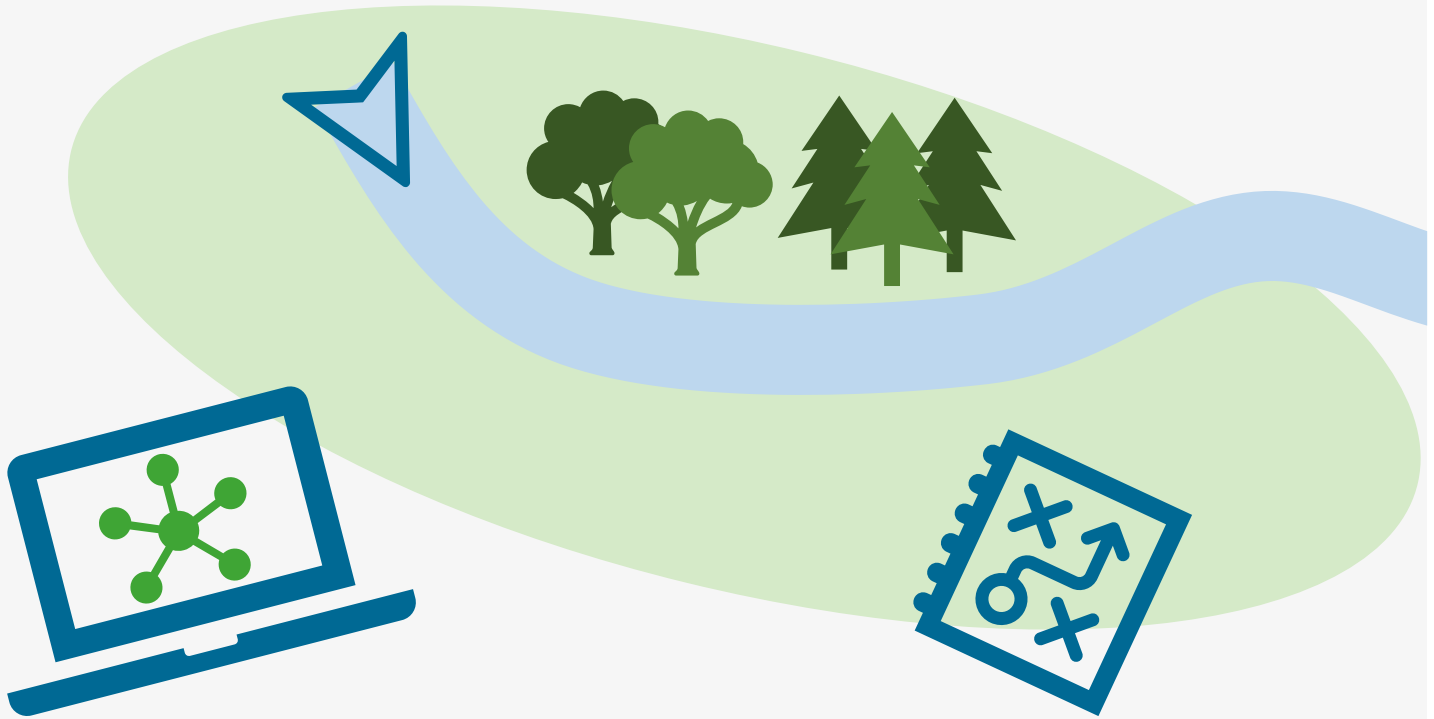


REGIO

TRANSFORMATION



Regional Transformation – Report 2020

Managing Regional Change in Times of Uncertainty

A practical guide for local and regional economic developers

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In order to make the report as user-friendly as possible, the general designation (economic development managers, participants, Regio Transformers, etc.) is chosen at some points. If not explicitly stated, the female form is also always intended.

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Preliminary remark:

Shortly before we finished our practice report on the follow-up of the 1st REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP 2019, we all experienced something we had never seen before: COVID-19. We therefore decided to take another close look at our chapters. Is it still true? Are our findings and theses still valid? We have come to the clear opinion: Yes! Only that some of them will be even more drastically true soon. After all, the COVID-19 pandemic will expose our regions to a much greater obligation to change than they have ever been before. Much is still uncertain, but it always is when it comes to the future - only with the difference that it currently seems less predictable than we were used to. Systemic issues (e.g. local supply, supply chains, recycling management, regional ecosystems, caring culture, transparency) and the merging of people and technology (e.g. digital communication tools, artificial intelligence, diagnostics, neurotechnology, smart logistics, social robotics, eSports, smart home, beauty tech) and their differentiated regional impact need to be reassessed and existing options for action revised. However, it is also true that processes already initiated, such as e-mobility, Industry 4.0 or decarbonisation, cannot be reversed now; they will continue inexorably, perhaps even faster than before. We have therefore made a few additions on the following pages and tried to direct the questions to what lies ahead of us as location and economic development managers in the coming months and years due to developments mentioned above and as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

1 Regional transformation – what's it all for?

Megatrends such as demographic change, changing values, an increasingly knowledge- and data-based economy as well as the conservation of resources and climate protection have been influencing the development of economic locations not just since yesterday. However, as overarching driving forces, they continue to gain momentum. Added to this are industrial convergences and emerging technologies, which are bringing about far-reaching changes in a wide range of application areas. Taken together, these developments cause complex transformation processes that have a significant structural impact on existing industry and value-added constellations in a region. Based on current fields of strength at the location, innovation processes can be stimulated and new fields of activity can be developed. Due to the underlying dynamics and complexity, regional economic managers are often faced with the great challenge of identifying these structure-changing processes in good time, prioritising them and addressing them with suitable measures. The main challenge in this context for economic development is therefore to identify the innovation potential relevant to the region by taking into account and utilising the existing competences of local companies, organisations and individual innovators, while at the same time placing these in the context of overarching trends. Only in this way suitable options for action can be defined for a targeted exploitation of potential¹.

In order to obtain a reliable picture of regionally relevant future trends and innovation potential, foresight studies and databased analyses, for example with regard to research and development, can help to uncover future potential for the region. However, at least equally important is the use of know-how and experience of the regionally based actors. A culture of participation and cooperation within the region and between these actors not only makes it possible to supplement the analytically acquired knowledge with region-specific, implicit knowledge and thus to exploit it in line with actual needs, but also to actively shape a broadly supported regional development process in the long term².

How this can be achieved in practice, which methods and processes need to be successfully applied and to what extent these can be transferred to the individual requirements of other locations, is shown by examples of innovative economic development agencies from different municipalities and regions. A targeted exchange between the respective representatives

provides a good opportunity to profit from positive as well as negative experiences and to receive innovative impulses for own projects and activities. In order to make exactly this possible, the 1st REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP was launched on June 3 and 4, 2019 in Augsburg as a hands-on format for new approaches to economic development. The present report looks back on the topics, methods and practical examples dealt with and moreover provides some suggestions that go beyond the camp. Last but not least, reference is also made to the current exceptional situation around COVID-19.

We wish you an exciting time reading excerpts from an inspiring and enriching REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP with lessons learned for the future. Thank you to all participants!

1.1 Rethink Regional Transformation – individual trend analysis

Regional transformation is nothing new in the classical meaning of the word, because locations have always been subject to a certain amount of change. The term “regional transformation” has just hardly been used until now. There are also a number of other terms such as Economic Development 4.0 or Open Region, which address a new type of economic development and change of locations. The term “Regional Transformation” takes an overall perspective, which is more applicable than ever due to the regional changes currently taking place. Not least because the revolutions of globalisation, digitalisation and climate change are becoming more radical and with increasingly massive regional impact.

