OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF CROSS-BORDER PLACE BRANDING – THE CASE OF EUREGIO

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ABSTRACT:

Cross-border regions are often seen as peripheral and low developed. To attract new residents, firms and tourists many cross-border regions engage in cross-border cooperation to overcome the faced challenges. Henceforth, cross-border place branding gains more and more popularity across Europe's cross-border regions and its stakeholders. This thesis deals with the challenges and opportunities of cross-border place branding for cross-border regions and its touristic stakeholders and how the challenges can be overcome. Theoretical concepts of place branding are explored to develop a concept of cross-border place branding. For this concept theoretical insights of regional geography and border studies are used as well. Especially the concept of regional identity is identified as an important factor for cross-border place branding initiatives. On the basis of the cases Vierländerregion Bodensee, Via-Claudia Augusta and Fehmarnbelt it is argued that a successful place brand needs to fulfill certain preconditions. Furthermore, these cases are used to identify opportunities and challenges for touristic stakeholders in a cross-border place branding initiative. Finally, this thesis uses the developed cross-border place branding concept and the identified preconditions, challenges and opportunities to analyze the potentials for a cross-border place brand in the EUREGIO region. This analysis is also based on open-ended expert interviews with important touristic stakeholders in the EUREGIO region. This thesis proposes a slow approach towards cross-border place branding with a focus on internal marketing and regional identity.

L<small>IST OF ABBREVIATIONS</small>:

EU	European Union
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
IEB	International Economic area Bodensee
LEADER	Liaison entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale
MIPIM	Marché International des Professionnels de l'immobilier
RTB	Regional Tourism Bureaus
SME	Small and Middle-sized Enterprise

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1   Introduction: problem statement, objective, research question and methodology

Cross-border region building has become an increasingly important point on the Agenda of the European Union (EU) since the early 1990s. Integration policy is used to create cooperation between neighboring countries and to promote economic development in often underdeveloped border regions. The main fields of cooperation are economic development, infrastructure and cultural activities. The field of tourism has not gained much attention in the beginning of cross-border region building. (Nilsson, Eskilsson, & Ek 2010) In the recent 10 years, however, the field of tourism became an integral part of regional development and cross-border region building. Tourism and other service industries are now often used to restructure former industrial regions after the decline of the producing industry. (Nilsson, Eskilsson, & Ek 2010) Henceforth, tourism policy is seen as an important instrument on local, regional and central government level European as well as communal. In the INTERREG regional funding programs of the EU the importance of tourism can be seen through more and more funding in cross-border tourism projects in the recent years (Nilsson, Eskilsson, & Ek 2010). The development of cross-border tourism strategies is one main funding topic in INTERREG and is often connected to Euroregions, which mainly developed during the rise of cross border cooperation in the early 1990s. The development from manufacturing industry to service industry led to more competition between places for corporations, tourists and residents. In this competition, place branding became the most important tool for policy makers. As in the literature on place branding places and regions are often used interchangeably this thesis will also do so. Early forms of place selling can already be seen in the late nineteenth century as a reaction to the globalization of the markets as shown by Ward (1998). He is mentioning the marketing of the newly settled western parts of the USA as a first effort to sell a place (Ward, 1998). But only since the late 1980s, place promotion became generally accepted, firstly by tourism actors and soon after by place managers. Still, it was only seen as a tool for place managers who used it as an addition to their existing toolbox, not as a tool widely used in the industry. In the early 1990s the first general and useful approaches towards a place marketing concept were made. After that, the developments of corporate branding led to a further refined understanding of place branding more in line with the current definition (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). The developments in place branding were also applied in cross-border cooperation introducing cross-border place brands. Several cross-border place branding initiatives can be identified across Europe (see: Hospers, 2006; Ioannides, Nielsen & Billing, 2006; Lepik and Kregul, 2009; Andersson, 2007; Prokkola,

2007; Nilsson, Eskilsson, & Ek 2010) but only first steps towards a theory development have been made. Furthermore the current research has not focused on the development of a cross-border place brand but analyzed the existing cases with focus on regional identities (Prokkola, 2007), on problems occurring in an imagined space (Hospers, 2006) and on the potential of region for common branding (Andersson, 2007). Hence, most research is focused on already existing cross-border place brands and their current challenges (exception: Andersson (2007) with his analysis of potential for a cross-border brand in the Baltic Sea region). The challenges that occur to stakeholders in the development of a cross-border place brand have not been analyzed. Therefore, this study uses the theoretical developments of place branding and cross-border cooperation to analyze cases of cross-border place branding. The main research question in this thesis is:

What challenges occur during the development of a cross-border place brand from the perspective of touristic stakeholders and how can these challenges be overcome?

This central research question aims at making recommendation for touristic stakeholders in cross-border regions to enhance the development process of a cross-border place branding initiative based on the latest theoretical developments, case studies and open semi structured interviews. The semi structured interviews were conducted to test the findings of the case studies.

To fully answer the main research question a set of sub questions was developed:

Are there certain preconditions that a cross-border region needs to fulfill to implement a successful cross-border place brand?

This question is based on three cases studies, the Bodensee region as a well-developed cross-border place brand, the Via Claudia Augusta region that started the development towards a cross-border place brand but was not able to successfully develop one and the Fehmarnbelt region that currently develops a cross-border place brand. Based on these cases preconditions for a cross-border place brand and challenges for touristic stakeholders are identified. The case selection and methodology of the case study is explained in the methodology section below.

What lessons can be learned from the cases in the regions Bodensee, Via Claudia Augusta and Fehmarnbelt?

Answering this sub question aims at identifying actions that help to overcome the challenges of touristic stakeholders.

What challenges arise for the tourism industry if the EUREGIO region is branded?

To answer this question open semi structured interviews with the main touristic stakeholders in the EUREGIO region are conducted. It helps answering the main research question insofar as the findings of the case studies are either confirmed or dismissed. The case selection is reasoned below in the methodology section.

How should touristic stakeholders get involved into the creation of a cross-border place branding organization?

Using the findings of the case studies and the open semi structured interviews recommendation on how to overcome the identified challenges are given and it is analyzed what role the touristic stakeholders play in the development of a cross-border place branding initiative.

How can EU measures be used to overcome the challenges that touristic stakeholders face?

Since cross-border cooperation in Europe is mainly based on EU measures (funding, regional development policies) this question uses the findings of the interviews and the case studies to identify the most important EU measures that help to overcome the challenges that touristic stakeholders face.

Drawing on these questions the objective of this research is to identify cases of cross-border place branding projects. Here the examples of the Bodensee and the Via Claudia Augusta will be used to identify different approaches towards cross-border place branding and possible opportunities, challenges and preconditions. To get insights in the development of a cross-border place brand the current development of the Fehmarnbelt region will be looked at. The final goal of the research is to test the current frameworks of cross-border place branding and the identified preconditions and challenges on the case EUREGIO as well as to explore possible place branding developments in the EUREGIO region. To do so, firstly, the history of place branding will be reviewed. Secondly, the theoretical developments of place branding will be shown. In chapter three the theoretical developments of cross-border cooperation and border regions will be identified. Combining the theoretical frameworks of place branding

with the cross-border cooperation concepts will then lead to a place branding framework adapted to cross-border regions. Chapter four will then present the case studies of Vierländerregion Bodensee, Via Claudia Augusta and the Fehmarnbelt. Preconditions and challenges for touristic stakeholders in the development of a cross-border place branding initiative will be identified using content analysis. In Chapter five these findings will then be compared with the findings of open semi structured interviews with touristic stakeholders in the EUREGIO region. These interviews were conducted with the main touristic stakeholders of the EUREGIO region to analyze the potential challenges for touristic stakeholder in the development of a cross-border place branding initiative. Finally a conclusion will be drawn and an outlook for cross-border place branding in the EUREGIO region will be given.

To do so, the first step in this thesis was to identify relevant place branding literature, to review this literature and to extract the findings on theory building in this literature. The focus was set on place branding and cross-border place branding concepts, definitions and theoretical frameworks which were then summarized and extracted into a theoretical framework to use in this thesis. To get an understanding of cross-border place branding initiatives cases were identified. During an extensive desk research with the analysis of print and online material two initiatives were identified and important preconditions of cross-border place branding and challenges for touristic stakeholders will be shown based on this analysis. The selected cases are the Vierländerregion Bodensee and the Via Claudia Augusta. The Bodensee case was chosen because of its best practice nature. Firstly, it includes all relevant stakeholders (investors and businesses, tourists, residents, students). Secondly, it is based on a common regional anchor, the Lake Bodensee and finally the development of the cross-border region was based on consensus between all stakeholders. This well-developed cross-border place brand is contrasted with the case of the Via Claudia Augusta region. In this region not all stakeholders are involved (only touristic and business stakeholders), the regional anchor is outdated and the cross-border brand developments are inconsistent, showing no consensus. Using contrasting cases helps at identifying preconditions for successful cross-border place branding as factors that are present in the successful case may not be seen in the unsuccessful case.

To get further insights into the development of a cross-border place branding initiative and the role of the tourism open sector semi-structured interviews with two stakeholders (Head of Lübeck Business Development and the project manager of Ostsee-Holstein Tourismus e.V) of the Fehmarnbelt region were conducted as this region currently develops a cross-border place

branding initiative. These interviews focused on the challenges that occur during the development of a cross-border place branding initiative. The findings of the interview are used to identify challenges during the development of a cross-border place brand and to give recommendations for the development of a place branding initiative in a cross-border region.

Additionally, the gained knowledge of the desk research and the first two semi structured interviews were used to develop a semi-structured interview guideline concerning the EUREGIO region. (See Appendix) The EUREGIO region is chosen as case for this research since this project already tries to promote cross-border projects between Germany and the Netherlands for many years but without the establishment of a cross-border place branding organization. This grown basis and possible synergy effects – like cooperation between tourism stakeholders – make the regions a good case to analyze opportunities and challenges of cross-border place branding. In total 15 stakeholders of the tourism sector in the EUREGIO region were interviewed using the developed interview guideline. To make sure that all tourism stakeholders are taken into account, nine interview partners were preselected and the remaining six interview partners were chosen by the snowballing method, using interview recommendations of the preselected partners. The interview guideline covered the following topics:

(a) Strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats for an inter-regional place branding project in the EUREGIO region,
(b) Stakeholders in the region,
(c) Cooperation in the region,
(d) Possible designs of an inter-regional place branding organization
(e) Synergies for the tourism industry.

The findings of the interviews were then compared with the findings of the case studies to identify preconditions and challenges relevant for touristic stakeholders in a cross-border region. Additionally the findings were used to develop recommendations for the establishment of a cross-border place branding initiative in the EUREGIO region.

2 Place branding: history and theory

To better understand the current discussions in the field of place branding this thesis will firstly look at the historical development of place branding. Here the theoretical roots will be identified and the different strains of place branding will be shown.

2.1 History of place branding

Place branding was and still is a practitioner led field of research. It is not a new phenomenon, but has been practiced since humanity began to explore the earth. Ashworth and Voogd (1994) mention the naming of Greenland as one of the first attempt to use image building to attract new settlers. Additionally, Ward (1998) showed that the promotion of cities and place has been in use since the 1850s. Still these approaches were all practitioner-led having no academic or theoretical basis. Place branding was first identified as an academic field of research by O'Leary and Iredal (1976) including a first definition of place marketing. Also, the widening of the marketing concept from business to other fields of application by Kotler and Levy (1969) pushed the academic development of the field of place branding. Hence, the first publications on place branding where mainly concerned with the application of marketing techniques to places. The marketing perspective is therefore one of the first perspectives on place branding. From this point of view places are products that can be marketed like any other product and compete for consumers like any other product. Rainisto (2003) and Kotler et al. (1993; 1999; 2002) are still the main advocates of this approach towards place branding.

Besides the marketing field other disciplines have begun to study place branding. As Braun (2008) has identified "disciplines that have traditionally studied cities, regions, places and locations such as Urban and Regional Economics (Boekema, 1990; Van den Berg et al, 1990; Van den Berg & Braun, 1999), Economic Geography (Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Ashworth, 2005), Planning (Gold & Ward, 1994; Ward, 1998), Cultural Studies, Social Geography et cetera" (p. 3) have also put their research focus on place branding. These disciplines argue that places use marketing as the globalization forced them to compete for residents, investment and tourists. This also includes the adaption of marketing to the specific requirements of places while also not viewing them as products but as their own complex system that needs adapted tools. (Braun, 2008)

Hence, place branding has a multidisciplinary history that was practitioner led in its beginning but developed academic research, influenced by marketing later by other disciplines as planning, economic geography and regional economics. Now place branding has been established as an interdisciplinary discipline with its own journals (e.g. Place Branding and Public Diplomacy) and theoretical concepts.

2.2 Place branding: theoretical developments

As pointed out above the theoretical foundation of place branding is based on various disciplines and is still in development. This thesis will look at the main developments that led to the current understanding of place branding. Furthermore a definition of place branding will be given as well as the differences between place marketing and place branding will be detailed to justify the decision for the use of current place branding concepts. The aim is to identify place branding frameworks applicable to cross-border regions.

2.2.1 Place marketing and destination marketing

The first developments towards a common understanding of place branding were made in the mid-1970s when Hunt elaborated on image as a factor in tourism development (Hunt, 1975). In his work he suggests that image is an important factor in tourism development and that the image of a destination influences the tourists' decision towards a destination heavily (Hunt, 1975). During the same time O'Leary and Iredal (1976) identified place marketing as an important future research field. In their research the broadening of the marketing was suggested with place marketing as one of the future research fields (O'Leary & Iredal, 1976). They do not only see place marketing as a future area of interest but also give a first definition of place marketing.

"Place marketing involves activities designed to create favorable dispositions and behavior toward geographic locations. It involves transactions in land, but it is the geographic location, not the land that is really being marketed. The land itself is merely a manifestation of the location. The answer to the question - "what needs can be met by a geographic location?" - suggests five types of place marketing: domestic residence; business site; community and recreational development; land investment and tourist resorts." (O'Leary & Iredal, 1976, p. 156)

In this very first definition the main stakeholders – residents, investors (businesses) and tourists - have already been identified. Still, no approach on how to aim the marketing activities towards the stakeholders has been suggested.

In the following years the development of place marketing as a concept did not develop further, until scholars began to develop more holistic concepts of place marketing in the early 1990s. Ashworth and Voogd (1990) began to develop a framework of place marketing from the perspective of management and urban planning. Their strategic framework includes the incorporation of place marketing into planning agencies already stating that successful place marketing can only be achieved if the methods are fully implemented (Ashworth & Voogd, 1990). Their work treats the city/place as a product but already mentions the importance of the manifold stakeholders (Ashworth & Voogd, 1990). Furthermore, they give the following definition of city marketing:

a "*process whereby urban activities are as closely as possible related to the demands of targeted customers so as to maximize the efficient social and economic functioning of the area concerned in accordance with whatever goals have been established*" (Ashworth & Voogd, 1990, p. 11).

This definition is still very focused on the place as a product and highlights the managerial aspect of place marketing. In their contribution Ashworth and Voogd (1990) also developed a strategic place marketing tool to give practitioners an academic framework for their work.

In another early framework of place marketing, Van den Berg et al. (1990) looked at the topic of city marketing from an urban planning point of view. In combination with Ashworth and Voogd (1990) they were the first to mention that places as product are influenced by many factors that are outside of the control of the place marketers (van den Berg et al., 1990). The current developments in place branding are mainly grounded on the findings in the early 1990s. This lays the basis for the current understanding of place branding in the context of regional branding strategies.

In contrast to this development, a further contribution to the development of a common understanding of place marketing was made by Kotler et al. (1993) which suggest a strategic place marketing concept that includes gaining more population, attracting more business, growing existing business, supporting start-ups, increasing the tourism arrivals and the exports of goods. Their approach of strategic place marketing is from a pure marketing

perspective, treating places as products and not taking into account the multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder nature of place marketing, which is relevant for this thesis due to the complex stakeholder situation in cross-border regions.

The evolution clearly points to one paradox: the concepts of place marketing were refined but still the places are mainly seen as spatial products (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). Also in further developments this paradox is can be seen. Thus, Kotler et al. (1999), Kotler et al. (2002) and Rainisto (2003) still look at place marketing from a product marketing perspective not taking the manifold stakeholders and target groups of place into account. Therefore this research acknowledges the importance of a multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach represented by Ashworth and Voogd (1990) and van den Berg et al. (1990). Taking this into account, only frameworks based on the finding of the two authors are used in this thesis. The contribution of Kotler et al. (1993, 1999 and 2002) to the field is acknowledged but not overstated since he only contributed from the field of marketing.

At the same time as the developments in place marketing were made, the concept of destination marketing started to develop (Hanna & Rowley, 2008). Here it is mentioned that destination marketing efforts often have positive spillover effects for other economic areas and their development (Hanna & Rowley, 2008). In addition the development in the field of destination marketing has always been ahead of the place marketing development, for example including all stakeholders and acknowledging the manifold factors that influence the destination product (Hanna & Rowley, 2008). Hence, the definition for destination marketing can be used instead of the one for place marketing as it seems to not only serve the tourism industry but often is the main image for a place (Hanna & Rowley, 2008). As this thesis only analyses touristic stakeholders in the EUREGIO region the author acknowledges that the tourism sector can be a main driver for further developments in cross-border place branding. Nevertheless, place branding frameworks need to include all stakeholders to work successfully. Based on this reasoning, frameworks that only include touristic stakeholders are not used in this thesis.

After setting the basis with the works of Ashworth and Voogd (1990) and van den Berg et al. (1990) this paragraph gives a current definition of place marketing in the light of the before mentioned developments. The current understanding of place marketing is defined by Braun (2008) as "the coordinated use of marketing tools supported by a shared customer-oriented philosophy, for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging urban offerings that

have value for the city's customers and the city's community at large" (p. 43). The aim of place marketing was already well defined by Ashworth and Voogd (1990) who say the aim is "to maximize the efficient social and economic functioning of the area concerned, in accordance with whatever wider goals have been established" (p. 41). The consumer in this case can be the resident, the tourist or the investor since the target groups may vary (Braun & Zenker, 2010). Braun (2008) introduced another important point with his definition: customer orientation which is further refined in Braun and Zenker (2010), adding a definition of the customer/consumer. This definition incorporates all stakeholders, builds on the multidisciplinary basis of place marketing and introduces the customer focus, making it a good starting point for the development from place marketing to place branding.

In the recent years the concept of branding was introduced to the field of place marketing (e.g. Kavaratzis, 2008). This was also triggered by the incorporation of cultural geography into the place marketing concepts. Cultural geography states, that people comprehend places in various ways. Firstly, by the use of place, secondly by urban design and planning and thirdly by media representation of a place. (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005) These meeting points with places can be directly and/or indirectly: For example people can experience the use of a place by themselves or a friend does so and tells about it. Therefore, images and perceptions are an important factor by which places are perceived. (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005) This importance of the image of a place also led to the development of place branding and the developments of cross-border place branding.

2.2.2 *Corporate branding*

Before analyzing the developments of place branding and its concepts this thesis shortly highlights the developments of corporate branding which are the basis for place branding.

The first attempts of branding can be identified in the late 19th century when consumer goods were branded, e.g. Gillette (Low & Fullerton, 1994). The most used definition is provided by the American Marketing Association whereas a brand is a "name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers." (American Marketing Association, 2014) This definition is very product oriented and is also criticized for being so (Hanna & Rowley, 2008). Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005) mention that there are several attempts to define brand and branding but the scholars have not been able to adopt one single definition. The only point which all marketing literature on the

topic has in common is that branding is more than giving a product a name that is identifiable (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005).

A first approach towards branding can be taken by looking at the relation between the activities of the company and the perceptions of the brand from the point of the consumer. This is summed up in figure 1. Here the brand is the interface of the communication between company and consumer (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). This approach gives a first understanding of the branding process and how a brand image is built. As this approach is still looking at product and not corporate brands one can see that the corporate brand image is influenced by many more factors because more stakeholders and steps are involved in the process. Places do not resemble products and hence cannot be handled with a simple approach like shown in Figure 1. Therefore this thesis will look at development of corporate branding to find solutions for a cross-border place branding framework.

BRAND IDENTITY
How the owners want the brand to be perceived

↓

BRAND POSITIONING
That part of the value proposition communicated to a target group that demonstrates competitive advantage

↓

BRAND IMAGE
How the brand is perceived

Figure 1: Brand identity, brand positioning and brand image (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005, p. 508)

In last 10 years a shift from product towards corporate branding can be observed leading to a focus on the people and the organization behind a brand (Knox & Bickerton, 2003). Knox and Bickerton (2003) propose a definition for corporate branding where "a corporate brand is the visual, verbal and behavioral expression of an organization's unique business model" (Kavaratzis, 2009) which is communicated through all channels and "takes place through the

company's mission, core values, beliefs, communication, culture and overall design" (p. 27). The aim of a corporate brand is to give a foundation to communicate its promise to all stakeholders by representing all the attributes that are connected with the product. These attributes can be physical and socio psychological (Kavaratzis, 2009; & Simoes & Dibb, 2001). In other words corporate branding gives attributes to products by assigning values from the corporate brand to the product and hence increasing the values for the consumer (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). Another important function of a corporate brand is the connotation of products with the corporate brand, thus using the corporate brand to give meaning to a product (Kavaratzis, 2009). In corporate branding every action is a way of communication by the company – be it actions by employees or press releases – and hence every communication needs to be managed to make sure that the brand identity is communicated uniformly to all stakeholders. (Kavaratzis, 2009) An important factor of corporate brands is their time horizon. In contrast to product brands their time frame is much longer and it takes much longer to establish a corporate brand (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). Additionally, corporate brands have multiple stakeholders and aren't oriented on one customer group like product brands (Balmer & Gray, 2003). The main concepts of corporate branding were summarized by Balmer (2001) in a well-organized table.

Concept	Addresses key question	Comments/explanations
Corporate identity	What are we?	Also involves addressing a series of questions including: What is our business/structure/strategy/ethos/market/performance/history and reputation/relationships to other identities?
Organisational identity (corporate personality)[a]	Who are we?	The mix of dominant/ascendant subcultures within/transcending the organisation. Employees' relationships with myriad organisational identities (holding company, subsidiary/ies, departments, original, current and emergent identities). Professional, cultural, industrial, sexual identities, etc
Visual identity (visual identification system)	What are the organizations symbols and system of identification?	Do the organisation's visual (and verbal) cues communicate what/who we are? What/who we were? What/who we wish to be? A mix of the above? Is there clarity or confusion? Does it reflect or possibly inform current strategy?
Corporate communication	Is there integrated communication?	In relation to management, organisational and marketing communications. Are they integrated in terms of management, philosophy and process?
Total corporate communications	Is there congruency re vertical and horizontal communication?	Vertical: between corporate communication, corporate actors, performance and behaviours and between third parties. Horizontal: as above but also congruency over time
Corporate image	What is the current perception and/or profile?	In relation to the immediate mental perception of the organisation held by an individual, group or network
Corporate reputation	What distinctive attributes (if any) are assigned to the organisation?	The enduring perception held of an organisation by an individual, group or network
Corporate brand	What is the promise inferred from/communicated by the brand?	Are these inferences accurate, reflected in reality (the promise/performance gap), shown in management commitment and underpinned/made explicit by effective communications? *Vide supra*

Note: [a]The traditional and/or preferred marketing description

Figure 2: Corporate Branding (Balmer 2001 p. 257)

Corporate identity is especially important for place branding as it has to be clear which image the organization wants to communicate and that this image is consistent (Kavaratzis, 2009). To manage the corporate brand the traditional marketing mix is not enough since corporate branding is more of a philosophy than a marketing strategy (Kavaratzis, 2009). Most important for a corporate brand is that all actions have influence on the corporate brand and hence need to be subordinated to the common vision. In the next part the development of place branding and its different concepts will be described and place branding will be

distinguished from place marketing to show why place branding frameworks are used instead of place marketing concepts for this research.

