Developing intercultural competencies of working cross-border in the tri-border region: Italy-Austria-Slovenia
Cross Border Challenge 2020
Management Team

Intercultural Perspective – insider/outsider view of the region and intercultural communication.

Dr. Eithne Knappitsch, Irish background, professor, researcher, program director of BA in intercultural Management (based in Villach, Austria) e.Knappitsch@fh-kaernten.at;

Dr. Svetlana Buko, Russian born researcher, consultant, sociologist, manager (based in the border town: Gorizia – Nova Gorica, Italy/Slovenia) Crossborder.legends@gmail.com

Geographical Proximity
Cross-border cooperation (CBC):
The project is designed as a part of the innovative curriculum for business BA program in the Intercultural Management (ICM) implemented in the tri-border region of Italy, Austria and Slovenia, connecting three cultures. Where 16 students from ICM BA level program tackle the issues of COVID-19 impact in the tri-border region via virtual fieldwork with local experts from business sectors, government officials, artists and educators.
Intercultural Management Head of Degree
About the “Cross-Border Challenge”

I am the Program Director and we work on the improvement and enhancement of the experiences of our students on a daily basis. The Intercultural Management program incorporates both theoretical and practical components.

This group of young researchers is unique because they have already been prepared by the program curriculum with theoretical knowledge of cross-cultural communication and interactional framework theories.

Dr. Eithne Knappitsch
Head of Degree Program ICM

+43 5 90500 2414
e.knappitsch@fh-kaernten.at

Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural teamwork</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meta-linguistic competence</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Action research project 2019 (tri-border)

First field trip was implemented in May 2019: 20 hours, 4 languages, 3 borders, 5 institutions, 9 experts, field interviews, 4 busses, 5 trains.

- Team Leadership: 78%
- Action Research: 81%
- Cross-border outreach: 76%
- Intercultural communication: 92%
2019 statistics: 21 hours, 4 languages, 3 borders, 5 institutions, 9 experts, field interviews, 4 busses, 5 trains.

Meeting local experts: businessmen, artists, academics, politicians etc.

Visiting institutions: public and private

Exploring tri-border transportation systems

Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IY-eZyGbBjo&t=33s
2019 Concept Assessment/Peer review

PROJECT CONCEPT PEER REVIEW at the SIETAR EUROPA CONGRESS in Belgium (May, 2019)

✓ SIETAR EUROPE / SIETAR USA / SIETAR AUSTRIA collaborative intellectual effort

✓ Focus on the competency building/evaluation of results – feedback from CILMAR Center for Intercultural Learning, Mentorship, Assessment & Research (May 2019)

Dr. Svitlana Buko  Dr. Katherine N. Yngve Dr. Eithne Knappitsch,
Cross-border challenge steps 2020
Online environment due to COVID-19 lockdown

1. Students work in small groups on the research question.
2. Teams analyze current COVID-19 situation via media analysis.
3. Virtual fieldwork: interviews with experts online.
4. Analysis of the empirical data, summaries, reflections.
5. Final product: Digital Story about findings in Tri-Border Region - online video shared with the community leaders.
FRAMEWORK

FOCUS: Attitudes, Skills, and Knowledge.
Theme: Connect with Your Tri-Border Community

Competency “Multiliteracy”: technical literacy – ability to design and produce digital storytelling products; human literacy- ability to connect/interview local leaders for unique content about current COVID-19 lock-down realities.
Course Roadmap – learning process focus

• How are we moving through the process in the online environment?

• Research Idea
  • After section 1 and 2 of the class, students are already in their small virtual groups, brainstormed the idea – WHO they will interview to find out more about current situation in pandemic

• Research
  • Peer Presentation (feedback)
  • Team ideas are presented virtually, feedback is given by peers and professors, research strategies are refined, challenges are addressed

Analysis
  Small teams process the data, produce the analytical reflections,

Preparation/Documentation phase

• Research Documentation/
  • Planning
  • Small teams get together virtually and prepare Research Plan and documentation (letters, bios, questionnaires for the fieldwork).

