



Past - Present - Future



FINALISATION OF REGIONAL ACTION PLANS

Final Action Plan on the topic “Deploying industrial culture for securing labour force and strengthening the regional ties of companies”

11 2018



T3.5.2



Nov 2018



PP3, city of Leoben



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1. Abstract

Industrial cultural is a chance for old industrial and mining regions to promote their heritage as well as living industry. Benefits can be gained by shaping the region's image and of regional identity as well as by supporting the needs of the current industries. The "Styrian Iron Route" houses some spectacular heritage remains such as "Erzberg", the Erzberg railway and the blast furnace museum Radwerk IV. In addition the museum association Styrian Iron Route collects and presents the regions' heritage in 13 museums beginning with the museum center in Leoben. Living industry and mining is present at the Erzberg and at successful industrial companies and plants such as voestalpine in Leoben. For deploying Industrial Culture for securing labour force and strengthening the regional ties of companies, a local action plan has been worked out by a regional focus group. It lists short-term actions which are relatively easy to implement as well as long-term actions looking beyond InduCult lifetime.

2. Project Context

The Central Europe Project InduCult2.0 addresses Central European regions mono-focused on industrial production. Through the InduCult project typical regions utilise the 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. 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.

Each of the regions has prepared an "argumentation paper" on their specific industrial culture and its benefits. This provides the basic frame for developing and implementing actions in the field of Industrial Culture and therefor for promotion of a Central-European (respectively European) Industrial Culture.

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

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

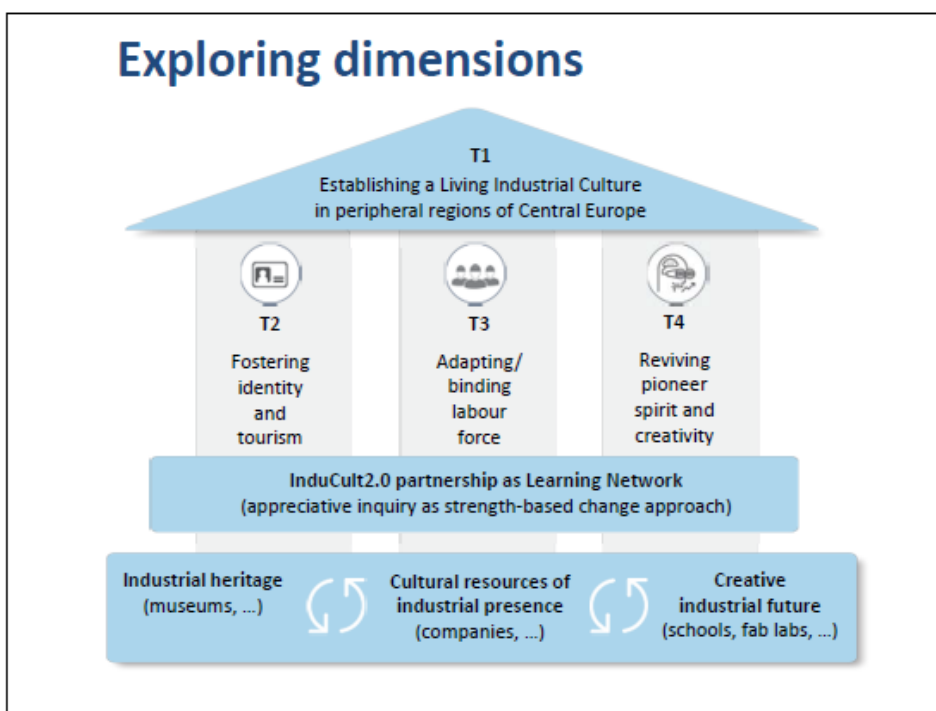
... cultural initiatives influencing industrial labour market and company commitment (T3)

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

3. Introduction & objectives

Industrial Culture (IC) 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. Nowadays the region is one of the most important industrial regions in Austria, with the city of Leoben and the Styrian Iron route - with the global steel player voestalpine, the mining university and the ore mine “Erzberg” (where according to the legend, ore has been extracted for more than 1300 years) - in its centre.

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, can be used as a location and image factor and for building a strong regional identity. To bring these potentials into mind and form a broad regional awareness, an argumentation paper was developed by a regional focus group to sort out key arguments which are relevant for different group of stakeholders (industry, politics, cultural actors, schools and youth etc.). Based on this argumentation paper actions for the three “pillars” (T2-T4) of Industrial Culture are to be developed and implemented in the region.