A clear picture of the current situation is always a good starting point for determining what needs to be done with respect of the change that is already taking place or is still to come. This actual situation must be analysed individually for each location and cannot be derived in a generalised way. The collection of structural data or location rankings as well as their development over the last few years can provide a first impression here. Often, corresponding location studies are available, which can be used as a basis and only need to be updated.

As mentioned at the beginning, trend analyses or foresight processes can be the next step. There are a large number of studies with different positions on future or megatrends.

1 Foray, Keller, Bersier, Meier zu Köcker (2018): Working Paper on Transformative Activities for Smart Specialisation: Considerations on a Workshop Methodology, Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne

2 Sedlmayr, Nögel, Wittpahl, Meier zu Köcker, Grieb (2019): Understanding Regional Transformation Processes - New Instruments of Regional Strategy Development, Working Paper of the Institute for Innovation and Technology, Vol. 43

Nevertheless, the same or very similar global trends such as individualisation, health, urbanisation, diversity, etc. usually emerge. The challenge is to break these down to one's own region. Thus, it is not a matter of looking into a crystal ball or a simple copy and paste of global trends into the strategy of economic development, but of making people aware, which trends and scenarios are important for the respective location and which are less so. Above all, however, it is important to realise the effects of the respective trends and to derive options for action from them. This step is often not pursued resolutely enough. After all, it makes a big difference whether I operate in a metropolis or a rural region. Eventually, the trend towards urbanization has a different effect on a rural region with a direct rail connection to a major city than on a peripheral location far away from major urban centers. It is also decisive which actors and competencies shape a region. Social diversity in an industrial location, for example, has a different character than in a university town. This all sounds quite logical, but few business development agencies draw concrete conclusions from megatrends in terms of their location specifics and visibly anchor them in their strategy or action portfolio. The approach

of the individual examination also applies to the exceptional situation caused by corona. Undoubtedly, every region is affected by the crisis. However, it is important to recognise that in the medium and long term not every region will be affected in the same way. For example, the economic effects and potential are different in a region with a strong medical technology or pharmaceutical industry than in a location dominated by the transport sector. Regional competencies in the fields of logistics, hygiene, robotics, textiles or in the areas of data economy, measurement and diagnostic systems with real-time information can develop a different dynamic in the short term than locations that are predominantly characterised by tourism and retail. Not only futurologists predict that the world will be a different one after COVID-19. We don't want to deny this, because we know that the world has always changed after major crises or world events. After the Chernobyl nuclear disaster or 11 September 2001, priorities have also shifted. However, we do not believe that concrete scenarios for the future are very useful, because retrospectively considered totally accurate future pictures rarely have come true. We therefore recommend asking ourselves what the priorities for the next

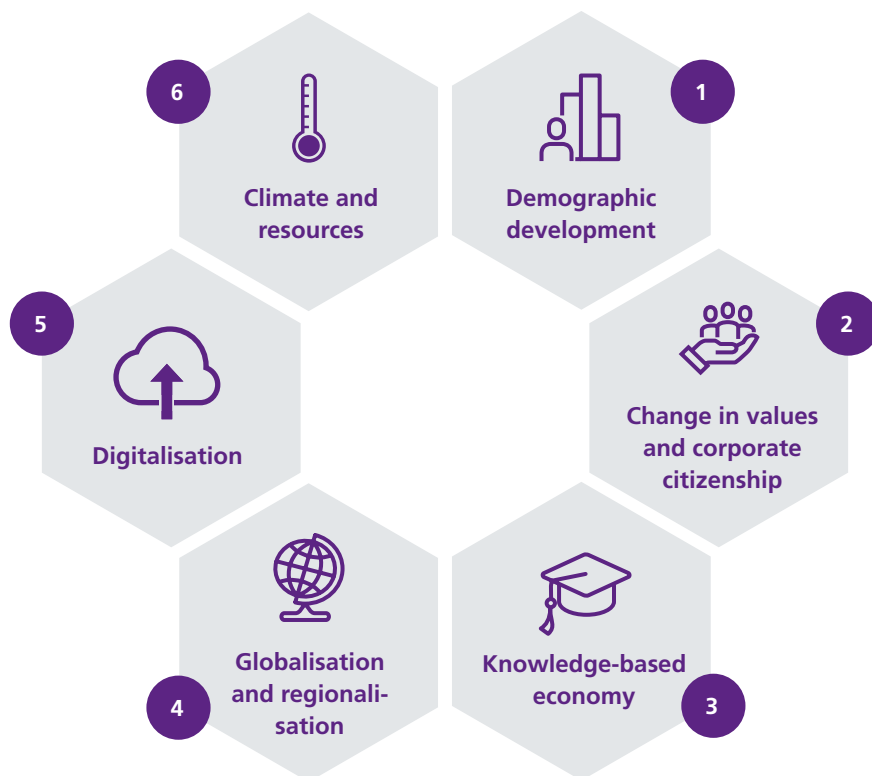


Figure 1: The 6 main trends for site managers

few years might be and we take a critical look at the megatrends with regard to this question³.

The University of St.Gallen has carried out a detailed analysis of important future developments within the framework of a regional foresight study for the Lake Constance region and considered six major thematic areas to be particularly relevant for regional transformation. For these trend groups it can be assumed that they will continue beyond the corona crisis or even be strengthened by it (see figure 1). Location managers should therefore ask themselves the following questions:

1. What do the structural and spatial changes in **population development** mean?
2. What challenges result from the **change in values** and from changed or new forms of **social commitment** and political participation?
3. Which questions arise from the increasing importance of **knowledge as a production factor** and output of the economy?
4. What are the effects for the interaction between **globalisation** on the one hand and the need for **regional integration** of businesses, the labour market, tourism or spatial development on the other?
5. What challenges does **digitisation pose** for these areas?
6. Finally, what challenges arise from the imperative for a **more resource-efficient, CO₂ neutral way of life and economic strategy**?

The questions are relevant for each location, but the answers will be different in each region depending on the specifics of the location. The answers will be understood as an examination of the long-term challenges and development conditions of a region. Participatory procedures for gathering future-relevant information, participation, networking and the joint development of a vision are considered important success factors in order to create a broadly based picture of the implications of the major future trends in the respective region and thus a solid basis for strategic decisions in the present.

The 1st REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP also began with an input from Dr. Roland Scherer and the question of how megatrends affect regional development. The LEGO SERIOUS PLAY method was then used to playfully create initial visions for the local or regional business development and to discuss them with the participants.



³ Schalko 2020: <https://elektro.at/2020/03/24/zukunftsforscher-horx-vier-szenarien-fuer-die-welt-nach-corona/>

2 Regio Transformer: For agile economic development with a hands-on mentality

Nowadays there is often a considerable ambivalence between the fast pace of the economy and increasing bureaucratisation. On the one hand, global markets and digital business models put enormous pressure for change, while on the other hand, stricter regulations and laws such as data protection, environmental regulations or citizens' petitions block any rapid action. This reduces the room for maneuver or causes delays in urgent projects. Because of these and other current challenges, it is important to look at the persons who are responsible for the business locations. Because only those individuals who are willing to take on responsibility and to act accordingly can provide a leverage for more agility and a palpable implementation of measures. Especially in the current pandemic situation, it is obvious that only courageous and quick action by responsible persons will help to avoid getting bogged down in bureaucracy.

