

Framing Regional Development: A reflection on the use of language in regional development – examples from Austria

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ABSTRACT: Examining the narrative of rural development, this paper investigates to what extent stories, language or images form consolidated images of a region and how these assist or inhibit regional development internally and externally. Thematically, the discussion incorporates questions of regional development concerning the security of livelihood, discrepancies in living conditions, demographic shifts, outward migration, and condition of infrastructure. The backdrop of this study predominantly consists of case studies in Austrian LEADER regions which were supported through the current structural fund period. The aim was to examine “felt disadvantage” in peripheral rural regions. Upon reflection, this was contextualized to framing. In accordance with (anticipated) regional development the future questions to be answered are to what extent „Deep Frames“ (e.g. “Our situation is bad!”) are doubly counterproductive in regard to both development capacity of a region and also negotiation tools when working with external partners (e.g. fiscal equalization negotiations with state and nation) who are growing to question the subjective interior portrayal more and more.

KEYWORDS: regional development, framing, rural development, linguistic turn, narrative

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