DATA COLLECTION phase

• Virtual Field Work
  • Part 1: Conducting personal interviews
  • Part 2: Meeting with present experts during hackathone

Analytical/ Production phase

• Product DigitalStory
  • Teams get together to produce digital story covering different aspects/perceptions/impacts of the lockdown
Online Modules – moodle + zoom webinars

Online modules are designed to help students become field experts + interactive component

01 Intercultural Competencies: communication, video blogging/digital story telling (lock down – quarantine mode)

02 Current Cross-Border Situation real life cases – Italy-Slovenia-Austria

03 Applied Research for field work – action research / interviews
Learning – tools moodle

Hello Class, and welcome to Module 4 of our Seminar!

Below is a quick overview in 2 parts of the scope of work, goals and key reminder for your research teams:

PART 1: Digital Story Telling:
- In the lecture with the Expert Bertram will get the key vision how to design a digital story use the tools and shape the vision of your story (write it down).
- Check helpful materials in the folder below (Folder: Digital Story Telling Tools): the infographic with key steps, rubric, storyboard draft.
- Submit interview Guides (Folder: Interview Guides) for review/bias checking for leading questions.

PART 2: Hackathon with Experts (29 April):
- We contacted experts from the field of Education/Governments/NGO-Artists from Italy, Slovenia and Austria and asked them to join us on the 29th of April for a quick 30 min zoom interviews. We will have several info-block through the day.
- The goals of this session are a) to add additional diverse perspectives to the core of the business contacts generated by teams for the final digital story b) create the opportunity to facilitate online interviews by teams.
- Contacts of Experts and their short bios will be available by the end of the week for review.
THE ELEMENTS OF STORYTELLING

BUILD A STORY

1. WHAT IS YOUR QUESTION?
   - What will be the line of inquiry?

2. ACQUIRE INFORMATION—ANALYZE DATA
   - It is essential to educate yourself on your subject. Researching your topic can take many different forms; you might:
     - Conduct interviews with experts who can speak about your topic.
     - Visit a library to consult primary resources. They can provide firsthand accounts of an event and add depth to your story.
     - Review consulting visuals such as photographs or films.

3. ORGANIZE YOUR THOUGHTS AND INFORMATION
   - Whether writing a story, preparing to take photographs, or making a film, organization is key. Writers might work from an outline, starting with a main idea and summarizing the most important points to be made. These become more fully fleshed out as the writer progresses.
   - Many photographers and filmmakers create a storyboard.
   - Encouraging ahead of time what you need to do for your project means a smoother creative process.

4. EMBRACE REVISIONS
   - It can also point out weak spots where you may need to go back and acquire more information or shift your focus.
   - Others might benefit from a multimedia presentation, such as on a website.
   - Rarely does someone get his or her story completely right the first time around. And sometimes, a story may need in new direction that is more best. Revisions help to fine-tune and add depth to your final product. When writing, be sure to keep the focus on the main point you're trying to make, and stick to a schedule so you don't end up "tinkering" forever.

5. TAKE ACTION
   - Who needs to see your story? Consider your audience when coming up with a presentation strategy.
SIMULATION 1: RESEARCH HACKATHON: cross-border challenge

Total immersion Tri-Border hackathon: cross-border challenge
NEW 2020 edition

Online Meetings/Interviews with local experts: businessmen, artists, academics, politicians etc.

#actionresearch #digitalstorytelling #virtualfieldwork

Exploring options of tri-border transportation systems / closed borders issues

During the hackathon students co-facilitated online interviews, moderated discussions with experts, reflected on the online presentations #moderation #facilitation #onlinepresentation

www.cuas.at/icm
theme: Connecting to the tri-border community impacted by the closed borders

Get Inspired by looking at other cases/stories from the borders, find YOUR (visuals/narration) way to tell YOUR story

https://www.instagram.com/go_2025/
Experiential Learning and competency development in the tri-border region: OPEN border vs. CLOSED borders

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y00gEPNJffA
Intercultural Teamwork

Cross-Border Challenge is designed to practice project work in small teams 2019 (onsite) 2020 (online)

Small team work: designing communication strategy together

Analysis and peer review of the teamwork after the field work reflections/presentations

Small group work: solving intercultural cases together, offering solutions

Small teams: working on the research field project together
Digital Story-Tellers: Cross-border Challenge Team 2020

Expert Interview with renowned Slovenian artist/movie-producer, border memories researcher and storyteller