Local action plans in the three fields of intervention show a strategic approach of how to proceed to a living culture in the region. This action plan deals with the topic “Deploying industrial culture for securing labour force and strengthening the regional ties of companies” (T3).

Industrial companies often have not yet discovered the chances of binding /attracting work force by taking on regional responsibility. Innovative culture-based approaches can help reinforcing regional commitment of both employers and employees. The action plan for deploying Industrial Culture deals on labour issues and company commitment. The focus of the action plan is on one hand placed on raising interest of youth in industry by embedding cultural issues and work options in a regional story of industrial evolution. On the other hand, work force and companies are directly addressed. The intention is to increase (1) the capacities of schools as main multipliers towards the young generation with a focus on linking industrial work options with cultural aspects and based on interaction with museums, companies, (2) to approach companies to bind work force through culture-related measures, boosting their corporate social responsibility and (3) to dismantle cultural prejudices on employers’ and employees’ sides as one main obstacle in matching job demands and offers.

4. Applied Approach

In a design thinking process (which is based on the method of appreciative inquiry) the regional focus group developed 2017 a catalogue of actions for each of the three InduCult work packages. Some were selected for implementation within the project period until 2019; other concepts require long-term planning. Subsequently the focus group met again in November 2018 to discuss the lessons learned from the pilot tests in the region and beyond to provide input to the final regional action plan.

The design thinking workshops were coordinated by Cities Next, a civic innovation company from Vienna, which led through the design thinking process with 15 stakeholders who accompanied the 4 workshop slots and the concept creation. The stakeholder group consisted of members of the city government, the tourism board, local universities and schools, industry, museums, regional organizations and associations and creative artists. The 4 phases of the design thinking workshop based on the model of appreciative inquiry led the participants through a discovery phase of discussing and evaluating the resources, expertise and talents of the region, the dream phase in which ideas were developed and visions articulated, a design phase where concepts were prototyped and a destiny phase which guided the concepts through a business canvas model to evaluate the chances and risks, the effectiveness and efficiency of the concepts.

The following action points were pre-selected for InduCult2.0 Topic 3 - “Deploying industrial culture for securing labour force and strengthening the regional ties of companies”.

5. Results

5.1 Short-term actions

5.1.1 Virtual Reality - industry in past and present

In the InduCult project a virtual trip across the Styrian Iron Route was created and tested in autumn 2018. This trip can be experienced by means of VR googles and shows the mining and production of iron in the past as well as in the present (see output report 3.3.3) and is especially designed for young people and pupils.

The set of 10 VR googles is available at the museum centre Leoben, where it has become an integral part of school museum tours. In addition it is possible for schools to borrow the whole set to make it even easier to use it during the classes. As the costs for 1 google are about 250 euro, it could be also possible that other museums or even schools buy some of them by themselves and use the VR content created by InduCult.

Costs: No further costs necessary (unless new videos are created and added, which is technically easily possible)

Responsible: Museum association Styrian Iron Route

5.1.2 Promotion Industrial Culture to work force

The approach of awareness-raising is mainly a promotional one. It was tried out in pilot action 3.4.2 in 2018 by distributing promotion material (industrial culture festival, museum association etc.) and is mainly based on internal resources of the companies:

- Use of internal company information system
- Use of other internal resources: Blackboard, company magazine or newsletter etc.
- Use of company events (e.g. regular employees meeting) for communication
- Target group “youth”: The instructors of the apprentices can be important “mouth-to mouth” communicators, and they could also organize the young work force within the apprentices’ programme to actively participate in IC. In this frame “exciting” things such as “geocaching” could be carried out

Implementation: ongoing 2019 and beyond

Costs: no costs, unless no special promotion material is produced

Responsible: Museum association Styrian Iron Route

5.1.3 Art by young industrial workers

The industrial culture festival provide opportunities for young industrial workers to actively participate in industrial culture (see deliverable 3.4.4). Industrial and especially young workers provided stories and input to several actions and also acted as actors. As the industrial culture festival shall continue in the forthcoming years, the approach of integrating young workers in cultural measures will be continued.

Responsible: Association Styrian Iron Route, museum association

Budget: covered by Industrial culture festival (see regional action plan 2.6.2 “Cultural measures for fostering regional identity”).