2.2.3   Place branding vs. Place marketing

The developments of corporate branding led scholars to adapt the concepts for place marketing which resulted in different concepts of place branding (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). As Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005) mention provocatively place branding may seem impossible since "places are not products, governments are not producers and users are not consumers" (p. 510). Nevertheless, it has been done and most scholars (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005; Kavaratzis, 2009; Braun, 2008; Braun & Zenker, 2010; Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenker, 2010) agree on the fact that places can be branded. The argument is made from the point that places are far more complex than products, e.g. by the fact that place have more stakeholders than products, it can be assumed that places cannot be handled like products, leading to the application of corporate branding to place marketing (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). The similarities of corporate brands and place brands are stated in many articles and are: resemblance to corporate umbrella brands, multiple stakeholders, rooted in different disciplines, very complex and multiple identities (Rainisto, 2003; Kotler et al., 2002; Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005; Braun & Zenker, 2010). Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005) distinguish three different groups of place brands. The first category is geographical nomenclature branding which is the branding of products with the name of a place – a good example is the Champagne. The second category is called product place co-branding and is used to associate the positive image of a place with a product, as seen in Swiss watches. The third category is branding as place management which is the category that is used in this thesis. Here the practices of corporate branding are adopted to place management and policy (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). To do so a framework is required that shows all facets of the development-phase of a place brand as well as a guideline that helps managing the place brand.

Before elaborating on current concepts of place branding a definition for place branding will be given and based on this place marketing and place branding will be distinguished. Braun and Zenker (2010) have adapted the concept of corporate branding to place branding and came up with the following definition that is used in this thesis. A place brand is:

"A network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal, and behavioral expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values, and the general culture of the place's stakeholders and the overall place design." (p. 5)

The authors note that the brand is not the reality/place/landmarks but the perception of the communicated reality as shown in figure 3. (Braun & Zenker, 2010) This thesis uses this definition as it incorporates the important factors of place marketing (multiple stakeholders, multidisciplinary and consumer oriented). Additionally, it includes the factors of corporate branding by mentioning the different ways of communication (visual, verbal, behavioral) of a place and the identity of a place.

Figure 3: Place Brand Perception (Braun & Zenker, 2010, p. 5)

To show why this thesis is using place branding approaches that fit to this definition the differences between place marketing and place branding are shown. The main difference between place branding and place marketing is the different approach. In place branding a more holistic approach is necessary since multiple stakeholders and identities need to be managed. The place marketing approach is a more costumer oriented approach seeing the place as a product. Furthermore, as place branding is encapsulating an overall strategy, the usual marketing mix is not enough for place branding. Another major difference is the focus on place identity in place branding and the focus on product/place promotion in place marketing. (Govers, 2011) In this thesis place branding is used instead of place marketing since the case in focus already uses place marketing measures and the possible influence of place branding on the tourism sector shall be analyzed.

To do so the most important frameworks of place branding will be discussed in the following paragraphs and a decision for one framework which will be used for further refinement will be made.

Several authors have introduced different frameworks for place branding. Kavaratzis (2009) gives a good overview of the current status quo of frameworks and proposes a framework which integrates all of the current frameworks. This thesis will review the integrated framework by Kavaratzis (2009) and the latest framework proposed by Braun and Zenker (2010). The frameworks reviewed by Kavaratzis (2009) will not be reviewed as their essence is summarized in the integrated framework.

Kavaratzis (2009) proposes the combination of the existing frameworks into an integrated framework consisting of eight categories. The categories are as follows:

- *"Vision and Strategy (chosen vision for the city' s future and development of a clear strategy to realize it)*
- *Internal Culture (spreading a brand orientation through the city management and marketing itself)*
- *Local Communities (prioritizing local needs; involving local residents, entrepreneurs and businesses in developing and delivering the brand)*
- *Synergies (gaining agreement and support of all relevant stakeholders and providing for balanced participation)*
- *Infrastructure (providing for basic needs without which the city cannot attempt delivering the expectations created by its brand)*
- *Cityscape and Gateways (the ability of the built environment to represent itself and reinforce or damage the city's brand)*
- *Opportunities (opportunities available for targeted individuals (urban lifestyle, good services, education etc.) and companies (financial, labor etc.), which signify the potential of the place)*
- *Communications (fine-tuning all intentionally communicated messages)."*(p. 34 f.)

He proposes the framework for cities but it is also relevant for other places (regions, interregional places) (Kavaratzis, 2009). The categories are ordered similarly to how a place branding process would work. In this framework it is highlighted that all stages need to be accompanied by external and internal analysis "to create and maintain a necessary connection

with all relevant audiences" (Kavaratzis, 2009, p. 35). Additionally strong leadership is necessary "to guarantee consistency and effectiveness" (Kavaratzis, 2009, p. 35).

This concept tries to incorporate many different approaches towards place branding (see: Rainisto, 2003; Kavaratzis, 2004; Hankinson, 2004; Anholt, 2006; Hankinson, 2007; Trueman & Cornelius, 2006) giving an overview of the actions which should be taken to establish a successful place brand. The place is not seen as a product in this concept but as a complex organization that needs strong leadership in place brand management.

Braun and Zenker (2010) propose a framework with a customer-focused approach to address different target groups with different sub-brands of the place brand. This approach is strongly based on the corporate branding developments during the last years. In this framework a brand architecture approach is adopted for place branding. (Braun & Zenker, 2010) To do so, "the idea is to develop a brand management structure with target group-specific sub-brands and a place (e.g. city) umbrella brand" (Braun & Zenker, 2010), therefore, the authors developed the framework of Place Brand Center shown below.
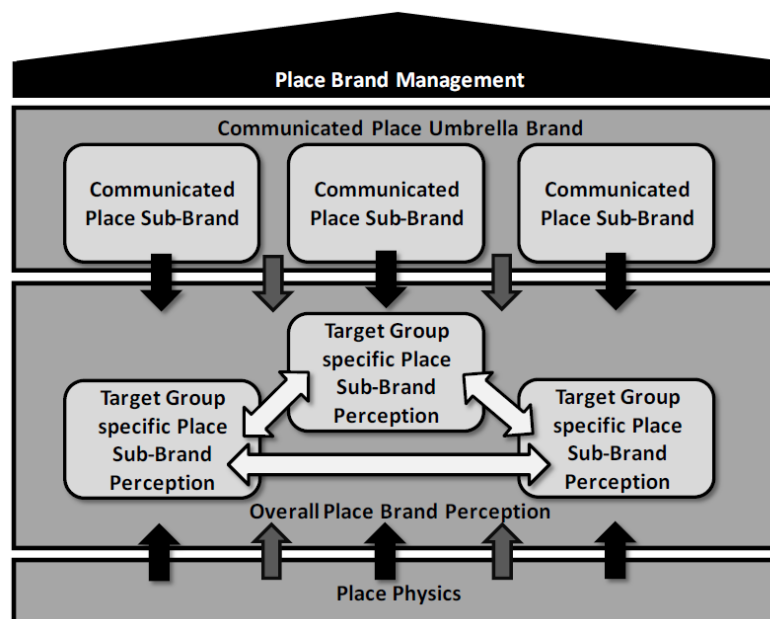
Figure 4: Place Brand Center (Braun & Zenker, 2010, p. 7)

In figure 4 the black arrows show the factors influencing the perception of the place sub-brand. These factors are the place physics, describing the offer of the place (environment, infrastructure, etc.), and the communicated place sub-brand. The grey arrows indicate the influence on the perception of the target groups by the communicated place umbrella brand in combination with the place physics. White arrows show the influence on the perception of a

place sub-brand by the perception of other place sub-brands. The overall place brand perception is influenced by the communicated place umbrella brand, the place physic and the perception of the place sub-brands. (Braun & Zenker, 2010) It is argued that this concept for a place brand management process will be more efficient due to its clear distribution of tasks. The communication between individual sub-brands as well as between sub-brands and umbrella brand is important to guarantee the success of this framework. (Braun & Zenker, 2010) Furthermore, the adaption of the place physic to the target group needs and a realistic communication of the place physic are essential as communicating unrealistic facts can lead to a negative place brand perception. (Braun & Zenker, 2010)

This thesis uses the Place Brand Center framework by Braun and Zenker (2010), since its set up is working for cities, regions and cross-border regions. It also is multi-stakeholder oriented and based on a multidisciplinary approach which is needed for a framework that is used for cross-border place branding. Another main reason for using the Place Brand Center framework is its target group orientation. To use it in this thesis it will be adapted to the current developments in cross-border place branding as shown in the next section. As the Place Brand Center approach is not giving recommendations for the development of a place brand but only for the management, the categories of the integrated framework by Kavaratzis (2009) are acknowledged and will be used to analyze potential opportunities and challenges for cross-border place branding initiatives. Since the identified categories are an integration of different approaches towards place branding from varying disciplinary starting points they help to maintain a multidisciplinary standard. In the following the developments in cross-border place branding will be shown and the frameworks stated above will be adapted to cross-border place branding.

3   Cross-border place branding: regions, borders and cross-border cooperation:

The concepts of place branding have also been applied to cross-border places and first case studies on these topics have been conducted (Hospers, 2006; Ioannides et al., 2006; Lepik and Kregul, 2009; Andersson, 2007; Prokkola, 2007; Nilsson et al., 2010). The developments of cross-border place branding and its special characteristics are shown below.

3.1   What is a region – theoretical foundation

As cross-border place brand is focusing on the cross-border aspect of a region, this research will give insight into the concepts of regions from different perspectives. This is important to later adapt the chosen place branding framework to cross-border regions. Firstly, the basic understanding of a region will be shown using the four traditional geographical definition of a region. Secondly, this research will explore the concept of regional geography and the institutionalization process of regions that is proposed in regional geography. This chapter concludes by bringing the concepts of place branding and regional geography together.

Regions are parts of the Earth's surface area – this can be seen as the most basic definition of a region. Different kinds of regions have been defined over time and hence four traditional categories of regions can be identified. Etymological the word region is rooted in the Latin language. The word region originates in the Latin verb *regere* meaning *to rule*. This meaning is reflected in the first traditional understanding of a region – the administrative region. Politically determined, this definition of a region is based on clear administrative boundaries and usually a hierarchal membership. Examples of administrative region can be seen all over the world including German Bundesländer or French departements. (Bailly, 1998) The second traditional understanding of a region is the formal region. Formal regions share multiple characteristics like language, administration and climate. Examples for formal regions are former colonies (English speaking, French speaking etc.). (National Geographic, 2014) As third category functional regions can be identified. Functional regions are defined by their interaction with a central actor. This central actor can be a big city to which the surrounding inhabitants commute to. Hence, functional regions are also defined by their connections which can also be the distribution range of a newspaper or the reach of local radio station. In contrast to administrative regions formal and functional region have vague boundaries. (National Geographic, 2014) The fourth and final traditional understanding of a region is the perceptual region also known as cognitive/vernacular region. Perceptual regions are made up

by peoples' attitudes and feelings towards a place and their subjective image of that place. Usually perceptual regions are based on cultural shared beliefs of a region but they can also be set up by individuals. Examples for perceptual regions are the Australian outback, East Germany and The Midwest (Hillbillies). (National Geographic, 2014) But to fully understand the complexity of regions these understandings of a region is are not enough. Gilbert (1998) made a contribution to diversification of the understanding of regions by reviewing the methodological approaches of the new regional geography in the 1980s. She identifies a renewed interest in regional geography with a focus of social theory in the study. The new regional geography approaches are categorized in

1. The region as a local response to capitalist processes
2. The region as a focus of identification
3. The region as a medium for social interaction. (Gilbert, 1988)

This approach to regions is the basis for further developments in regional geography and can already be applied to place branding as it includes the social part of a region. This gives insights in regions and how regions are perceived by their stakeholders who are of importance to place branding approaches. This focus is especially important as the frameworks of Braun and Zenker (2010) and Kavaratzis (2009) used in this thesis have a strong spotlight on identification and social interaction.

Further differentiations of regions were also made by Paasi (1996) who made an analytical distinction of regions. He indentifies three analytical approaches towards regions

1. Pre-scientific (a region is a spatial unit that is needed for collecting data)
2. Discipline-centered (regions are objects and/or results of the research)
3. Critical ideas (regions are conceptualized "as part of a wider network of cultural, political and economic processes and of divisions of labor" (Paasi, 2002, p. 804)

Especially the critical ideas approach contributes to the understanding of place branding. As Paasi (2002) states "critical regional geography should ideally combine the politico-economic approaches with questions of subjectification and identity formation" (p. 804). Hence the critical approach towards regions sees regions as a social construct that exist in spatial boundaries but are institutionalized in social practice. (Paasi, 2002) The point of institutionalization is central to place branding in cross-border regions as these processes are

often started by place branding. The understanding of a region used in this research is therefore the following set up by Paasi (2002):

"Regions, their boundaries, symbols and institutions are hence not results of autonomous and evolutionary processes but expressions of a perpetual struggle over the meanings associated with space, representation, democracy and welfare. The institutionalization of regions may take place on all spatial scales, not only between the local level and the state (Paasi, 1991). Actors and organizations involved in the territorialization of space may act both inside and outside regions." (p. 805)

Particularly the fact that institutionalization can take place on all levels is an important factor for cross-border place branding, as this supports the idea that cross-border regions can be branded and institutionalized by place branding done right. Additionally, this understanding of a region supports the choice for the two before mentioned frameworks. It acknowledges the wide scale of actors taking part in the territorialization of space which is an important part of the two frameworks. Therefore cross-border place branding initiatives can be seen as an actor that takes part in the institutionalization of a region; be it successful or not. To understand the challenges which come up for cross-border regions the next section will look at the notion of border in regional geography. Especially the social component in this understanding of a region can be seen in the cross-border regions that are looked at in this research. These regions are currently region under construction but the social input may change them to "regions as social practice" (Paasi, 2002, p. 200). To get an understanding helps to answer the sub-question on the challenges that occur in cross-border regions since some of those challenges may be related with borders occurring in this kind of region. Hence, an understanding of what a border is will be given drawing on the recent developments in regional geography.

3.2 Borders as part of a region

To understand the multi-faced nature of borders this section starts with an introduction by Van Houtum and Strüver (2002).

"Borders do exist. Borders exist precisely because they are imagined, sensed, felt; because they are believed. The border is absent, yet present. We define ourselves against what we are not, visible borders or not. Drawing lines on a map however does not help us much to

understand and describe the world. It does not represent our thoughts, identities, remembrances, joy or fear. It is we who make the borders, who are the borders." (p. 23)

Having this notion in borders in mind, this section explores the characteristics of borders and their contribution to cross-border place branding. Following the approach this thesis used to get an understanding of region, the phenomenon of borders will be tackled the same way. Firstly, the traditional understandings of borders will be shown. Secondly the current approaches towards borders will be analyzed followed by a final assessment including the application of border concepts on the chosen place branding frameworks.

Traditionally borders are understood "as constituting the physical and highly visible lines of separation between political, social and economic spaces" (Newman, 2006, p. 144). But this very broad understanding of a border is not helpful in the context of this thesis as borders are an important part of cross-border regions. A deeper insight in the different approaches towards borders in the field of border studies is given by Van Houtum (1998). He identifies four main distinctions of borders.

1. Natural vs. artificial borders (landmark borders vs. man-made borders)
2. Open vs. closed borders (free movement of people and goods vs. no movement of people and goods)
3. Functional vs. affective borders (jurisdictional border vs. peoples emotional tie with territory)
4. Concrete vs. abstract borders (jurisdictional borders vs. mental borders conceived by people) (Van Houtum, 1998)

Van Houtum (1998) analyses these identified distinctions and finds that they have a paradox in common paradox. Firstly, the term natural can be used in different ways (political borders can be seen as natural since it is natural for human being to set them) which means all borders are natural borders. Secondly, he argues that the distinctions 2, 3 and 4 made in research can't be seen as distinctions but as paradoxes, as borders are open as well as closed, functional as well as affective and concrete as well as abstract. (Van Houtum, 1998) He therefore argues that "the overlap between active/cognitive/affective space and functional space" (Van Houtum, 1998, p. 49) can be regarded as an opportunity for integration and if "the active/cognitive/affective space is smaller than the functional space" (Van Houtum, 1998, p. 49) it is a barrier to integration.

Adapting this to cross-border regions borders can be seen as opportunities as well as challenges. Cross-border initiatives may profit from an overlap of functional and affective border because of a strong identification but if that is not the case challenges occur. Furthermore open borders like in the Schengen Area are opportunities for cross-border place branding initiatives. Abstract borders can also be a challenge for cross-border place branding initiatives especially if they occur in regions with open borders which overlap functionally and affectively. In this kind of regions mental borders that do not fit with the functional and affective borders become a challenge for cross border place branding initiatives (van Houtum, 2002).

As shown the understanding of borders changed from static borders to a dynamic process. This can also be seen in research with Newman (2006) giving a good overview of the border study development. This thesis will not go into details of different border study approaches but will look at the border studies in focus the understanding of borders in Europe. Van Houtum (2000) identifies three approaches to the study of the EU's internal borders.

1. The flow approach
2. The people approach
3. The cross-border cooperation approach

These approaches will shortly be explained and opportunities and challenges for borders and cross-border regions will be analyzed.

The flow approach categorizes research that deals with "the physical flow of (economic) activities" (Van Houtum, 2000, p. 59). It is the approach of the classical approach of regional geographers like Giersch and Lösch in the 1940s. In their approach it is argued that state borders are market barriers and lead to economic loss. Borders are seen as barriers to economic interaction. (Van Houtum, 2000) Scholars of this approach advocated that border regions suffer from their proximity to the border economically as the low transportation costs and great internal economics of large scale production would make border region to peripheral areas that are not chosen for location by big companies. (Van Houtum, 2000) Therefore it is argued that borders in Europe are obstacles that prevent the natural flow of economic activities which increase the marginal costs of interaction. (Van Houtum, 2000) Empirical studies proofed that internal borders in Europe are a barriers to interaction between countries (for details see: Bröcker, 1984; Nuesser, 1985; Rietveld & Janssen, 1990; Rossera,

1993) In later research on the barrier effect of borders, it is argued that not only the physical factors should be taken into account but also non-physical barrier factors like socio-cultural influences. (Van Houtum, 2000)

The second approach identified by van Houtum (2000) is the people approach. This approach focuses "on the (mental) creation, (symbolic) shaping, and reshaping of borders by human beings – including politicians, firms, consumers and citizens." (Van Houtum, 2000, p. 67) Scholars hence analyze the perspective of people that are involved in cross-border interaction. (see a good overview of conducted studies in Van Houtum, 2000) In the view of the peoples approach borders are seen as mental products of humans with different identities instead of visible dividers. (Van Houtum, 2000) Additionally, the fixation on borders as political line as seen in the flow approach is not used. Van Houtum (2000) gives a good general definition of the people approach: It deals with

"the dynamic processes of differentiations in perceptions and identity caused or stimulated by the social production and reproduction of that [border] line, and with possible consequences for the (inter)action and behavior of the people who occupy that socially constructed line"(p. 68)

A key term in the people approach is regional identity. A good definition of regional identity is given by Paasi (2002).

"Regional identities are collective narratives on who and what 'we' and 'our region' are and how these differ from others." (p. 146)

Paasi (2002) also suggests that regional identity is part of the construction process of a region and is an important part of the institutionalization of spaces into region. This process of how regions are constructed and come into being is influenced by the people approach. It is a good example of the approach in research. It states that regions get institutionalized by 4 processes - (i) territorial shaping (identification of spatial structure), (ii) symbolic shaping (name and other symbols of the region), (iii) institutional shaping (establishment of institutions that maintain the territorial and symbolic shapes) and (iv) establishment of an identity (regional identity in social practices and consciousness). (For details see: Paasi, 1986) Place branding initiatives can play an important role in this institutionalization process. Borders are here seen from a peoples approach as the intentions of people play an important role in all four processes.

The third category identified by van Houtum (2000) is the cross-border cooperation approach. A main trigger for the increasing interest of scholar on cross-border cooperation in border studies was the growing promotion of cross-border cooperation in the EU since the 1960s. This approach looks at the cross-border cooperation – mainly introduced by EU measures like INTERREG – that tries to overcome shared problems of border regions and aims to profit economically from the cooperation. (Van Houtum, 2000) Often the assumption of the studies was that border in Europe can be overcome towards a borderless Europe. Hence, in this approach "borders are seen as barriers, not as physical barriers as the flow approach would argue, but as barriers to success or a prosperous integration and harmonization process." (Van Houtum, 2000, p. 64) But border regions do profit from this kind of border as as they drift from peripheral national regions to central European regions that cooperate economically. Or as van Houtum (2000) states border regions "are seen as "active" spaces and key areas for cross-border policy development"(…) "rather than "passive" spaces" (p. 64) Nevertheless, critics see examples that the border is still a barrier to cross-border cooperation and cultural differences are cannot be overcome by this approach (van Houtum, 2000), which brings this review back to the importance of regional identity in the process of regional institutionalization. To conclude the characteristics of the different approaches are shown in the table by van Houtum (2000).

	Flow Approach	Cross-Border Cooperation Approach	People Approach
Problem Orientation	Analysis of the discontinuity in (physical) interaction flow across borders	Analysis of effective strategies to overcome borders and stimulate cross-border development and Euregionalisation	Analysis of the territorially divergent constructions of social practices, spatial identity, and spatial cognition
Central Question	Do borders matter?	Borders matter! How can they be overcome?	How are borders constructed?
Theoretical Framework	-Core periphery models -Location theories -Central places approach -Gravity models -Economic potential models	-Network approaches -Transaction costs approaches	-Social constructionism -Spatial identity approaches -Behavioral approaches -Action approaches
Assumption on Human Behavior	Homo economicus: Minimization of (distance) costs	Homo cooperans: Maximization of contacts	Homo socialis: Human behaviors and affections are socially and spatially constructed
Assumption on Space	Space is homogeneous	Cross-border spatial networks have missing links	Space is affectively and cognitively divided
Key Terms	-Physical distance -Discontinuity -Transport costs -Economic potential -Accessibility	-Effectiveness, success -Tools, instruments -Connectivity, openness -(Dis)similarities, differences, synergy -Networks, cooperation, alliances	-Spatial cognition -Spatial perception -Spatial affection -Spatial identity -Social construction -Social practices
Choice of Method	Computational analysis	Descriptive/prescriptive analysis	Mental/social discursive analysis
Methodological Characteristics	-Material -Objective -Manifest -Static	-Material/Nonmaterial -Objective/Subjective -Manifest/Latent -Static/Dynamic	-Nonmaterial -Intersubjective/Subjective -Latent -Dynamic/Evolution
Connotation of Borders	-Physical barriers -Artificial distortions of equilibrium -The perishing barrier effect of borders is measurable	-Artificial barriers to integration -Borders are both challenges and opportunities for contact and integration	-Borders are social constructs -Borders are relevant markers of identity -Borders are demarcations of certainty
Connotation of Border Regions	-Peripheral -Socially and economically marginal areas -'Passive' space	-Peripheral -Challenged to become central -Micro-scale laboratories -'Active' space	-Border regions are political and social constructs -Juxtaposured, overlapping zones confirming national and regional narratives
Types of Distances	-Travel or transport distance -Euclidean distance	-Economic distance -Administrative distance -Social distance -Cultural distance	-Affective distance -Cognitive distance -Mental distance

Figure 5: Border Study approaches (Van Houtum, 2000)

This review of approaches towards borders shows that borders do exist but not only as dividing line. Borders are multi-faced with varying approaches to conceptualization as shown above. From these concepts of borders challenges and opportunities for border regions can be extracted that will be shown below.