Real life STORIES from the tri-border

Applied Research

#actionresearch #digitalstorytelling #virtualfieldwork

Anja Medved

02
Digital Story-Tellers: Cross-border Challenge Team 2020

Real life STORIES from the tri-border

Applied Research

#actionresearch #digitalstorytelling #virtualfieldwork

Expert Interview from Slovenia “Go2025” collaborative cross-border Italian-Slovenian project

https://www.go2025.eu/en/

2025 European Capital of Culture Candidacy

Neda Rusjan Bric
head of the candidacy
GO! 2025
Nova Gorica • Gorizia
During the interview – focus on Competencies for cross-border business

From the interviews - for Human Capital (HR), work with clients, work with suppliers

- Linguistic competencies
- Intercultural sensitivity / awareness: demographics / historical clues of the region / Demographic (who and why lives here?)
- Comparative mindset / ability to change “frames”
- Agility and ability to manage uncertainty avoidance

© Svetlana Buko. “Role of business leader’s competencies in shaping successful intercultural entrepreneurial strategies on the Italian-Slovenian border”, Intercultural Congress of SIETAR EUROPA “Building Dialogues on Diversity” Leuven, Belgium 30 May, 2019
1. Stories help us to find **order in things** that have happened to us and **make sense of the events** of a world (local-global focus of closed borders and COVID-19 (Chaos and uncertainty management))

2. Stories can also let us **see how others think and feel**. In other words, they can allow us to understand better people around us. *(people share emotions and feelings in the stories)*

3. Stories also allow us to **register and share information in a memorable way**. By telling a story rather than merely reciting dry facts, we remember the details more clearly.

**Analysis: Power of the STORY –**

**what stories did we hear?**

Evaluation Rubric recommended by Dr. Katherine N. Yngve Intercultural Learning Specialist, Institutional Data Analysis + Assessment (IDA+A), & **Associate Director, CILMAR Center for Intercultural Learning, Mentorship, Assessment & Research.**

Students record Voices from Different Parts of Society -
Italy-Austria-Slovenia in the time of the COVID19 – Theme: CONNECTING TO THE COMMUNITY

**Government staff**
How are governments reacting to the situation – what decisions are made, how they are implemented?

**EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**
How did the life change for the kindergartens, schools, universities etc.

**Businesses**
How were Big corporations impacted and how small and medium businesses are handling the quarantine

**NGOs, Artists**
Students worked in groups, reached out to the locals and organized Interviews with business Owners in the tri-border region (teamwork and community outreach during the lockdown)
Online zooms with **Experts from the Field 2020:**
Italian, Slovenian, Austrian experts from the tri-border region – virtual interviews by students

Online skills: students co-facilitated online interviews, moderated discussions with experts, coordinated expert presentations
Results: Digital Cross-Cultural Communication skills – 5 digital stories

Students designed a research question, worked in the virtual teams, reached out to collect data to the tri-border community, recorded 5 digital stories, presented the stories at the online conference.

Production of the visual portfolio and promotion of the project findings in the social media – intercultural virtual communication
Students reflected during the digital story: Analysis Processing the Data

What’s happening? Why?

- DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES AND Geographic SCALES

- Cultural and Historical Perspective
- Local Focus – Tri-Border Region
- Political Perspective – government reactions of the closed borders
- National Focus (for each country) - capitals are decision-makers (Vienna, Ljubljana, Rome)
- Economic Perspectives and impact on the businesses in the tri-border region
- Global Perspective and situation in the world in General for COVID-19

www.cuas.at/icm
Audio and Video Interview Examples (Students virtual field work)

In German with subtitles in English. Students also did interviews in German, Slovenian and Italian and practiced their linguistic skills.

Oliver Köck

Because we had, anyway, imported many goods from Italy before the crisis in Austria began.

Rene Zauchner
Freight forwarder - LHI Logistik

Why now?
The information gathered through our interviews could further benefit with understanding the current effect that Covid-19 has on the Austrian economy (in particular the pharmaceutical market).

