

"Governance and Infrastructure" | 11.03.2021

Project: DigiTeRRI | GA n° 873010

Event format: web-based roundtable discussion with the participation of regional / national stakeholder representatives and experts

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Executive Summary

Roundtable 3 “Governance and Infrastructure”

The third DigiTeRRI roundtable discussion on the topic of “Governance and Infrastructure” was a further continuation of this series of events and brought insights from a new perspective in the run-up to the Styrian roadmap development. The aim of these exchange format is to collect possible directions and points of contact for a strategic plan development. The events are carried out with the involvement of various stakeholder groups and external experts in order to show different perspectives with regard to digitization and to make the different needs transparent.

The topics of the discussion rounds are derived from the roadmap vision developed in the project.



Styrian Vision

(more information under <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ul1OMhRhq0s&feature=youtu.be>)

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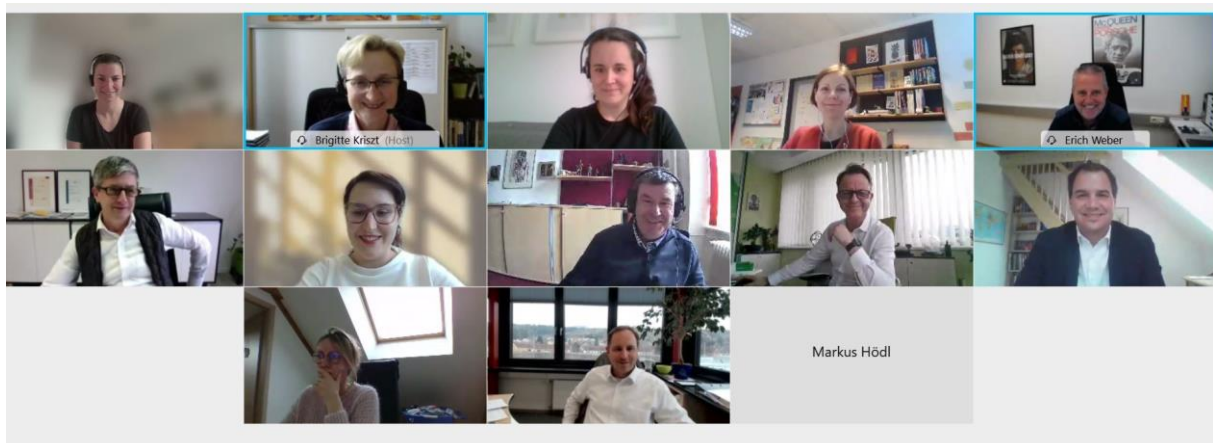
The third round table discussion on digitization revolved around opportunities and challenges in regional development in relation to digitization. Representatives of the public sector from regional municipalities, regional management, providers of high-performance networks and funding agencies discuss issues relating to regional broadband expansion, the use of digital media for a wide variety of applications in the field of administration and services for citizens.

The participants let their different personal and professional approaches, experiences and expertise flow into the 90-minute discussion.

Over 18 people actively participated in the discussion. For the first time, a partner from another DigiTeRRI model region was also involved.

Participants in the third round table discussion:

Mario Abl | Stadtgemeinde Trofaiach
Fritz Pichler | Gemeinde Stanz im Mürztal
Markus Hödl | Stadt Bruck an der Mur
Cornelia Schuss | Stadt Leoben
Christoph Huber | Stadtwerke Kapfenberg
Lisa Hausberger | Regionalmanagement Obersteiermark Ost
Michael Schickhofer | Steirische Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft m.b.H.
Jean-Jacques Bernardini | Grand E-Nov+



Discussion participants of the third roundtable "Governance and Infrastructure"

*Moderation: **Erich Weber** | Standort und Marketing Bruck an der Mur GesmbH*

*Introduction to the project DigiTeRRI: **Teresa Riedenbauer** | ZAT*

Other participating project partners:

