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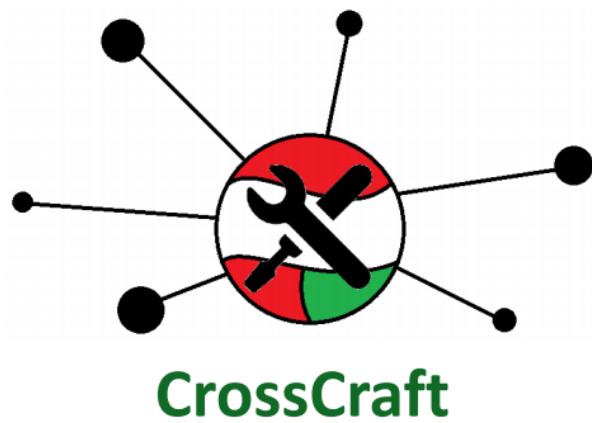
REGIONET Competitive

REGIONET CASE STUDY COMPETITION

Titel: CrossCraft

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Cross Craft

- a regional database for skilled workers -

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1 Introduction

In our project “Cross-Craft” we want to eliminate the borders between Austria and Hungary metaphorically. We want to solve the disbalance between the distribution of skilled/craft workers at the both side of the border. As further plans with our project, we want to help establish common rules and grounds regarding the rights of the frontier and cross-border workers or at least work on an agreement in order to think more European and less on the national level.

The chosen areas are Mittelburgenland and Vas with the focus of the Kőszeg-Szombathely district because they are both project partners in the project Regionet Competitive. They are bordering regions so the connection could be done easily.

The main idea was to build a platform/database for all skilled/craft workers but after the research, we agreed on only one field to reduce the complexity. We have chosen self- employed electricians because there is a shortage of these workers in the county of Vas. Beside this fact, it is also important in today's electronic world that the problems are solved quickly in residential households as well as in fabrics and companies.

This database would be useful for both people searching and offering the service. The interface would be in three languages - German, Hungarian and English - to be more useful to inhabitants of the regions.

2 Analysis of the area

We want to choose a border area which is paired in the Project Regionet Competitive. To find data we asked one of the project hosts to help us with the provision of the information. Scardobona send us the economic strategies of the areas they are working with.

We recognized that there is a lack of skilled workers not only on the Hungarian side (which everybody knows, who lives here) but in the middle axis also at the Austrian side, in Buckliger Welt-

Wechselland. But not going so deep into Austria, we choose the other two regions in the axis to work with, Kőszeg-Szombathely and Mittelburgenland.

There are differences between each region's economy, that is why we analyzed the areas in detail, to mark out the common fields.



1. Figure: Map of the border-region Austria-Hungary (Google Maps)

2.1 The Hungarian side: district Kőszeg-Szombathely

The economy of county Vas, in particular the district of Kőszeg Szombathely has grown dynamic and open from the 90s. Both in employment and in proportion to foreign capital investment, and especially in the development of modern large industrial production bases, the region was characterized by the most favorable indicators after Budapest and Central Transdanubia. In the automotive industry in Europe, it is among the firsts in growth of production capacities and resulting export performance. In addition to the remaining absolute dominance of externally driven economic growth, the turn of the millennium also paid due attention to the development of economic sectors that mobilize internal resources, such as the development of wood and furniture manufacturing, electronics or thermal tourism services.

In addition to the openness of the economy, they have also opened the labor market, which, especially in Western Transdanubia, and in Szombathely, has started a significant workforce flow towards Austria and Germany, the actual dimensions of which can only be estimated. The scarcity of a good skilled workforce is a growing constraint, and the Pannon Vehicle Industry Center is still struggling with this problem. The advanced industrial and service activities, which mobilizes significant foreign capital, is followed by the tourism. The industry and the tertiary sector generate outstandingly high levels of employment in a national comparison, making Szombathely and county Vas attractive to workers from the eastern side of Hungary. Due to the high level of employment and secure living, the financial well-being of the population ensures a high demand for high quality food, construction, real estate products and services.

