

# SOCIAL- ECOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

## Industrial Conversion and the Role of Labour (CON-LABOUR)

The **automotive (supplier) industry** is an important source for economic growth and jobs. At the same time, the transport sector is responsible for 27% of greenhouse gas emissions in the EU-28. The project starts from this conflict and analyses the possibilities and barriers for a **social-ecological conversion** of the automotive industry in Austria that engages the interests of workers and their representatives.

## DURATION

June 2018 – June 2020

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

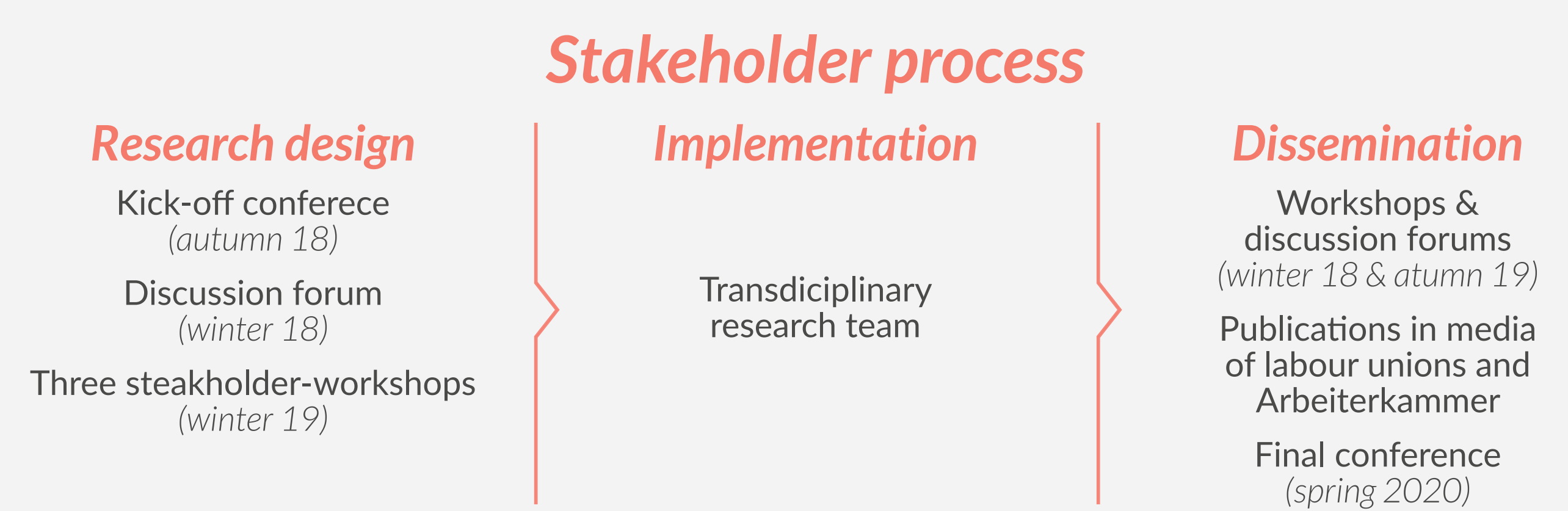
- **Understanding** of current developments and problems in the automotive sector
- **Workers' experiences** and evaluations of recent changes in the sector on societal, branch and company level
- Instruments and entry points for **democratic control** of conversion processes at different levels
- **Major obstacles** for conversion processes at various levels and with different stakeholders

## WORKFLOW AND METHODS

- **Review of literature** on conversion processes in other countries and sectors, economic and institutional context of the automotive industry, workers' participation, democratic steering as well as workers' interests and identities
- **Branch analysis of the Austrian automotive industry:** structure, key players, economic and employment significance, technological path dependencies
- **Analysis of the institutional and political conditions for conversion:** industrial policy, environmental and climate policies, instruments for workers' participation and democratic steering
- **Examination of workers' perspectives** on current developments, their interests and identities
- Dissemination of results and best-practice examples on a **website**.