Taking the viewpoint of flow approach scholars borders are mainly challenges. Due to their peripheral location they usually don't host big international companies and tariffs hinder cross-border trade. These challenges do occur in border regions but the European Union and Schengen developments minimized these challenges. (van Houtum, 2000) Looking at the cross-border approach borders are not only challenges to the region but can also be seen as opportunities. Borders in regions are challenges for border regions as they are barriers for further integration. Additionally they minimize contact between the border regions. But still these challenges can be seen as opportunities since the EU is providing cross-border cooperation policies to overcome these challenges. (van Houtum, 2000) Hence, borders can be seen as opportunities to increase cooperation. (van Houtum, 2000) The active role of border regions is the main opportunity shown by the cross-border approach. The opportunities for economic growth and a central instead of a peripheral role in the European space are central to this approach. (van Houtum, 2000) Still, cultural distance, administrative distance, social distance and economic distance are challenges that need to be overcome. Taking the peoples' approach perspective further challenges and opportunities can be identified. On the one hand regional identity is an opportunity for border regions, if it occurs across borders, as this common identity may overcome functional barriers set by the border. On the other hand it may be a challenge occurring on each side of the border since in addition to the functional barrier of the border cognitive distance as barrier appears. (van Houtum, 2000) The confrontation of national and regional identities is challenge as wells as opportunity for border regions. The mix of identities can be an opportunity because new inputs for border regions are given and the development of new structures is triggered. Nevertheless this mix can also lead to barrier building. (van Houtum, 2000) The identified challenges and opportunities will be used analyze the cases in section 4.

To get a more detailed insight on the reason for cross-border place branding the next section will analyze the cross-border cooperation approach in place branding literature more deeply.

3.3 Developments of cross-border place branding: cross-border cooperation in Europe

Cross-border cooperation approaches are playing an important role in cross-border place branding. Therefore this thesis will give a more detailed look into this phenomenon. Place

branding and cross-border place branding show some differences. The growing complexity due to the rising number of stakeholders, different governmental and organizational systems and the lack of a central decision making authority can be identified as main difference in cross-border place branding compared to city/region place branding (Anderson, 2007). But there are also varying explanations for the creation of place branding and cross-border place branding. Hence the following section will show the focus of cross-border place branding scholars on cross-border cooperation approaches to indicate the importance of border studies for the field of place branding.

Cross-border branding initiatives in Europe came up with the rise of the European integration introducing cross-border cooperation as part of the European integration policy (Prokolla, 2007). To develop often underdeveloped border regions, cross-border regions were created and new possibilities for economic growth were created. This also led to new institutional set ups and cross-border structures which fostered new economic developments. (Prokolla, 2007) Most of the current cross-border regions in Europe have been named Euroregions and profit from European Union policies, mainly from financial funding by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) (Prokolla 2007, Andersson 2007). This development is conceptualized under the topic 'new regionalism' stating that regions are not bound to national borders anymore and regions are in competition with each other (Keating, 1998) In this concept EU measures provide the regions with instruments to act detached from their respective nation state (Keating, 1998). This leads to new possibilities for economic development in border regions as it can be seen in cross-border place branding.

Next to the developments of the new regionalism cross border place branding is also based on the ever recurring topic of competition between places (Prokolla, 2007). These developments led to a fair amount of cross-border branding initiatives (see: Hospers, 2006; Ioannides et al., 2006; Lepik and Kregul, 2009; Andersson, 2007; Prokkola, 2007; Nilsson et al., 2010) with first steps towards a theory development. These steps can be split into, firstly the identification of challenges mentioned by Andersson (2007) who emphasizes the "diversity of the region" and "the lack of a central decision making authority" (p. 124) as main challenges for cross-border branding initiatives. Secondly, Hospers (2006) introduces the concept of imagined spaces into the cross-border place branding topic referring to the field of regional geography. Imagined spaces are places that are constructed to serve the purpose of branding without reflecting the identity of the existing place. This includes place brands that copy existing brands (e.g. Silicon Saxony as a copy of silicon Valley), places that communicate

only small aspects of their reality (e.g. the Ruhrgebiet focusing on culture leaving out the working class tradition) and places that communicate no message at all but rely on slogans only (e.g. Enschede: Color the City) (Hospers, 2006). It is implied in this concept that imagined spaces often fail in their branding attempts as the residents refuse the branding attempts (Hospers, 2006) as a place brand needs first and foremost the residents' support (Braun & Kavaratzis, 2010). The current place branding initiatives are mainly such imagined spaces, developed out of multi-level initiatives with national and supra national actors playing an important role. This fact is confirmed by Perkmann (2003) who identifies INTERREG and ERDF funding as main driver behind cross-border cooperation. This shows that cross-border cooperation and hence cross-border place branding is not mainly driven by competition between places but by EU policies.

Based on this finding the reason for constructing place brands can be identified as difference between city/regional branding and cross-border place branding. Cross-border place branding is mainly policy driven whereas city/regional branding is mainly competition driven. This can also be seen in the case of the EUREGIO region shown below.

Since the reason for cross-border place branding have been analyzed and challenges for border region have been shown the next section will bring place branding and border study approaches together to develop a framework of cross-border place branding.

3.4 Cross-border place branding: integration of place branding and the border study approaches

Firstly cross-border cooperation and tourism policy are closely interconnected. They make the above mentioned leading role of the tourism sector in place branding developments even more relevant. Prokolla (2007), for example, reasons that since tourism policy became part of the EU policy agenda in the Treaty of Maastricht (1992) it became more and more important for cross-border cooperation efforts in the following years. Now tourism policy can be seen as "the driving force for regional development in rural and peripheral parts of Europe, which often consist of national borderlands" (Prokolla, 2007, p. 124). This is just another argument for the use of the tourism sector as flagship sector in the development of cross-border place branding strategy.

Some efforts to combine the theoretical developments in place branding with the developments in cross-border cooperation have been made by Anderson (2007) by

highlighting the common characteristics of place and corporate brands. He also concluded that the "most important of these characteristics in the context of building a regional brand are the need to deal with and address both multiple identities and multiple stakeholders" (p. 123.).

The concept of regional identity can also be seen as an interesting contribution of the people approach to the concept of place branding. Andersson (2007) has elaborated on the importance of regional identity in the creation of cross-border brand in the Baltic Sea Region. He stresses that regional identity is needed for the development of a cross-border place brand but sees the lack of a central decision making authority and multiple stakeholders as a more relevant barrier. (Andersson, 2007) This thesis is arguing that regional identity is an important basis for cross-border place branding. Especially in the institutionalization process of a cross-border region regional identity plays an important role. In current research regional identity is either assumed or only looked at peripherally. This work states that successful cross-border place branding also needs to be based on a successful regional identity development.

Furthermore this thesis acknowledges the findings, regarding borders as economical barriers, of the flow approach. Nevertheless it argues that these barriers can be overcome by cross-border cooperation.

In total this thesis acknowledges the importance of border studies and regional geography as a basis for cross-border place branding. Furthermore it uses the Place Brand Center Approach by Braun and Zenker (2010) in combination with the framework of Kavaratzis (2009) as basis for a possible cross-border place branding initiative in the EUREGIO region. The further application of the frameworks on cross-border place branding will be operationalized in the next section.

3.5 A framework for cross-border place branding

In the section on regions this thesis already has shown that place branding initiatives are an important part during the institutionalization of regions. Nevertheless the current place branding frameworks were developed for cities, regions and nations but not for cross-border region. This section will therefore combine the framework of Kavaratzis (2009) and Braun and Zenker (2010) and adapt it to the special characteristics of cross-border regions.

Cross-border branding initiatives are a part of the institutionalization process of regions. Therefore this research sees a cross-border place brand framework not as a single action but

as part of an institutionalization process. This process can work successfully but can also be unsuccessful, the cross-border place brand being just one factor of many. Still, a successful cross-border place brand can help to institutionalize a region. On the basis of the challenges and opportunities mentioned in the section before the place branding frameworks by Kavaratzis (2009) and Braun and Zenker (2010) will be adapted bearing in the role of cross-border place branding in the institutionalization process in mind.
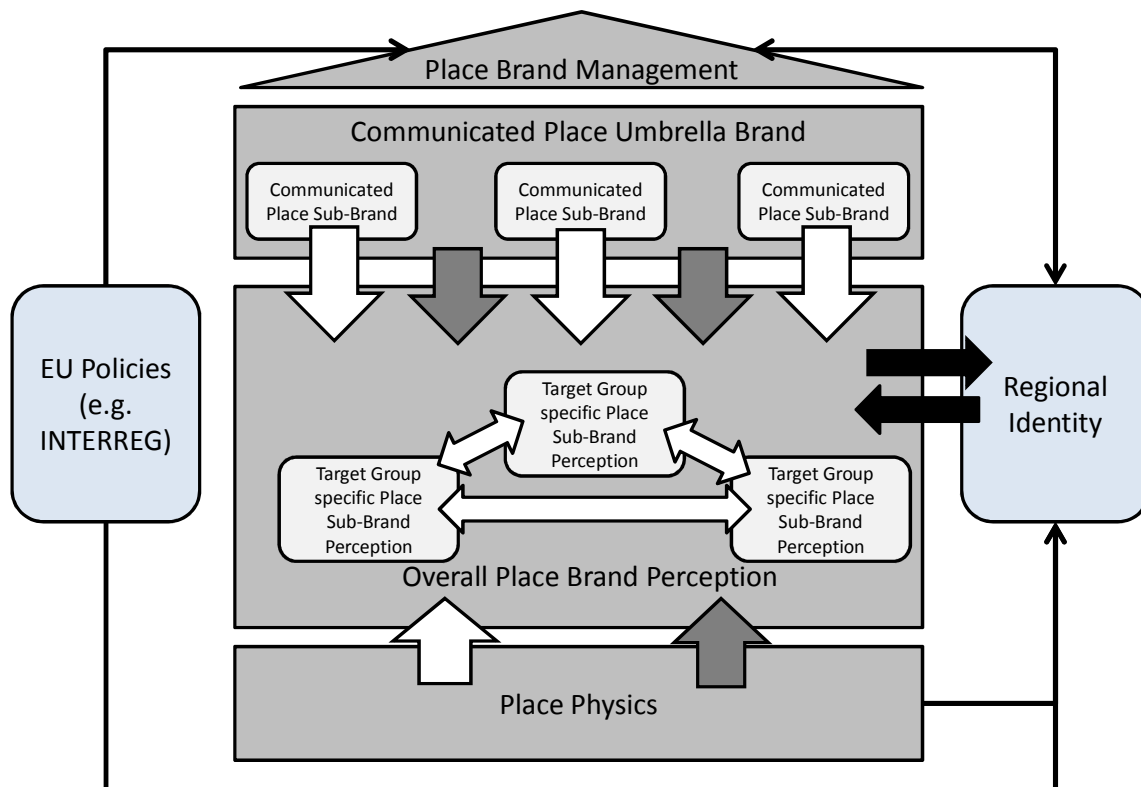
Figure 6: Cross-border Place Brand Center based on Braun and Zenker (2010)

In figure 6 the Place Brand Center approach is adapted to the characteristics of cross-border regions that this research has identified above. This adapted model now includes the factors regional identity and EU policies which play an important role in the development phase of a cross-border place brand. The characteristics of the Place Brand Center approach are still acknowledged but the regional identity and EU policies as influencing factors are needed to show the full process of the development of a place brand in a cross-border region. Firstly, the white arrows show the influence of the place physics and the communicated place sub-brands on the target group specific place sub-brand perception. Secondly, the grey arrows indicate the influence off the place physic and the communicated place umbrella brand on the target

group specific place sub-brand perception. Thirdly, the target group specific place sub-brand perception is influenced by the perception of the other place sub-brands as shown with the white arrows. Finally "the overall place umbrella brand perception […] is built by the communicated place umbrella brand; by the place physics; and finally by the perception of the different sub-brands" (Braun & Zenker, 2010, p. 7). Insofar this follows the conceptual framework of Braun and Zenker (2010). Two additional factors are added to this framework. the factor 'regional identity' is added which influences the target group specific place brand perception (black arrows) and is influenced by the place brand perceptions itself. The perceptions of the brands influence the regional identity as it may change the place identification and satisfaction. (Braun & Zenker, 2010) The perception of the umbrella brand and the perception of the target group specific sub-brands are influenced by the regional identity since the target group members are part of the regional identity building. Furthermore the regional identity is influenced by the place physics and the EU policy measures as both give regional stakeholder input for the adjustment of the regional identity. Finally, regional identity is an important overall input for the place brand management since – as stated before – successful cross-border place branding should be place on a common regional identity. Still the place brand can also be implemented with no regard to the regional identity which leads to a possible influence of the place brand management on the regional identity as new input may create a regional identity or adjust the current regional identity. EU policies also influence the overall place brand management as these measures of are the starting point for cross-border place brand development.

In addition to the already stated characteristics the categories of a place brand identified by Kavaratzis (2009) are acknowledged with a special focus on leadership. Due to the multiple stakeholders and identities of cross-border region strong leadership is needed to implement a successful cross-border brand. Still all categories are important for the successful implementation of a cross-border place brand since they are based on corporate branding which also deals with multiple stakeholders and identities.

In the following three cases of cross-border place branding will be assessed on the basis of this framework and the identified challenges and opportunities. The next section will therefore give reason why the cases were chosen and then systematically identify challenges and opportunities for tourism stakeholders.

4 Cases of cross-border place branding and its influences on the tourism industry

In cross-border regions different regional actors – politicians, officials and private entrepreneurs – need to recognize what is happening on the other side of the border in order to achieve sustainable tourism planning. (Prokolla, 2007) To analyze if this is done in practice three cases will be identified and analyzed. In the first section the case selection will be explained followed by three sections on the different cases.

4.1 Case selection

Cross-border place branding cases were selected on the basis of the theoretical foundation of chapter 3.Since this research is focusing on the touristic stakeholder the first criteria for the case selection was the involvement of touristic stakeholders in the cross-border place branding initiative. The second criteria was that the cases needed to be based in the EU as the EU policy measures were identified as important factor for the development of a cross-border place branding initiative. Therefore the cases not only needed to be based in the EU but also need to be involved in at least one EU policy measure like INTERREG. As third criteria for the case selection this research chose the presence of a regional identity for the branded region. To better analyze the influence of regional identity on cross-border place branding one case (the Bodensee region) with a strong regional identity, one case with a medium regional identity (Via-Claudia-Augusta) and one case with a low regional identity (Fehmarnbelt region) were chosen. To assess the importance of leadership one case with a strong regional leadership (Bodensee Region), one case with medium regional leadership (Fehmarnbelt Region) and one case with a low regional leadership (Via Claudia Augusta) was identified. On the basis of these criteria the cases Vierländerregion Bodensee, Via Claudia Augusta and Fehmarnbelt were selected. Additionally, the Fehmarnbelt region case is a special case since it is a cross-border place brand that is still under development. Whereas the cases Bodensee and Via Claudia Augusta are based on a content analysis, the Fehmarnbelt case is additionally based on two in depth interviews with stakeholders of the project.

In the following the three different approaches towards cross-border place branding will be shown. Firstly, as a cross-border place branding example that tries to include all stakeholders (Investors, tourists, students and residents) the Bodensee brand will be looked at in detail. Secondly, a project that is based on tourism to trigger further economic development, the Via Claudia Augusta, is shown. Finally, a case is analyzed in which a cross border place brand is

still under development. The analysis of the three cases aims at identifying relevant preconditions for cross-border place brands, funding opportunities for cross-border place brands as well as opportunities and challenges for the touristic stakeholders of a cross-border region. Especially in the case of Via Claudia Augusta the role of touristic stakeholders in the development of a cross-border place brand will be analyzed to develop possible approaches for touristic stakeholders in the EUREGIO region.

4.2 The case of the Bodensee region

The Bodensee brand is set up around the lake Bodensee, bordering Switzerland, Austria, Germany and Liechtenstein. In Germany two Bundesländer - Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg - in Switzerland five Cantons - Appenzell-Ausserrhoden, Appenzell-Innerrhoden, Schaffhausen, St. Gallen and Thurgau – in Austria one Land – Vorarlberg – and the whole Principality of Liechtenstein are parts of the Bodensee brand. In total 3 Million residents inhabit the region.47.000 residents cross the borders daily to get to work. It is a diversified economic region with many international companies (e.g. Doppelmayer, Nestlé, Credit Suisse, Unilever, Stihl etc.) including the following industrial sectors: Nanotechnology, biotechnology, life sciences, aerospace engineering, mechanical engineering, food industry and mobility technology. This international industry is complemented with a strong small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) sector, especially in the tourism sector. Furthermore 30 universities and many research facilities are based in the Bodensee region. Cross-border cooperation is traditionally rooted in the region as the trade over Lake Bodensee has existed for centuries and the lake gives a common identity for the people around it. (all regional information above: Bodensee Standortmarketing GmbH, n.d. a)

Figure 7: The Bodensee Brand (Bodenseestandortmarketing, n.d. a)

The place brand Vierländer Region Bodensee was set up in September 2011 as a development of the project International Economic Area Bodensee (IEB) which was funded by the before mentioned regions to promote the economic development in the Bodensee area. (Bodensee Standortmarketing, 2014) The IEB is mainly funded by INTERREG IV with 272.067,35 Euro

and the public sector of the participating countries with 414.782,65 Euro. 22.500,00 Euro are given by the private sector which adds up to a project volume of 709.350,00 Euro. (All financial numbers: INTERREG IV Alpenrhein, Bodensee, Hochrhein, 2014) Hence the Bodensee brand is mainly financed by EU and public sector funds. The funding ends in December 2014. The future financing of the project is done by licensing costing from 150 Euro p.a. to 250 Euro p.a.. Currently there are ca. 200 license holders which is a minimum/maximum of 30.000/50.000 Euros of license fees. (Bodensee Standortmarketing, n.d. b) Hence this project can only be continued with further public sector funding. The Bodensee brand was set up by 15 project partners namely: Vorarlberger Landesregierung (AUT), Amt für Volkswirtschaft Fürstentum Liechtenstein (FL), Amt für Wirtschaft und Arbeit des Kanton Thurgau (CH), Landkreis Sigmaringen (GER), Landkreis Bodenseekreis (GER), Wirtschaftsförderung Bodenseekreis GmbH (GER), Landkreis Ravensburg (GER), Stadt Ravensburg (GER), Regionalverband Bodensee-Oberschwaben (GER), Landkreis Lindau (GER), Landkreis Konstanz (GER), Stadt Konstanz (GER), Stadt Friedrichshafen (GER), Bodensee Standort Marketing GmbH (GER/CH) and Wirtschaftsförderungs- und Standortmarketinggesellschaft Landkreis Sigmaringen mbH i.G. (GER). (INTERREG IV Alpenrhein, Bodensee, Hochrhein, 2014) The IEB project, which solely aims at promoting the business location Bodensee region, is the basis for the development of the cross-border brand Bodensee, which unifies all stakeholders (Residents, tourists, politics, culture and business/investors). Projects for the touristic positioning of the cross-border region Bodensee and for the development of an international Bodensee touristic organization – the International Bodensee Tourismus GmbH - were synchronized with the IEB project and used for the development of the multi stakeholder brand Vierländerregion Bodensee. The Bodensee Standortmarketing GmbH is the project leader and coordinates the cross-border brand.[1]

The developed brand is not just a logo with combined slogan but is based on a strategy and a vision. The aim of the cross-border brand is to bundle the communication efforts of all participating partners. The Bodensee is used as the common anchor that brings all partners together. Additionally, the brand communicates a holistic proposition of economic sectors, quality of living and tourism attractions. Based on the external studies on the identity of the Bodensee region and the target groups of the region a brand was developed drawing on the diversity of the region and the resulting areas of conflict. Thus, for example the regional and interregional characteristics are brought together to show that tradition and regional quality of

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[1] All information retrieved from the official sites: www.interreg.org, www.vierländerregion-bodensee.info and http://www.bodensee-standortmarketing.com/de/home.html

life can be combined with international business and cross-border open-mindedness. Using further areas of conflict as quietness vs. dynamic, tradition vs. innovation, nature vs. culture and lake vs. landscape a holistic brand identity is created combining the traditional elements of the region with the innovative business environment of the area.

The cross-border brand of the Bodensee region resembles a corporate brand with the Vierländerregion Bodensee as corporate brand developing the corporate identity and bundling the communication. The aim is that the participating stakeholders (cities, businesses, regions etc.) add value to their own product brand by being part of the cross-border place brand. Therefore the Vierländerregion Bodensee developed a corporate branding based on a license system. There are five scopes of application for the license holders who pay a yearly fee to use the cross-border brand. The range of application reaches from full use to facultative use.

	LOGO 1. EBENE	LOGO 2. EBENE	CORPORATE DESIGN
MARKENTRÄGER			Regionenmarke
VOLL-ANWENDER	Orientierungslinie Vierländerregion Bodensee Name		Regionenmarke
TEIL-ANWENDER	Eigenes Logo		Regionenmarke
ADDITIV-ANWENDER	Eigenes Logo		Eigenes Design
FAKULTATIV-ANWENDER	Eigenes Logo		Eigenes Design

Figure 8: Bodensee License System (Bodensee Standortmarketing, n.d. b)

The full application only allows the use of the corporate brand without using the product brand. Second category combines the corporate design with the name of the product brand, for example a region. The third category uses the corporate design but also their own product brand. In the fourth category the corporate design of the cross-border brand is not used but only the logo to achieve additive effects for the own brand. In the final category the user only applies the logo of the Vierländerregion Bodensee as a seal of quality. Hence, the cross-border brand is not only constructed like a corporate brand but is also used for place of origin branding like it is done in the South-Tyrol region. Therefore, the Bodensee brand can be categorized as an umbrella brand. But whereas the South Tyrol is a sole touristic umbrella

brand which is also used for place of origin branding the Bodensee brand is a place brand for all stakeholders.

As it can be seen the Bodensee region uses a slightly different approach than this thesis. The concept of Braun and Zenker (2010) also identifies the importance of a place umbrella brand but the sub-brands in the concept are fully oriented at their respective target group. This isn't communicated in the Bodensee brand. Here the focus lies mainly on the communication of the umbrella brand without coordinating the sub-brands since they are using the corporate brand as license holder but are not part of the organizational structure of the corporate brand. Looking at the eight categories that Kavaratzis (2009) developed for an integrated place brand framework one can see that the Bodensee brand is oriented at these categories. Clearly, the umbrella brand has developed a vision and strategy as a brand philosophy, a vision and a plan to realize this strategy are detailed in the IEB project as well as in the Vierländerregion brand.