In order to increase the number of employment and county-related enterprises, they want to encourage the founding and growth of start-ups. Also, it must be a coordinated business development institution with responsible ownership in order to rationalize and develop existing institutional capacities. The enterprise development system should help to develop the management capacities of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. The institutional system should differentiate its services based on the product or service life cycle: it should provide good segregated advice and support during the development of ideas, product and business development. Counseling should serve not only profit but also non-profit-based businesses, while promoting network-based collaboration.

In the following, a SWOT analysis will be presented for this region.

As a **strength** counts the neighborhood of Austria and the big cities, which are Vienna, Bratislava, Graz or Zagreb. There are good capabilities for business services, which are existing

but not yet extensive networks. The amount of the significant businesses with development potential and the new entrepreneurs is high. There are entrepreneurial traditions and strong human and cultural capital (qualification, qualification). The cross-border service partnerships are already existing and there is also a cooperation intent in further cross-border projects. It is also possible to acquire new technical, economic and IT skills. The services provided by local community development organizations are already available. There and a good organizational capacity of partner organizations for economic development and an existing experience in organizing business development programs, employability.

One of the **weaknesses** is, that many people in the area are working in Austria, that is why so local businesses are struggling with labor shortages. The properties of the Industrial Areas are not fully utilized and there is a lack of modern solutions. The business density is lower than the national average. The potential for cooperation is not used. There is also a lack of up-to-date knowledge of not only by experienced but also by young entrepreneurs due to the lack of information. There are less than average start-up companies in the two affected districts and the subcontractor / supplier relationship is not presented enough. The available education offer does not fully meet the entrepreneurial needs. The long-term planning is not typical. The regional and cross-border cooperation is not strong, there is a lack of confidence on both sides of the border. There are significant differences in employment rates compared to Austrian wages. There is a lack of information on the legal, financial and tax conditions of cross-border business.

To strengthen what the region can, one of the **chances** are to have responsible businesses. The growth difficulty should be overcome through education. The region must develop the key competences and raise the level of qualifications. There should be a continuous exchange of information between actors in a similar sector. For the successful implementation of joint projects should be built capacity. People from other parts of the country must be involved in the development of the economy. The flow of information should be strengthened on counseling and mentoring. The local economic development organizations must be involved in the cooperation.

Finally come the **threads** to localize the possible difficulties. In the absence of development opportunities, the risk of young people leaving abroad is increasing. The entrepreneurial ability is reduced. The bureaucracy, a constraint on implementation and a lack of capital in employment hinders business growth. The employability of businesses is reduced due to lack of labor. The economic situation could worsen, and few supports can come. The employment / self-employment is reduced due to lack of cooperation. The shortage of labor is

becoming permanent in the district of Szombathely and Kőszeg. The integrated business consulting services are not yet available in the region. The increase in demand for cross-border services is not going to surface. Bureaucracy and high tax and contribution burdens are a constraint for Hungarian businesses.

One of the strategic proposals for economic development is to create an Enterprise and Time Bank Information System. The aim of which is to improve the provision of information to residential and service companies in Kőszeg and its vicinity, to use modern information and communication technologies in information transfer and to develop an 'interdisciplinary on-call system'.

For example, in some of the professions in Kőszeg and its region, the well-functioning on-call system has disappeared for years, in some cases for decades, which makes the population vulnerable over the weekend due to the failure of some services. Here, starting with the plumber from the boiler installers, pluggers, locksmiths, or even the computer mechanic, there are several services available in Budapest or Vienna over the weekend, but not in small towns and border areas at all.

2.2 The Austrian side: Mittelburgenland

Mittelburgenland is known for its agriculture and tourism because of the natural conditions. Thanks to the situation, the share of the foreign resident population in Oberpullendorf in 2016 was 6.0% below the province-wide comparative value of 8.2% (Austria: 14.6%). From the 163 moves abroad in 2015, 52 (32%) was to Hungary. Of the 359 foreign arrivals in 2015, 107 (30%) were from Hungary. Mostly for better living conditions, but the two countries are definitely bound to each other.