2.1 The personality of a Regio Transformer

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.” If we change this challenging quote from Mahatma Gandhi to “Be the change that you wish to see in this region”, we have the mindset that describes the type of economic developer we call Regio Transformer. They are people, starting with themselves, who consider what they and their economic development unit can do themselves to bring about a positive change in their region or municipality. They take regulations, political and social resistance or limited resources of their own organisation very seriously. However, they see this less as a limitation and more as a stimulus to their creativity. Regio Transformers therefore ask themselves, what they and their economic development unit can do themselves despite certain circumstances or formalities and how they can take other actors and stakeholders along and make them more active so that they can take action. In doing so, they take a pragmatic approach and always ask themselves what the first or next step is to get things moving or to develop further. It is about creativity and a hands-on mentality that is not to be confused with actionism. Regio Transformers usually take a holistic approach and have strategic viewpoints, i.e. they have a rough or perhaps even a very precise idea of a region's development within the next years. This foresight is their real driving force, because they know what they want to achieve (together with other actors). For short-term successes and intermediate goals, however, Regio Transformers are also excellent tacticians who have developed a certain feeling through regional experience on site. This feeling helps him or her to decide who should do exactly what and when and who should better refrain

from doing it. It is also this feeling that determines whether a project should rather be initiated with a bang or step-by-step.

Hence, before Regio Transformers become perceptibly active, they ask themselves, for example, whether it is better for the planned activity if they, together with their team, become active themselves, whether a discussion in public or in a small circle is purposeful, whether the impetus should possibly come from a company, a specific organisation or possibly from a certain personality in order to be accepted in the region or at least have a majority. Through a network, which has usually grown over several years, they use the informal channels to address the relevant actors about the activity and to win them over. Vanity, too much ego or arrogance are inappropriate here. A real Regio Transformer is always concerned with the cause and that the region is moving forward. With a healthy self-confidence and authentic appearance, Regio Transformers have their *raison d'être* in the region and do not have to justify why their position and organisation exist and they definitely do not need to boast in any way. They are concerned first and foremost with the location for which they work and not with themselves. Whether an idea comes from them or whether people perceive what exactly their achievement was is of secondary importance for real Regio Transformers. However, they take a position where it is required and they stand by their decisions and ideas. If necessary, however, they also show understanding when things develop differently than planned or need to be reconsidered. It is a fine line that these types of movers and shakers have to walk, and despite the necessary formalities, such as administrative hierarchies, political committees or funding programmes, they also have a command of agile working and hands-on project management. In order not to end up in overactivity, it is important to create test fields for new ideas and not to overtax oneself and the given resources through prioritising and reducing to pilot projects.

Whether economic development in a municipality or region plays an active role in the regional transformation of the respective location or behaves in a more reactive or even onlooker-like manner depends largely on the persons involved. The Regio Transformer does not necessarily have to be the business promoter in the narrower sense, operating in a specially designated administrative office or a business development agency. Those in charge of chambers of commerce, business associations, cluster initiatives and likewise can also consciously or unconsciously assume the role of a Regio Transformer.

When you get involved with a region, start with homepages, check event formats or location marketing. You will quickly notice whether this situation is rather conventional, perhaps even interchangeable, or whether this location can clearly differentiate and stand out. In the latter case, there is a high probability that a team exists that can act hands-on and has a real Regio Transformer at the top. A Regio Transformer who sees himself as a coach and leader with integrity, who is proficient in new management cultures and who sees his team at eye level. A Regio Transformer can motivate the team, e.g. by personally granting individual freedom and possibilities for realisation and by assigning the most suitable colleague for the respective topic. Keep an eye out when you deal with a specific region or a specific business development agency. Do you recognise a Regio Transformer there? Are you yourself in a position to become a Regio Transformer? Does this part suit you? How can you change yourself or develop even more in this direction? Maybe you will find the answer in the next REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP.

2.2 A camp for Regio Transformers

The type of economic developer described in 2.1, which we refer to as Regio Transformer, differs significantly from the classic image we have of administrative staff or career-oriented individuals who do their job primarily for their own advancement. We will not concern ourselves with evaluating the working methods or personal attitudes of people or thinking in pigeonholes. Our aim is to highlight the fact that there are people with special skills, who are actually made for their job as location managers. People who are willing to change a certain region or community for a positive future – and who are able to do so. Not every economic developer is willing or able to be a Regio Transformer, and some locations offer such unfavourable conditions that the required dynamics of a Regio Transformer can lead to overload or blockade amongst the local and regional decision-makers.

Precisely because Regio Transformers often experience resistance in their region and can only rarely exchange information neutrally and completely openly within their sphere of influence, there is a need for a peer group of Regio Transformers and concrete sparring partners. With the