With corporate design guideline and communication guideline the cross border place branding organization embraces an internal culture that represents the brand. Since the process of the development of the cross-border brand was harmonious and decided in consensus, it can be assumed that the partners fully support the philosophy and strategy of the place branding initiative. Local communities were involved from the beginning and are important financial partners of the place brand. Furthermore, the main business initiatives of the region are involved in the place branding project showing the support of the brand by the businesses of the region. The central coordination of the umbrella brand by the Bodensee Standortmarketing GmbH helps to build synergies by creating networks for all stakeholders. Due to its cross-border status of the Vierländerregion Bodensee the categories infrastructure and cityscape and gateways cannot entirely be fulfilled since the competencies of the place brand organization do not reach that far. Still, the promise of the brand was built upon the existing infrastructure and with the knowledge of the full commitment of all relevant stakeholders which includes infrastructure and planning authorities. Clear opportunities were developed and are communicated to the target groups (e.g. innovative SMEs). Moreover the brand communication is bundled to efficiently communicate the umbrella brand. Using existing networks with universities, external auditions during the process were held and gave input into the development of the place brand. Hence, the Vierländerregion Bodensee brand adopted many parts of the theoretical concepts, but due to its cross-border nature there are still some competencies that are not yet on the place brand level.

From the best practice Vierländerregion Bodensee the following conclusions for the development of a cross-border place brand can be deducted.

One can see that the development of a cross-border place brand depends on some preconditions which may simplify the development process. Firstly, it is helpful if the development of cross-border place brand is on the agenda of all inter-regional stakeholders. This may happen by political agenda setting or by agenda setting pressure of other stakeholder like businesses or business development organizations. In the case of the Bodensee brand political as well as economic stakeholders had the development of a place brand on their agenda. Secondly, existing networks can be regarded as a precondition. Discussions in existing networks help to bring the topic on the agenda. The existing networks in the Bodensee region help by the development of the cross-border brand insofar as the common goal of a cross border place brand was able to grow in existing cross-border initiatives which then were used to implement the place brand. A third precondition is the access to funding opportunities. As shown above the Vierländerregion Bodensee is mainly funded by INTERREG and INTERREG cofounding of the public sector. This also may explain why there are so many cross-border place branding initiatives set in the EU. Finally, a strong leadership can be identified as a precondition. Leadership is mainly needed to bring the development process on the next level, concentrate decision making and coordinate the development. The Bodensee Standortmarketing GmbH took this part in the development of the cross-border place brand.

As stated above funding opportunities are important factors for the development of a cross-border place brand. In the case of the Bodensee region INTERREG funding was used to develop the cross border brand. The maintenance of the Place brand is done by licensing which may also be an opportunity for other regions. Still, further public funding is needed to maintain a well-functioning cross-border place brand since the means of a licensing fee are limited.

To conclude with the case of the Bodensee region the opportunities and challenges for touristic stakeholders which can be identified in the analysis of the case are shown. The main opportunity for the touristic stakeholders is the profit they gain from brand value of the umbrella brand. Additionally, the networking possibilities help the touristic stakeholders to access new markets or increase their market share. The umbrella brand takes part in big fairs, EXPO REAL and MIPIM, and can network on behalf of the touristic stakeholders.

Nevertheless some challenges for touristic stakeholders occur. To fully profit of the umbrella brand the communication must be aligned with the umbrella brand and be on track with the corporate identity. This might be too much for the personal capacity of the touristic stakeholders because the tourism industry is mainly made up from SMEs. Additionally, the further investment in license fees and redesigning the own brand might be an entrance barrier for touristic stakeholders. Finally, the growing competition for touristic stakeholders due to the promotion of a bigger region might be a barrier. The awareness of the customer that the region is bigger than for example Germany introduces more competition for the same amount of tourists. Since the cross border brand was launched in fall 2013 effects on tourist flows can't be seen, yet as current numbers are not yet available and the timeframe is too short to see the effect of the brand.

Overall, looking at the Bodensee case one can see that a cross-border place brand can be introduced if certain preconditions are present. Furthermore, a strong leadership and willingness by all stakeholders is needed to introduce an umbrella brand like the Vierländerregion Bodensee. Still, there are different approaches towards introducing a cross-border brand. This will be shown at the case Via Claudia Augusta.

4.3 The case of the Via Claudia Augusta

The second case presented in this thesis is the case of the Via Claudia Augusta. In contrast to the Bodensee region no strong leadership is present in this region which can be seen by the manifold initiatives that are present in the region. Instead a historical road connects Italy with Germany via the Alps, bringing mainly touristic stakeholders of the region together through bicycle and trekking routes. Following the previous case, the characteristics of the region will be shown followed by an analysis of the branding approach of the region.[2]

The history of the Via Claudia Augusta reaches back to the Roman Empire when the northern frontier of empire was connected with the Po River valley for trading purpose under the rule of Augustus and Claudius. The northern starting point of the route is the city Donauwörth in Bavaria, Germany connecting Trento in South Tyrol, Italy via Bolzano, Merano, the River Lech and the River Inn valley and Augsburg. Its first purpose was to bring troops in the north for further conquests but it soon developed to an important trading route between the north and the south of the Roman Empire. Since it was the only road for carriages connecting these

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[2] All information on this case retrieved from: www.viaclaudia.org, http://wegeundgrenzen.wordpress.com, www.alpine-space.eu/home/ and www.interreg.net/

parts of the Roman Empire its historical importance must not be understated. Over the times it lost its importance for trading but along the track it developed a thriving touristic industry. Especially because of its long history the route has potential for a cross-border culture route and a cross border brand building on the long tradition of trade, tourism and tradition.

Although there is the possibility to anchor the brand on the Via Claudia Augusta, like the Bodensee is anchored on the traditions around the lake, only small steps towards a cross-border brand have been taken. The Via Claudia Augusta is not only connecting major tourism destinations but also links the economical strong regions of South Tyrol, Trento, Tyrol and Allgäu. In all regions tourism is one of the main business sectors. This can be seen in the tourist arrivals, the Allgäu for example has 2.9 million tourist arrivals (in 2012) a year making it one of the biggest tourism destinations in Germany (Bayerisches Landesamt für Statistik, 2013), Tyrol has 10.2 million arrivals (in 2013) (Statistik Austria, 2014), South Tyrol 6 million (in 2013) (Südtirol Marketing, 2014) and Trento 5.1 million arrivals (in 2013) (Südtirol Marketing, 2014). This shows the relevance of the tourism industry at the Via Claudia Augusta. Additionally all regions have a strong agricultural industry which can be combined with touristic products as for example done well in South Tyrol. Although the regions around the Via Claudia Augusta are economical successful, the networking capacity is not yet as well developed as in the Bodensee region. Business networks are not institutionalized as in the Bodensee region and the development of cross-border touristic products is still in progress.

Currently the development of a cross-border place brand is stagnating. The first step towards a cross-border brand was the establishment of cross-border cooperation in the LEADER II funding period from 1994 – 1999, an EU regional development measure based in the agricultural policy of the EU. It aims at developing rural cross border areas and stands for "links between actions of rural development". Furthermore its goal is to encourage the residents of rural regions to tackle rural problems with innovative solutions, instead of building on already tried structures. Using this rural development measure the German partners initiated projects at the Via Claudia Augusta as project leader with Austrian project partners. The Italian part of the route wasn't involved in the LEADER II projects. Additionally these project partnerships were deepened during INTERREG IIIa and INTERREG IIIb projects only then under the leadership of the Trento province. These projects mainly included touristic stakeholders and aimed at developing the bike route Via Claudia Augusta. Additionally, transnational workshops and meetings were organized to

develop informal networks along the route. Different INTERREG IV projects led by Italian and Austrian partners further developed the bike route building. The LEADER II project set the basis for a common brand developing a Via Claudia Augusta Logo and the Via Claudia Augusta website. The INTERREG projects helped to develop further studies for the route but all were based on the touristic potential. Although an INTERREG IIIb project objective was to develop branding perspectives the developments in this area stopped with the design of the logo. Also no INTERREG IV project tried to further develop a brand for the Via Claudia Augusta. Hence, there is only a logo present without any strategy behind. This logo is used to mark the biking route and attractions around but it is not used for further branding. To better understand the factors that hinder the development of a cross border brand in the Via Claudia Augusta the theoretical frameworks will be used on the case.

The Via Claudia Augusta region did not use the approach by Braun and Zenker (2010), since the approach by Braun and Zenker (2010) is using an umbrella brand and target group sub brands and the Via Claudia region only tries to use the Via Claudia as a product brand for bike route tourism. Due to the strong branding efforts in the regions Allgäu, Tyrol, South Tyro and Trento no cross-border place brand can be identified on the basis of this framework. Analyzing the Via Claudia Augusta with the framework Kavaratzis (2009) proposes one can see that some categories are fulfilled but some categories are not even regarded.

First and foremost it can be seen that the Via Claudia Augusta did not establish a clear vision for their region and did not develop a plan to realize their strategy. Although the development of a strong brand around the Via Claudia Augusta was mentioned in the INTERREG projects the identification of a clear strategy did not happen. Furthermore, internal culture was only developed partly. Some networks formed to promote the idea of a successful cross-border place brand around the route but the internal idea did not focus on the idea of a cross-border place brand. This may also have happened because of the missing strategy and vision. Due to the nature of LEADER programs local and rural communities have been involved in the development of the current approach. This was mainly done by conferences and workshops. It was tried to build synergies by gaining the support of all stakeholders but the efforts were mainly directed towards the touristic stakeholders. Additionally, leadership in the different LEADER and INTERREG project varied which led to difficulties in coordination resulting in a variety of projects instead of one common project.

Another category that can only be fulfilled partly is the infrastructure category. Since the Via Claudia Augusta brand is based on a strong infrastructure (e.g. signs, well developed routes etc.) at least the partners of the cross-border brand should have influence on the infrastructure. The projects at the route all partnered with the city and regional councils/governments but the varying project partners made overall infrastructure coordination hard. The same partly implementation occurs with communicated opportunities. The available print and online documentation does show some vague opportunities. The opportunities for cycling are communicated well but since the project was seen as a holistic approach the opportunities for other target groups are missing. The problem of varying project leadership also reflects in the communications category. A coordinated communication can only be seen in the importance of the cycling route but no common identity is communicated and different approaches are taken. One can see that the main problem that occurs is the missing leadership. This may be because of the four existing strong regional brands that do not want to share competencies but can also be based on the missing networks before the LEADER projects. Furthermore the analysis of the print and online material on the case shows that no external evaluations were used. Hence this case shows that the preconditions identified in the Bodensee case are needed to implement a successful place brand as they are not met by the Via Claudia Augusta case.

Drawing on this analysis the following hindering factors can be identified: As one main hindering factor the missing leadership can be identified. Analyzing the documents it seemed that all regions wanted to have a share of the reputation leading to an unstructured approach with the logo of the Via Claudia Augusta as only consensus. Furthermore, the presence of already existing strong regional brands is clearly a hindering factor. Especially, Tyrol, South Tyrol and Trento have existing strong regional brands that do not only support the tourism industry but all stakeholders. These grown networks and power structures can slow down the development of a cross-border brand that is trying to incorporate other regional brands.

To see if the theoretical identified preconditions, opportunities, challenges and hindering factors occur in the development of a cross border brand in practice the case of the Fehmarnbelt region is analyzed theoretical and practical, using semi-structured interviews with stakeholders of the region.

4.4   The case of the Fehmarnbelt region

The Fehmarnbelt region is a cross-border region at the German-Danish border. It includes the district Sjælland (DN), the district Ostholstein (GER), the city of Lübeck (GER) and the district Plön (GER) with a total of ca. 9 000 km². (Fehmarnbeltregion, n.d.) The region is situated between the two big cities Kopenhagen and Hamburg. On the German side of the cross-border region live 550 500 people and on the Danish side 821 00. The Fehmarnbelt region has three main industries: the tourism industry, the food and agricultural industry and the health care industry. (Destination Fehmarnbelt, n.d.) Of these the service and food industry accounts for almost 80 % of the production. The two biggest universities in the region are the University of Lübeck and the University of Roskilde. Additionally the University of Applied Sciences Lübeck and the Academy of Music Lübeck are situated in the region (Fehmarnbeltregion. n.d.). After this short introduction of the region this section gives an overview of the current developments towards a cross-border place brand. [3]

The trigger for the development of a cross-border place brand in the region was the planned fixed link between Denmark and Germany crossing the Baltic Sea (the Fehmarnbelt) over 18 km. This tunnel is currently in the development phase and will be finished in 2021 being the longest immersed tunnel in the world. (Femern A/S, n.d.) The regional stakeholders saw the construction of the tunnel as a chance to further develop their cross-border cooperation leading to increased cross-border cooperation via INTERREG funding. Three of these projects directly dealt with the development of a cross-border brand and two projects dealt with the development of a regional identity. The cross border place brands are namely: Beltfood, Belttrade and Destination Fehmarbelt. The Beltfood project was designed to increase the cooperation of the food industry in Germany and Denmark. Additionally, strategies for a cross-border place brand with focus on the food industry were developed. The project partners are the Green Center on the Danish side (a research and development center for agriculture) and the Lübeck business development agency. The aim of the Belttrade project was mainly to enhance the economic opportunities for SMEs in the Fehmarnbelt region that occur due to the fixed link. The project partners are Fonden Femern Belt Development, DI – Organisation for erhvervslivet, Industrie- und Handelskammer zu Lübeck and Lübeck business development.

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[3] All data and information for this case collected from: www.beltfood.de, www.belttrade.dk, www.fehmarnbeltregion.net, www.femern.de, www.fehmarnbelt-portal.de, http://www.ostsee-schleswig-holstein.de/de/index, www.kulturlink.org, http://www.destination-fehmarnbelt.com/

Finally, the destination Fehmarnbelt project aims at developing a cross-border touristic destination brand with the Ostsee-Holstein Tourismus e.v. and the Fonden Østdansk Turisme as partners. The regional identity projects are KulturLINK and Regio SKILL, both focusing on cultural cross-border cooperation to trigger regional identity building. Whereas KulturLINK centers on the initiation of cross-border cultural events the Regio SKILL project focuses on the bringing together different actors of the region to develop a dialog on regional identity. Additionally, conferences on the topic of place branding were held and academic consultation on cross-border place branding in the region was sought. In the interviews with two regional stakeholders (Head of Lübeck Business promotion and Employee of Ostsee-Schleswig-Holstein Tourismus e.V.) only the cluster initiatives (Beltfood and Belttrade and the Destination Fehmarnbelt project) were mentioned. This can be seen as a first sign for missing leadership in the region as well as for missing coordination of the projects.

On the basis of theses interviews the opportunities and challenges in during the development of a cross-border place brand will be analyzed. [4]

Firstly, the interviews show that the development process of a cross-border place brand takes a long time. The process in the Fehmarnbelt region started in the late 2000s and did not yet lead to a common place branding strategy. Secondly, both interview partners identified the financing of such a big project as a challenge to the development of a cross-border place brand. The current projects are all funded by INTERREG and it is still in the discussion how further projects can be financed without INTERREG. In this context the Head of Lübeck business Development mentioned the importance of private investors to finance such projects. This is based on the special situation in the Fehmarnbelt region where a private company (Fehmern A/S) builds the fixed link and receives the financial profit from it. In both interviews the dependency on EU and national funding is identified as a threat to a sustainable place brand development as most results in such projects can only be seen after 5 to 10 years. Furthermore both interviews showed that the development process must be seen as a long-term process as first networks and understanding must be built up. Another problem that has been identified is the cultural difference in the two countries. The different languages, different kinds of communication and different marketing strategies (Denmark more online, Germany more print) are challenges that need to be overcome during the development of a cross-border place brand. Furthermore, the Ostsee-Schleswig-Holstein Tourism Marketing

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[4] The interviews can be found in the Appendix

employee mentions the importance of consistent structures and partners. During the destination Fehmarnbelt project the structure of the Danish partner organization changed and the Danish project coordinator changed as well. This led to a slowdown of the project as the Danish side first had to adapt to their own, new structure. In both interviews the importance of further cooperation is mentioned and the development of cross-border networks by the current INTERREG project is seen as a good basis for further development. To ensure the success of a cross-border place branding project the Ostsee-Schleswig-Holstein Tourism Marketing employee argues in favor of a strong internal marketing. In her opinion internal marketing is the key to a successful cross-border place branding initiative since the internal participants need to be convinced of the goals of the place branding project. Another important point which was mentioned by both interviewees is the fact that the development of a cross-border place brand would not have started without the fixed link. Hence, one can say that either a strong regional identity or a flagship project in a cross-border region is needed to successfully implement a cross-border place brand.

As both interview partners did not know about the projects outside their involvement it is evident that a strong coordination can only be identified in the different sectors. The Business development agency of Lübeck is the leading partner in the business sector and the Ostsee-Schleswig-Holstein Tourismus GmbH is the leading partner in the tourism industry. But the initiatives both go their own way a common cross-border place branding initiative with a common strategy is hard to establish. Therefore an organization that coordinates the activities of the different stakeholders and brings them together can be identified as a precondition for successful cross-border place brand development. The Head of Lübeck business Development also states that the basis for successful cross-border cooperation is trust. After building trust between the stakeholders, a common product must be developed based on the identity of the cross-border region. He therefore argues that a place brand needs to be developed from bottom-up based on trust built in cluster networks. The cross-border place brand can only be successful if the stakeholders are convinced of the idea.

In the last section the preconditions, challenges and opportunities identified in the three cases will be summarized to further apply them to the case of EUREGIO.

The research identified a set of preconditions for the successful implementation of a cross-border place brand. To succeed, a cross-border place branding projects needs a strong regional identity or a flagship project, existing networks, funding, long term planning, consistency,

trust and no present strong regional brands. In the table below the preconditions are shown and explained

Precondition	Explanation
Regional identity/flagship project	A cross-border regional identity or a flagship project that brings together the stakeholders of the cross-border region
Existing networks	Cross-border networks either established by INTERREG or private cross-border cooperation. Networks should exist in all sectors.
Funding	Public funding, preferably EU funding and national funding. Private funding as future goal.
Long term planning	All stakeholders should accept the long-term nature of cross-border place branding. Strategy and financing has to be based on long term planning.
Consistency	Consistency in structures, partners and strategy.
Trust	Trustful basis to cooperate is needed before developing products and strategy.
Internal marketing	Marketing activities that aim at the internal stakeholders to convince them of the cross-border place branding approach
Lack of strong regional brands	Existing strong regional brands hinder the development of a cross-border brand as the necessity of a cross-border brand is not acknowledged by all stakeholders leading to low support of the cross-border brand.

Figure 9: Preconditions for cross-border place branding

Additionally, profit, networking, a bigger market and external marketing have been identified as opportunities for touristic stakeholders. In table 2 the identified opportunities are explained.

Opportunity	Explanation
Profit	The profit can rise because of more tourists that come to the region
Networking	Cross-border networks help to use synergies, develop new products and adapt best practices from network partners.
Bigger market	A cross-border brand increases the visibility of the touristic stakeholders on a bigger internal (cross-border region) and external (foreign market) market. Stakeholders are present on foreign market because of the cross-border place brand.
External Marketing	Touristic stakeholders take part in external marketing that would not have been done without a cross-border place brand

Figure 10: Opportunities for touristic stakeholders

Finally the following challenges were identified:

Challenge	Explanation
Alignment of communication	Current communication must be changed to adapt it to the cross-border place brand communication. This leads to investment for changed communication and negative effects if communication is not changed.
Private investment	Private investment by the touristic stakeholders is needed to further finance the cross-border place brand. This may be an entry barrier for touristic stakeholders.
Competition	A bigger region also means bigger competition. Touristic stakeholders not only compete with regional stakeholders but also with cross-border stakeholders.
Cultural differences	Cross-border regions often have different cultures in a small area (language, different attitudes etc.). Cultural differences may make the cross-border cooperation more difficult.
Inclusion of stakeholders	Al lot of effort must be put in the persuasion of stakeholder. This leads to less time to plan the cross-border place brand strategically.

Figure 11: Challenges for touristic stakeholders

In the next section, the identified preconditions will be used to analyze a possible cross-border place branding approach in the EUREGIO region. Furthermore the challenges and opportunities will be aligned with the challenges and opportunities identified in the interviews with touristic stakeholders in the EUREGIO region.

5 <u>Cross-border place branding: the case of EUREGIO</u>

This final section is based on nine semi-structured in-depth interviews with touristic stakeholders of the EUREGIO region. Firstly, the regional facts of the EUREGIO region will be shown and the current marketing activities of the EUREGIO will be analyzed. Secondly, the opportunities and challenges for touristic stakeholders that may occur in the development of a cross-border place brand in the EUREGIO region will be analyzed. Finally, the possibilities for a cross-border place brand in the EUREGIO region will be analyzed on the basis of the preconditions identified above and an outlook for further cross-border place branding projects in the region will be given.

