



Past - Present - Future



HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

A CONCEPTUAL PROPOSAL FOR
RE-BOOSTING INNOVATION AND PIONEER
CULTURE IN INDUSTRY OF GORENJSKA
REGION

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Deliverable T4.5.1. Concept for capitalization on innovation and pioneer culture of industrial regions



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Abstract

Fostering creativity and innovation in industrial environment without great attention on its beginning and remains is a hopeless aspiration. Industrial development and past innovations are the fundament for creating new type of pioneer culture.

Although the Gorenjska region can proudly present its industrial past there still are challenges on how to boost the main regional identification elements and establish a new and innovative pioneer culture.

The present study, by researching past and existent industrial, educational, economic and innovation spirit of Gorenjska region, highlights cases and critically examines some of the largest failures of creating the single and at any cost modernized industrial environment. Through comparative analysis we created a concept which presents solutions for re-boosting innovation and pioneer culture in the industrial region of Gorenjska. However the presented concept is not tailor made only for Gorenjska region, it can easily be adapted and transferred to other European partner regions.

1. Project context

InduCult2.0¹ wants to revive the cultural spirit of long-standing industrial regions of Central Europe. Together with local stakeholders, project partners from 8 European countries (Austria, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Poland, Check republic, Croatia and Slovenia) rediscover and create the positive elements of industrial communities and therefore intend to:

- Establish the idea of Industrial Culture in Central Europe and promote it as unique feature of regional identity
- Prepare initiatives in schools to raise the interest in industrial culture and show them work options in that field; binding work force and companies through industrial culture
- Fostering creativity and innovation through distinct interaction of creative communities and productive industry

The definition of industrial culture goes beyond heritage and includes contemporary and upcoming cultural and creative resources.

¹ More information about the project is available on: www.inducult.eu, www.facebook.com/Inducult2.0

The concept developed belongs to the work package T4 5.1. with the topic "Fostering creativity and innovation in the environment of industry and its remains", where concepts for capitalisation of innovation and pioneer culture of industrial regions shall be provided.

The concept "History for the future" presents an innovative model to attain the old spirit for new pioneer culture. Interactions between industries, with its entire legacy, educational institution and government are a must; for shaping the regional identity. By collective promotion of Industrial culture, with all its contents, not only the regional identity can be re-established, but it will form the space for new knowledge, smart education, respect and interest for the history, new and different (more secure) work places and sustainable innovation.

2. Regional Context

The Gorenjska region has a rich industrial legacy but, as many other European regions, somehow isn't able to build the bridge between past and future and to connect the most important regional stakeholders (industry, education, government) for fostering creativity and innovation.

And precisely this discordance causes one of the most developed regions of Slovenia not to find its identity and, consequently, cannot position it properly. The concept of "History for the future" Gorenjska offers a model of building a new identity that will grow from the (relatively unknown) industrial and cultural heritage of the region. Industrial and cultural sites, which are now safely stored in many museums, need to be logically connected and, together with the natural heritage of the region, to form integral products. They will be the basis for both regional and international tourism.

Through active cooperation between industry and educational institutions, and at the same time with the strategic support of local authorities and the public administration, we will achieve smart education for the knowledge that the region actually needs and for the development of which it can actually offer all conditions. In this way, industrial culture will not be left only to local communities, which they propagate more or less successfully than themselves, but will be unified and uniformly represent the brand that represents the region in the best light and identifies it outwardly.

3. Objectives

By compiling the concept of capitalization of innovations and the pioneering culture of industrial regions, which contains an analysis of the innovation culture over time to date as a regional identification element, by comparing the basics (craft, industry, education, development, innovation, knowledge) and the scenarios for the development of these environments in the future we have pursued in particular the following objectives:

- find common points of industrial local communities in the region,
- develop new content that will contribute to the development of old industrial centres,
- to form a common concept of regional identity and last but not least
- establishing model for regional network of all stakeholders, with fundamental task to make young people aware of the industrial heritage value for the future development and progress in the society and to stir their enthusiasm for getting new knowledge based on region's rich tradition.

4. Applied Approach

The main part of our approach was mainly qualitative and was guided by the following leading theses:

T₁: The changes of industrial branches were in no direct connection to regional needs. They were more or less relinquished to individual entrepreneurs.

T₂: The educational system isn't up to date with industrial needs due to the lack of communication between economy and educational institutions.

T₃: Local communities have not elaborate papers on strategically development of their region and when they do so the educational guidelines are not included.

We started the study with in-depth research of the main past industrial branches in the region to then critically evaluate their transformation; such as textile and footwear industry oriented in smart wearable articles, ironworks now using special steel and smart materials, electronic and rubber industry becoming green (smart grids, solar/renewable energy), industry for sport equipment orientating on solar/wind energy, nautical, sport facilities, innovative skies, tourism changing from classical into eco, green and local production. We included also the health sector becoming more and more specialised (from general to specialised clinics like pulmonology, allergology).

The second step of our research was examination of educational programmes in the past that supported the industry of that time (for mechanical engineering, craft and cottage

trade such as shoemaker, hairdresser, watchmaker etc.) and critical evaluation of the present situation; both, the system itself and the contents.

