

Empirical studies in COST TU1305

Qualitative study:

Mobile communication, friendship and everyday communication

Two empirical studies that have been carried out within the Action:

A quantitative study based on a web-based survey developed within the working groups regarding “Social Networks, Social Media usage and Travel Behaviour among students in EU countries”. The survey was distributed at 23 universities in 20 countries in different languages. The analysis of the 8250 responses is currently in progress.

A qualitative study based on the qualitative method developed within the working group. The study “Mobile communication, friendship and everyday communication” includes 20 in-depth interviews from 6 countries, and the analysis of the interviews is in progress as well.

The outcomes of these studies generated several publications in high ranked journals. A technical report based on the quantitative survey, proposing ways to collect travel behaviour data, will be published as well.

Qualitative study:

Mobile communication, friendship and everyday communication

The study and methodology was formed in a joint work of WG2 meetings and on-line discussions.

Methodology

- Qualitative interview study
- Explorative focus

Qualitative study interviews

COUNTRY	NO. INTERVIEWS	AGE RANGE
Austria	6	18-65+
Germany	3	25-30
Israel	4	18-65+
Norway	9	19-72
Spain	5	18-21
UK	3*	18-65+
USA	2	18-65+
TOTAL	32	18-65+

*including interview with two people

Descriptive coding in an iterative process:

- Initial coding
- Discussion of three main themes from overall discussion of data
- Placing codes within three themes

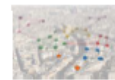
Preliminary Conclusions

Omnipresence of social and personal media

- Use of communication channels varies depending on factors such as spatial proximity of the friendship, transport mode, age

Micro coordination

- Constant stream of communication with friends, before, during and after face-to-face meetings
- Short term organisation of trips and meeting points



Preliminary Conclusions

How are friendship ties shifting?

- No clear results,
- Influence seems to be limited, in many cases social media just replaces other communication channels like telephone calls and mailing
- Friendship ties are very much determined by biographical context and seem to be interrelated with the development of travel options

Explorative research

- Differences between routine and non-routine leisure activities
- Micro organisation
- Larger-scale study to further explore themes