5.1 The EUREGIO region – facts

The EUREGIO region is a cross-border region in Germany and the Netherlands with 13 000 km² and 3.5 million inhabitants.
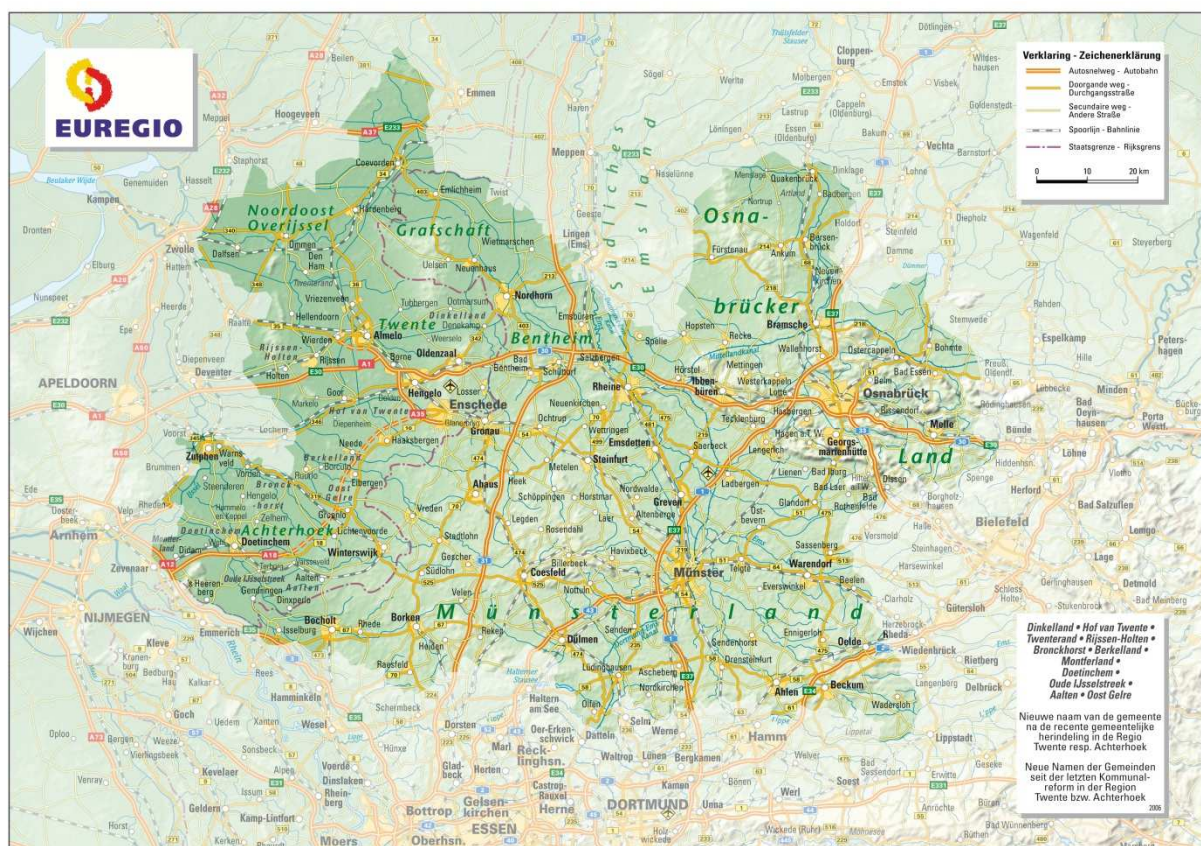

Figure 12: The EUREGIO region (EUREGIO, n.d. b)

On the German side it includes the regions Münsterland, Osnabrücker Land and Grafschaft Bentheim. On the Dutch side Achterhoek, Twente, and Nordoost Overijssel are part of the

region. The region has a long tradition in cross-border cooperation as it is the oldest Euroregion founded in 1958. Three municipal centers – Enschede (NL), Münster (D) and Osnabrück (D) – are part of the region, with universities in each city. The cities all have a high proportion of students (ca. 20%) as inhabitants. (EUREGIO, n.d. a) The economy is dominated by SMEs and still has a strong agricultural sector. Furthermore the service industry is strong in the cities of the region. (EUREGIO, n.d. a and EUREGIO, n.d. b) Having these basic facts in mind the following section will explore the history of the EUREGIO and its institutional setup. [5]

The EUREGIO is Dutch - German cross-border region founded in 1958 as one of the first Euroregions. It is responsible for all cross-border cooperation matters in the region covering the following fields: economic development, traffic and transport, spatial structure, environmental conservation, culture and sports, health care, energy, waste management, tourism and recreation, agricultural development, innovation and technology transfer, school and education, social cooperation, rescue service and emergency management, communication and public safety. In the beginning of the EUREGIO the cooperation was informal and mainly based on local economical problems. In the 1970s the cooperation developed from a project based cooperation towards an institutionalized cooperation driven by Alfred Mozer. 1971 the first cross-border commission under the chairman Alfred Mozer was founded to promote the socio-cultural exchange in the region. This was followed by the first cross-border action program ever implemented in the EU. Out of this institutionalized cooperation the EUREGIO council was founded in 1978 resembling a cross-border parliament. (Perkmann, 2007) A common EUREGIO office was opened in 1985 situated in Gronau – a German city at the Dutch-German border. In 1987 an action program including a catalogue of measures with clear financial agreements was introduced which is now seen as archetype for the INTERREG program. The EUREGIO is organized as a German e.V. and had a budget of ca. 6.1 mil. EURO in 2013. 930 000 Euro of the budget are collected via a membership fee while the remaining budget is financed by INTERREG and consultancy work. (EUREGIO, 2014) The EUREGIO is the program management institution for INTERREG program implementation in the membership region. Therefore the EUREGIO is a policy implementation partner of the EU commission regarding regional policy in the EUREGIO region. The organization of the EUREGIO is shown in figure 6 below. The most important part of the EUREGIO is the EUREGIO council made up of 41 German and 41

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[5] All information on the EUREGIO is retrieved from: www.euregio.de and www.deutschland-nederland.eu/home/

Dutch delegates based on proportionality. The council is the decision body of the EUREGIO and gives recommendations for a decision to the INTERREG committees. The EUREGIO board of directors has 12 members of which 10 are voted by the council, 1 is the EUREGIO president and 1 is the EUREGIO director. The board of directors gives recommendations for a decision to the council and appoints the director. The director is the head of the EUREGIO office, implements the decisions of the council, board of directors, the INTRREG committee and the general meeting. Additionally he is responsible for the regional INTERREG program management. Finally the EUREGIO committees (health care, public safety, sustainable spatial development, school system, tourism, economy, EUREGIO Mozer commission, job market/vocational training) give recommendations for decisions to the board of directors.
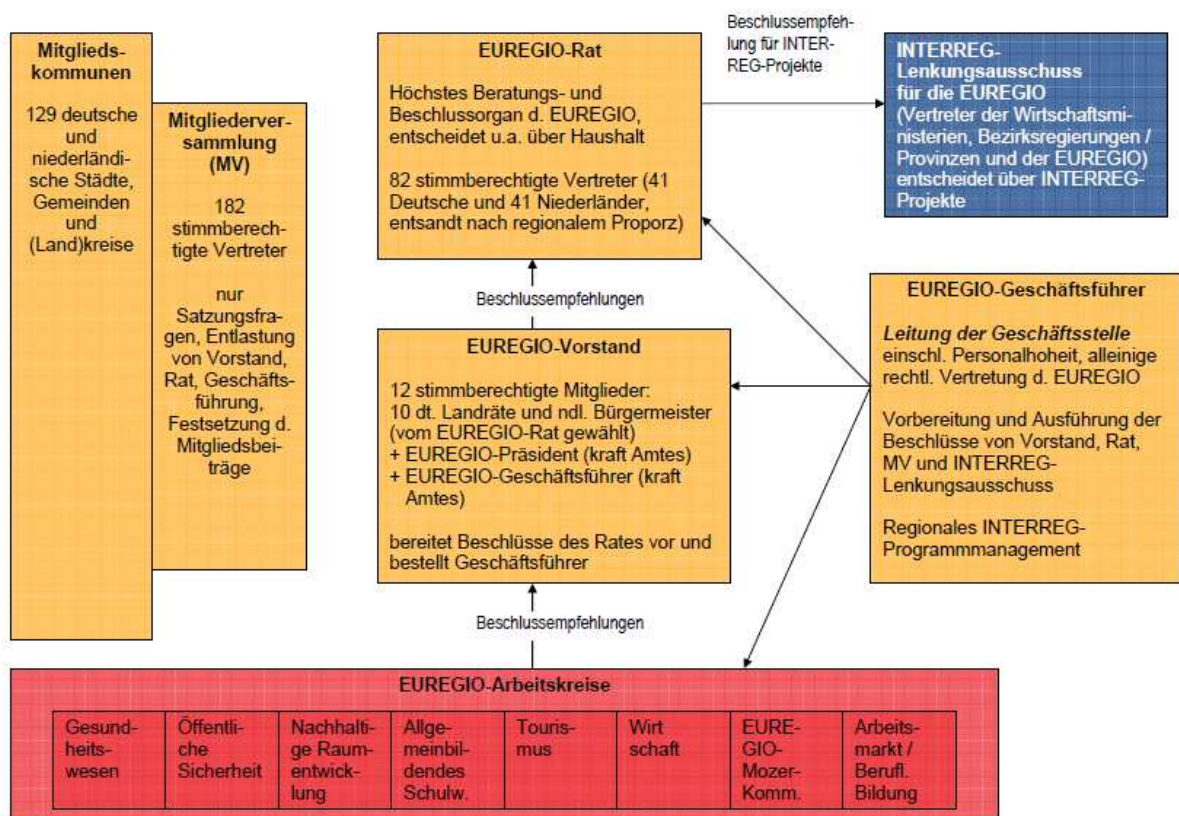

Figure 13: Organizational structure of the EUREGIO (EUREGIO, n.d. c)

In the following the current approach towards cross-border branding in the EUREGIO structure will be explored.

5.2 Current cross-border place branding approach in the EUREGIO region

The EUREGIO has a common development strategy – EUREGIO 2020 – with the focus on three topics: sustainable spatial development, economy and social development. (EUREGIO, 2011) Common branding approaches can only be identified in the sector economy under the topic tourism. The following sector will first explore if some characteristics of a cross-border place brand can be identified in the general set-up and strategy of the EUREGIO. In the second part the touristic approach towards place branding in the EUREGIO organization will be explored. Both explorations are based on the conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews and on intensive desk research. [6]

5.2.1 General approach

All interviewed stakeholders made clear that the EUREGIO is not a cross-border place brand. The current set up shows that this assessment is true, nevertheless some characteristics of cross-border place brand can be identified in the general set up of the EUREGIO. Firstly, it is based on a common strategy for cross-border cooperation. This can be regarded as a first step towards a common branding strategy as suggested by Kavaratzis (2009) as basis for a place brand. Still the EUREGIO 2020 strategy is only focusing on cooperation with the exception of the tourism sector that includes first cross-border branding approaches. (EUREGIO, 2011)

Secondly, the EUREGIO can be seen as institutional leader for cross-border cooperation also promoting cross-border branding developments (Interview EUREGIO). This important characteristic of a cross-border place brand is not yet fully used, especially because the EUREGIO council which is made up from many different stakeholders all promoting their own region. As the EUREGIO is responsible for the INTERREG program management in the region its leading role in the development of a branding initiative is strengthened because of its financial possibilities. Finally, the current networks, introduced by EUREGIO, can be regarded as a future basis for a cross-border place branding initiative. In total it can be said that the interviews are influenced by a general negative attitude towards cross-border place branding as the importance of putting the needs of the own region/organization first was mentioned by all interviewees except the EUREGIO participant (see APPENDIX). Although the participants neglect the fact that first steps towards a cross-border place brand already have been made one can see be analyzing the EUREGIO that fundamental characteristics of a

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[6] The Interviews can be found in the Appendix

cross-border place brand are already fulfilled. Additionally, the EUREGIO has commissioned a consultancy to analyze the current situation in the tourism sector and develop recommendations for future cross-border projects. This study recommends the development of a product based cross-border place brand. (COMPASS GmbH, 2012) Hence, it is obvious that the idea of a cross-border place brand is not new for the region. To deepen this argument the next section will analyze the tourism marketing approach of the EUREGIO.

5.2.2 *Tourism approach*

As mentioned before the tourism sector is the only sector in the EUREGIO 2020 strategy focusing on a common marketing and a possible cross-border place branding initiative in the next years. The current marketing approach is based on three projects:

1. Geheim over de Grens
2. Das andere Holland
3. Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis

The first project is a marketing initiative of German regions and businesses in the Netherlands to promote the tourism industry in German part of the EUREGIO. The second project is the correspondent initiative on the Dutch side promoting the Dutch tourism industry on the German side. The final project promotes the border region and develops products for the border region in order to achieve synergy effects at the border. The projects will be shown in detail in the following including the attitude towards these projects by the interviewees. Furthermore the findings of the consultancy will be used to analyze the success of the projects.

5.2.2.1 Geheim over de Grens

This project is the umbrella brand of the German regions in the Netherlands. The whole communication in the Netherlands is done via this umbrella brand. In an interview it was stated that if this project stops no marketing in the Netherlands would be done. (see APPENDIX) The main point that speaks for the umbrella brand is the financial situation of the RTBs. Conducting marketing operations in the Netherlands region by region would cost too much hence the regions cooperate. The participating regions and businesses can take part in trade shows, promotion tours, the geheim over de grens website, the geheim over de grens newsletter, press relations and press trips, marketing campaigns and brochures. Every action to take part in is charged for separately. This gives the companies the chance to select

expanses on a case by case basis. According to the consultancy study the project is well accepted by the RTBs which can also be seen by the interviews. Still the participation of businesses can become better. The interviewed businesses on the German side did not know about geheim over de grens and their possibilities to take part. Since the project started the tourism arrivals of Dutch tourists increased but the increase doesn't have to be related with the project as the general arrivals increased as well. (COMPASS GmbH, 2012) As shown in the study under 50 % of the stakeholders are satisfied with the project overall. In the conducted interviews the same attitude towards the project can be seen. It is seen as a well working project that is needed but the daily routines hinder the stakeholders to put more work into it. The projects are planned to be conducted further in the next years. The next paragraph will look at the Dutch marketing project in detail and analyze if the same problems occur.

5.2.2.2 Das andere Holland

The project Das andere Holland promotes the Dutch EUREGIO regions on the German side of the border as the RTBs have indentified the German market (North-Rhine Westphalia and Lower Saxony). The project is set up like the German partner project with different marketing measures to participate for the stakeholders. In contrast to the German project the Dutch stakeholders see the project as less successful. Especially the participation of businesses needs to be increased. (COMPASS GmbH, 2012) Furthermore, the Dutch interviewees mentioned that a better overall coordination between the RTBs is needed to be more successful. In the interview with EUREGIO and Twente Tourism it became obvious that the project time was mostly needed to convince businesses of the importance of cross-border marketing. (see APPENDIX) The study showed that the project is not very well known in the EUREGIO region and that fewer than 50% of the stakeholders see it as a successful project. (COMPASS GmbH, 2012) In total it can be said that the full potential of both projects – das andere Holland and geheim over de grens – is not yet fully used. Especially more internal marketing is needed to enhance the awareness of the stakeholders.

5.2.2.3 Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis

The final project conducted for cross-border tourism marketing is the Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis project. The project is organized as marketing platform for the cities and communities located at the German-Dutch border. Its main proposition is the possibility of one vacation in two countries. Stakeholders can take part in press trips and the website by paying a yearly fee. Additionally, the project aims at developing the touristic infrastructure at the border. For example bike routes were connected over the border.

Furthermore, the project Grenzerlebnisse/Grenbelevnis coordinates cross-border product development. In the conducted interviews the possibilities of the project were acknowledged but the coordination is – like in the other projects – seen as a problem. Additionally, the interviewees connect the Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis project with product and infrastructure development and not with marketing activities. This leads to a distorted perception of the projects and a lack of attention for marketing activities.

Although these marketing projects try to promote the Dutch region as a common region on the German side and vice versa, no common approach can be identified. The Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis project tries to promote cross-border product development and cross-border marketing but the branding of the border region is not a goal of the project. As seen in the interviews and the consultancy study, the attitude towards more cooperation is positive but the daily routines often come in the way of new developments.

EUREGIO also has initiated several other projects which have not been accepted by the stakeholders as seen in the awareness of these projects (COMPASS GmbH, 2012). In addition, the interviewees only knew about the three projects mentioned above. One can see that the current projects are still marketing initiatives with no effort to brand the region. Still, the tourism sector is taking first steps towards a cross-border brand by acknowledging the importance of cross-border cooperation. The interviewees all mentioned the importance of the current initiatives as networks for innovation and learning. To get a deeper understanding of how the stakeholders see the region and its opportunities/challenges the next section will analyze the opportunities and challenges for cross-border place branding in the EUREGIO region based on the conducted interviews.

5.3   Opportunities for cross-border place branding in the EUREGIO region

To identify opportunities for the whole EUREGIO region it will be analyzed which preconditions identified above are met by the EUREGIO region based on the conducted interviews. This aims at finding out if there is a basis for cross-border place branding in the region.

Firstly, the region can be regarded as a grown region with a long tradition in cross-border cooperation. The fact that cross-border cooperation can stimulate the region's development is deep seated in all interviewed stakeholders. The current, well working networks and projects are the basis for future cross-border place branding developments. Not only is the tradition of

cooperation an opportunity for a future cross-border place brand but also common values can be identified in the region. In the interviews lower Saxonian values – which have not been detailed - have been mentioned when asked about a common identity of the EUREGIO region. Furthermore lower Saxonian language Low-German is a dialect spoken on both sides of the border. Nevertheless not all interview partners agreed on this common regional characteristic. In total it can be said that especially the grown networks and the role of EUREGIO as agent between the stakeholders is an opportunity for a future cross-border place branding project.

Secondly, this grown region and tradition of cooperation leads to a long term planning horizon of the regional stakeholders. Long term planning is a central precondition for a successful cross-border place brand and therefore the stakeholders' awareness of long term planning as success factor is an opportunity for future cross-border place branding projects. The long term planning can especially be seen in the EUREGIO 2020 strategy. It is based on an analysis of the current facts on which future goals and measures to reach them are developed. Particularly the tourism sector develops long term goals to achieve more arrivals. A second indicator for the long term planning and future willingness of cross-border place branding is the consultancy study as the EUREGIO is seeing the importance to take the proposed steps. (see APPENDIX) Based on the findings of the study new projects can be developed. Additionally, it shows that the current projects are an important part of the future strategy if they are evaluated to improve them. Finally, the institutional set up in the region is a sign for long term planning. The stakeholders in EUREGIO (regions, mayors, businesses) can look back on a long tradition of successful cooperation in an institution with long traditions. Due to the INTERREG program management competency the importance of EUREGIO as cross-border cooperation partner will remain high for the next years which can help to develop EUREGIO towards the leading cross-border place branding partner in the region.

Thirdly, the consistency of the partners is an opportunity for the region. The often long lasting cooperation (e.g. EUREGIO with Münsterland e.V. over 10 years) builds awareness for cross-border cooperation and helps to trigger new developments for the EUREGIO region. Nevertheless, the political stakeholders often change after elections slowing down developments in cross-border place branding as the agenda may shift to other topics. (see APPENDIX)

In this regard, as mentioned before, the leadership of EUREGIO is also regarded as opportunity for the region. The EUREGIO advocates cross-border cooperation for a long time and is also opting to take the current marketing efforts a step further. (see APPENDIX) Additionally, it is the contact organization for all cross-border cooperation projects which assures its position as leading cross-border cooperation partner. Still, the full potential of its leadership role cannot be fulfilled since EUREGIO decisions are taken in the EUREGIO council which is organized similar to a parliament leading to compromises in important questions. (see APPENDIX)

As fifth opportunity the trust between the stakeholders is identified. The interviews showed that the cross-border partners trust each other. One example is the Dutch RTB that asks a German RTB about marketing techniques for the German market leading to contracting a German marketing and branding organization for their campaign. The opinion of the other partner across the border is valued and in special situations advice from the cross-border partner is sought. (see APPENDIX)

Finally, the general funding situation is regarded as opportunity for the region. EUREGIO as INTERREG project management built a lot of capacity in getting funds and has developed contacts to governmental organizations for funds. Nevertheless, the overall situation described in the interviews shows that the current funding is only sufficient for the current projects and more money especially from businesses is needed. This was also a main point in the consultancy study which also argues for more independence from governmental funds. (COMPASS GmbH, 2012) The main problem with INTERREG occurs in most of the cross-border cases: the co-financing required by INTERREG is hard to get from governmental stakeholders. Therefore the overall financial set-up can also be regarded as a challenge. To these general opportunities for cross-border place branding specific opportunities for touristic stakeholders are now added. To do so the attitudes of the interviewed touristic stakeholders are analyzed and combined with the general opportunities.

More tourist arrivals can be regarded as the main opportunity for all touristic stakeholders. The interviewed RTBs also identified potential increase in tourist arrivals by more cooperation between the businesses and cross-border marketing. Furthermore the consultancy study shows that since the cross-border marketing cooperation is conducted tourist arrivals are rising steadily. (COMPASS GmbH, 2012) Additionally, the current networks need to be used to extend the reach of the current marketing initiatives to involve more stakeholders. A second

opportunity for the stakeholders is the knowledge exchange that comes with extended cooperation. More cooperation helps to understand the different approaches across the border and leads to the adaption of helpful marketing tools and strategies for the other country. In addition best practices can be exchanged - be it marketing practices or business strategies. Finally, it can be said that the stakeholders that are already taking part in cross-border cooperation see a cross-border place branding initiative as an opportunity for the region whereas stakeholders that do know little about the possibilities for cooperation see more challenges than opportunities. (see APPENDIX) Henceforth, as a final opportunity for the touristic stakeholders the already existing cooperation is identified. The stakeholders that already profit from the cooperation can convince other stakeholders which do not take part in the current projects leading to higher participation rates.

The next section will look at the challenges for a cross-border place branding initiative in the EUREGIO region it will structured like the section on the opportunities starting with the challenges for the whole region followed by the challenges for touristic stakeholders.

5.4 Challenges for cross-border place branding the EUREGIO region

Overall the challenges outbalance the opportunities. Especially the interview participants are not positive about a cross-border place branding initiative. This leads to the first challenge to overcome on the way to implement a successful cross-border place brand. To establish a common acknowledgment of the importance of a cross-border place brand, the focus needs to be set on internal marketing. The developments in the Fehmarnbelt region showed that businesses only participate if they are sure about the positive outcome. This outcome needs to be communicated by a leading partner to the internal stakeholders. Due to the complex stakeholder structure in the region with decision competencies at each level many stakeholders need to be convinced of a cross-border place branding initiative. The current situation can be seen in the interviews: The stakeholders only focus on their daily routines, acknowledging the possible opportunities of cross-border cooperation without putting it on the agenda. The RTBs argue on the basis of their political order as they are mainly 100% communal agencies. The political agenda is the second argument identified in the interviews. Often political actors, like local mayors put the marketing efforts of their city first without thinking about possible positive effects of cross-border place branding. (see APPENDIX)

As a second challenge overcoming the missing regional identity is indentified. Although some participants mentioned the Low Saxon values as a regional identity most of the participants still see the border as dividing line with different cultures on both sides. (see APPENDIX) The border in general is mainly seen as a challenge to overcome and not as an opportunity for cooperation. The fragmentation of the marketing campaigns on the basis of countries and not on the basis of target groups (Dutch stakeholders work together on the German market and vice versa) also fosters the perception of the border as challenge and points to a low regional identity.

Thirdly, there are already existing strong regional brands in the EUREGIO region. The Münsterland, the City of Münster, the City of Enschede and the Grafschaft Bentheim have a built their own brand image and are often not willing to give that up. The conflict can be seen in the region Münsterland where the Münsterland RTBs communicates an image of quietness, relaxation and active holidays and competes with the image of the city of Münster which does not want these attributes but aims to be recognized as thriving city. The interviews with the RTBs showed that they think the tourist see the Münsterland/Grafschaft Bentheim/Twente as a destination but not the EUREGIO region. Nevertheless it is acknowledged that the tourists do not stay in the chosen destination but usually explore the whole EUREGIO region with day trips. (see APPENDIX) Therefore, a target group approach as proposed in this thesis and in the consultancy study needs to be developed.

To do so the fourth challenge needs to be overcome – the agenda setting process. The topic of cross-border place branding is not on the political or the business agenda and only pursued by EUREGIO. EUREGIO as regional leader is responsible to put the topic back on the agenda. All interview participants were not aware of the chances of cross-border place branding often not even aware of the current projects like "Das andere Holland". This challenge also occurs because of the financial situation. The interview with EUREGIO showed that it is desired to put more effort in the internal marketing and agenda setting but due to financial restrictions it is not possible.

As final challenge leadership issues are identified. As mentioned before the stakeholder structure in the EUREGIO region is defined by a variety of decision making bodies (RTBs, political leaders, committees). Currently the EUREGIO can only be regarded as an organization that gives recommendations to these decision making bodies. The EUREGIO needs more competencies in topics that are relevant for cross-border cooperation to exercise a

leadership role in the region since currently the leadership is only based on theoretical recommendations.

