



Past - Present - Future



IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL INDUSTRY-RELATED CULTURAL EVENTS

Industrial culture festival in the region
Styrian Iron Route

Version 1
11 2018



T2.4.3



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PP3, city of Leoben



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0. Abstract

Industrial cultural provides chances for old-industrial and mining regions to promote their heritage as well as existing industry. For this reason a festival of industrial culture took place in the region Leoben/Steirische Eisenstraße (Styrian Iron Route) in autumn 2018. The aim of the festival was to positively influence regional identity, to shape the region's image, to raise awareness of the region's industrial culture and its assets and to interpret industrial culture in new ways. The festival utilized industrial-related sites (living industry, abandoned industrial buildings, heritage sites, museums etc.) and is supposed to become an annual project. The first "pilot" year focused on people from the region, whose lives are/were shaped by industry, as well as industrial space, with all its shaping effects in the cityscape and landscape. All in all the festival provided different contributions - from theatre to music to film to visual and street arts and also included an exhibition on Industrial Culture. It was in addition used as a platform/stage to showcase the results of other InduCult2.02.0 actions and Industrial Culture related initiatives and projects.

1. Project Context

The Central Europe Project InduCult2.0 addresses Central European regions mono-focused on industrial production. Through InduCult2.02.0 regions utilise their tangible and intangible cultural assets of their industrial past, present and future in a synergetic way for positioning their regions as attractive places for working, living and recreation (www.inducult.eu). Together with local stakeholders, they rediscover and develop the positive elements of industrial communities. Specifically, the partnership intends to:

- promote and establish the idea of Industrial Culture in Central Europe;
- strengthen the distinct culture of industrial regions and utilise it as location factor;
- empower industrial regions by re-activating their pioneer spirit.

Involved are eight representative regions from Germany, Austria, Belgium, Italy, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Croatia and Poland. They are supported by two scientific partners from Germany and Austria.

Actions are to be developed by the regions in three fields: Actions on ...

... cultural measures for fostering regional identity (T2)

... cultural initiatives influencing industrial labour market and company commitment (T3)

... cultural measures promoting creativity and pioneer spirit (T4).

In work package T2 public Industrial Culture events are seen as a powerful way to promote the regions' industrial heritage and interpret it in contemporary ways. Six concepts for such events in six different Central European regions are prepared, and they shall be linked by a transnational touring feature (the so-called "InduCube").

2. Introduction & objectives

Industrial Culture is a young member of the European culture family. Its roots can be found in many European regions, which 200 years ago were not only cradles of industrialisation, but have been up to now sites of industrial production. A typical representative is the region “Styrian Iron Route” and the adjoining Mur-Mürz-valley. Over the centuries the hegemony of industrial production and mining has created a specific cultural climate, which - apart from visible monuments and artefacts - can be experienced in specific values, traditions, skills and a distinctive way of living.

Local players and stakeholders are not always aware of the strengths and potentials of their existing industrial culture. In an innovative way of interpreting industrial culture and beyond restricting it to cultural heritage, it can be linked with recent developments; it can be used as a location and image factor and for building a strong regional identity.

In quite a few European regions, Industrial Culture events such as the “Industriada” in Silesia/Poland have proved to become valuable ambassadors for this topic. For this reason the Styrian Iron Route wants to establish a yearly Industrial Culture festival in the region. InduCult2.0 provided the framework and resources to stage a first “pilot festival”. The aim was - and is in future - to make the cultural heritage of the region visible, to convey it and subsequently to use it as an opportunity for further development and as a source of inspiration, for example in urban development or tourism.

3. Applied Approach

The conceptual approach for the festival was created by Werner Schwaiger, a regional artist well-known for the regional aspects of his work for many years. He used his networks with artists and persons engaged in the cultural sector inside as well as outside the region. Additional inspiration was gathered within the meetings of the regional Industrial Culture focus group, which worked on creating new Industrial Culture measures during a design thinking process in summer 2017. Further important contributions came from a “market research” on similar festivals - especially in Germany and Poland, from the InduCult2.0 partners working on the same topic and from the ERIH (European Route of Industrial Heritage) network.

Werner Schwaiger chose to use the personal stories of people of all ages in the region as the starting point for the henceforth artistic realization of the festival programme. Thus, numerous conversations were held with industry-related local people. Photographs, objects and other documents concerning the theme “Life in the region Leoben/Steirische Eisenstraße” were collected as well. A film project set a special focus on young industrial workers. Already in advance, a broad network was created, which on the one hand guaranteed a smooth handling of the individual events and on the other hand, through

various cooperations, ensured the utilization of industrial areas for cultural activities. Important partners involved in the realization of the festival were the museum center Leoben and the association Styrian Iron Route.

4. Results

The festival officially took place from Sept 1st to Oct 5th 2018. Due to some unforeseen circumstances, the final action “Styrical” had to be postponed and was carried out on Oct 31st.

Responsible for carrying out the festival was a team led by the city of Leoben which worked in close cooperation with the museum association Styrian Iron Route and the association Styrian Iron Route. The “creative head” (curator) of the festival was Werner Schwaiger, who was responsible for the artistic input of this concept.

The festival was advertised through public relations measures (several press articles), flyers, posters, a programme brochure (24 pages), which also gave an insight of other related InduCult2.02.0 actions, and social media.

The programme in detail is presented in the programme brochure (Annex 1) and included the following actions.