The interviewees possess professional experience

This provides us with a first hand perspective on how they are dealing with the situation.
Digital story sample: Group 1

Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wk71U6urDFM
Student reflections after the hackathone and after presenting 5 digital stories

(google forms reflections of students about the project. There were key questions 1) knowledge (what did you learn about tri-border) 2) attitudes: curiosity and responsibility - what was the "aha moment" during the hackathone; what confirmed/challenged your thinking 3) Skills: documentation, teamwork, virtual team interview moderation.

Part 1: Reflection on the Knowledge – Human Journey COVID-19 tri-border region. Question: Name one new fact about cross-border region you learned during the hackathon (can be cultural, political, historical, geographical perspective; local, regional or global scale).

16 responses

I learned that Caritas also has transborder projects with the Slovenian and Italian Caritas and I also learned that we have social businesses in Austria. This interested me a lot, because I have already read some books about social businesses and how they work and it was nice to see that also people in Austria try to implement this types of businesses.

I learned that borders are a really interesting area as so much happens on each side of them and then also between them. People have so many different experiences with borders either positively or negatively. The Schengen agreement made it so much easier for everyone to connect, set up businesses and trade between different countries. Now that the borders are closed again, people come up with very creative ideas to overcome them and to still connect people. Either virtually or through art, videos and pictures. I think this is beautiful.

I learned about Nova Gorica, which was a town that I didn’t know about. It sounds very interesting and I would really like to visit, as it’s sounds as if it highlights the significance of borders in this region, which I also learned during the hackathon.

No matter the gender, location, business our speakers acquire, they have all been affected by the COVID-19 and do bear their obstacies, do not lose your faith for better future :(
Part 2: Reflection on the Attitudes – curiosity and responsibility “researcher’s hat”. Question: Name something (2 things) that surprised you or an "aha" moment from the expert talks you were able to discover as a researcher during the hackathon.

16 responses

Before this I did not that If we are making photos and videos of people and they are aware of that, the perspective will we completely different. Because people will change their behaviour. The thing that we should bear in mind that online interview will be different than normal ones.

Julian Mullen was very open and friendly, answerd each of our questions, I was surprised at how well the students can work in a meeting

how people’s attitude and hardwork influence their work when circumstances change (e.g., the photographer who decided to register the crisis even though his main focus is food and the attitude of the irish pub owner to protect his employees even though the uncertainty of his business to be alive)

I found very interesting the fact that one of the expert said she had to be supported politically but not influenced. I also found funny the reactions of the grandmothers who did not wanted to be taken in pictures by the photographer and running away.

alpe adria carinthia - living in the land of fairies where everything is calm - covid19 strange times
Part 3: Reflecting on the skills – virtual teamwork, observation, documentation, presentation.

Question 1: Teamwork: Name something YOU learned from another learner in this Hackathon session.

16 responses

I learned that the most important to do good in crisis situation is to adapt and basically, adapt from day to day and not make a long term plans when you don't know what future will bring you.

I learned how being in a group helps being patient and organizing things quickly and efficiently.

That perfectionism in such unstable situations is not preferable, thus we must accept the bad with the good.

To always have additional questions prepared to avoid awkward silence.

I really like attitude of the other learner, especially the presenter. They were really proactive, they preformed as a professionals. It was really motivated for me, I am not sure if I would handle this situations so excellently.

It was nice how for example Marusa, Monika, Mihaela and Eithne used their mother tongue to connect with the guest speaker. --> creates such a nice environment

It is always good to connect through a common intrest, person or knowledge with you interview partner since it makes it more personal.
KEY Global Competencies to develop
IBE-UNESCO 2017, Future competencies and Future curriculum

1) Lifelong learning (curiosity, creativity, critical thinking during the trip)
2) Self agency (resiliency during the cross-border challenge, grit, drive, initiative)
3) Interacting with others (teamwork collaboration before/during/after the trip, interaction with local experts).
4) Interacting in and with the world (being local and global, balancing rights and privileges, considering local histories with respect)
5) Thriving on interdisciplinarity (cross-sector, interdisciplinary approach)
6) Multiliteracy (technical literacy – ability to blog and produce digital storytelling products, human literacy- ability to connect/interview local leaders for unique content)
Tri-Border resource Laboratory

Geographical, political, cultural, historical perspective on the human journey and borders

Knowledge, attitudes, Skills

www.cuas.at/icm