In the interviews with the touristic stakeholders further specific challenges for the stakeholders can be identified. Firstly, the RTBs identify the missing willingness of participation of businesses as a challenge. All interviewed RTBs mentioned that the most time they spend on cross-border cooperation is spent on convincing businesses to participate in cross-border marketing activities. Additionally the interviewed businesses did not show interest in an extended cross-border branding cooperation and did not even know about the current marketing projects. Businesses that participate in the current marketing cooperation see an actual rise in tourist arrivals. Hence these businesses need to convince their peers that a cross-border marketing cooperation is the most efficient way to increase tourist arrivals. Secondly, the missing lobby for touristic stakeholders is indentified as a challenge by EUREGIO and some RTBs. The importance of cross-border cooperation at the tourism sector is currently not communicated well to the political stakeholders leading to a loss of influence and essentially a loss of funds. Therefore a better organized tourism sector is needed to promote the interests of this industry. This would also help to improve the above mentioned challenge of missing willingness to participate by making the project more visible throughout the tourism sector. Finally, the general attitude of the touristic stakeholders poses a challenge. Especially the regional RTBs and the businesses do not see the positive effect of cross-border branding. The consultancy study already proposed a target-group oriented branding approach for the region but the stakeholders did not want to hand responsibility over to EUREGIO.

The identified challenges and opportunities will now be used to develop a realistic outlook for cross-border place branding in the EUREGIO region.

5.5 Possible developments of cross-border place branding in the EUREGIO region

The following possible developments are taking the identified opportunities as a basis to overcome the challenges. It will first give recommendations for steps to be taken in the near future followed by further steps to be taken after the implementation of the near future recommendations. It will conclude with an outlook for the late future if all further steps are implemented successfully.

To achieve more tourist arrivals in the EUREGIO region this thesis recommends to the touristic stakeholders to focus on the identified preconditions. As a first step internal

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marketing efforts must be increased to put cross-border place branding on the agenda. This needs to be done by EUREGIO in cooperation with the RTBs of the region. These efforts should include information events on the current marketing projects as well as on the possible positive effects that can be achieved by cross-border place branding supported by the consultancy study. Additionally, EUREGIO council meetings should be used to inform decision makers in the region about the positive effect of cross-border place branding for the region and to inspire the decision for an upcoming cross-border place branding initiative.

Meanwhile, the EURREGIO INTERREG committee should develop a cross-border place branding INTERREG VA project for the region, exploring co-funding opportunities and possible partners. Both processes also aim at establishing a strong leadership of EUREGIO in the upcoming cross-border place branding initiative. The inclusion of interested touristic stakeholders should be a goal; possible ways of participation can be developed in council meetings and information events. Ideally a cross-border branding working group including participants from all stakeholders is set up to develop a cross-border place branding strategy for the tourism sector in the EUREGIO region. This project would increase the ownership of the cross-border place brand by the stakeholders and could guarantee future participation. The stakeholder committee should then be developed further into a steering council under the roof of EUREGIO for cross-border place branding increasing EUREGIO leadership while ensuring stakeholder ownership.

If these steps can be introduced successfully a common target group branding approach in the tourism sector is the second stage of the cross-border branding development. This thesis recommends a common EU wide target group approach based on the proposed design above. This should first only include the tourism sector with target groups e.g. for hiking, biking, camping and city visitors. Since the stakeholders currently cannot imagine that an umbrella EUREGIO brand may be successful the umbrella brand may not be introduced already but only target group specific marketing cooperation is implemented. Further steps towards an umbrella brand may be taken if the stakeholders' opinion towards this topic changes with the success of the common target group marketing.

In the late future the introduction of a EUREGIO cross-border place brand for the tourism sector can be planned with a possible expansion to other sectors leading to a fully operating cross-border place brand in the region. The most important factors on which this outlook is based are the leadership role of the EUREGIO as well as the leadership of partners in the

specific industry sector, the political agenda setting, sustainable financial planning and constant external evaluation.

6 <u>Conclusion</u>

This thesis aimed at identifying challenges and opportunities that occur in the development of a cross-border place brand. The main findings are summarized in this conclusion and topics for further research are proposed.

City marketing, place marketing and regional marketing are basic elements used by every city and region in the developed world. Its basic foundations have been researched on by various disciplines and further concepts have been developed. These concepts – city branding and place branding - are influenced by the multidisciplinary approaches and lead to different approaches towards place branding. A topic that is not fully included in the academic research agenda is cross-border place branding, although it is practiced all over Europe. Therefore this thesis has adapted the current state of the art place branding concepts to the characteristics of cross-border regions.

To do so, a literature analysis on place branding and cross-border place branding was conducted and the state of the art concepts were identified – Kavaratzis (2009) and Braun and Zenker (2010). The special characteristics of cross-border regions were identified via the fields of regional geography and border studies and integrated in the concepts of Kavaratzis (2009) and Braun and Zenker (2010). This led to the introduction of regional identity and EU Policies as thriving forces in cross-border place branding. Based on these findings three European cases of cross-border place branding were identified. These cases were analyzed based on the developed concept of cross-border place branding to identify preconditions for cross-border place branding as well as opportunities and challenges for cross-border place branding. What is especially interesting in these findings is the importance of regional identity for cross-border place branding as well as the role EU funding plays in cross-border place branding. Additionally, the importance of networks and grown trust between the cross-border stakeholders cannot be understated. Furthermore, the research identified a set of opportunities and challenges for touristic stakeholders that occur in cross-border place branding initiatives.

Finally, these findings, in combination with expert interviews, were used to identify challenges and opportunities for cross-border place branding in the EUREGIO region. The research identified a set of challenges and opportunities concerning the whole region and a set only concerning the touristic stakeholders of the region. It can be outlined that the main challenge for the touristic stakeholders is to overcome regional thinking and think in cross-

border terms. Without this step further developments in cross-border place branding are likely to fail. Nevertheless the general characteristics of the region, especially its grown networks and pioneering tasks as first Euroregions are a good starting point to further develop current cross-border marketing cooperation projects. Furthermore, these projects have proven successful whereas the internal communication of this success lacks time and capacity to communicate. Therefore the focus for the future development of the cross-border cooperation of this region needs to be put on internal marketing.

Using these findings the research question

What challenges occur during the development of a cross-border place brand from the perspective of touristic stakeholders and how can these challenges be overcome?

can be answered as following. This thesis has identified missing regional identity, the inclusion of all stakeholders accompanied with internal marketing, the funding situation and the alignment of communication as main challenges during the development of a cross-border place brand. To overcome these challenges this thesis proposes to focus on trust and network building in the first steps of a cross-border place brand development. Additionally, internal marketing measures should have the same importance as all external measures as a successful cross-border place brand need to be based on a convinced internal stakeholder basis. As final suggestion to overcome the before mentioned challenges this thesis advocates institutionalized cross-border meetings to build trust and develop a cross-border consciousness.

As this research has developed the existing place branding concepts towards a cross-border place branding concept further research is necessary if this concept holds in practice and is a useful tool for practitioners. Additionally, further case study research is needed to test if the identified preconditions for cross-border place branding proof valid. Finally the author highlights the importance of further research from different disciplines to fully understand the multi-stakeholder processes in cross-border place branding. Especially the importance of existing networks and leadership needs to be further looked at.

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8 <u>Appendix</u>

The interviews are summarized and not transcribed. For audio files and transcribed interviews please contact the author.

<u>Interview EUREGIO:</u>

Q: Wie wir die EUREGION Region derzeit vermarktet?

A: Seit zehn Jahren: Tourismus Marketing Offensive, lange Kennenlernphase.

Nicht als ein Gebiet vermarktet, Grenzthemen gemeinsam, NL in D und D in NL, Starke Marken auf jeder Seite, Eine Strategie für NL: das andere Holland und eine Strategie für NL: Geheim over de Grens, mehrere Grenzthemen

Q: Wurden positive Effekte schon gesehen (Zahlen)?

A: Man kann nicht genau sagen ob das das eigene Projekt ist. Ziffern sind jedoch in den letzten 10 Jahren gestiegen. Seit das Projekt gestartet ist in D mehr NL Gäste in NL mehr D Gäste. EUREGIO die einzigen die so was machen. Prozente der Gästeankünfte in Betrieben gestiegen.

Q: Was ist die gemeinsame Identität der Region?

A: Ländlicher Raum, Ruhe, Fahrradfahren Aktiv (gleiche Zielgruppe) Marketing auf 50 + und Familien mit Kindern

Q: Hat die Bevölkerung eine gemeinsame Identität?

A: Niedersächsische Mentalität, ländlicher Raum, nette Leute, Vergnügen, Niedersächsische Werte

Q: Was sind die Stärken der Region? (touristisch geographisch, Industrie, politisch)

A: Viele Regionen daher ist es schwer auf einen Nenner zu bekommen, inhaltliche Logik fehlt. Ansonsten: Einheitliches Gebiet, grüne Lunge, industrielle Fachkräfte, Bauindustrie, Großer Vorteil: Mitte von dichtbevölkerten Gebieten, Zwei Unis

Q: Gibt es Potentiale die noch nicht genutzte sind?

A: Wird immer noch in Ländern gedacht.

Q: Ist die Grenze noch vorhanden in der Zusammenarbeit?

A: Ja, aber wird weniger durch Zusammenarbeit, viele Sektoren noch nicht, auch Politiker sollen über Grenze nachdenken, zusammen auf null anfangen von vornherein an einem Tisch da Problem vergleichbar: Strukturwandel Demographie, Strukturwandel. Politik wechselt alle 4 Jahre, da wo lange Zusammenarbeit funktioniert es, daher gute Basis mit Organisationen die lange da sind.

Q: Gibt es unterschiedliche Stärken in NL und D?

A: Pro Sektor unterschiedlich, politisch unterschiedlich organisiert, NL selbstständiger dahingegen in D ein Ansprechpartner, unterschiedliche Kulturen, Zusammenarbeit mit Respekt wichtig

Q: Gibt es gemeinsame Ziele im Tourismus?

A: Ja im Tourismus, bei anderen Projekten nicht (z.B.: Flughafen Twente)

Q: Gibt es eine Basis wo man sich treffen kann und die Ziele bestimmen kann?

A: Es ist immer noch Konkurrenz, es wird aber nicht viel abgeschöpft.

Q: Wäre es für ausländische Gäste nicht besser sich gemeinsam als Grenzregion zu vermarkten?

A: Ja könnte sein, aber die Mittel fehlen. Hauptzielgruppe Nachbarland. Bei mehr Geld ja. Nachbarländer einfacher zu organisieren, Markt noch nicht ganz erschlossen

Q: Sind die Finanzen eine Schwäche?

A: Ja, die vorhanden Mittel reichen nur für D und NL?

Q: Was könnten das Ziel Mehr Touristen in D und NL gefährden?

A: Die Regionen, da dort erkannt werden muss Kooperation ist wichtig, die eigenen Probleme sind immer wichtiger, wenn einer sagt er will es nicht fällt ein Tischbein weg. Viele Partner können mitreden, politische Motivation, immer Kompromiss, das inhaltliche beste geht verloren durch Kompromisse, Überzeugungskraft ist wichtig, Status der Personen spielt mit rein.

Q: Ist es eine Schwäche, dass die regionale Bevölkerung kein einheitliches Gebiet sieht?

A: Weiß nicht… die sind nicht so beschäftigt damit. Persönlicher Gewinn zählt (shoppen).

Q: Bevölkerung würde das unterstützen?

A: Ja, aber die sehen EUREGIO nicht als einen Teil, Kooperation nur wichtig wenn eigener Gewinn.

Q: Es gibt viele einzelne Initiativen, aber nicht erkennbar als gemeinsame Arbeit ist das ein Problem?

A: Stimmt, internes Marketing ist viel Arbeit, beschränktes Personal. Dafür nicht vorhanden, RTBs sollten internes Marketing machen, viel geht verloren auf dem Weg durch viele Partner. Die eine Kommunizieren die Projekte die anderen nicht.

Das Ziel ist, dass das RTB Ansprechpartner ist. EUREGIO ist hinter dem Schirm.

Q: Wie läuft die Akquise denn ab?

A: RTBs akquirieren die Partner. Erfolg ist abhängig von den RTBs Daher Verbesserungsbedarf um aufzuzeigen wie wichtig ist Zusammenarbeit,

Q: Wird oft nur das eigene Unternehmen gesehen?

A: Manchmal ja, Vergangenheit noch schlimmer, viel Diskussion, viel Aufwand jeden mit einzubeziehen.

Q: Wie sind denn die Interessen der Tourismusbetriebe nach gemeinsamer Vermarktung (auch RTBs)?

A: Sind Fachleute, die eigenen Mittel reichen nicht, schauen immer da noch was für sie rauskommt, Politik ist wichtig (Statusdrang) im Allgemeinen sind die Reaktionen positiv. Inhaltich wichtig aber die Zusammenarbeit geht nur mit eigenem Profit

Q: Gibt es Konferenzen wo das besprochen wird? (Strategie)

A: Ja. Grenzüberschreitende Projekte

Q: Gibt es das auch als jährlichen Event?

A: Ja einmal im Jahr Workshops, teils gemeinsam teils getrennt nach Ländern, auch Treffen der Steuergruppe alle 2 Monate, Arbeitsgruppen treffen sich auch öfter (Geheim, anderes, Grenzprojekte)

Q: Wer macht in den Gruppen mit?

A: RTBs

Q: Betriebe nicht?

A: Nur auf Projektebene, die RTBs wissen was die Betriebe möchten. Passiert auch, dass Betrieb direkt zu EUREGIO kommt um neue Projekte anzuleiten EUREGIO als Vermittler, wenn ein RTB sagt nein fällt das Projekt weg, Kompromiss nach Konsultation, treffen mit Betrieben werden auch organisiert. Immer noch Entwicklungsphase obwohl schon zehn Jahre, viele Partner. Ko-Finanzierung muss organsiert werden

Q: Wie werden die Projekte finanziert?

A: INTERREG 45 %, Provinzen und Bezirke. 15-20 % RTBs in D zahlen mit in Holland sollen die Betriebe zahlen und RTBs. 25- 30 Prozent Regionen (RTBs). Immer die Frage wie viel können die Regionen tragen

Q: Gibt es noch Potential?

A: Ja, Kreativität ist wichtig, Garantien sind wichtig (Lead Partner muss das abdecken), EUREGIO ist verantwortlich für die Abrechnung des Projektes.

Q: Können neue Projekte mehr Mittel an Bord bringen?

A: Ja aber jeder muss mitarbeiten. Wirtschaftliche Zahlen sind wichtig. (Touristen geben Geld für viele Sachen aus)

Q: Ist es eine Schwäche, dass der gesamtwirtschaftliche Einfluss des Tourismus nicht so aufgezeigt wird?

A: Bei den politischen Akteuren ist das wohl vorhanden, aber alle machen solche Berechnungen. Der Tourismus ist aber schlecht organisiert, hat keine Lobby, viele Betrieb aber schlecht organisiert

Q: Wie ist die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Wirtschaftszweigen, da es dort auch Überschneidungen gibt?

A: Bei INTERREG Projekten gibt es keine Zusammenarbeit, bei den Regionen ist das schon eine gemeinsame Arbeit, aber in den Projekten ist nur Zusammenarbeit mir Kultur Sektor, davor musste man den eigenen Sektor kennenlernen.

Q: Welche Partner sind die wichtigsten Partner?

A: Letztendlich die Betriebe aber alles läuft über die RTBs, Zahlung der Betriebe ist wichtig, die Hoffnung ist das die RTBs die Sprache der Betriebe sprechen, manchmal wird aber auch eine politische Entscheidung vorangestellt. Betrieb machen nur mit wenn Ergebnis kommt. Camping in NL mit gemeinsamer Vermarktung in D sehen dass mehr deutsche kommen. Derzeit erst am Anfang der Projekte viele Betriebe haben sind nur 10 km von Grenze weg und haben keine deutsche Webseite.

Q: Viel Kleinarbeit?

A: Ja. Viel Entwicklungsarbeit. Viele Familienbetriebe die noch nicht verstanden haben, dass unterschiedliche Strategien nötig sind. Beratung ist wichtig für die Betriebe.

Q: Sind die aktuellen Strukturen die richtigen Strukturen?

A: Ja. Seit zehn Jahren bewährt die RTBs sind nahe an Betrieben die müssen die Kommunikation machen. Ist richtig wie jetzt, die Strategie ist wichtig, jeder muss dahinter stehen, alle müssen EUREGIO als Kollegen sehen, der Entscheidungsprozess sollte öfter überregional liegen.

Q: Wäre eine gemeinsame Vermarktung Destination EUREGIO mit Entscheidungskompetenzen wichtig?

A: Die Betriebe sehen sich nicht als EUREGIO daher wird das nicht funktionieren. Die Betriebe sehen sich als Region (Münsterland oder Twente),

Q: Und für eine internationale Vermarktung?

A: Eine Grenzüberschreitende Dachmarke ist zu komplex, Stakeholder erkennen sich da nicht drin, Entscheidungsbedarf auf überregional aber die Vermarktung nicht. Das wird nicht funktionieren in INTERREG V mit diesen Stakeholdern auch der Kunde möchte das nicht.

Q: Die touristische Aktivität ist aber doch sehr grenzübergreifend?

A: Das mache wir ja auch schon wir zeigen das man über die Grenze kann und dort was machen kann. Aber eine Dachmarke ist nicht marktfähig, wir sind froh dass die Regionen in das andere Holland mitarbeiten. Dachmarke ist Utopie. Ohne INTERREG sind solche Sachen weg.

Q: Zum Beispiel bei den Watteninseln funktioniert das?

A: Da geht das, aber nicht eine künstliche Region

Q: Was kann an der jetzigen Situation verbessert werden?

A: Überregionale Entscheidung, inhaltliche Entscheidung soll leitend sein, die Entscheidung für grenzüberschreitende Projekte soll objektiv sein. Zielorientiertere Entscheidung. Da muss aber auch Organisation und Finanzen anders geregelt werden. Inhaltlich entwickelt sich aber alles ins Positive (letzte 12 Jahre), das Projekt wie jetzt läuft ist die richtige Strategie

Q: Gibt es für die Zukunft wie das weitergehen kann (Vision)

A: Mehr Geld wäre eine Vision, Budgets sind verzogen mehr Auslandmarketing die meisten Studien sagen, dass da das Wachstumspotential ist, man sieht auch in Betrieben, dass die Steigerung dort vorhanden ist, außerdem nicht nur D und NL Marketing (English) auf beiden Seiten, englischsprachiger Markt als Potential.

Q: Wäre Auslandsmarketing unter EUREGIO eine gute Idee?

A: Ja, in INTERREG V, das hat ein großes Potential die Frage ist immer wer will mitfinanzieren (Ko-Finanzierung) dauert auch lange derzeit sind die ersten Resultate von INTERREG IV erst zu sehen, wenig Geld für große Aufgabe. Es läuft schon gut aber Verbesserungsbedarf. Auch viele Arbeit mir Organisation und Kommunikation Marketing nur 50%. Abhängigkeit von Partnern für zehn Jahre Arbeit ist es schon ein gutes Ergebnis, der ganze Prozess dauert immer.

Fazit: mehr Finanzen und Überzeugungsarbeit

Interview Twente Tourismus:

Q: How does the Twente region marketing work is there cooperation with other EUREGIO regions?

A: Twente has a specific budget, which is not large. Focus on the Netherlands, the Flemish part of Belgium and Germany. In Germany focus on Niedersachsen and NRW, in NL with Overijesel and Gelderland (das andere Holland) try interest German costumers in this part of Holland. Specific proposition of this region (active Holidays). Focuses on this target group, not the names of the regions are important but the specific themes. Another choice than the other parts of NL

Q: How is the current cooperation with the Germany regions (is there cooperation, are there projects to market the border regions)?

A: Yes, three parts in tourism Geheim over the Grens, das andere Holland and the Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis (specific border region project), stimulate the border region. Work together in working groups for knowledge exchange

Q: Direct cooperation with German actors in das andere Holland?

A: Not via RTBs, mainly knowledge exchange how to approach the people

Q: Is the exchange institutionalized?

A: Yes, in groups 3-4 times a year

Q: Have you seen synergy effects since the starting of the projects?

A: The results are exchangeable, GER good results in NL arrivals and NL good results in German arrivals (NL not that big) needs more time

Q: How old is the project?

A: 5 – 10 years

Q: Is there a common cultural identity in EUREGIO?

A: Yes there is a Niedersächische Werte identity own dialects are the same (Niedersächsisch) on GER and NL side

Q: Is there touristic potential if you promote both regions together (whole EU)?

A: We use the financial benefits of INTEREG for the current projects and this is the way we should go further on it will take too much effort to promote region together it would take too much money and the businesses would not participate (not interested)

Q: Isn't there a potential for other EU countries (e.g. website in English for the EUREGIO regions)?

A: There is one project in Rhein Whal Euroregion were they promote their region as one I do not know the results but here it is not the way we want to do it, too much money and the business are not interested already lot of effort to interest the businesses in the German market. Better try to focus on the specific markets as now.

Q: Is there current marketing done by Holland tourism for worldwide projects?

A: Yes, with Holland tourism and NBTC, money for current projects and adjustment of the projects

Q: What are the strengths of the Twente regions and EUREGIO?

A: The active and family holiday branch is the strength of Twente and the whole region. Several themes in "das andere Holland".

Q: Do you think your organizational structure is a strength?

A: We are on the right way, because we can't do it on our own (German marketing), cooperation under das andere Holland is the way to work together, it is getting better as the regions have more responsibilities, the marketing organizations should be part of the local RTBs but it is concentrated in EUREGIO that is not always the best solution as it is only one part of the marketing program they see it as an extra and not as the first choice. The das andere Holland should be incorporated in the RTBs

Q: Is it a weakness for the EUREGIO region that there are so many stakeholders?

A: I would say yes but it is the way it is you can't change it. It is a fact that cannot be changed.

Q: Are there other weaknesses of the Region (EUREGIO and Twente) (organizational, touristic sector)?

A: The accusation of businesses can be better (for das andere Holland)

Q: Do you think that business accusation in Germany? (Promotion of Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis)

A: No not the way it works better that the German RTBs do it on the German side. But inside projects better cooperation. Organization for das andere Holland.

Q: Should das andere Holland have decision competencies (German side and Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis as well)?

A: Yes three organizations with competencies on that topic would work better

Q: Do the tourism businesses know where to go to when they want to participate or is it hard to get them in?

A: It is hard to get them in, problem is that it is too separated not the main topic in RTBs, to less office time to convince the businesses of the German market. A lot of pressure in the Dutch market. Chances in the foreign markets. Closeness to the border as chance. Growth in German arrivals 8 percent last year. Bigger part of the growth if better organized and information of businesses better. Examples are helpful to increase the interest. Information for the businesses needs to increase.

Q: Do think that the other RTBs see the potential?

A: The do, but you have to make the choice for that. Not each region sees it as the most important part of the program?

Q: How important is it for Twente?

A: Dutch market is the priority but German market grows in importance for the border regions. We have to manage the good cooperation and make clear choices how to work together cooperation is the only way to get German costumers.

Q: Is an institutionalization of a meeting of all stakeholders in NL and GER for marketing strategy a good idea?

A: We do that already.

Q: Does it work well?

A: It could be better I think. The COMPASS study think it could be a chance to make a big organization but the regions do not believe that.