The economy of Mittelburgenland is characterized by "micro enterprises" (no to 9 employed persons). 93% of all companies are in this category and 28% of employees work in these micro-enterprises. The specific problem of micro-enterprises is that the owners themselves work in the company and have no resources for strategic work on the company. One consequence of this is a lack of resources for activities that are not directly productive, such as cross-border cooperation. That is why the cooperation must be increased in general and especially in cross-border aspect. One of the potentials is the high and stable number of companies in the field of metal technicians (including the following occupations: locksmiths, agricultural machinery technicians and blacksmiths, plumbers and coppersmiths, metal founders, belt makers, engravers, metal presses, metalworkers).

Apart from its own population, customers from Hungary are the most important customers for the Burgenland retail trade. More than half (55%) of respondents from Győr-Moson-Sopron, Vas and Zala county say they come to Burgenland for shopping at least occasionally. In contrast, the purchasing propensity is much lower in the opposite direction, i.e. from Burgenland to Hungary. Only 11% of all respondents' households in Burgenland use shopping facilities in Hungary. The utilization of services of Burgenland households are not so dominant. Mostly the Austrians came for hair stylists, cosmetics, massage, manicure and less for the typical skilled workers, as painters, carpenters and gardeners.

An essential element of the development strategy of the region is cooperation, on the one hand within the region, but also beyond that with other regions - in particular with neighboring regions or regions in the neighboring countries. Greater regional awareness and the search for common goals and synergies contribute both to improving the quality of life and to making the region more competitive.

2.3 Skilled Workers in the border area of AT-HU

On average, the number of vacancies in Austria increased by a quarter in 2018 compared to the previous year, according to a report published by the Austrian statistical office. All this means that the labor outflow of Austria, which has already caused great concern to the West Transdanubian region, may continue to grow. According to the report, at the end of last year, there were 130.900 vacant posts in Austria. Most jobs were offered in the service and sales area (26.000 seats) and in the field of skilled workers (23.000 places). More than 40 percent of all vacancies in Austria came to these occupations in 2018. In the year, an average of 17 percent of open positions (about 20.600 places) required higher education or managerial experience. At the end of December, 94.458 Hungarian citizens officially worked in Austria according to the data of the social security association (Hauptverband). And as everybody knows, many Hungarians are willing to work across the Austrian border, and who had already worked there, not thinking very much about returning home.

The Hungarian situation is even worse, as there are a sufficient number of skilled workers who are already trained but mostly work abroad because of higher wages and better working conditions. You have not realized that you can be successful at home, but with harder work and more perseverance. Mostly the development of success takes longer, but you always have enough work. We found only data in the Hungarian side, which kind of skilled workers are in shortage, because the Hungarian government already distributes scholarships to support these shortages. In the county of Vas are the following shortages supported in the school year of 2018/2019: agricultural mechanic, bricklayer, carpenter, clothing industry technician, confectionery product manufacturer, electrician, electronics technician, machine cutter, ornamental gardener, practical baby & child care, practicing nurse, small food producer & village host, social care & nurse, technician for automatic processes, tinner, tool maker, upholstery, welder, women's tailor.

We took a closer look to the electricians because we thought that they are very important in the modern households because everything function with electricity. In the county Vas is it a shortage but in Mittelburgenland are enough from them. The payment differences in the both countries are different but not so big as we thought. Maybe the ratio to the average wage is lower. Most electricians charge an hourly wage. This varies depending on the technical requirements of the electrical installation and technical training of the electrician sometimes considerable.

