

Corporate Responsibility Research Conference (CRRC)
from 11th – 13th September 2013 at the University of Graz, Graz (Austria)

CSR – Making the Number of Options Grow!

Regional Resilience and the Role of SMEs

Peak oil is increasingly seen as a major threat to economy as well as infrastructures. Peak oil either happened (2008) or is to be expected in the near future. European gas production has peaked and it is doubtful if imports will be sufficient. A decline in oil production will possibly trigger a decline in economic production or even a collapse.

Thus, regional development policies should consider regional resilience strategies. In order to do this, it is necessary to clarify the resilience concept and operationalise resilience components: economic, ecological, social factors and factors of the built environment.

This describes the background for answering our research questions. Our research guiding question to be answered by businesses in two Austrian regions is what is the minimum space and material resource to maintain a continuous coverage of basic needs like:

1. Food,
2. Housing,
3. Mobility and haulage.

What can be SMEs contributions? We carry out workshops with local entrepreneurs and their local stakeholders as well as interested public from May to July 2013 underpinned by social capital surveys within various organisations and businesses in order to crosscheck analyses from explorative interviews with key stakeholders before. The empirical data are basis for case studies in two regions rounded up by energy expert workshops in each region for analysing sensitivity of empirical results (derived scenarios) against various expert scenarios.

Keywords: Business Economy, Peak Oil, Regional Development, Resilience.

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