

# Facing Regional Challenges: Investigating the Discursive Construction of Challenges for Structurally Weak European Rural Regions

## ‘PROGRESS IS CLOSING DOWN RURAL IRELAND’

### Das Hipsterdorf in der Uckermark

Gerswalde in Brandenburg ist ein Magnet für Menschen aus Berlin. Das Problem ist nur: Hier leben ja schon Leute! Kann ein Dorf gentrifiziert werden?

#### Research Objectives

- Knowledge of:
  - ▶ The discursive construction and framing of development trajectories in specific European rural regions (Mühlviertel; Austria, Uckermark; Germany & Mid-West; Ireland)
  - ▶ as the discursive preconditions for troubleshooting and (innovative) problem solving (e.g. by social entrepreneurs)

#### Research Questions

- ▶ What type of narratives constitutes the discourse (e.g. about challenges or opportunities) in the specific (rural) regions?
- ▶ Which positions and actions (e.g. solutions) are proposed (in the discourses) for (and by) local actors?
- ▶ Which cultural knowledge pattern(s), i.e. logics, are working as preconditions (or structure) for these discourses?

#### Core Concepts & Theoretical Foundations

- ▶ Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (Keller, 2012: "Entering Discourses: A New Agenda for Qualitative Research and Sociology of Knowledge", Qualitative Sociology Review 8(2): 46-75. )
- ▶ Imagining the Rural (Woods, 2010: "Rural". Routledge)
- ▶ Intrinsic logic (Barbehön & Münch, 2017: "Interrogating the city: Comparing locally distinct crisis discourses". Urban Studies, 54(9): 2072-2086.)

#### Methodological Framework

- ▶ Interviews with local actors, i.e. residents, local journalists, policymakers, social enterprises etc.
- ▶ Qualitative analysis of newspaper articles, policy papers and documents
- ▶ (Quantitative Computational analysis of newspaper articles)

#### First Achievements

- ▶ Data collection made for first case study: Mühlviertel (interviews and texts/documents)
- ▶ The preliminary results indicate discourses playing a big part in local development processes. Furthermore there is indication towards specific actors explicitly having the "changing of the local discourse" as an objective.
- ▶ Attended: Methods Seminar "Big Data Module II - Text mining with R", GESIS Cologne
- ▶ Attended: Autumn School "The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD)", University of Augsburg

#### Early Stage Researcher

- ▶ Sune W. Stoustrup
- Urban Studies (M.A.)
- Planning Studies and Communication Studies (B.A.)

#### Promotion at

- ▶ Technische Universität Berlin (TU), Germany

#### Supervisory team

- ▶ Prof. Gabriela Christmann (IRS, TU), Germany
- ▶ Dr. Mary O'Shaughnessy (UCC), Ireland
- ▶ Prof. Nina Baur (TU), Germany

#### Secondments

- ▶ Otelo eGen, Austria
- ▶ Social Impact, Germany
- ▶ Ballyhoura Development CLG, Ireland

#### International Networks

- ▶ SKAD Network
- ▶ (discourseanalysis.net)