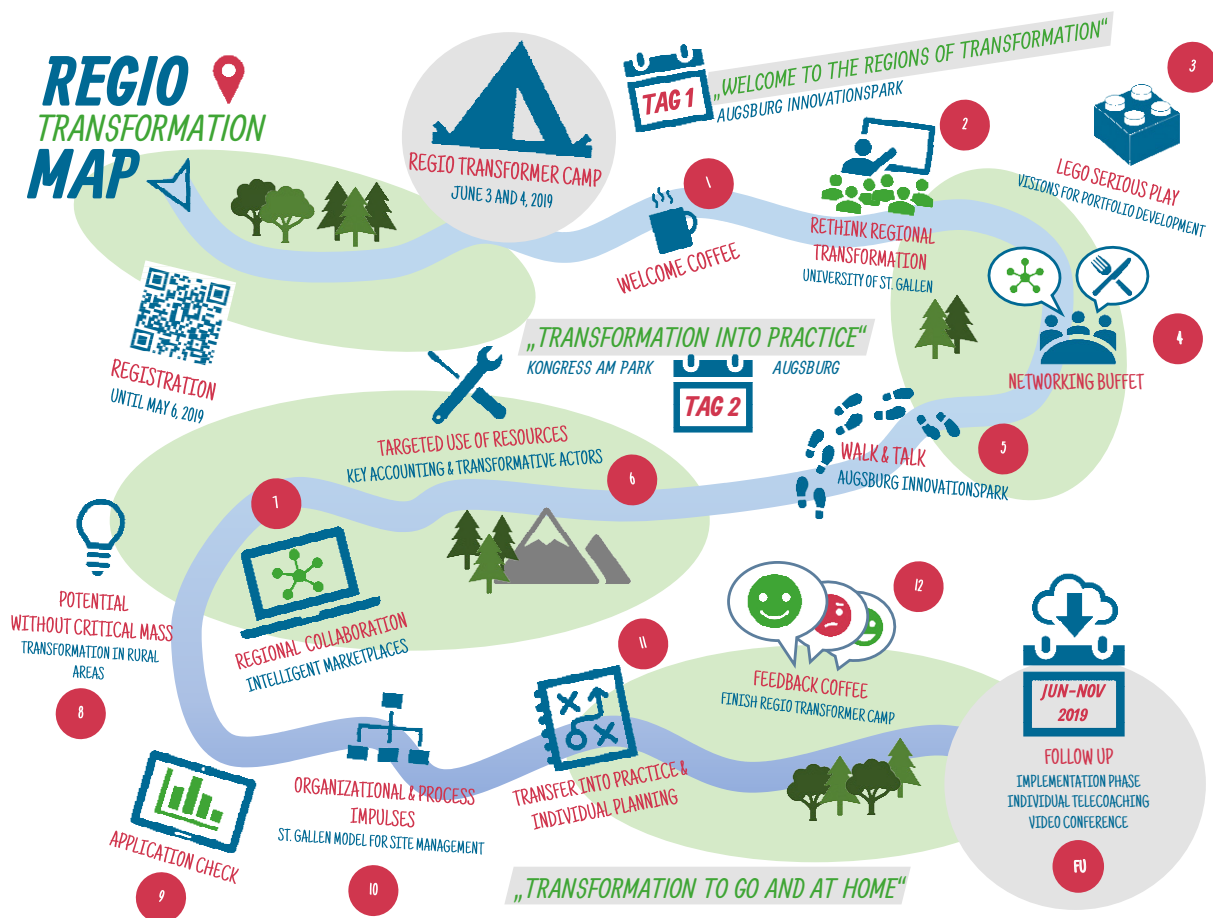


Figure 2: Regio Transformation Map

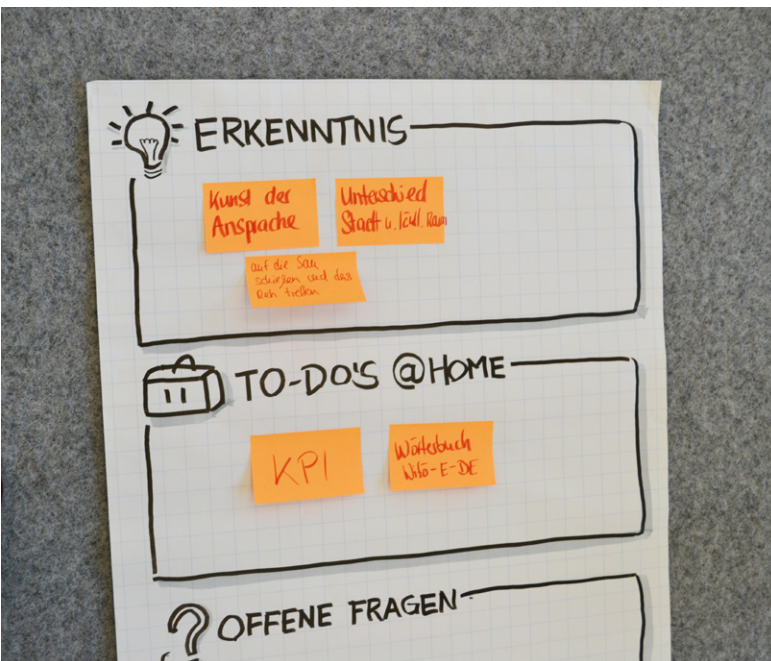


Figure 3: Personal documentation of findings, to-dos and open questions in the Regio Transformer plenary session

aim of meeting this need, the REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP was developed as a hands-on format for new approaches to economic development. The focus is on interactive approaches, innovative impulses and individual practice transfer. A target-oriented exchange, which is tailored to Regio Transformers for adaptation and further development. Under the motto “Local and regional business development reinterpreted – active shaping of regional change”, the first camp deliberately turned the focus of the locations inwards. How do trends of today and tomorrow affect the locations of the participants and what are the individual needs of these regions or municipalities. During the practical insights, we attached great importance to identifying the methods and processes behind the successes. A culture of openness and critical self-reflection was crucial in order to admit mistakes and let others learn from them. But also the willingness to make personal changes and further development in order to create real visions, jointly create opportunities and develop concrete ideas

for a better economic development. On June 3 and 4, 2019 the 1st REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP (RT-Camp) took place in Augsburg, Germany. As the REGIO TRANSFORMATION MAP shows (see Figure 2), the camp was part of an overall process. In the course of the implementation, the participants were accompanied with external support, which included personal telephone coaching and a video conference for following up the implementation if desired.



3 “First-Practice”: Pioneers of Regional Transformation

The following are four examples that provided insights into their analyses and methods for shaping change during the RT-Camp. For this purpose, we selected innovative economic development agencies that successfully applied new instruments and changed approaches to transform their cities, districts and regions. This first-practice is intended to provide suggestions on how to influence trends and individually emerging changes as a location manager. The exchange among the Regio Transformers and learning from mistakes should not be neglected in this regard.

3.1 Augsburg A³ economic region: Where transformation is at home

Region: Economic region Augsburg A³ (city of Augsburg, district of Augsburg, district of Aichach-Friedberg) in Bavaria

Populations: 676.500

Organisation: GmbH

Regio-Transformer:

Andreas Thiel (Managing Director of Regio Augsburg Wirtschaft GmbH),

Wolfgang Hehl (Managing Director Augsburg Innovationspark GmbH)

Primarily addressed trends:

- Globalisation (takeovers by Chinese corporations and site closures)
- Knowledge-based economy (innovation park and settlement of research institutes)
- Climate and resources (consistent focus on resource efficiency)

Augsburg was already a place of transformation in the Middle Ages. The city owes this mainly to two extremely successful merchant families. Jakob Fugger, who was considered the

richest man of his time, for example, initiated important changes in business administration with the introduction of double-entry bookkeeping in Germany and the discovery of a value chain in the context of metal production. The Welser family, also based in Augsburg, was one of the pioneers of globalisation by entering the spice and sugar cane trade in the beginning of the 16th century. The merchant families were followed by a successful textile industry in Augsburg that lasted for several centuries. Considered innovations of this epoch were calico printing, a technique originating in India for printing cotton fabrics, as well as an ingenious channel system that supplied the textile factories with energy. Later with the invention of the diesel engine in Augsburg and the first production of the Linde refrigerating machine and a rotary machine for newspaper printing, mechanical engineering also flourished in the city on the Lech⁴. The lynchpin was the Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nürnberg (M.A.N.), which still exists today as MAN SE, although it now has its headquarters in Munich and belongs to the VW Group via a majority shareholding⁵. The success story of the Augsburg mechanical engineering company also includes KUKA. As early as the beginning of the 20th century, the company set standards in the field of industrial welding and cutting. Recently, however, the robot specialist was more likely to be associated with negative headlines, such as the sell-off of German high technologies, due to the takeover of a Chinese group. The OSRAM site in Augsburg was acquired by a Chinese owner, too. After more than 110 years, light and luminaire production was completely closed down in 2017. Another closure is imminent and will affect the IT sector. The Fujitsu factory, formerly Siemens-Nixdorf, was considered the last remaining computer plant for hardware in Europe. After two decades of job cuts, operations in Augsburg will be completely shut down this year (2020)⁶.

Hence, the transformation was not always all positive and with such negative developments one can also start to complain. This probably happened here and there, so that a few years ago Augsburg was called “Augsburg an der Jammer” (like “Augsburg on the Whining”) by a Bavarian Minister of Finance⁷. Andreas Thiel, the founding managing director of Regio Augsburg Wirtschaft GmbH, who has been

4 Hunziker (2020): https://www.patrizia.ag/de/detail/trends-and-more/augsburg-als-wiege-der-innovation/?utm_campaign=linkedin-kampagne2020_Augsburgtm_medium=linkedintm_source=social

5 Wikipedia (2020): <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/MAN>

6 BR24 (2019): <https://www.br.de/nachrichten/wirtschaft/bayerische-unternehmen-in-der-krise-ein-rueckblick,RUPvyy>

7 Marks (2018): <https://juergen-marks.de/uncategorized/metropole-augsburg-eine-stadt-auf-der-ueberholspur>

demonstrating for a good ten years how to make a virtue out of a necessity, is not at all convinced by the whining. In fact, the Augsburg economic region has undergone an impressive development in this time window, demonstrating on the one hand a high degree of resilience in economic crises situations and on the other hand an intelligent ability of industry to change in new technologies and markets. Figures also back-up this impression, e.g. the gross value added has been increased around 24 percent between 2010 and 2017. There were strong growth rates in the service sector, but also, as before, in manufacturing⁸. In Andreas Thiel's experience the notion of concepts, concepts and concepts is what helped most, as he impressively demonstrated in his presentation on the first evening of the REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP. The participants were able to see the results of such concepts live in the Augsburg Innovation Park, the Augsburg Technology Center and the MAI Carbon Leading-Edge Cluster, all of which are united at the venue of the meeting. In addition, there is a considerable Bavarian aerospace promotion, from which Augsburg also benefited (thanks to convincing concepts). Appropriately enough, a location of the German Aerospace Center (DLR) could be established near the Technology Center. In terms of content, it is all about the future of flying, which should be quiet and as emission-free as possible, for which new materials and raw materials are constantly researched. Another young research institution is the Fraunhofer Institute for Casting, Composite and Processing Technology, located directly next to DLR. Here, the focus on the topic of resource efficiency is already evident.