Electricians in Austria currently charge between 50 and 70 Euros per hour for simple tasks such as the installation of a junction box, the installation of a light switch or the laying of hoses or pipes. For example, electrical findings (E-findings), the connection to a fiber-optic cable network or the installation of a photovoltaic system are a little more elaborate and expensive. Prices for an electrician are also subject to significant regional fluctuations. In the border-region of Hungary the prizes are such as high as in the capital. In some areas the prizes are about 15-20 Euro per hour, but it can cost about 50 Euro per hour to get an electrician very quick.

The Austrians use a lot of services in Burgenland which are done by Hungarians. What if they could get it cheaper? And some Hungarian does not find a skilled worker for emergencies. What if they could get some from Austria?

3 Preparation

In the next phase, after we discovered the problem, we searched for existing cooperation in cross-border collaborations. First, we searched for solutions which are developed by a project, after that we collected useful ideas, how to make our database more efficient.

3.1 Cooperation of firefighters in the border-region of CZ-PL

The project named “Cooperation and exchange of experience among firefighters in municipalities Lánov, Szklarska Poreba and Karpacz” is for firefighters in the border-region between the Czech Republic and Poland. It was founded in the previous program period.

The border region of these two countries is mostly characterized by small mountain villages, which are difficult to reach. There are volunteer-run brigades which are smaller than in the big cities, but the emergency could be as big as there. The equipment's were mostly old, and they had difficulties in recruit new people. After they realized that they have the same challenges on the both side of the border. the town leader decided to share the know-how and pool the information.

Fire does not stop on the border of a country that is why they need a corporation. During the project the Polish and Czech brigades had joint exercises which was good for exchange of information and best practices. They made a youth program to tempt the new generation and a bilingual leaflet to inform the inhabitants. There were information and instructions on how to behave during a crisis and included a dictionary of technical terms and commands. Despite the relative nature of the two languages, we found this to be a useful idea, which we will also consider.

The results were on one hand the improvement on effectively respond to fires and other emergencies and brought the communities closer together. On the other hand, the project helped each country's brigades individually. On the Czech side, they founded the reconstruction of the fire station of Lánov and bought new equipment. This helped them a lot because not only they could work better but the respect in the community became higher which brought them new people. On the Polish side were new youth-brigades were formed. and a new station was built in Karpacz.

3.2 Cross-border medical care system in BE-FR

The Cosantran, Cosanwalfran and Cosanvlaamsfran Initiatives are from the Franco-Belgian Health Observatory (OFBS), the French and the Belgian healthcare providers. In the cross-border regions of Northern France and Belgium (Walloon and Flemish regions) inhabitants are able to enjoy high-quality healthcare outside their own country. They have access to the healthcare services, cutting edge technology and emergency services and during use they do not have financial or administrative problems.

This cooperation shows in the optimal department networks between hospitals, but it needed a huge amount of advance planning. They involved plenty agreements f.e. two framework agreements, as well as monitoring and evaluation commissions. There are no more administrative, legal and financial barriers relating to the two different health systems, which were previously only accessible to their own residents.

We learned from this project that if it is willing to work together for a better supply it is possible to make it even with the differences of the countries.

3.3 Information services for cross-border workers in the AT-HU border regions

It was important to have a closer look to the situation of the cross-border workers in the Austrian-Hungarian border-region. We wanted to know what kind of help they get, and we found three projects, the EURES-T Pannonia, the Project BLD and NetLab.

3.3.1 EURES-T Pannonia

EURES-T Pannonia was established after two years of preparatory work in 2009 with the cooperation of 27 partner institutions in the West Hungarian and East Austrian regions. There are several cross-border projects running throughout this region, covering the different areas of the labor market. The aim of EURES-T Pannonia is to bring together the activities of the projects mentioned, to bring their results to a common level, and to further develop the labor market of the border region in the incomplete themes.

They made an information portal for labor market issues in the border area Austria-Hungary. It provides special information for both workers and employers on both sides of the border, facilitating work in the neighboring country or recruiting from the workforce. It offers advice, or provides information about the tax and social security, the education and professional recognition system abroad. It builds a cross-border bilingual labor market database that further deepens and develops the existing communication system between the two countries and promotes the harmonization of demand and supply in the labor market.