The third step was close examination of the role of local government and public administration by changing of industrial branches and educational systems.

At the end we compare the results with the numbers of students joining the educational system in Gorenjska region in the past years and present time, regarding numbers of educational institutions and inhabitants.

Through comparative analysis we created a concept which presents solutions for re-boosting innovation and pioneer culture in the industrial region of Gorenjska

5. Results

Anticipated effects of action plan in Gorenjska region are:

I. Creating the foundations for innovative pioneer projects in development strategies of local authorities in industrial centres

The first flagship project “Vision and strategy of industrial centres” (coordinated by local government with close cooperation between the main stakeholders and citizens of single industrial centre) is of key importance for further development of industrial centres. The industrial centre must create a clear vision of development and acquire a clear picture, where it can be seen in 20 years and which projects have to be carried out so that their vision will come true. The strategy will place concrete innovative pioneer projects in a target-oriented integrated whole.

The follow up projects for networking between industrial centres - the establishment of functional regions will be created on the basis of analyzed needs that the region and industrial centres in it - especially the largest - should represent a functional economic region from the next point of view: movement of labour, shopping, supply chains, attractiveness for foreign direct investments, attractions for visitors (tourist flows), logistics (setting up supply chains), etc. As a functional economic region, we consider the area in which markets operate, which leads to agglomeration benefits and consequently to the establishment of the following processes: networking, competition, cooperation, innovation, the emergence of new possibilities...

II. Creating regional identity of Gorenjska

The second flagship project “creating regional identity” is focused on establishment of a regional brand. Unique and including the specific attractions of the region, the brand have an important role to increase the visibility and performance of the region on a global scale. When designing a brand, it is necessary to focus on those features that will attract the attention of others and preserve it in the long run.

The identity of the region does not only mean a formally defined and widely recognizable logo, but rather a communication mark that reflects the personality of the region (developing common strategic points that include historical events, past and present industry, architecture and buildings, cultural institutions, various events, exhibitions, sports teams; environment and climate; demographic structure; customs and culture; global connections; cooperation between local government and companies; speed of communication; adaptability and attractiveness for people, businesses and capital.)

III. Creative project work in education

If we want to create innovative projects and fill young people with enthusiasm over the past, culture, industry and economy and, above all, joint and innovative cooperation, we must take into account that such projects are usually exceeding the traditional framework of organized school lessons, as they are not limited by school curriculum, curriculum content and spatial conditions. This can be done by close cooperation between companies and educational institutions, with strong support of local government. In development strategies, the possibilities and programmes (content and financial consistent with the vision of development) should be envisaged to launch projects with active participation of students.

IV. Integral touristic products;

Integrated tourism products carry stories that are home to the region. They connect all actors: from caterers to industry and entrepreneurship, educational and cultural institutions, natural and historical sites. The tourist is no longer just a spectator, but a major player who can co-create each story. In order to achieve such integral tourism products, it is necessary to connect actors who will be part of individual stories.

For example: Gorenjska region is well known for its winter tourism and mountain climbing. However not every tourist is a sports enthusiast. But if we combine culture, industrial history, culinary art and sport in one single package, we can attract much more people to travel to Gorenjska (The Pinocchio adventures: visit the museum of footwear factory in industrial centres of Tržič and Žiri, having lunch with locally grown food in Bled and taking a relaxing walk around the lake, concluding with visiting of Bled Castle.)

The promoters of this activity are local tourist agencies and tourist information centres.

V. Enable smart education.

It is imperative to instantly establish a bridge between the three most important pillars to which sustainable development can be resisted. These are: industry, educational institutions and local authorities.

Enabling smart education means making a common plan at the level of the region. To define the main point of regional identity, taking into account the past and transfer it to the present, to design and implement those study programs that the

region needs, knows and can employ. At the same time, it is compulsory to attract young people to active participation as widely as possible and to encourage curiosity and self-initiative for pioneer projects.

The promoters of this activity are local governments and development agencies.

6. Transnational Added Value

With cooperation in the InduCult2.0 project, we have opportunity to learn from other partners and add some knowledge of our own to the partnership. Also the concept “History for the future” can be adapted and transferred to any European partner regions with the lack of regional identity.

The starting-point should always be the awareness of industrial and cultural heritage which can inspire innovative projects for achievement of sustainable development of the region as a whole.

Finally, the most important thing is creating a strong triangle of industry, educational institutions and government.

7. Outlook and Sustainability

It is important to get awareness of advantages that a strong regional identity can bring for region as a whole; for industry, for education, for tourism, for all the people living and working there. Of course creating an identity is not an easy task and is certainly not done in a short term. But what must be done in the beginning is to start with cooperation between stakeholders that is more concrete, set the tasks that have to be attained and build on the future activities with them.

A requirement for this is to continue to present the idea of creating “Vision and strategy” and “urgent networking between industrial centres” to local authorities and to convince politicians of its importance and necessity. An important step can be taken by the end of 2019, when the idea of regional brand can be created.

At the joint meeting of local authorities of Gorenjska region and main stakeholders from industry and educational sector, we will be presenting and discussing results of the study to gain more supporters.

8. Annex: Extended version