In addition to Thiel's remarks, Wolfgang Hehl, a passionate manager of the Innovation Park, gave exclusive insights into the business and found the reasons why this concept is successful in the fact "that everything fits together here":

1. **Future topics that are aligned with the competencies of the local industry**, namely ideas for aerospace, lightweight construction, mechatronics, automation, digitalization and environmental technology. From this, the thematic focus was aligned on Industry 4.0 and resource efficiency in the Innovation Park and pursued with an open innovation approach. This concept is consistently adhered to, even against resistance if necessary.
2. **Composition of financing, subsidies and sponsors:** In addition to the city of Augsburg, the district of Augsburg and the Free State of Bavaria, other public partners such as the above-mentioned research institutions and predominantly regional private investors are also involved. The consideration of indirect profitability and a long-term payback period distinguish the project from properties in other major cities.

3. **Attractiveness of the site:** The site is located in the direct vicinity of the university and was specifically developed and planned for this purpose.
4. **Overcoming the "not-invented-here-syndrome":** The right players have been found who want to and can work together. There is a great acceptance that not only one's own ideas are good and that cooperation and networking can help you move forward.

In order to keep a constant eye on upcoming transformations, the Economic Development Agency acts as a systematic networker by picking up new topics as soon as the first signs of them appear. Andreas Thiel's team perceives itself as "sensitizers" who initiate the discourse. In addition to organising the meeting and the exchange of information, great importance is attached to the development and follow-up of ideas. In total, they have gathered 140 network organisations, which they involve in this process. The result is a strong increase in cooperation projects within the region. One of the most current projects is the positioning of Augsburg as a health location and the "conversion" of the Augsburg hospital into a university hospital.

Andreas Thiel's insight: Complex projects need consistency and stamina.

He frankly admits that there were also projects that did not run as planned or even failed. As lessons learned, he thus recommends the following to colleagues:

- Do not leave working groups to their own devices, moderate wherever possible, this is the only way to be properly informed and involved!
- For important projects, take the lead yourself in order to be able to design and, if the worst comes to the worst, not to be confronted with a fait accompli!
- Even written intentions are sometimes worth nothing, so do not rely on Lols!

3.2 Transformation through targeted priority setting and key accounting at the innovation location Hamburg

Region: Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg

Populations: 1.895.718

Organisation: GmbH

Regio-Transformer:

Christoph Kober (Head of Key Account Management at HIW Hamburg Invest)

Primarily addressed trends:

- Globalisation (identification of actors with cooperative relations to Hamburg)
- Knowledge-based economy ("innovation champions" as key accounts)
- Digitisation (use of data for the analysis of existing business and settlement potential)

The first chapter of "Transformation in Practice" begins on day 2 of the REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP with Christoph Kober, Head of Key Account Management at HIW Hamburg Invest. "From trading metropolis to innovation location", it is written prominently on one of his presentation slides. In his practical input, Christoph Kober shows which new methodological approach the HIW chose to support this process of change in a targeted manner.

In 2016, the Hamburg Business Development Agency underwent a strategic realignment, in the course of which a separate "Key Account Management" department was set up. From now on, it was intended to place a clear focus on the further development of the Hamburg innovation system. Between science and research on the one hand and business and industry on the other, Kober and his team are concentrating in particular on intelligent networking of the highly innovative players in the location and the promotion of future-oriented topics and projects – always with the aim of achieving an effective transfer of research and innovation into marketable products and services. In addition to industry representatives, the team also focuses on players from the service and tourism sectors, the digital economy and the start-up scene.

But how is it possible to focus on the relevant "innovation champions", the "Transformative Actors" of Hamburg? And, how can potential new key accounts from other regions and countries be identified for acquisition purposes?

Two analytical approaches, applied with external support in 2018, should provide answers to these questions. Christoph Kober presents them in sequence.

For the local business-oriented approach ('Who are the local "transformative actors" in Hamburg?'), an analysis of innovative, local actors was first carried out on the basis of publicly available data. These also formed the criteria for the evaluation of innovative competence:

- EU-funded projects from the 7th Framework Programme (2007 to 2013) and from Horizon 2020 (2014 to 2020)
- Federal funding projects in Hamburg (starting year 2012 at the earliest)
- Innovation prizes and awards from Hamburg companies over the last five years
- Number of patents of the respective actors as additional qualification

So, if Hamburg players are particularly active in these categories, this indicates a certain research and innovation strength. Although the evaluation cannot provide a complete picture of the innovation potential of the players, it does provide a valuable information basis for key account management. The most active "innovation champions" can thus be given special priority with regard to innovation-promoting activities.

As a result of the analysis, the innovative strength of leading Hamburg companies, such as Airbus or NXP, could be underpinned. In addition, new "innovation champions" could be identified who had not previously been on the radar of the economic development agency – for example, organisations such as "Die Johanniter" or the "Initiative Naturwissenschaft & Technik". Finally, the results were incorporated into a list of relevant "innovation champions", which were assigned to internally responsible key account managers and provided with information on already existing or planned activities (e.g. brokerage of premises, professional events, networking activities with regard to R&D projects).

In the second part, Christoph Kober also illustrated the acquisition-oriented approach ('Who are potential new "Transformative Actors" outside of Hamburg?'). Designed as a network analysis, the joint R&D projects funded by the EU and the federal government with the participation of Hamburg actors were evaluated here. First of all, the initial question was investigated, with which supra-regional partners the innovative Hamburg actors cooperate within the framework of the joint projects. In this way, it was possible to identify some 3,500 national and international actors with cooperative relationships with Hamburg "innovation champions", which were then further evaluated and prioritised, taking the Hamburg acquisition strategies into account.

In the end, with the help of the results of both analyses, it was possible to align HIW's internal CRM system much more

purposefully to the topic of innovation, both for existing and potential “new customers”. The two approaches also show very vividly how local business development and acquisition can be intelligently combined – in terms of the targeted enhancement of the local innovation system.

3.3 Regional potentials without critical mass: What does transformation in rural areas mean?

Region: District of Miesbach (Location Marketing Company of the District of Miesbach) in Bavaria

Population: 99.726

Organisation: GmbH

Regio-Transformer:

Ingrid Wildemann (Innovation Manager), Alexander Schmid (Managing Director)

Primarily addressed trends:

- Changing values (need for new forms of work and innovation infrastructures)
- Globalisation and regionalisation (temporarily offering urban formats on site)
- Digitisation (challenges such as artificial intelligence, which are changing the world of work extremely and thus give even more importance to innovative ability)

What can be done if there is no critical mass, no distinct cluster structures in specific fields of competence and no dense university and research landscape at the location? For rural regions, the question arises as to how an intelligent modernisation and diversification of regional economic structures can succeed against the background of megatrends. The fact that professional innovation management on a regional level is not only meaningful and possible in metropolitan areas where high-tech competence and innovation infrastructure is available in abundance, is impressively demonstrated by the district of Miesbach with its location marketing company.

Knowing the megatrends, seeing them as an opportunity. Being aware of your own regional strengths and structures. Knowing the players, their competencies and their mentality. Being able to inspire them to participate actively by setting an example of creative and innovative drive. Being courageous, creative and willing to experiment. Always keeping the well-being and quality of life of the region in mind. These are the guiding principles with which the Location Marketing Company of the district of Miesbach has been operating for several years now and is successfully implementing them within the framework of the initiative “Servus ZUKUNFT - Together into the uplands of tomorrow”. This was launched in 2017 together with the neighbouring district of Bad Tölz-Wolfratshausen.