We analyzed the structure of the website to collect ideas. After opening it we can choose in which situation we are:

- live in Hungary and work in Austria
- live and work in Austria

After the click on the right choice we come to a site which is same for the first sight, but it contains different information because other things are important. And after switching the language to German we get the information from the other perspective too. We took this filtering of information into consideration.

The structure of <http://www.eures-pannonia.hu> as guide:

From Hungary to Austria	Job-searching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EURES Job-Search-Portal - Job opportunities in Austria - Largest employers in the region - Office-map - Certificate recognition - EURES consultants - CV
	Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life and working conditions in Austria - Useful brochures - Collective agreements - FAQ - Useful links - Form filling guide - Documents
Live and work in Austria	Life and work in Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working conditions in Austria - Documents - Required documents
	Education system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education system in Austria - Recognition of certificates
	Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brochure of employers - Industrial map - Workforce recruitment guidelines - Organizations
Live and work in Hungary	Job-searching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EURES Job-Search-Portal - Professional recognition - CV - EURES consultants
	Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life and working conditions in Austria - FAQ - Links
Industrial map of the border region Austria-Hungary	Education & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education system in Austria - Education system in Hungary - Professional recognition

	Employer Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Industrial map - Guide of recruitment - Online counselor - Organizations
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3.3.2 Project BLD

"Beratung gegen Lohndumping", shortly BLD, is a project of ÖGB Burgenland (Austrian Trade Union Confederation) financed by Austria (Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection) and Province of Burgenland. It provides for Hungarian and Romanian workers with native counseling and information on labor law in Burgenland. Their headquarter is in Eisenstadt, but the personal consultants can take place in Neusiedl am See, in Oberwart, in Oberpullendorf and in Güssing too. There is an option to consult per phone or per skype as well. It is a useful service because of the growing number of Hungarians. The low qualification comes often with a lower foreign language level. This can be used easily at the workplace but not in the bureaucracy.

3.3.3 NetLab

The project Network for Labor-market cooperation (shortly NetLab) wants to establish an active cross-border and cross-stakeholder network of regional social partners, labor market policy actors and labor market administrations in the Austro-Hungarian border region (Industry Quarter, Burgenland, West Hungary). This cooperation enables mutual exchange, the creation of a common awareness of problems and the development of solutions and strategies (on topics such as skills shortage, comparability of qualifications, cross-border mediation, etc.) in order to be able to react quickly and together to changes and challenges in the cross-border employment space.

3.4 Practical examples for databases

3.4.1 Yellow Pages

Yellow pages are a phone and address directory sorted by industry. Formerly it was in print form but lately we can find it only online. It exists both in Austria and Hungary as well, but it contains only offers from their own countries. It is in the native language, so it is difficult to use as a foreigner. There is a wide selection from fields of work, but the application is in self-registration form that is why not every company is on it.

The Hungarian version is well developed for the customers' needs. It has a clean and informative searching field, where we can search for the profession and the area too. The profiles however contain beside the name only the head office, phone numbers, the email address and a short introduction. There is a lack of personality which is for the younger generation important.

The Austrians have their version of it but while searching the internet seemed to be not so popular. It has more information than the Hungarian one. There is an option to upload an online VisitCard and the opening hours, the website makes a personalized QR-Code for each profile and there is a section for reviews and recommendations.

3.4.2 HEROLD.AT

On the first place of the search for yellow pages in Austria were HEROLD.AT which contains not only the profiles of the companies but also useful information about job seeking, tax equalization etc. We can search not only for companies and people but also to phone numbers. There is a search based on ratings too and an adviser field where you can get useful ideas in various areas f.e. building & living, beauty, law, animals etc. The profiles contain beside the basic information recommendations and photos which are more in the center. There are more specific data too as the founding year, the company register number, number of employees, references and payment options. This variation has a lot of additional information, but it is only in German and wants a lot at once.