4.1 Opening part(y) “Hüttenzauber on Sept 1st”

The opening event “Hüttenzauber” took place in the museum center Leoben on September 1st and was combined with work package T3 (social art event T3.4.4). Several art performances from local artists took place. Most of the artists had an industrial background and tried to combine the regional industrial image with art performances. It was a public event and visitors got a mixture of live music, a short film presentation (“Working?Klass!”), a photo exhibition (a combination of photography and graphic design showing industrial places and tools), reading (literature of the working class) and typical food of a former factory canteen.



4.3. City conversations “Werkstücke” - theatre/cabaret “Stahl/Stein/Strom”

Based on the „city conversations“ with local citizens and industrial workers (see “applied approach”, three one-person plays “Stahl/Stein/Strom” (genre theatre/satirical revue) were written and performed in Eisenerz (brewery), Trofaiach (former transformer station) and Leoben (Museumscenter Leoben). The sites reflected the respective “industrial” topic as well as industrial locations. For example, “electricity” was performed at the former transformer station in Trofaiach and the actor was a local electrician.

4.4. Musical Performance “Styrial”

“Styrial” was a musical performance based on the three one-person plays “Stahl/Stein/Strom”. The musical was the main act of the cultural industry festival. The libretto was written by famous Austrian writer Franzobel. Approximately 30 amateur actors (local citizens) had been casted for the play. The premiere took place on Oct 31st in the city theatre of Leoben.



Leoben
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STYRICAL- so ein Theater - oder so.

Knapp 30 Schauspieler aller Altersgruppen wurden in der Region Leoben gecastet und erarbeiten nun seit Ende August das Stück. Dabei entsteht in einem offenen Prozess mit Autor Franzobel ein satirisch-humoriges, aber auch sehr optimistisches Abbild der Region!

Programm
19.09.2018, 19:00
Theater/Kabarett
Veronika Olschnegger: Stein
Eisenerz - Erzbergbräu
20.09.2018, 19:00
Theater/Kabarett
Stefan Riegler: Strom
Trofaiach - Museumsdepot
21.09.2018, 19:00
Theater/Kabarett
Flo Stocker: Stahl
Leoben - Museumscenter
05.10.2018, 19:00
Theater - Franzobel: Styrial
Leoben - Stadttheater
September 2018
Vom Stein zum Eisen
Leoben/Vordernberg

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VERANSTALTUNGEN FREI.
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4.5. “Werkspuren” and photo exhibition “Die Zeit malt.”

„Werkspuren“ was a project for the artistic examination of industrial culture in public space. Artistic statements and installations left their familiar environment and interacted with the public. The installations were also used as advertisement or message for the industry cultural event. The photo exhibition “Die Zeit malt” (unusual insight on local industry) was shown in the museum center Leoben for the whole festival time.



4.6. ERIH exhibition “Wandel mit Wirkung”

The exhibition „Change with an impact“ was provided by the UNESCO world heritage site „Zeche Zollverein“ and was shown in the museum center Leoben vom Sept 1st to Oct 10th 2018. It gave insight in the industrial past and present of eight old-industrial European regions (including “Eisenstrasse”), Europe´s industrial heritage and the variety of industrial culture.



5. Evaluation/transnational added value

The festival concept relied strongly on best practise examples in other Central European regions (“Days of industrial culture” and “Long night of industry” in Germany, Industriada in Poland, Rostfest etc.).

An important impact was reached by involving local and regional citizens and industrial workers and making them aware of industrial culture - giving them the opportunity to tell their stories and use these stories for theatre performances. A high identification with the theatre plays was reached through this concept. The industry culture opening event was a well-received option for identity building. An even stronger impact was reached by integrating actions of different work packages in the industrial festival, e.g. the social art event (T3), where industrial workers were involved by creating their own understanding of industrial culture or the improvement of the appearance of an industrial quarter (T4) by implementing an art installation at the Porubsky Halle.

The festival concept (and many elements of the programme of the Styrian Iron Route industrial festival) can be easily conducted in other European cities involving local and regional industrial workers and citizens. It is recommended to combine different aspects of industrial culture and create an image or brand in order to foster regional identity.

The official festival opening was attended by approximately 100 visitors, the IC exhibitions in the museum center were visited by approx. 1000 visitors during the festival time. The Styrial IC theatre performance had an audience of over 100, the additional performances in Eisenerz, Trofaiach and Leoben between 40 and 80. More than 10 articles on the festival were published in 2018 (see communication reporting).

6. Outlook and sustainability

The first festival year was focused on trying out the general festival concept and raising acceptance within the region. The festival planned beyond 2018 will increasingly focus on supra-regional effects. It is supposed to trigger discussions and to set processes in motion, and it is supposed to become part of the regional development efforts. The region's identity in the range of contemporary art shall be thus shaped in a sustainable manner. In public space, timeless and self-confident statements will emerge, which will be permanently affixed to prominent places, preferably to industrial sites.

The willingness and joy of the local people to actively participate in the festival has already been recognizable in the preparations of the theatre productions. About 30 potential actors could be found; hence all plays could be performed by regional amateur actors. Being personally involved they are now also important multipliers for the content of the festival.

2019 a priority of the "line-up" shall be "folk culture" in connection with industrial context. Based on the experiences of the pilot festival 2018, the connection of traditions with new visionary approaches - in the artistic as well in the technical meaning- shall be tried out. Suggestions for the "design" of the future in industrial space shall thus be created. Responsible for continuing the festival will be the association Styrian Iron Route. Funding by the LEADER programme is an option to raise the necessary budget.

7. Annexes

[Annex 1: Festival brochure](#)

[Annex 2: Picture documentation "Werkspuren"](#)