Planned time of realization: late spring to early autumn 2018

5.2 Long-term actions

5.2.1 Educational trail

Educating/motivating pupils about the topic of industrial culture with digital and physical tools, e.g. an ,app’ and a real-time trail inside an industrial building or in the public space. The app could show a map of the region and the local industry allowing to virtually entering the companies and learning about their products and their use of the resources from the raw material to the final product. Companies could cooperate with spatial planners to build an educational trail in empty warehouses/unused industrial sites.

The creative / educative approach of the trail helps to build a regional identity among citizens, starting from young age. Pupils might also be guided with innovative guiding systems from town to town (similar to treasure hunt/geocaching revealing questions or hinting to a company site, etc.).



Figure 1 refers to such a project (‘Trail of Traits’), executed at Ars Electronica (Linz/Austria) in 2013 which sought to creatively weave an explorative trail throughout the festival. Trail of Traits aimed to help uncover significant landmarks within the city, encouraging participants to become part of the adventure. The project took form as a

series of discovery boxes that lead participants on a trail throughout the exhibition. These boxes sensed the presence of those passing by, and chimed in order to capture audience attention. When opened, the boxes alighted to reveal a secret message which led participants on a journey, taking them to various cultural landmarks.

An explorative educational trail in the form of an information hunt represents a rather inexpensive tool to convey interesting information about spaces and places, companies, resources and opportunities for the region. It could invite pupils (still benefitting from their fresh minds) to help identify unconventional approaches to define Industry Culture and invent ideas, expressing their future visions of Industry Culture in the region of Steirische Eisenstrasse.

The cooperation between industry and schools could enable manufacturing prototypes of the children's visions. Inspiration is drawn from artist & designer Dominic Wilcox's 'Little Inventors' project in the UK <http://www.littleinventors.org>

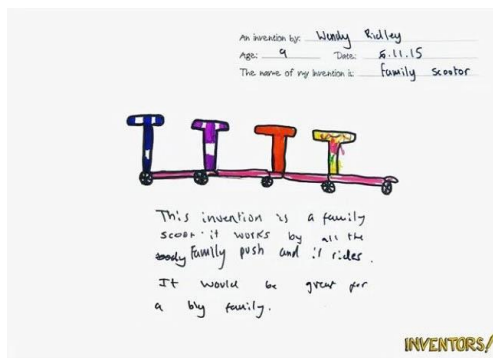


Figure 2: The best ideas created in one of the numerous workshops with children were submitted to [littleinventors.org](http://www.littleinventors.org) and made into reality by a team of craftspeople, manufacturers and the digital making community.

Costs: To be defined

Responsible: City of Leoben

Planned time of realization: beyond 2019

5.2.2 Educational suitcase

An 'educational suitcase' for pupils in elementary and secondary schools has already successfully been implemented in schools (voestalpine and Böhler, both steel based technology companies, had teamed up to create a metal & steel suitcase; the blast furnace process was explained to elementary school pupils through lead-pouring which the children were experimenting with). This suitcase can be further expanded. The elements could explain highly complex processes in a simplified and visual way. It can be filled with

objects and tools to help develop ideas of how local resources could be merged with current and future technology. The suitcase will be curated in cooperation with the local industry and schools under the core theme of 'Industrial Culture' and ensure that it creates references to the regional identity.

It further allows pupils to be introduced to local resources and companies in the region and to regularly follow product development and innovation management. Ties between industry and schools allow field trips and knowledge transfer.

Execution requires a coordination role between industry and schools to merge expectations equipment, equipment and resources.

Costs: to be defined

Planned time of realization: beyond 2019

Responsible: City of Leoben

6. Conclusion, outlook and sustainability

One of the challenges for our education system is to find time and resources to equip children and adolescents with the skills of dealing with whatever the future holds. With an ever changing world, brimming with information and evolving technology, creativity and problem-solving are skills that every child should learn to use as early as possible, in order to adapt and thrive in tomorrow's society.

The regional focus group on Industrial Culture of the Styrian Iron Route worked out and provided input for a regional action plan on the topic of "Deploying industrial culture for securing labour force and strengthening the regional ties of companies". It includes both short-term activities and activities beyond 2019. Several pilot actions which were developed within InduCult are sustainable and will be carried out beyond project lifetime. The focus group will continue its work on an irregular base (meetings when necessary), but will be informed regularly about progress and IC-related activities. The coordination will be carried out in future by the association Styrian Iron Route. For some long-term activities, efforts have to be made to raise the necessary funds.