3.4.3 TaskRabbit

TaskRabbit is an American online and mobile platform, which acts as a mini-job marketplace and pairs job offers with an available labor demand (workers) locally. It offers

users a way to place assignments for everyday tasks, such as cleaning, moving, transporting, and crafting tasks.

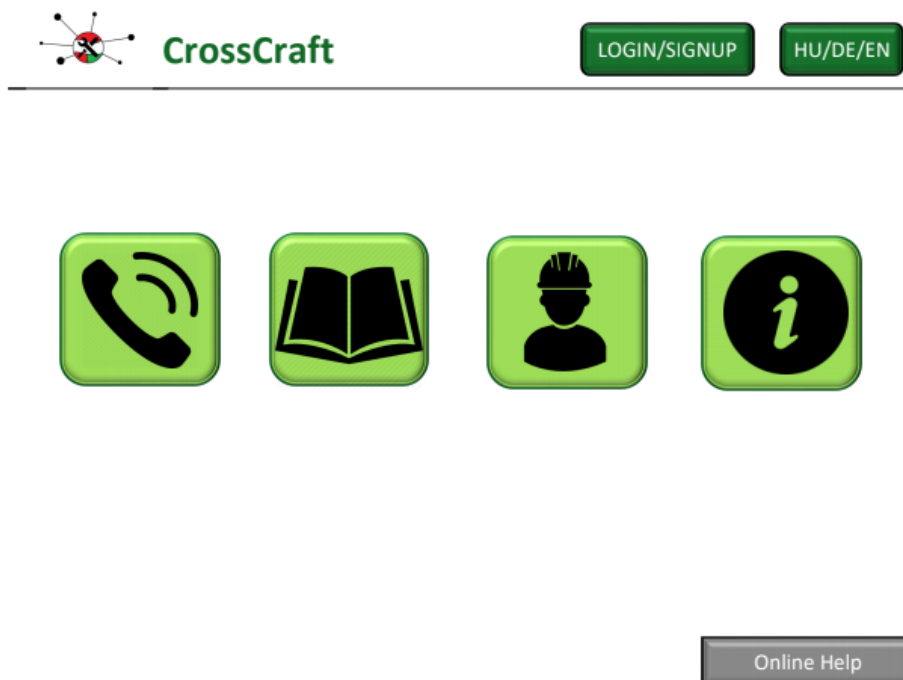
In every case you must describe the work which has to be done in four steps. First is the interest, where you can choose from browsing, needed soon or willing to book. After the location you must decide how big the task is and give a little description about the problem.

Every person profile includes a photo and a short introduction what the person can do. It contains the hourly rate, which helps in the decision making. There is also several completed task and rates of reliability and reviews. We liked the appearance but there is not enough information to transpose it for professions.

4 Our Project

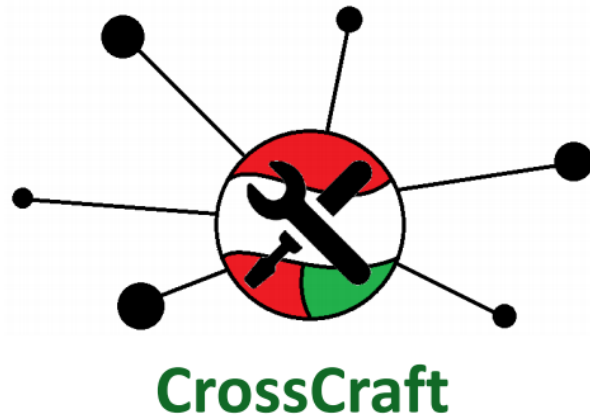
4.1 What is our main product idea?

While discussing what should be our final product for this project, we took these criteria in consideration: it should be simple to use, available to as many users as possible, multilingual and applicable for other stages in our future development, such as territorial and professional growth.