Q: The proposal was a tourism marketing organization in EUREGIO?

A: Yes but on specific themes.

Q: Why do you think it is not a good idea?

A: Most important is the local business (how can they participate in the projects) more interest in their business.

Q: Is the problem that the new organization would not bring a return on investment or that the businesses would not accept it?

A: I think it is very difficult to get them involved in such a project

Q: If you could change something in the current marketing cooperation what would it be and why?

A: More responsibility for project at the regions itself not that much at EUREGIO,

Q: You would also think that that would bring more effort by the regions in the project?

A: Yes, because if they are responsible for that they get more capacity for that project?

Q: So the decision hierarchy is too high?

A: Yes, they do not see it as their first responsibility. First thing is the Dutch market and then to attract the businesses to that and third it is the German market. It does not feel like our project.

Q: Do you also think that on the Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis?

A: No that should be at EUREGIO level, because of the border. EUREGIO is the institution to connect both sides an stimulate cross border

Q: So cross-border project are on the last place of the agenda?

A: No, because it is not only promotion but also product development. (Routes for bikes)

Q: Do you think it is possible to finance the project das andere Holland with Dutch responsibility?

A: We could do it as we do it now (INTERREG) that depends on three parties (EUREGIO, German, Dutch) benefits are knowledge exchange and the Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis project.

Q: So you still need the EUREGIO for financing?

A: Yes without ITNERREG it is not possible to finance that.

Interview Messe Münster:

Q: Wie vermarkten sie ihre eigenen Veranstaltungen?

A: Mit einem eigenem Marketing,

Q: Und auf welcher regionalen Ebene (Münster Münsterland…)?

A: Das kommt auf die Veranstaltung an. Kongresse werden eng mit Münster und Kongressinitiative vermarktet.

Q: Und eigene Veranstaltungen werden nur alleine vermarktet?

A: Mit Münster Marketing aber nur sehr wenig

Q: Würde es etwas nützen wenn es eine Ansprechstelle für grenzüberschreitendes Marketing gäbe?

A: Schwer einzuschätzen

Q: Der Weihnachtsmarkt wird auch mit Münster Marketing vermarktet?

A: Es gibt 5 Weihnachtsmärkte und wir organisieren einen davon aber er wird durch Münster Marketing gemeinsam vermarktet auch großer Focus auf NL

Q: Die arbeiten aber dann nicht weiter mit EUREGIO oder den NL RTB zusammen?

A: Das weiß ich nicht ich bekomme nur die Rechnung

Q: Wäre es finanziell möglich ein interregionales Project zu unterstützen?

A: Alle Budgets sind begrenzt (eher nicht).

Q: Sehen sie potentiale auf der holländischen Seite?

A: Akquisition und Marketing unterschiedlich. Hängt immer vom Thema ab.

Q: Wäre es themenbezogen nicht praktisch?

A: Keine Organisation hat Interesse das Marketing das Messe und Kongresszentrum zu finanzieren. Oft wissen die Leute, dass Veranstaltungen da sind und sprechen auch alle englisch und deutsch. Man kann immer was optimieren aber es läuft schon gut.

Q: Welcher Rücklauf ist von den Standbetreibern?

A: Viel NL Gäste. MS Polizei zusammen mit NL Polizei. Bewusstsein für NL Gäste ist vorhanden.

Q: Wie ist die Kooperation mit den Teilhabern (Hotels)?

A: Nicht vorhanden, nur über Münster Marketing als zusammenlaufendes Organ und Koordination.

Q: Wie sieht der Kongressmarkt auf der NL Seite aus?

A: Weiß ich nicht. Sicher Konkurrenz. Aber viele Veranstaltungen sind regional gebunden.

Q: Sehen sie eine Chance für ein cross-border Marketing?

A: Touristisch macht das Sinn aber für Einzelunternehmen nicht, branchenspezifischer Markt wir erkundet, das gemeinsame Marketing kann nicht mit verschiedenen Branchen funktionieren.

Q: Werden Synergien cross-border mäßig genutzt?

A: Nur auf Deutschlandebene.

Interview Messe Münster II:

Q: Wie werden derzeit ihre Produkte vermarktet?

A: Traditionell im Umkreis 50 - 100km

Q: Alleine oder Kooperation?

A: Kommt darauf an. Eigene Veranstaltungen alleine, manche Messen mit verbänden, Image Marketing in verbänden auf nationaler Ebene

Q: Zusammenarbeit mit holländischer Seite?

A: Nein

Q: Wäre das ein Potential?

A: Keine Ahnung. Ab und zu Anzeigen auf holländischer Seite hat sich bis jetzt nicht etabliert.

Q: Und beim Weihnachtsmarkt?

A: Macht die Stadt.

Q: Wir da alle abgegeben?

A: Ja

Q: Was war die Entscheidung?

A: Halb städtische daher. Außerdem um einheitliche Auftritt der Weihnachtsmärkte?

Q: Kennen sie die aktuellen Marketing Aktionen der EUREGIO?

A: Nein

Q: Wäre eine cross-border Organisation ein guter Ansprechpartner?

A: Schaden würde es nicht.

Q: Würden sie Geld dafür zahlen?

A: Nein. Zu wenig Geld.

Q: Wenn das gefördert ist und punktuell gezahlt wird?

A: Das wäre etwas anderes.

Q: Was die stärke ihre Unternehmens der Region?

A: Größtes Zentrum der Region.

Q: Werden alle Potentiale genutzt?

A: Das hoffe ich wohl.

Q: Werden sie von anderen Organisationen unterstützt (Außer Münster Marketing)?

A: Was heißt unterstützt wir sind zu 92 % städtisch.

Q: Wird durch Münsterland e.V. noch etwas gemacht?

A: Es greift auch viel, da viel durch automatische Prozesse.

Q: Wie läuft das?

A: Da gibt es gemeinsame Aktionen die dann durchgeführt werden Kongress-Initiative? Münster Projekte werden da besprochen.

Q: Gibt es Möglichkeiten Projekte die mehr Regionen vereinen zu koordinieren?

A: Ja, durch Münsterland e.V.. Treffen sind aber nur projektbezogen und von uns nimmt keiner teil.

Q: Für was würden sie extra Budget verwenden?

A: National und regional

Q: Also sehen sie die Potentiale national?

A: Ja

Q: Würden Sie die Möglichkeiten eines institutionalisierten internationalen Marketings nutzen?

A: Nein

Interview Lübeck Business Development:

Q: Wie wir die Region Fehmarnbelt derzeit vermarktet?

A: Die Region in Gänze nicht. Nur die einzelnen Akteure vermarkten sich selbst. (Kommunen Städte)

Q: Ist es hauptsächlich wirtschaftlich oder touristisch geprägt?

A: Unterschiedlich. Die Wirtschaftsförderungen kooperieren weniger, die touristischen Akteure kooperieren mehr.

Q: Was sind die Hauptgründe eine gemeinsame Vermarktung zu entwickeln?

A: Der Grund ist die Investition - die feste Verbindung. Die politische Erwartungshaltung die blühenden Landschaften kommen. Mehr als Infrastruktur, muss mit Inhalten gefüllt werden. 5 Milliarden Euro Investition, aber Gefahr der Transit-Region.

Q: Gab es eine Überlegung davor eine Vermarkung zu starten?

A: Nein.

Q: Spielt der Tourismus eine Rolle in der gemeinsamen Vermarktung?

A: Image ist touristisch geprägt, die Bilder spielen auch als Investitionsstandort eine Rolle.

Q: Welche Schritte wurden bis jetzt auf dem Weg zu einer gemeinsamen Vermarktung unternommen?

A: Bestandsaufnahme. Welches Produkt soll vermarktet werden, Branchen Infrastruktur, Stärke Schwäche noch keine Kommunikation?

Q: Über welche Wege?

A: Kooperation Wirtschaftsförderer Studie im Auftrag bestimmte Zusammenarbeit in Clustern

Q: Die jetzigen Stakeholder sind Verbände und Berater?

A: Ja

Q: Nimmt die Wirtschaft an sich schon teil?

A: Nur die Förderer, treffen mit Unternehmen. Branchenfokus SME um die Möglichkeiten vor Augen zu führen

Q: Wie ist das Feedback?

A: Verhalten, viel Überzeugung, Zu weit weg. Zeithorizont.

Q: Was sind die ersten Probleme die sie identifizieren?

A: Sind noch keine Region auf den Seiten (D und GER) die Querung ist eine Trigger sich zusammenzuraufen

Q: Wie ist das Finanzierungsproblem?

A: Generelles Problem, freiwillige Aufgabe der Kommunen immer zusätzlich da wenig Geld da ist. Irgendwo sparen. Ist nicht einfach. Aber im Kontext feste Querung sind die Finanziers der Infrastruktur die verantwortlichen. Auf Dänischer Seite bisschen anders gesehen. Noch kein Wille ohne Infrastruktur zu argumentieren.

Q: Gibt es Wiederstände von Stakeholdern?

A: Nein

Q: Hat die Dänische Seite ähnliche Probleme?

A: Noch fragmentiere Region. In den Kreisen und Lübeck, in D jeder Bürgermeister sein eigener Wirtschaftsförderer schon jetzt dabei zu organisieren. Feste Querung als Auslöser die Strukturen zu ändern. Schon lange Kooperation 1996 aber durch die Querung geht es weiter Gedanken über Strukturen. z.B. Focus auf Clusterthemen.

Q: Kann man sagen dass es institutionelle Hürden in der Zusammenarbeit gibt (politische Systeme)

A: Nicht Systeme aber Entstehungsgeschichte. Verschieden Reformen haben die Strukturen durcheinander gebracht. (Systeme eigentlich schon)

Q: Gibt es positive Aspekte?

A: Die Kooperation der Cluster funktioniert gut (Ernährung) alle Teilhaber werden zusammen gebracht. Auch Logistik. Dort wo Verbindlichkeit hineingebracht wird funktioniert es. Da wo die Frage nach der Dauerhaftigkeit gefragt ist.

Q: Wird versucht das zu institutionalisieren?

A: Vorsichtig; institutionalisieren kann auch tot machen. Inhalte sind erst wichtig.

Q: Was ist der Erfolgsfaktor für eine gemeinsame Vermarktung?

A: Vertrauensbasis, gemeinsames Verständnis was man erreichen will. Außerdem braucht es ein Produkt. Wofür stehen wir für wen ist es vorteilhaft hier. Das ist die große Herausforderung von Vertrauen auf Inhalt zu kommen. Was sind wir gemeinsam.

Q: Gibt es da schon Ansätze?

A: Analysephase. Das wird sich konzentrieren auf die Stärken (Ernährung, Gesundheit) Tourismus ist nicht unsere Arbeit erneuerbare Energien.

A: Gibt es ein Ziel eine gemeinsame Linie mit Tourismus zu finden?

Q: Tourismus noch separat (B2C vs. B2B) schon jetzt viel Kooperation. Tourismus sind schon einen Schritt weiter. Machen das schon länger-

Q: Kann man sich da was abschauen?

A: Anderes Geschäftsmodell, komplementäre Produkte. Bei Wirtschaftsförderung sind alle Wettbewerber.

Q: Ist es ein Ziel einen gemeinsamen Koordinationsschirm zu haben?

A: Das ist das was man sich vorstellt. Funktioniert teilweise aber nur mit starkem top down Approach und sehr vielen Mitteln und gewissem druck (siehe Marke Südtirol Steuerung über Incentivierung mach mit und es gibt Geld) diese Mechanismen gibt es hier nicht. Auf absehbare Zeit nicht.

Q: Wie abhängig ist das alles von INTERREG?

A: Im Moment sehr. Die aktuelle Phase ist aus INTERREG druck entstanden. INTERREG Region ändert sich da wesentlich größer wie das dann ist, ist die Frage wichtig finanzielle Stakeholder einzubringen (Fehmarn AS) Landesregierungen. Immer ist erst die eigene Marke.

Q: Ist es eine Problem dass es auf der Länder und Kommunen keine Koordination gibt?

A: Der politische Ansatz wäre mit einer Oberkoordinierung. Am Ende des tage s ist sich jeder selbst der nächste. Koordination funktioniert wo man Druck ausüben kann. Rein freiwillig geht das nicht. Wäre aber wünschenswert.

Q: Haben sie Empfehlungen wie man eine Place Brand entwickeln beachten muss?

A: Wichtig ist eine inhaltliche Basis. Nicht top down was für Themen gibt es schon und welche bringt man zusammen. Netzwerke müssen von unten entstehen von oben geht nur mit vielen Ressourcen. Dann ist aber keiner von überzeugt.

Interview Ostsee-Holstein-Tourismus e.V.:

Q: Wieso wird versucht die beiden Seiten des Fehmarnbelts zu vermarkten?

A: Fest Querung, dadurch wächst Region zusammen. Ostdansk Tourismus als Projektpartner (Destination Fehmarnbelt als INTERREG-Project

Q: Wurde das vorher schon überlegt?

A: Nein das war der Auslöser, es hat schon Zusammenarbeit gegeben aber noch nicht so.

Q: War die INTERREG Förderung auch ein Grund?

A: Ja ganz klar, auch Möglichkeit neue Arbeitsplätze zu schaffen.

Q: Gibt es eine Zusammenarbeit mit den Wirtschaftsförderungen?

A: Mit Lübeck speziell nicht, aber Entwicklungsgesellschaft Eutin, gibt Schnittstellen mit INTERREG Projekten und Information

Q: Wie ist die Entwicklung bis jetzt gelaufen welche Schritte?

A: Projekt endete Juni 2012, in diesem Rahmen: Marktforschung als Grundlage für Strategie (quantitative, Nachfrage Analyse potential einer neuen Marke, Trendanalyse,) Fehmarnbelt nicht bekannt, Strategie Integration (bestehende Strategien in Verbindung mit Ergebnissen), dann schritt nicht Marke (Destination Fehmarnbelt) bestehende Marken weiternutzen. Viele Gemeinsamkeiten (USP) Landschaft Strand werte. Daher gemeinsames Thema zu vermarkten auftanken, Erholungszentrum zwischen HH und Kopenhagen keine Marke aber Thema

Q: Soll die gemeinsame Vermarktung über gemeinsame Organisationsstruktur laufen?

A: Soweit sind wir nicht, könnte sein dass es in der Zukunft ein Regionalmanagement gibt. Gibt Folgeprojekt in dem an so etwas gearbeitet wird. Jetzt wurde das Thema in die bestehende Struktur integriert. Einbau in die Marketing Strategie Produkte entwickelt die eine Rolle spielen. Beide interpretieren das Thema auf Ihre Weise.

Q: Gibt es ein Treffen um die Strategien weiter zu besprechen?

A: Nicht für Auftanken aber im neuen Projekt Tourismus Innovation Management. Projektpartner sollen zur Zusammenarbeit angeregt werden, die alte Kampagne ist dennoch

weiter vertreten. Regelmäßige Treffen aber kein zentraler Bestandteil. Kein Marketingschwerpunkt.

Q: Nicht mehr das Ziel gemeinsame Place Brand?

A: Nein, in 2011 wurde ein anderer Weg eingeschlagen (hohe Bekanntheit Ostsee Schleswig Holstein und Inseln Dänemark)

Q: Ist eine gemeinsame Grundstrategie ein Ziel?

A: Da wir in den nächsten Projekten zusammenarbeiten arbeiten wir schon gemeinsam, aber nicht mehr als Kampagne. Bsp. Kulinarik: regionale Produkte in neuem Projekt das Ziel neue Produkte gemeinsam zu entwickeln. Zusammenarbeit in anderen Dimensionen. Auch fehlende Mittel.

Q: Solche Projekte sind von INTERREG abhängig?

A: Ja, Förderung durch Schleswig Holstein und Mitglieder wenig bis gar kein Geld für Auslandsmarketing. INTERREG als Finanzier der Kooperationen unumgänglich

Q: Wird dadurch die Langfristigkeit der Projekte gefährdet?

A: Ja ist schwierig, wir hätten die Kampagne gerne weitergeführt aber in INTERREG geht das nicht, muss auf bestehendes Aufbauen und eine neue Ausrichtung haben, Angebotsseite mit D und GER angeboten die mit fehlenden Geldern eingestellt wurde. Gute Besucherzahlen mit Bewerbung aber am Schluss nicht mehr finanzierbar.

Q: Wo sind die Herausforderungen in der Zusammenarbeit?

A: Grundsätzliche Sachen. Sprache, (auch in der gemeinsamen Kampagne, in D geht englisch in Ger nicht) bei den Pauschalangeboten Frage der Währung (Kronen vs. Euro), Währungsunterschied. Kulturelle Unterschiede (duzen, auch Ansprache der Gäste) Unterschiede in der Ansprache online Print, Anzeigengestaltung.

Q: Gab es auch Probleme durch die verschieden Organisationsstruktur?

A: Nein, nur die Veränderung der Strukturen während des Projekts. Bei Dan Ostsee Tourismus hat sich die Aufgabenstruktur verändert Tourismus zu Wirtschaftsförderung. Eigene Probleme.

Q: Problem der mit Veränderung der Ansprechpartner?

A: Ja. Wechsel Geschäftsführer und Projektkoordinator. Entstehende Herausforderung.

Q: War es schwierig die Stakeholder für das Projekt zu begeistern?

A: Ja. Die Stakeholder wurden nicht in die Entwicklung einbezogen (nur Ostsee Tourismus und externe Berater) Gremien wurden nur informiert. Wiederstände gab es nicht direkt aber es gab eine geringe Beteiligung. War schwierig Angebote für Angebotsseite zu bekommen. Schwierig die Stakeholder zu begeistern. Es wurden auch Workshops durchgeführt mit allen Stakeholder war schwierig die Teilnehmer zu bekommen. Veranstaltung in D war schwer das Leute aus GER hinkommen. Fehmarnbelt negativ belastet durch Infrastrukturbelastung. Thema ist allgemein negative belastet. Tunnel wir erst 2021 fertig es fehlt die Betroffenheit.

Q: War das auch in Dänemark ein Problem?

A: Anderer Grund. Nicht Skepsis sondern die fehlenden Angebote. In D darf man das rechtlich nicht. Herausforderung rechtliche unterschiede

Q: Was läuft gut in der Zusammenarbeit?

A: Obwohl Projekt beendet ist wird das Thema weiter fortgesetzt. Allgemein erfolgreiches Konzept . Identifizierung eines Trendthemas. Region konnte sich gut positionieren als Erholungszentrum. Beteiligte Partner haben auch positive Rückmeldung gegeben. (Marktforschung wurde hervorgehoben). Gemeinschaftliche Zusammenarbeit am Ende, Gute Entwicklung. Am Ende Plan, Kampagne und Agentur.

Q: Ist es positiv dass nun Kontakte für eine weitere Zusammenarbeit geknüpft sind?

A: Ja. Seit das Projekt zu Ende ist wurde gemeinsam das Folgeprojekt entworfen und weitere Projektpartner sind hinzugekommen. Gute Zusammenarbeit am ende

Q: Ist das irgendwann möglich das ohne INTERREG zu machen?

A: Das ist das Ziel von dem aktuellen Tim Projekt. Regionalmanagement als Ziel. Viele Projekte und Zusammenarbeit. Der Gäste und Einwohner Austausch ist spannend. Potential ist da.

Q: Was sind Ihre Empfehlung für andere Regionen?

A: Keine neuen künstlichen Marken, bestehende Stärken nutzen. (hier Ostsee) Innenmarketing ist wichtig. Tue Gutes und sprich darüber. Bei uns fehlte die Information,

wenig Partner einbezogen. Öffentlichkeitsarbeit ist wichtig damit Beteiligung da ist. Ganz wichtig: Innenmarketing.

Interview Münsterland e.V.:

Q: Wird die Region als Tourismusregion gemeinsam vermarktet (EUREGIO)?

A: Im Tourismus ist das der Fall. Seit 2002, nächste Förderphase ist in den Startlöchern. Funktioniert gut. Ist Best Practice. Drei Säulen (Grenzerlebnisse/Grenzbelevnis, Geheim over de Grenz, das andere Holland). Klappt schon gut aber nicht das Thema Standortmarketing

Q: Ist ein gemeinsames Standortmarketing gewünscht?

A: Marketing ist das eine aber EUREGIO ist nicht als eigene Destination. EUREGIO weit ist die Frage wie das geht. Keine neue Region entwickelt sondern eigen Region zurückgenommen. Schwer vorzustellen ob man das machen kann da Region benannt werden muss.

Q: Sind noch mehr Synergien möglich als die jetzigen?

A: Ja. Gibt schon einige Kooperation (Wirtschaft, Kultur und Hochschulen), gemeinsame Projekt Pferdewirtschaft. (Cluster Tourismus, Industrie, Sport, Agrarindustrie) in gewissen Bereichen ist das wichtig aber die Region als Standortmarketing ist noch nicht vorhanden.

Q: Also gibt es keine gemeinsame Identität die die Region als Basis haben könnte?

A: Eigentlich nicht, aber im Tourismus ist das auch das Spannende, Grenze nicht mehr vorhanden aber man merkt dass man über die Grenze fährt.

Q: Könnte das nicht als gemeinsame Identität genutzt werden?

A: Im Tourismus ist das ein Alleinstellungsmerkmal aber in anderen Bereiche ist da meiner Meinung nach nicht so.

Q: Ist die Grenze durch die derzeitigen Projekte die Grenze weniger sichtbar geworden?

A: Bedingt ja aber die Betriebe kennen sich zu Teil schon nicht auf einer Seite und es ist schwierig die zusammenzubekommen. Potential die Leute zusammenzukriegen.

Q: Gibt es gemeinsame Stärken die diese Tourismusregion hat (Münsterland und EUREGIO)?

A: EUREGIO: lange Zusammenarbeit, da erste Euroregion. Gewohnheit der Zusammenarbeit, Tradition. Projekte die die Grenze verschwinden lassen (Altenheim Bocholt)

Münsterland: Tradition, gewachsene Region seit Jahrhunderten. Münster als Zentrum alles Münsterländer, Abhängigkeiten Umland Münster als Tradition. Versorgung des Umlandes und Pendeln in die Stadt.

Q: Viele RTB ist das eine Schwäche wegen viel Koordination?

A: In Münsterland ist das schon gut nur eine Münsterland e.V. in anderen gibt es mehr. Verschiedene Zielgruppen müssen angesprochen werden mit verschieden Schwerpunkten (unterschiedliches Image) in der EUREGIO ist das nicht zu viel. Die Regionen haben Existenzberechtigung, Mittel der EU werden an Region verteilt in Holland ist der Schritt eher zurück viele verschiedene Ansprechpartner jede räumliche Ebene hat seine Existenzberechtigung. Betrieb, Ort regional EUREGIO. Skeptisch ist zu sehen wenn dann noch zusätzlich teilregional gearbeitet wird (Bsp. Baumberge) Reichweite irgendwann begrenzt. Wichtig ist das aufgaben richtig verteilt sind.

Q: Kann man ein festes Bild (Münster Ruhe Radfahren Wiesen) kann man das nutzen um ein gemeinsames Marketing durchzusetzen oder Angst reduziert zu werden?

A: Derzeit sieht man es ist gelungen. Wirtschaftsförderung ist derzeit das Ziel. Schwierig die Images zu ändern. Wirtschaftsimage muss aufgebaut werden aber das touristische Image ist gut als Basis für z.B. Fachkräfte) Erstansprache ist aber anderes unterschiedliche Zielgruppen

Q: Ist dann nicht die EUREGIO als gemeinsame Vermarktung eine Chance (Dachidentität)?