Innovation Manager Ingrid Wildemann and managing director Alexander Schmid show in their practical impulse that it is especially important to find as many smart and motivated minds as possible in the region, to bring them together in creative spaces to juggle ideas and to initiate innovative projects together. A sector focus is not defined. With various open formats such as the “Feierabend(bier)”, barcamps or a specially founded FabLab association, creativity and innovation are to be increased, thus making a valuable contribution to the sustainability of the region.

The implementation is not only carried out in a moderating function and in partnership with other innovation-hungry stakeholders. In terms of a professional innovation management, the location marketing company itself anchors an agile, creative process and organisational approach in “Servus ZUKUNFT”. Based on Design Thinking, a systematic approach is implemented, in which they work demand- and solution-oriented. The active involvement of different minds and disciplines is just as natural as the creative spinning and testing of ideas. Especially the latter, the development and testing of prototypes, was the focus of the two-day lighthouse project “POP UP INNOVATION HUB”. Based on the question of whether the region needs an innovation and creative centre, a temporary version of it, a prototype, was installed for testing. Under the motto “creative and innovative work in harmony with nature”, numerous examples of design and digitalisation were brought to life in over 50 lectures, workshops, exhibitions and discussion groups. In addition, a wide range of innovative ideas and methods were shared, discussed together and refined. Ingrid Wildemann illustrates the great interest and commitment of participants from a wide range of sectors, from education, politics and citizenship. This was facilitated not least by the intensive preparatory work of recent years. Through the networking activities within the framework of “Servus ZUKUNFT”, but also through the many other initiatives of the location marketing company, e.g. on topics like education, new work, cultural and creative industries, the desire for a common, future-oriented regional development could be awakened in numerous actors. Wherever motivation and the will to shape the future meet creativity and professional competence, innovation can emerge, also in rural areas, even without sector-specific clusters. It is important that the economic developers of the district of Miesbach take the geographical location into account and coordinate their activities accordingly. For although the district of Miesbach is located in rural areas, it also belongs to the Munich Metropolitan Region. However, it is too decentralised to be interesting for the settlement of branch offices, universities or own high-tech clusters.

3.4 Transformation through regional collaboration: Intelligent marketplaces as a successful digital project with universities, start-ups and local authorities

Region: District of Rhine-Neckar in Baden-Württemberg

Population: 546.745

Organization: Department of the district administration

Regio-Transformer:

Danyel Atalay (Head of Department)

Primarily addressed trends:

- Population development (decline in population and supply in rural areas)
- Globalisation and regionalisation (need for local supply and meeting places)
- Digitisation (development and use of technical solutions for the benefit of citizens and small businesses)

Danyel Atalay is head of the department for economic development at the Rhine-Neckar District Office and is responsible for the economic development of the district around Heidelberg with a team of twelve people. Even though the district belongs to the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan region, there is a certain disparity between the city and the rural area. One of the five strategic goals of economic development is therefore: equal living conditions. In order to achieve these, digitisation should make its contribution to structural development. The Intelligent Marketplaces project, which was examined in detail in the context of the REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP, is only one project in the field of local supply and services of general interest. In addition to this field of action, there are also the areas of infrastructure & processes, networking & cooperation, qualification & education in Smart County Rhine-Neckar. This is the name the district has been using since it won second place in the "Intelligent Regions of Germany" competition in 2016 with the "Smart County Rhine-Neckar" initiative. IT is here! is the motto of the Smart County initiative, which combines the above-mentioned fields of action. After all, the Rhine-Neckar district is one of the top locations in the software and IT services industry, not least because SAP has its headquarters there.

With regional platforms or digital marketplaces, various players have already tried their hand at different locations throughout Germany. So what makes the Intelligent Marketplaces in the Rhine-Neckar district so special? The project is accepted and works better than any other project so far! It consciously connects existing structures, enhances them with previously unavailable but manageable offers and combines everything with an intuitive app. All of this will be created with the help of regional experts and financially supported by public funding.

In detail, this means that the Intelligent Marketplaces project follows the objectives: stabilisation and improvement of the supply situation in rural areas (goods, services), strengthening and sensitisation of the stationary retail trade as well as the revitalisation of town centres as social meeting places (or in short: act regionally - act socially - strengthen retail trade). It is divided into two phases, the first of which was a feasibility study (07/2017 - 06/2018). The study included a location analysis as well as citizen participation with the result that the focus should be on services of general interest, with food being the highest priority. The study was carried out for the two model municipalities Spechbach (1,800 inhabitants) and Schönbrunn (2,600 inhabitants), which were chosen by a pre-selection process. In addition to own resources of the Economic Development Department, the study was financed by a LEADER grant with funds from the EU and the state of Baden-Württemberg. Based on the results, the following project constellation was created.

- The concept of Intelligent Marketplaces is set up as a holistic approach to **strengthen rural areas, especially the local supply**.
- The CrowdMyRegion sub-project is developing technical components for **setting up a social ordering and delivery network**. The result is Emmas.app for a comprehensive food supply. The CrowdMyRegion project and Emmas.app are funded by the technology programme Smart Service Worlds II of the Federal Ministry of Economics. The project makes use of artificial intelligence, which is being developed by the student start-up Ciconia Software together with researchers from the Institute for Enterprise Systems (InES) at the University of Mannheim.
- With the programme "Local Online Marketplaces", funding from the State of Baden-Württemberg is added to this, which is used for local and regional modelling and **implementation of the conceptual and technical solution approaches**. The local authorities and the Rhine-Neckar Regional Association are the sponsors of this sub-project.

The second phase is the implementation of Emmas.app (07/2018–12/2021). Emmas.app organises the sale and distribution of food using existing mobility capacities. While at the beginning of the project, the products were delivered to "Appholstationen"⁹ centrally located in the municipality, the company is now experimenting with possibilities for front door delivery.

Transformation in this case also means addressing target groups that have had little affinity with digitisation so far. In addition to older customers, who tend to appreciate regional products, these are primarily small, traditional companies

9 project name combining "app" and "pick-up station"

in the region. For example, a butcher's shop in Spechbach, which was closed shortly before the project started, reopened three months later. The reason is that it has attracted more attention again as an "Appholstation" and thus also increased sales. And other small businesses such as agricultural direct marketers, bakers and retailers benefit, too. Emmas.app provides them with a low-threshold platform that functions as an online shop and is integrated into a regional ecosystem, thereby increasing its reach.

An initial interim balance shows that another goal of economic development, namely the revitalisation of town centres as social meeting places, is also possible. The development of an implementation strategy and the "Appholstation" as an integral component were of great importance for this partial success. Nevertheless, there are enough challenges that repeatedly require additional effort for the project: issues such as liability, data protection, payment processing, cold chain or changed project objectives etc. posed recurring challenges for

the project. His conclusion: persistence and flexibility pay off. At first, this sounds like a contradiction, but if you can distinguish between things you need to be tenacious about and others you need to be flexible about, you will make progress. After all, many things took longer than planned or could not be implemented exactly as intended. Without the right partners (university, start-ups, regional businesses, citizens and politicians) in the region and the clever allocation of funds, such a model project would not have been possible. The increasing number of enquiries from other regions with the question of transferability to their municipalities show Danyel Atalay that they are on the right track in the district of Rhine-Neckar. The coronavirus pandemic has accelerated this process considerably. As the operator of Emmas.app, ciconia Software GmbH has put together a free introductory offer for retailers at www.emmas.app/hilfspaket. The site also includes a map of Germany, which shows the current expansion to other municipalities.



4 Instruments for early adopters

Here we present a small selection of tools and methods that were used and tested during the RT-Camp. We want to encourage creative testing in other regions, too.