2. Figure: The main interface of the platform

We wanted to create a very simple interface which is easy to use by users of all ages and computer skills. In the top left corner, you can see our logo, which we created as a visual presentation of our project. It is a network that connects circles of different size and distance and in the middle, there is a central circle with Austrian and Hungarian flag. We deleted the border between them, to represent our vision of unity for this place. We don't look at this territory as two border regions in two states but as one region. In the middle of the central circle, we put a sign with two tools crossed, which are representing craftwork.



3. Figure: Our logo

In the right corner, we put a button for login and button to choose the language of the platform. We put German, Hungarian, but also the English language to make the platform available for foreigners living on this territory. On the bottom right corner, there is a chat button which connects you to our support center, available 24/7.

4.2 How would it work?

The platform is designed to help not only customers, who are in need of the offered service, either private households or big companies, but also for the workers who are searching for jobs or need the help and the expertise of other workers to finish some projects.



4. Figure: Emergency button

First is the emergency button, designed for quick response in situations that need to be resolved as quickly as possible. By clicking on it, the user opens a window with the necessary information and telephone of the service center. We had a vision of a service center which is available 24/7 for our customers on all three languages.

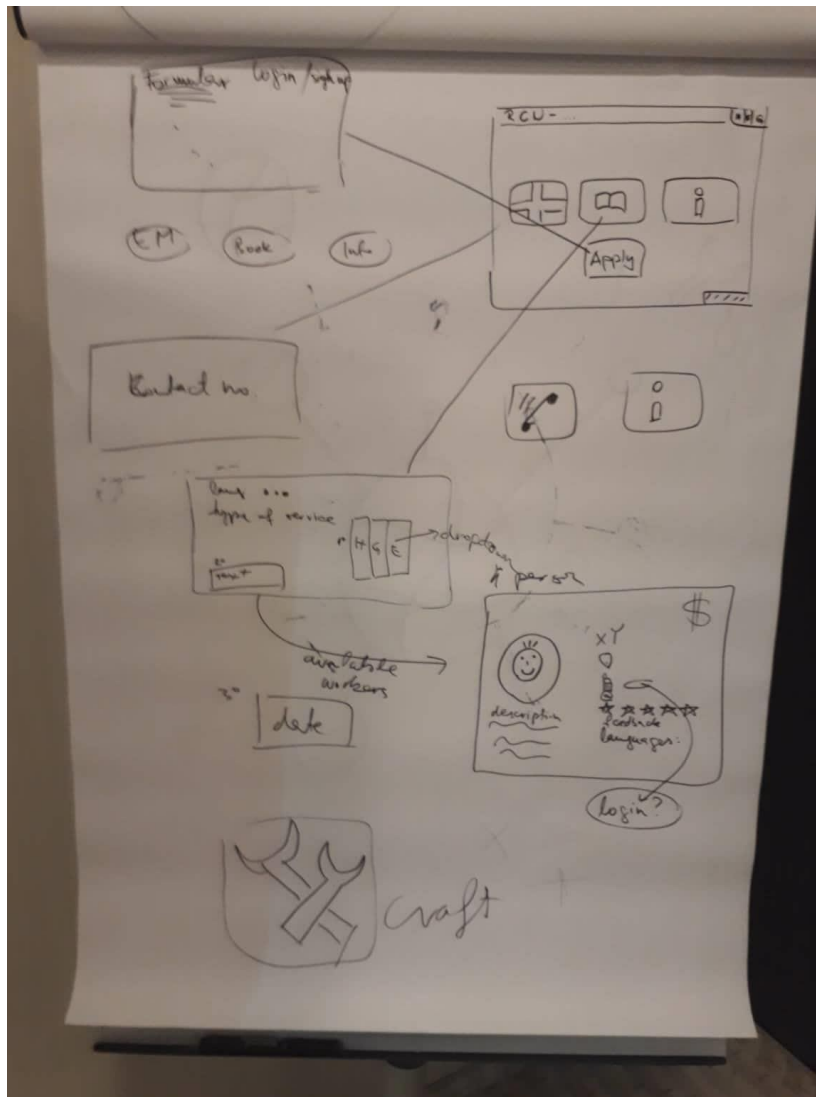


Booking button is used to book a craftworker depending on language, type of service, availability, price and recommendation.

