have a colourful "cultural landscapes". The cultural events are as multifaceted as the actors, which influence arts and culture in the border region.

In addition to this cultural diversity it must be noted, that in the study area three national states with three different "philosophies and structures" in the cultural fields converge. That often handicaps cross-border cooperation. Although culture may appear as a "boundless" process, the impacts the border has on cultural actions are manifold.

Until now, cross-border collaboration between stakeholders are predominantly project-based. Common cultural concepts do not yet exist in the region - and are not demanded by the stakeholders, because the process of culture and creativity is hardly to govern and a new institutionalisation is not necessarily useful for creative, innovative processes. Even though the stakeholders have awareness for the benefits and the need of cross-border cooperation, there is a lack of regional realisation.

Nevertheless, the first studies have shown great potential of culture to promote a sustainable cross-border development. Especially in the field of project-based and inter-municipal cooperation, there are many opportunities for improvement. One goal could be to close "gaps" in cultural networks for creating a common cultural region "Alpine Rhine Valley".

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