4.1 Step by step to visualise the challenge and potentials

Depending on the megatrends (see above) or the current pandemic situation, it is important to be regionally aware of what the important issues of the coming months and years are. In doing so, it is of utmost importance to get away from day-to-day business and open up to less operational topics. Above all, it is also a matter of clearing one's head. Freedom to critically question things that have always been done and have never been questioned or have not been questioned for a long time. Freedom to focus on what is really important in the near future. This can create capacities to push forward new ideas and projects with expected added value for one's own location. Since this is easier written than done, it makes sense to proceed step by step.

1. **Step: Do not enter the process alone.** Different perspectives are important and the creative potential also increases in a group. So, either enter the process with the team of your organisation or, if necessary, with other location managers. However, this is first of all an internal process. Stakeholder participation is definitely recommended at a later stage (see 4.2 and 4.3). First, however, it should be clear what kind of vision for the future the actors of the own organisation have and where potential for change is seen.
2. **Step: Definition of the methodology and rules.** It must be ensured that all parties involved understand the procedure. This can be assured, for example, through a test or warm-up. For the RT-Camp we decided to use the Lego Serious Play method. The goal was to work on complex issues with metaphors, allegories and shared stories. We explained the method and rules and as a warm-up we set the task that each participant should build any animal out of Lego bricks. This allowed a quick transition to the actual questions.
3. **Step: Clearly defined questions and tasks** (formulated as simply as possible) and the implementation itself. In our case, the following three "tasks" are asked one after the other:
 1. Task: What are the main challenges for your location in view of the current megatrends?

2. Task: What could an economic development measure look like that addresses such a challenge?
3. Task: What can be transferred from the best practice examples for sustainable local and regional business development?

For the second task, the challenges were swapped between the participants, so that nobody had to work on his own challenge. This was followed by a presentation and an exchange. While the first two tasks were carried out in single work with Lego bricks, the third task involved the entire team from each table, which brought together the measures from the second round to form an overall picture (see Figure 4).

4. Step: Record the results and define the follow-up.

This step is very important in order to move from the creative phase to a more binding approach and not just leave it at unfinished ideas. In the case of the RT-Camp, the method forms the prelude to the subsequent units, in which concrete to-dos and milestones were fixed.

Instead of Lego Serious Play, a number of other creative methods, such as Playmobil pro, Design Thinking, Design Sprint or Graphic Recording, can be used to visualise the challenges and associated transformation potential. In order to ensure the correct use of the method and, if necessary, to meet legal requirements, it is recommended to contact moderators, coaches or similar service providers in advance in order to learn the method properly yourself or to have it carried out by an external expert. The application of a new method offers the potential to create something really new and not to stick to old patterns and ways of thinking.

In order to initiate a conscious transformation process as an economic developer, the visualization of the current situation and the challenges associated with it is of high relevance. The identification of transformation potentials should be the focus of attention. Where are the pain points? Where do we need to take a closer look? What affects us more than others? What makes other locations better in this or that area? Only by determining our position in this way, we can motivate other actors and initiate a discourse process with stakeholders. This phase of "departure" should also be well visualised because it should be possible to put oneself back in the starting situation when the question of results and effects of measures is raised.

- Enabling function for the initiation of specific development and implementation projects by actors from business, regional policy and science

Key **development modes** are growth, cohesion, sustainability and stability. **Enabler** focus on initiating, monitoring and evaluating the process. Normative, strategic and operational target levels result in the **horizon of meaning**.

3. Reflection on regional governance and its ability to manage regional development

By regional governance we understand the reflexive design and regulatory practice to ensure the contingency of development process and environment. In a modern understanding of governance, the entire reflection process is guided, being

the basis of sustainable location management. Regional governance is context-, situation- and actor-dependent. Each governance system must therefore be developed differently, depending on the location, time or topic.

Function of regional governance:

- Order and structure the reflection process
- Ensuring the comprehensive involvement of interests
- Ensuring the openness and accessibility of the communication system
- Adaptation of the reflection process to environmental and system changes
- Mediation and moderation of different (vertical and horizontal) systems

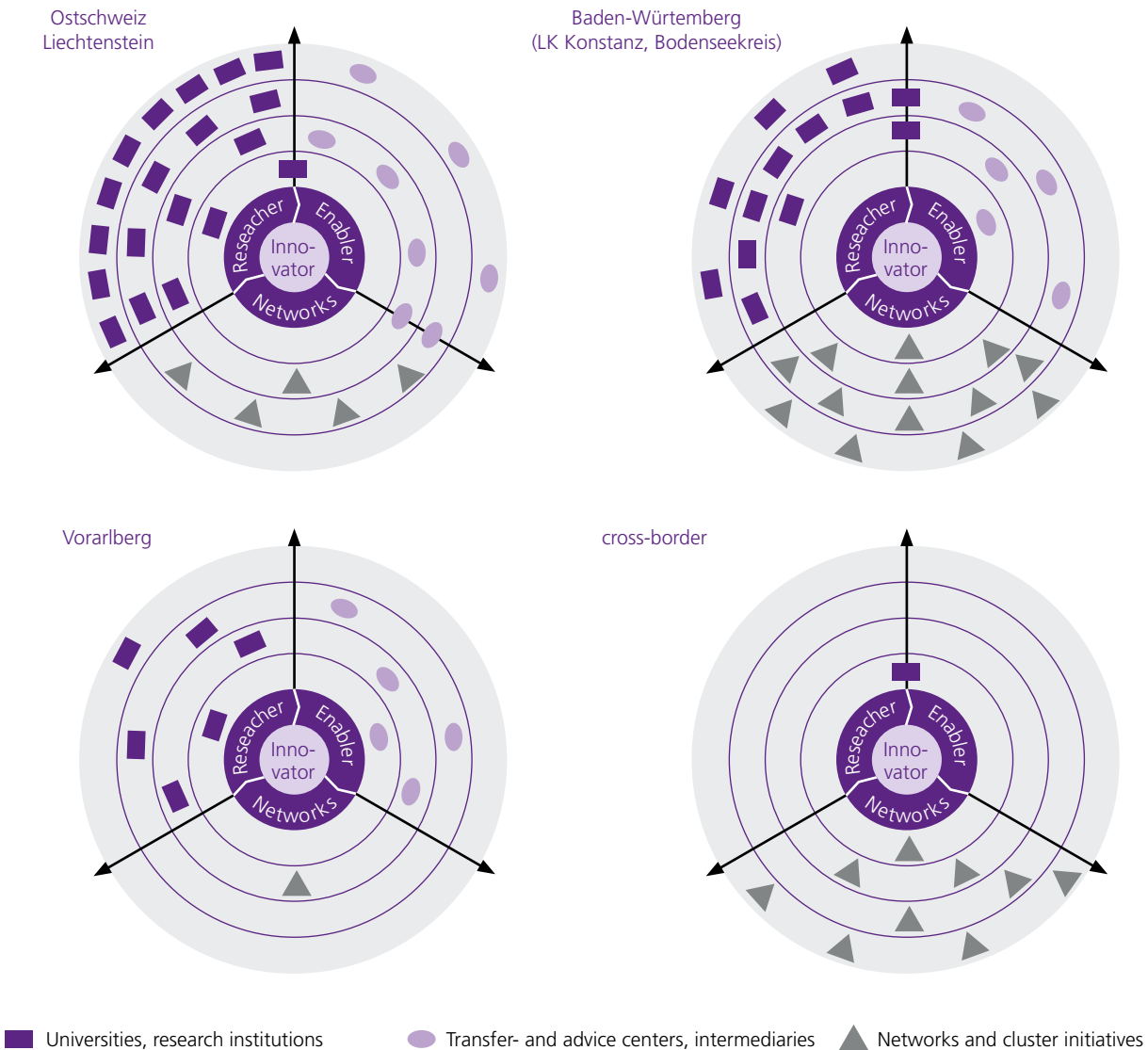
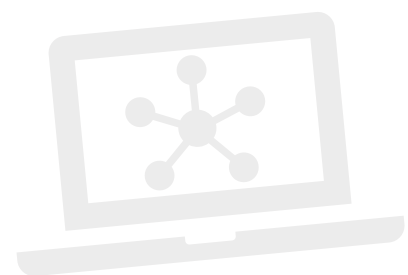


Figure 5: Exemplary representation of a stakeholder map. The rings provide information about the intensity of contact with the respective actor. The intensity decreases from the inside to the outside.