***Brigitte Kriszt** | **Julia Schmidbauer** | Montanuniversität, Außeninstitut*

***Marianne Hörlesberger** | AIT Forschungsgesellschaft GmbH*

And other registered participants, such as Iris Filzwieser (member of the DigiTeRRI Advisory Board)

Executive Summary

Key messages and discussion points:

Network expansion needs

- Demand for high-performance networks (5G network, high frequencies, increasing number of users, broadband, stable networks, data-secure networks, etc.) is increasing rapidly in the municipalities of the region.
- Triggers for higher demand are increasing home-office up to home-schooling activities and a generally increasing use of digital media by citizens.
- Increasing demand on the part of companies - especially high expectations/needs of SMEs in the municipalities.
- The need for digital access to the administration and services of the municipalities.
- New possibilities for problem solving would be given, for example disaster control.

Networks and network expansions

- Current strategy: Expansion of the broadband network with fibre optic cable, public sector project - regional perspective, central planning.
- In the future, broadband infrastructure will have the same importance as water supply or sewerage.
- Challenge for municipalities: decentralized equipment with broadband in a rather fragmented rural structure and connection to data highways inside and outside the municipalities.
- Problem of "Open Access" (free of charge) networks vs. chargeable networks that are relocated and served by regional companies.
- Examination of alternative forms of financing (e.g. Finnish model of cooperatives, or communal founding).
- There is an existing need for networks, but the customers' expectations regarding the price for laying, maintenance and support do not match the costs of the providers.
- Concepts such as alternative networks, mobile radio networks or TV cable networks, which can also be used for data transmission, are missing.

Applications of digital solutions

- The question of digitization is currently more focused on the creation of the necessary infrastructure than on future applications for solutions for citizens and their needs.
- Problems of the interfaces for different systems in the public area (municipalities, regions, state, federal) were shown - limited use of the citizen card only for a few applications - harmonization of the interfaces, or even a uniform system basis, requires enormous resources and solutions.
- New applications appear, for efficient implementation supercritical values are required - need for networking.
- Public administration and business have different needs in the field of digitization.
- Possibly start with small ideas (keyword: mobile phone parking).

Executive Summary

Networking and cooperation

- The discussion shows the possibility of platform formation and networking of comprehensive modular solutions and meets with the approval of many speakers.
- The pivotal point and responsibilities for these initiatives would have to be activated (association of local representatives, association of towns, regional management, Province of Styria, Austrian Federal Government) with the involvement of the citizens - selection according to objective.
- Ideas exist in the area of municipal administration, the exchange with citizens or services for citizens (e.g. digital parking space management).
- Especially at the local / regional level, someone has to take on the leadership role in initiatives in new digital solution .

Knowledge gap

- There is a lack of expert knowledge / participation in the issues raised.
- Access to experts sometimes associated with high costs with limited resources on level of the municipalities (problem of financing expert services).

Attractive location and influx of experts

- Region “Obersteiermark Ost” needs companies and expert knowledge about the development of digital solutions and services - motivating companies and their employees to move into this region.
- Find companies with little space requirement for their services, for communities with limited space - new offer profile for companies, with a digital service portfolio - leverage high-performance network connection, data security and data protection.
- Representation of the region as an attractive living and working space.
- Branding of “Obersteiermark” from traditional industry to digital transformation.
- The region as a living space - not just individual communities - must offer or be able to provide uniform standards.

Summary of the key messages:

The following large chapters were addressed in the 3rd Round Table:

- **Network expansion:**
 - Various technical solutions and providers (chargeable / open access).
 - Difficulties of the municipalities in achieving the necessary network expansion and connection to high-performance nodes / data highway - time windows for implementation and costs.
 - Lack of access to “affordable” expert knowledge.

- **New applications and solutions through digitization**
 - Find and implement new "valuable" fields of application - e.g. administration, solutions for citizens, or disaster control in alpine regions of the municipalities (red zones).
 - Solve existing interface problems.

- **Networking and cooperation**
 - Networking and platform building for the development of digital solutions and services for the communities.
 - Strong involvement of citizens in the development of new applications.
 - Reduction of interface problems through overarching platforms.
 - Start pilot projects.