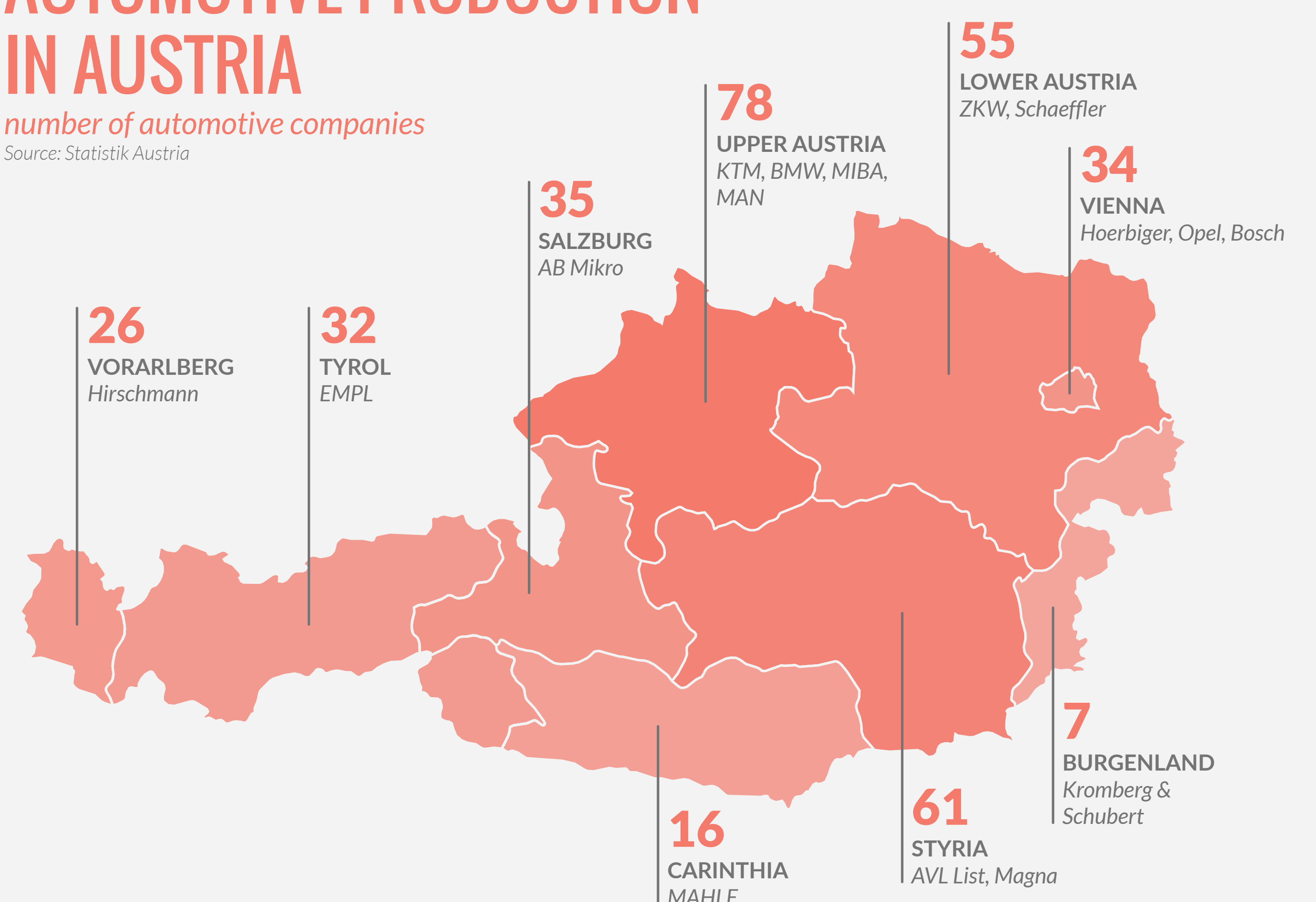
Methods ① Desk research ② Semi-structured interviews ③ Focus groups and participant observation ④ Stakeholder workshops

## TRANSDISCIPLINARITY



## AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTION IN AUSTRIA

number of automotive companies  
Source: Statistik Austria



## STRUCTURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

### Austrian automotive industry is a supplier industry

- **High relevance of combustion technology**  
> ICEs and gearboxes make up **30%** of output
- **High dependence from German car industry**  
> **40%** of automotive exports
- **69% of employment** in **foreign** controlled firms in 2016
- > 70.000 employees and a value added of 7.4 billion in 2018
- > No OEM Headquarters (Exception: KTM)
- > Large international Tier-1 and Tier-2 suppliers (Schaeffler, Mahle, Hirschmann)
- > Internal suppliers (BMW Steyr, Opel Vienna, MAN Steyr)
- > Small and medium-sized enterprises
- > "hidden champions" (highly specialized, often family run market leaders)

### Tensions in the automotive industry

- conversion as modernisation vs. conversion as transformation
- ecological modernisation of motorized individual transport vs. transformation of mobility
- individual company decisions vs. policies at different scales
- electrification and automatization/digitalisation (of products and processes) vs. jobs
- hidden champions vs. extended workbench (of German automotive industry)
- efficiency gains in combustion technology vs. alternative powertrains (e.g., electric, hybrid)

## TEAM MEMBERS

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