Online Help

5. Figure: Booking button

Next button is the booking button which is the most complexed one. When a customer clicks on it, a new window opens with a drop-down menu on all three languages where most common problems are offered as an option to narrow the search down, an option to mark all the languages the customer understands and an optional text box where a customer can explain the problem he has if he wants. After putting the time variable, a new window would be opened, showing profiles of all the workers available at that time which have the skill for the work that needs to be done and who speak the required language.



6. Figure: Putting our ideas on the paper

It was very complicated for us to put our idea on the paper and to imagine this database because we had to create every step and window in our head. As shown in Picture 5, we tried to create a chain of windows which are opened depending on the need of the user.

As mentioned, after giving all the previous details, the user can see profiles of all workers that are suitable for the job. In this profile, customer can see the picture of the worker (for more personalized approach), their name, location, phone number, email address, the language he speaks and the hourly rate. We also created feedback and rating system where previous customers can leave comments and rate the service.

To protect the workers, in this stage their telephone number is hidden, and the only way to see it and to contact them is to register/login into the site. That way, customers are also in the system and can also be rated and given feedbacks.



Apply button is intended for craft workers who want to apply to the website.

Online Help

7. Figure: Apply button

The apply button is created for the workers who need a job or who are searching for other workers for their team or specific job/project. By clicking on this button, they open a new page with a form where they can enter their data and give documents for a background check if they want to be listed in this database.

We think that it is crucial to have this background check of the workers, in order to offer quality and professionalism. Who would do the data check and how would be an organizational issue and will be mentioned later?



Information button provides more information about the website, basic information regarding tax and income, and the project itself.

Online Help

8. Figure: Information button

The information button gives additional info about the website and the database, information about our project, the purpose of it and future goals, but also some basic information regarding tax and income in these two regions. When we were researching for this project, we realized how difficult it is to find statistical data about this topic and we think it would be very useful to have it all in one place, regularly updated and available to inhabitants of this region.

4.3 Who would finance/organize/operate it?



Organizational Background

3

9. Figure: Potential organizational partners

While discussing the organizational issue regarding our project, we concluded that it would be ideal to have two partners on each side of the border. Also, we wanted to include public and semi-private partners and we settled for these four as a possibility:

1. West Hungarian Innovation Centre
2. Chamber of commerce of the county Vas
3. Austrian Chamber of commerce
4. Regionalmanagement Burgenland

Their tasks would include the background checking of the workers who are in the database, updating of the data, running the call center, maintaining the website and other important tasks.

5 Further development



10. Figure: Development plans

As we mentioned, we chose self-employed electricians as a test phase for the database, which if successful could be applicable to a larger scale, territorially and data-wise. The first step in future development would be to add more professions, starting at similar self-employed craft workers, and evolving to other professions.

The second step would be to spread our platform to different territories. First, it could be other regions in Austria and Hungary and then the rest of Europe and the European Union. We think this kind of solution could help a lot when we consider how often the European Union comes across this kind of cross-border problems.

After that, we could work on solving the language barrier by offering our services in more languages. This way we can first of all help minorities in European countries, and later spread our platform to even bigger territories.

If we want to be easily accessible and up to date, we should also consider creating a phone application that is free and available to everyone.

6 Conclusion

From the very beginning, we had a clear vision of what we want to create and offer. We believe our project deals with an everyday problem; it is well defined and scaled down. It is also very practical and what we think is the most important thing, it helps the inhabitants of the territory by solving their problems, which we know are there, and by helping them to find a job and to be more concurrent on the market.

7 Sources

Chapter 2

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Chapter 3

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