The **interaction system** consists of context, situation and form of interaction. The **political leadership** has the legitimacy to make decisions and must therefore define the limits and participation. The **executive management** (e.g. economic development agency) serves as a mediator of interests and has to ensure the reflections and accompany the processes.

4.3 Stakeholder participation and awareness of their diversity

Even a Regio Transformer will not get far just by him- or herself. After all, a Regio Transformer operates in a regional ecosystem and needs partners to successfully implement the change process. Last but not least, political decisions must also be made. It is of crucial importance who interacts with whom and how, and what personal network a Regio Transformer can draw on through which people can be activated. Stakeholder participation is also very important in the St.Gallen Management Model described above. One way to make people aware of the diversity of stakeholders is to depict their relationships by means of stakeholder mapping, as the diagrams in Figure 5 show. Optimal participation works in a cycle in which the stakeholders are involved in everything from situation analysis (co-development), agreements (co-assignment) and incentive design (co-implementation) to communication and qualification (co-evaluation). Another approach is the current discussion on "ecosystems". Here, too, a systematic identification of key stakeholders and interest groups relevant for economic development and location management can be carried out.



5 "Follow-up for Transformation": And so it continues

5.1 From the first to the second REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP

Do you know this? You have been to a training course or a lecture and have taken a great idea with you that you want to implement. Unfortunately, you are back in daily work routine sooner than you would have liked. The implementation has to be postponed and most likely, the idea has not been implemented until today. This is a situation that many people are familiar with, because after all it is a real challenge to break through routines and make room for new things. That is why we don't want to disregard small measures and initial impulses for change and have endeavoured to follow up and support the to-dos in the form of reminders, telephone coachings and video conferences within the framework of the RT-Camp. In doing so, we want to highlight the following two activities and positive results:

Exchange and job rotation between Miesbach and Vorpommern: Transformation through transfer

While the RT-Camp was still taking place, the economic development agencies from Vorpommern-Greifswald and the district of Miesbach agreed to visit each other and to participate in an event organised by the other organisation. The first visits to the other region and exchanges of experience have already taken place. A job rotation to enable further knowledge transfer should already have taken place, but had to be postponed due to the corona pandemic. The regional Promotion and Development Company of Vorpommern-Greifswald is interested in the "Coworkation"-concept of the Location Marketing Company of the district of Miesbach and is currently trying to integrate it in the region of Vorpommern. Furthermore, the two economic development agencies are in constant exchange on the subject of accounting and controlling in order to optimize and make it more efficient. Further ideas of the cooperation are the presentation of the "Coworkation Alps" concept at the business symposium in Vorpommern-Greifswald (new date in June 2021) as well as a business trip with companies from the Miesbach region to the north-east of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

"Mondays for Innovation" in the Northern Black Forest

As head of the "RegioINNO" funding project, Herbert Wackenhut has been assigned the task of strengthening the regional innovation capability of the Northern Black Forest location and thus promoting the breeding ground for innovation in the Northern Black Forest. Through the methods and discussions with the participants at the RT-Camp he came

up with the idea of "Mondays for Innovation". From then on, he wrote a text every week, which he published on the homepage of the Economic Development Agency and via social media channels to inspire and network the innovation actors in his region. Embedded in an overall concept, he takes up a range of transformation topics and best practices that stimulate awareness raising, idea generation and imitation. As a result of the exchange on "Mondays for Innovation" with regional companies and more intensive contacts with the federal state programmes, Herbert Wackenhut accompanied a firm from the Northern Black Forest and others from Baden-Württemberg to Silicon Valley in March 2020 to participate with them in the Innovation Camp BW. In the course of this two-week programme, the participants were introduced to the ecosystem of Silicon Valley, worked on concrete challenges of digitisation and established valuable business contacts. The measure is supported by Baden-Württemberg International (bw-i) and the Ministry of Economics, Labour and Housing of Baden-Württemberg. Herbert Wackenhut has planned an innovation congress at the University of Applied Sciences in Pforzheim for September 28, 2020 as part of the RegioINNO funding – on a Monday, of course! Due to the corona pandemic, an alternative online offer is being drawn up.

Originally, it was planned that the 2nd REGIO TRANSFORMER CAMP would take place in summer 2020. Due to the situation around COVID-19 the camp will probably be postponed to autumn / winter 2020 or even 2021.

5.2 In the light of current events: Transformation in times of the COVID-19 pandemic

Location-related or regional transformation processes shall make it possible to smartly merge overarching trends with locally existing potentials and structures. Appropriate strategies can provide a guideline for future action. A Regio Transformer does not rest on his laurels. He continuously questions existing strategic approaches and measures. He is constantly on the lookout for new possibilities and solutions, because he is aware of the fast pace of trends, technologies and markets. "Local and regional business development reinterpreted - active shaping of regional change": This motto of the RT-Camp is currently more valid than ever in the context of COVID-19.

Direct contact with local companies and organisations is of course essential. Regio Transformers proactively investigate where the shoe pinches particularly due to corona and what

quick measures are needed. They want to understand what long-term effects are expected and how regional economic development can respond to them. This is important in order to set new priorities, to react quickly and to initiate creative solutions – but also to simply “be there” for the local economy in challenging times.

In the context of COVID-19, many smart ideas and showcase projects are born nationwide with the participation of regional or municipal economic development entities. Mainly in the digital space, of course. For example, digital consulting assistants, implemented as chat-bot, appear on the websites of Economic Development Agencies (example: “Kuckuck Kai” of the Northern Black Forest Economic Development Agency). Cooperation platforms are launched in order to “match” highly sought-after competencies and products, for example in the field of medical technology, with the right solution providers. On platforms such as “Jetzt zamhelfen” (Location Marketing Company of the district of Miesbach) or “Handel(n) für Pforzheim” (Economic Development Company of the city of Pforzheim), customers can support regional businesses by buying vouchers and redeeming them later on site. Online tutorials and web seminars are used to address current hot topics or digital events are organised to address questions of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. One example is the digital HACK AND HARVEST Hackathon¹¹ in the Lake Constance region, in which ideas and prototypes are to be developed not only for today's acute challenges, but also for those of the future.

These are just a few examples of how innovative and “Regio-Transformer-like” action is taken in many regions and municipalities. One thing becomes particularly apparent: it is not possible to act alone and certainly not in such times of crisis. Close cooperation with partners in the region makes successful and needs-based measures possible in the first place. Regio Transformers are taking the lead and, together with partners in economic development, are now able to make full use of their key competences as brokers, networkers and facilitators. They bring loose threads together at the location and in the region, bundle different know-how, coordinate joint actions and share them with the public. Regional networks are gaining in importance. It remains to be seen whether and to what extent the effects of the pandemic will affect entire value-added cycles in various sectors. In any case, the Regio Transformer will remain vigilant, act with foresight and be prepared if framework conditions change and new solutions are required.

Good luck with your transformation and stay healthy!

¹¹ The event is part of the “Bodensee Mittelstand 4.0” project and is jointly organised by the cyberLAGO e.V. competence network, the Initiative Companies for Founders and the city of Constance

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