

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Goals

The main topics identified for each municipality in the demographic checks are collected in more detail in order to develop suitable solutions for the individual municipalities as well as the region as a whole. The purpose is to make the region more attractive especially for younger people and prevent them from leaving. Moreover, we need to guarantee medical and social care for our elderly and old people by introducing new models of health care. At the same time, there is immediate call for action to reuse vacancies and close the enormous mobility gap.

Priorities and results

1. **Vacancies:** Data on vacant houses, flats, farms and farmhouses as well as commercial space was collected by means of a questionnaire. Moreover, data on temporary and future vacancy (75% of the people living in one household > 70 years) was collected:
 - Actual vacancy:
 - Flats (0%– 15,5%)
 - Houses (0% – 16,05)
 - Farms (0 % - 6%, 1 statistic outlier: 11,8%)
 - Commercial Space (0% - 46,67%)
 - temporary vacancy flats and houses (0-16%, 2 statistic outliers: 47,93% and 68,37%)
 - potential vacancy 75% of the people in one household > 70 years: 7% - 25,6%

2. **Mobility:** Data on mobility gaps was collected from 15 municipalities by means of a questionnaire. After that, a geographical as well as a topical cluster was created.
 - Cluster 1: Reichenau – Bad Kleinkirchheim – Feld am See – Radenthein
 - Limited access to public transport, which means that workers without their own car are not able to get to their working place in the tourism regions of Bad Kleinkirchheim or the Turrach.
 - Poor accessibility to the central region and the district town Spittal, especially to the railway station, which means that students of the FH and university can't get from their place of residence to their study location.
 - Very poor weekend connections
 - Cluster 2: Mühldorf – Lendorf – Baldramsdorf
 - Limited access to bus and train connections
 - Public transport cannot be used by elderly people, because the stations are not in walking distance.
 - Cluster 3: Rennweg – Krems – Gmünd – Malta – Trebesing
 - Cancellation of bus routes with additional total cancellation of weekend lines.
 - Municipalities with many small - partly mountainous- villages, whose inhabitants cannot walk to the station and back.
 - no regular local transport to Gmünd (=mini agglomeration zone)

- Cluster 4: Millstatt und Seeboden

- Poor public bus connections, especially to the small villages
- Limited offer on Sundays and holidays, plus cancellation of the Saturday night shuttle, which was used mainly by young people.

3. **Growing old in the region:** A step towards medical supply for the rural people was the successful application to take part in the interreg-project alpine space “CoNSENSo” (Community Nurse Supporting Elderly in a changing Society, February 2016 – December 2018) together with partners from Slovenia, Italy and France. We chose the municipalities Reichenau, Bad Kleinkirchheim and Malta, because they have to face an expected increase of people 65+ of about 30% until 2031. Their percentage of people 65+ is now 20-24% already. The project’s aim is to help older people stay at home independent and self-determined as long as possible. There are mobile services in the region but their networking is insufficient and there is a missing link between them. Graduated nurses have been upgraded on a tertiary level by the FH Upper Austria and the university Primorska in Izola. They are now responsible to connect the various health and service offers in the region, to spot the people’s needs and to help organize support, e.g. meals on wheels, homecare or adaption of housing space. Moreover, they make contact to practitioners when they spot a medical problem. Taking part in this project created three jobs for women.

4. **Proud of:** We wanted to know how people feel about themselves and what makes them proud in the region. Therefore, we launched a call via print and social media to name people, institutions, clubs, ... in autumn 2015. Then we held a casting to find out why somebody is proud of a certain club, company, 43 people were chosen and got a professional photoshoot. In a festive event their banners were presented to the public and can be seen in all municipalities and in social media. The aim is to make people aware of the diversity in the region and to give curtain to the many committed men and women who work mostly voluntarily in clubs and associations. Our region is permanently confronted with negative connotations (brain drain, unemployment and aging) so that the positive aspects tend to be covered. With this campaign, we want to strengthen the region’s self-esteem. We made a second call in autumn 2016, and in spring 2017 you can see new people of whom the municipalities are proud of.

5. **Brain Gain instead of Brain Drain:** Upper Carinthia is very much affected by brain drain, young, mostly well-educated people leaving the region. To find out more about their motives we started looking for migrated Upper Carinthians (former school-mates, Carinthian Clubs or Austrians Clubs, social media). More than 100 of them were contacted and asked to answer an online questionnaire (designed in cooperation with ÖAR) about their motives of leaving and their interest in the old home. The response rate of 65% exceeded our expectations as well as the fact that more than 80% are still interested in the development of the region. Many of them are also willing to be part of a network, whose working title is “Network OK Nockregion”.

On 15th October, we met the out-migrated Upper Carinthians, who had come mostly from Vienna but also from Germany or Poland for the first time. They got information about the development and the current challenges the region is facing (from the head of AMS Spittal or the mayor of Spittal) We discussed vividly and got valuable contributions from them. At present, we are working on the expansion of the network and the preparation of a second meeting in form of a festivity, to which we’re also going to invite the regional politics of Carinthia. Our vision is to create a pool of

knowledge, gain ambassadors for the region und bring them in touch with educational institutions to foster transfer of knowledge and labour.

Of course, we also want the out-migrated to benefit from the network. When they – at best – plan to start a company in Carinthia we can help them find space, or a suitable house or give them information on the infrastructure for families,

6. **Cooperation-platform:** One main concern of the project is to find out what is going on in the region, who is already working on a certain topic, if there are similarities or even overlaps and if we can bundle financial and time resources to derive the maximum benefit for all. Therefore, we constituted a multisectoral cooperation platform in April 2016. It meets twice a year and consists of representatives from health, educational, youth, mobility, industrial and commercial sectors, from the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Agriculture, the Employment Market Service, the Spittal District Commission, the female business centre and single-person businesses. This platform not only offers the possibility of exchange but also the chance for sectors working together on a topic which would never have thought of having something in common. It's not the purpose to develop new projects as a platform but to provide a framework for networking and a think tank. In the future, we plan to build a bridge to the network OK Nockregion, to gain synergies and bring fresh wind into the region.

7. **Creation of regional value:** We want to keep the small regional cycles alive and therefore we are working on the establishment of the shop "Nockkörperl" at present. Local farmers deliver their products to the shop on a regular basis. The shop will be open from Monday to Friday and the products will be sold by one person, who has the chance of getting a job. Following the cycle of the year, there will be theme weeks, e.g. deer, harvest, ..., when you can get special offers of the season. You can also purchase your individual Nockkörperl as a greeting from the region to take home or to send to your dear ones.

Continuation

The project "Everything there in our valley – therefore consume consciously regional" is a first step towards reuse of a vacant primary school, which shall be transformed into a multiple service site. There local companies or service providers can offer those products and services which are otherwise not available for the residents of the municipality. The first phase is the creation of a directory of all companies and service providers for the five municipalities Trebesing, Rennweg, Krems, Gmünd and Malta in order to make transparent, what is already there in the region. The directory will be delivered to all households to motivate them to consume locally. On the other hand, it shall also support small firms and single-person businesses to stay and help them survive economically in the region.

Another municipality plans to focus on the creation of a new model of living for elderly people. The premise is not to build a new house but to reuse and adapt vacancy.

Financing

The project "Carer for handling questions of demographic change" is an EU-Leader project with 80% subsidies of € 94.400.-and a duration of two years (November 2015 to October 2017).