A: Kann man sicherlich als Chance sehen, aber man muss eine gemeinsame Identität identifizieren was ist der USP, das sehe ich aber noch nicht. Um richtig gut das zu machen braucht es Geld und Zeit. Das siehe ich noch nicht. Das ist schwierig. Die Gelder müssen auch herkommen und man sieht das Ergebnis nicht direkt.

Q: Ist die Finanzierungssituation eine Schwäche?

A: Nicht nur eine Schwäche dieser Region sondern allgemein. Wichtig ist ein Schritt von öffentlich zu privat zu gehen. In dem EUREGIO Projekt gelingt das schon ganz gut aber noch nicht immer wichtig ist Ergebnis zu zeigen. Auf Dauer geht aber Fördermittel nicht. Muss ziemlich schnell ohne Fördermittel laufen. Oft ist es davon sehr abhängig und dann verläuft es im Sand. Wir haben seit 2002 zwei Projekte und man könnte sagen wieso noch mehr fördern wenn es jetzt nicht läuft wieso dann? Aber was wir machen ist Wirtschaftsförderung und ohne öffentliche Mittel läuft das nicht. Ohne geht nicht das bleibt auch so. Förderung als

Grundfinanzierung ist essentiell. Ansprache Unternehmen. Betriebe geben Geld nur für spezielle Projekte.

Q: Sind die verschiedenen Organisationsstrukturen auf beiden Seiten eine Schwäche?

A: Ja sicherlich. War in Holland extrem mit der letzten Umstrukturierung. Viele in der Region wissen das nicht. Auch in der EUREGIO. Man blickt da manchmal nicht durch. Auch Finanzierungstrukturen sind anders. Hinzu kommt auch noch dass die Marketingansätze in den Ländern anders sind NL will nicht angesprochen werden wie D. Mehr Austausch ist wichtig. Holland will mehr Internet man muss noch mehr voneinander lernen.

Q: Müssen alle Stakeholder an Bord genommen werden um?

A: Grundsätzlich ja. Die Authentizität lebt auch von den Bürgern. Die Mentalität wirkt sich auch auf den Tourismus aus. Agenda 21 Prozess nicht wirklich zielführend. Schon schwierig die Tourismusakteure an einen Tisch zu holen.

Q: Gibt es Projekte die Stakeholder an einen Tisch zu holen?

A: Von EUREGIO gibt es den Versuch Workshops zu machen wo die Akteure zusammengebracht werden. ich merke schon im Münsterland dass das was bringt. Netzwerk wird so erst gebildet. Das wird versucht aber im Tourismus ist es schwierig die Unternehmer dort hinzubekommen.

Q: Ist das Interesse allgemein bei den Unternehmen gering an Grenzüberschreitender Zusammenarbeit?

A: Das ist schon gestiegen es war mal geringer es steigt natürlich. langwieriger Prozess ideal ist Mundpropaganda. Gibt immer welche die da gar nicht daran denken. Es kann immer mehr werden.

Q: Sind die beste Werbung Projekte die Unternehmer schon gemacht haben?

A: Ja erfolgreiche Projekte. Unternehmer glaubt Unternehmer.

Q: Gibt es Grenzüberschreitend touristische Synergien die nicht genutzt werden?

A: Die Frage der Ausprägung des schon vorhandenen ist wichtig. Neue Themen werden nicht angepeilt ausschöpfen kann man immer mehr. Steht und fällt mit personal. Persönliche Ansprache ist für Akquise wichtig. Auch Zuarbeiten für EUREGIO kann noch besser werden.

Die eine sind ja auch mehr und die anderen sind weniger engagiert. Naturgemäß muss man erst seine Kernaufgabe machen. Man kann schon sagen Zuarbeiten ist auch ein Teil davon. Daher ist es nachvollziehbar das so weniger zugearbeitet wird. Man kann auch sagen, dass manche Orte eh wenig Geld habe und man sagt wir machen das. Aber nicht Aufgabe EUREGIO. Unsere Aufgabe dt. Markt alle NL macht EUREGIO Input wird nur geliefert. Andere wollen so was doch noch für sich machen. Jeder will genauso dargestellt werden. Daher entsteht dann Missgunst.

Q: Gibt es was das sie anderes Strukturen würden? Wie sieht die ideale Struktur für die EUREGIO Region aus?

A: Eigentlich müssten die EUREGIO Leute mit anderen Touristikern zusammensitzen um den Austausch zu verbessern. Sind derzeit isoliert. Engerer Austausch ist wichtig um Ideen zu entwickeln. EUREGIO ist der Projektträger daher ist das nachvollziehbar. Für Austausch wäre gut wenn jedes RTB einen Mitarbeiter für die NL/GER Arbeit hätte

Q: Wäre es nicht eine gute Idee innerhalb der EUREGIO D und NL Marketing zu bündeln?

A: Das wäre der Idealfall. Regelmäßige Treffen aber man kann nicht inhaltlich arbeiten. Zumindest Teilzeitkräfte wären gut als Scharnier zu EUREGIO. Die müssten aber für die gesamte Region gelten und nicht als Arbeiter für einzelne Regionen. Wir würden ohne Förderung nicht alleine auf NL Markt stehen. Personal ist mehr als die Hälfte der Fördermittel und das ist schon schwierig. Förderung wäre so nicht möglich und eigenes Budget auch nicht?

Q: Könnte man für das Budget auch die Wirtschaft begeistern?

A: Mit größeren Unternehmen ist das Schwierig. Hat immer mit Bezug zu tun. Immer Sparkassen. Es gibt Unternehmen die geben größere Summen aber nur für spezielle Projekte.

Q: Würden die vielleicht ein gemeinsames Standortmarketing fördern?

A: Das wäre immer noch zu unkonkret. Muss konkreter Gegenwert vorhanden sein. Nur enggefasstes Projekt. Im Tourismus noch schwieriger da keine großen Player. Aufwand auch größer für Tourismus

Interview StattReisen Münster e.V.:

Q: Wie vermarktet sich Stattreisen Grenzübergreifend?

A: Gar nicht. Da wenig nachfrage. Einmal versucht 1993. Mit Pressemitteilung aber kein einziger Gast.

Q: Sind sie sich bewusst, dass es mit Münsterland und EUREGIO Möglichkeiten gibt?

A: Mit dem Vorgänger von Münsterland e.V. ja aber mit den jetzigen gibt es keine direkte Kooperation.

Q: Sehen sie Ansätze in der Touristik dass es versucht wird über die Grenze zusammenzuarbeiten?

A: Von uns aus nicht und von anderen weiß ich es nicht. Das Problem ist auch das EUREGIO keine touristische Region ist.

Q: Ist da nicht die Möglichkeit das Gäste des Münsterlands nach Holland fahren und umgekehrt?

A: Das mag sein aber die eigentliche Destination ist immer das Münsterland oder Twente. Unsere Erfahrung ist dass, das nicht auf kultureller Ebene funktioniert

Q: Sehen sie denn eine gemeinsame Basis für gemeinsames Marketing?

A: Man könnte das machen wenn man viel Geld in die Hand nimmt. Aber da ist nicht die erste Priorität

Q: Gibt es Synergien die Grenzüberschreitend genutzt werden können?

A: Könnte es geben aber dafür brauchen wir niederländische Stadtführer die es nicht gibt und weil die Nachfrage sehr gering ist. Das lohnt sich nicht. Gäbe es mehr Anfragen würden wir das machen. Viel Holländer kommen aber machen das zu einkaufen. Die geben dafür kein Geld aus.

Q: Ist es ein Nachteil Geld für eine gemeinsame Vermarktung auszugeben und es wäre anders besser angelegt?

A: Die Frage macht es Sinn Geld dahinein zu stecken und ob die Gelder nicht für etwas anderes besser angelegt wären.

Q: Die EUREGIO als Zwischenpartner und Ansprechpartner für Zusammenarbeit wäre ein Weg für eine Marketingzusammenarbeit?

A: Kann ich nicht sagen. Wenden sich die Leute denn daheim. möglicherweise ja aber das muss von der EUREGIO ausgehen. Wenn die EUREGIO das entwickelt ja. Wenn man eine Basis entwickelt geht das vielleicht. Dafür müsste viel Geld in die Hand genommen werden.

Wenn die EUREGIO uns Geld geben würde für Programme würden wir es machen. Immer ist die Frage was kommt als praktischer Nutzen raus.

Q: Wie wichtig wäre eine starke Leadership in der Region?

A: Das wäre sicher ein Ansatz wenn das als Signal gesetzt werden will wäre das sicherlich ok aber nicht wegen dem wirtschaftlichen Nutzen. Wenn sich die Region die Zusammenarbeit auf die Fahne schreiben will wäre das möglicherweise ein Ansatz. Das ist letztendlich eine Frage des Geldes wenn das der eigene Etat ist dann funktioniert das nicht. Interessant wäre das aber. Der Bedarf ist beim Kunden nicht da und ob man ihn wecken kann weiß ich nicht. Das würde sicher viel Zeit benötigen.

Q: Arbeiten sie mit regionalen Partnern zusammen?

A: Wir als stattreisen kooperieren mit Münster Marketing, und früher über Münsterland Touristik mit anderen Partner (projektbezogen). Schon Probleme bei Arbeitstreffen. Immer treffen am Flughafen auf neutralem Boden. Seit Münsterland e.V. Wenig bis gar nichts. Die anderen müssten auf stattreisen zukommen.

Q: Sehen sie eine Initiative der Partner grenzübergreifend zu arbeiten?

A: Von Münster Marketing macht das Sinn, aber die holländischen Gäste bringen nur Profit für Einzelhandel und Gastronomie wenn sollten die finanziell eingebunden werden. Die sind in der Verantwortung.

Q: Also sollte man wenn man eine gemeinsame Vermarktung macht alle einbezogen werden.

A: Ja bei der Verwendung von öffentlichen Geldern wäre das wichtig.

Interview Enschede Marketing:

Q: How does your current marketing strategy look like and do you cooperate with stakeholders in the EUREGIO region?

A: 2010 research showed: German tourists come to the market and shop but if more information about culture interest of tourist is there. Knowledge shared with stakeholders. Campaign based on this research in Münster and Osnabrück, one hour drive maximum, Marketing strategy with marketing company chose a German agency, aim to make German tourists aware of the shopping possibilities, Campaign, mass communication: billboards, radio spots, website, Facebook. In Enschede brochures with shops and restaurants. Main aim: you can go shopping but there is more. It is hard to inform them about more therefore we do mainly marketing on shopping. They come because of the other offers and the chilled atmosphere

Q Is the strategy only on German market?

A: Not just, also Dutch but not with a big campaign. Focus on inhabitants with city projects; make the city more alive and attractive. Goal of organization more visitors: achieved with four subjects, shopping living, music knowledge. Target groups: visitors, companies students inhabitants,

Q: Is there cooperation with the local stakeholders (Twents Bureau for Tourism, EUREGIO)

A: Yes not so much with EUREGIO but with Twents Bureau for Tourism, also because of the same website, online cooperation, EUREGIO is in cooperation with geheim over de grens, Press trips with EUREGIO, Cooperation not that close, Das andere Holland is also not a focus, we do not participate.

Q: Are there projects with stakeholders on the other side of the border?

A: yes but not on structural basis, there are projects but timely limited, Cooperation with Deutsche Bahn, Info about Enschede in Flyer, In talks with Münster marketing, project plans but yes of cultural partners is needed. The will is there but it is hard to find a topic that is interesting for both cities. We want to work together but a natural basis is needed.

Q: Is this based on the different characteristics?

A: No because both have the same focus, students bikes, But the topics need to fit it is hard to integrate all stakeholders

Q: Is it hard to bring all stakeholders together?

A: Yes, cultural partners need to be brought together, get to know each other, Main working focus is on our city marketing, contacts to Münster and EUREGIO is not focus.

Q: Would it be easier if a central organization coordinates cross-border cooperation?

A: Yes, we see that we don't know the partners on the other side yet.

Q: For Networking, would it be good to have an every 3 months networking meeting to bring the partners together?

A: EUREGIO does organize that, already. If we have questions EUREGIO is helping, Sometimes the EUREGIO comes to us for projects

Q: What are the strengths of the city Enschede?

A: The offer and the ambience, student city

Q: Are the strengths of the region the same as Enschede?

A: Yes: Enschede is the biggest city of the region and we want to be the shopping city of east Holland, region is calm and chilled and we are the vibrant city,

Q: Can that be combined?

A: Yes: Hengelo Almelo and Twente try to do so. Combination can be made, if stay in the country side you also want to have a city around. But at this point the combination can be better.

Q: Is the EUREGIO region seen as one region or is there still a border in between in the thinking?

A: There is still a border, lot of cultural difference between German and Dutch, In common project USP of the city was asked, and USP for of the region but no project was developed out of this.

Q: There was a consultancy study which researched on the effects of the EUREGIO projects which showed that they led to growth in tourist arrivals. The marketing organizations want to

do more cross-border work but they do not have the money and time and they have to get the businesses on board which takes a lot of time. Do you have the same feeling that it is the main work to convince the businesses of cross-border marketing?

A: we mainly focus on the visitors and not on collaboration. Most of the time is spent on promoting Enschede across the border. The main stakeholders are the Enschede businesses.

Q: Would they also support a campaign that markets the whole EUREGIO region?

A: Difficult to say, one part says the only want Enschede promoted, the other says that they would see the profit that comes from this. Businesses were enthusiastic on prior projects like that (Tag des Gastes). You should not see each other as concurrent, small projects are the steps to take. Hard to find common goal, we want to cooperate but in practice it's hard.

Q: Would it be hard to find a common strategy for the whole EUREGIO region?

A: I think it's hard, because it is so different, large region and our main goal is to promote Enschede

Q: Would it hell to promote the whole region as it would bring more visitors to Enschede as well?

A: Of course but we also have to work with politics and they say Enschede is your main focus, the goal is that more visitors come to Enschede if that is not happening we won't get any money.

Q: on the money aspect: you are mainly funded by the city of Enschede?

A: Yes and we get money from the market and Enschede partners (large companies main budget from city

Q: Are there any weaknesses of Enschede and the region?

A: The Region is unknown (EUREGIO) insiders and outsiders, some effects out of our reach (Parkgebühr)

Q: You wouldn't say that it is a weakness that you are dependent on politics and city funds?

A: Yes you have to keep in mind the different interests?

Q: Could this also be a weakness for the whole region that you have to keep in mind the interests of the stakeholders (politics, businesses etc.)?

A: Everybody`s focus is their interest and on the last place the region

Q: Does that led to losses?

A: Yes, because everybody has a different assignment

Q: Is a common strategy on the agenda for the Region in Enschede?

A: No, EUREGIO has that but we are just on little part, our contacts are not very frequently.

Q: What are the important stakeholders?

A: Shops, city, Marktleute, Twente branding (Business development organization), but not EUREGIO

Q: Did your stakeholders tell you to engage in cross-border cooperation?

A: No it is not an assignment or a wish; i don't say we don't need to do it as they want more visitors for Enschede, difficult to get a common project, difficulty in organization of small projects

Q: Do you think that a cross-border place branding organization is possible for the region or does it loose power because of the differing interests?

A: It depends on the understanding of cross-border place branding; some projects would be successful a big campaign would not be possible. Our target group (Münster Osnabrück) is EUREGIO but EUREGIO has bigger reach (Germany Netherlands) both can coexist, you need to focus

Q: Is a EUREGIO umbrella brand with sub target groups would be helpful?

A: Yes that really could work

Q: would it be able to finance it in the region?

A: people always think what is in it for me and that needs to be expressed clearly, We had a meeting with EUREGIO for mentioning on the das andere Holland website and our focus was already on Münster and Osnabrück and did not see the extra effect. Our budget is already

finished with Münster and Osnabrück. We also have a different target group, we go for one day visitors and EUREGIO is larger and focuses on longer vacations.

Q: The main financial source for cross-border place branding is INTERREG: would the stakeholders participate in INTERREG projects?

A: Yes but even with INTERREG you need co financing and you need to fill out all these forms which takes time that is not there (administration etc). You should not do something only because you get subsidy the project needs to fit.

Q: As Enschede is directly on the border, could you use the border better to market yourself?

A: Yes definitely, even if I go to Osnabrück it feels like holidays because there are different shops and buildings that is also what we try to emphasize: when you go to Enschede you have a day of holidays.

Q: Could that be a strategy for the whole region?

A: Of course, it's a USP for the whole region. That may be something the whole region has in common. The difference can be specified for cities, landscape, and holidays.

Interview Münster Marketing (schriftlich beantwortet):

Q: Wird die Tourismusregion zentral vermarktet?

A: Münster hat eine eigene Tourismus-Marketing Organisation, genauso wie das Münsterland. Es werden hinsichtlich der überregionalen Themen Radfahren, Pferderegion, Gärten und Parks sowie Regionalen Produkten gemeinsame Vermarktungsaktionen durchgeführt. In Bezug auf das Auslandsmarketing in den Niederlanden werden fast alle Marketingaktivitäten über die EUREGIO in Gronau gesteuert.

Q: Ist eine gemeinsame Vermarktung gewünscht?

A: Eine gemeinsame Vermarktung bezüglich der oben genannten Themen mit der Region ist absolut gewünscht. Mit der EUREGIO hinsichtlich des Niederlande-Marketing ebenfalls.

Q: Sind wirtschaftliche Synergien durch eine gemeinsame touristische Vermarktung möglich?

A: Ja. Gemeinsame Anzeigenkampagnen, Journalistenreisen, etc. reduzieren die Kosten für die einzelnen Partner.

Q: Welche Zusammenarbeit gibt es?

A: Mit der EUREGIO: Kataloganzeigen, Anzeige-Aktionen in niederländischen Zeitungen, Journalistenreisen, Workshop Besuche, Bewerbung von Veranstaltungen, gemeinsame Messeauftritte (Vakantiebeurs Utrecht), Promotionstouren in den Niederlanden mit Auslage von Prospekten von MM, …

Q: Ist die Grenze immer noch eine Abgrenzung oder sind grenzübergreifende Zusammenarbeit und Projekte normal geworden?

A: Die Grenze ist hauptsächlich eine sprachliche Grenze, die Auseinandersetzung mit den niederländischen Markterfordernissen ist alltäglicher geworden

Q: Wie wird das touristische Potenzial der Region eingeschätzt?

A: Gemeinsam mit dem Münsterland und dem Emsland und den weiteren EUREGIO-Regionen (Osnabrücker Land, Grafschaft Bentheim, Twente, Overijssel, Achterhoek) hat die Region ein großes touristisches Potenzial.

Q: Gibt es identitätsstiftende Ansatzpunkteß

A: alle Regionen haben unterschiedliche Identitäten.

Q: Welche Stärken (Organisation, industrielle Faktoren, geographische Faktoren, politische Faktoren) hat die Tourismusregion EUREGIO?

A: Vielfältiges touristisches Angebot von der Radfahr- und Pferderegion bis zum Wander-, Kultur- und Shoppingerlebnis.

Q: Gibt es eine gemeinsame touristische Identität?

A: Bisher gibt es -unseres Erachtens- keine für alle Teilregionen geltende touristische Gemeinsamkeit, nur die Vermarktungsplattform EUREGIO ist gemeinsam.

Q: Gibt es eine gemeinsame Identität?

A: Nein

Q: Gibt es unterschiedliche Stärken in den Teilen der Region?

A: Jede Region hat unterschiedliche Schwerpunkte. Das Münsterland steht für Radfahren und Reiten, das Osnabrücker Land fürs Wandern. Twente für Radfahren und Wandern.

Q: Welche Chancen sehen Sie in einer gemeinsamen Vermarktung?

A: Verbesserte Wahrnehmung aufgrund einer größeren Vermarktungseinheit bzw. Gebiet, Möglichkeit Vermarktungsinteressen/Arbeitsstunden zu bündeln und ein gemeinsames Budget aufzustellen.

Q: Welche Schwächen (Organisation, industrielle Faktoren, geographische Faktoren, politische Faktoren) zeichnet die Tourismusregion EUREGIO aus?

A: Noch kein gemeinsames Identifikations-Merkmal.

Q: Welche Gefahren birgt eine gemeinsame Vermarktung durch inter-regional Place Branding?

A: Es besteht die Gefahr, dass sich einige Teilregionen ggf nicht im Vermarktungs-Portfolio der Organisation widerspiegeln.

Q: Sind spezielle Teile der Region schwächer als andere?

A: Ja. Beispielsweise in Bezug auf den Geschäftsreisetourismus

Q: Variieren die Schwächen in den Teilen der Region?

A: Ja.

Q: Welche Stakeholder identifizieren Sie?

A: Münster gehört als starker Besuchermagnet für niederländische und deutsche Gäste auf jeden Fall dazu.

Q: Gibt es Möglichkeiten die alle Stakeholder zusammenbringen? (Konferenzen, Tourismus-Tage etc.)

A: z. B. Deutsch-Niederländischer Open-Space-Workshop zur Zusammenarbeit in Gronau, Projekt: INTERREG Top-Cluster Pferd (Landkreis Osnabrück (als Lead-Partner des Projektes)

Q: Wie können sich die Stakeholder an der Entwicklung eines gemeinsamen Vermarktungsprojektes beteiligen?

A: Wie bisher indem Sie gemeinsame Aktionen unterstützen, Input für Anzeigen oder Journalistenreisen liefern, auf den Homepages verlinken,….

Q: Welche Stakeholder werden als wichtig für solch ein Projekt identifiziert?

A: Kooperationspartner (Destinationen, Institutionen, …)

Q: Wie wird die grenzübergreifende Zusammenarbeit beschrieben?

A: Mit der EUREGIO ist ein starker und aktiver „Mittler" für die Zusammenarbeit mit den Niederlanden gefunden worden.

Q: Variiert der Grad der Zusammenarbeit von Stakeholder zu Stakeholder?

A: Bisher findet die Zusammenarbeit mit den Niederlanden nur über die EUREGIO bzw. die DZT Amsterdam und das Projekt TOP Cluster Pferd statt. Es gibt keine direkte Zusammenarbeit.

Q: Welcher Stakeholder sollte an einer Place Branding Organisation beteiligt sein?

A: Kooperationspartner (Destinationen, Institutionen,…)

Q: Wie sollte solch eine Organisation aufgebaut sein?

A: Wie eine klassische Marketingorganisation mit einem Beirat aus Experten verschiedener Institutionen

Q: Kann die bestehende EUREGIO dafür als Basis dienen?

A: Ja, auf jeden Fall. Ein Netzwerk zur Zusammenarbeit ist bei der EUREGIO bereits vorhanden, die EUREGIO ist bei den Partnern als kompetenter Ansprechpartner bekannt. Marktkenntnisse liegen durch die bisherigen Erfahrungen zahlreich vor.

Q: Sollte die Zusammenarbeit auf den Tourismus beschränkt sein?

A: Ggf. kann es eine Erweiterung auf andere Bereiche geben, beispielsweise Regionale Lebensmittel

Q: Wie kann dieses Projekt finanziert werden (EU Mittel, nationale Regionalentwicklung)?

A: EU Mittel sowie Co-Finanzierung