



Past - Present - Future



COMPANIES AND WORKERS CREATE INDUSTRIAL CULTURE THEMSELVES

Thematic - Implementation

Version 1



D.3.4.4



Reporting Period nr.5



PP3,6



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0. Abstract

In the framework of InduCult 2.0 thematic workpackage 3 the City of Leoben and Padova Chamber of Commerce tested the joint concept to help companies and workers to develop their own understanding of industrial culture and its features.

This has been realized by PP3 through theatrical performances involving workers, linked to Industrial Culture Festival, by PP6 involving workers in social art workshops linked to the setting up of installations to be displayed in Arte Padova, International Art Exhibition held in Padova.

The results have been positive, for the engagement of the workers and the feedback by the general public. Social art proved to be a powerful way for storytelling and expression.

1. Project Context

[InduCult2.0 project](#), financed by the Interreg Central Europe cooperation programme, establishes the idea of Living Industrial Culture in Central Europe and as such reveals, strengthens and utilizes the unique cultural spirit of industrial regions.

The underlying basic concept is innovative by itself: Living Industrial Culture goes far beyond heritage preservation and utilization. Instead, past, present and future cultural and creative assets related to industry are combined into one powerful package. This is achieved by cross-sectoral cooperation set up by the partners, bringing together their museums, companies, schools and creative communities. In this way, Industrial Culture becomes a living and dynamic concept mirroring the ongoing transformations of industrial economy and shaping the cultural sphere of the affected communities.

The Thematic Work Package T3 “Deploying Industrial Culture for securing labour force and strengthening the regional ties of companies”, moves from the verification that traditional industries have created a distinct work culture made up of certain skills, loyalties, habits, attitudes. However, recent industrial and social transformations require their adaptation. Also, partly because of historic connotations, industrial work and environment are today often perceived as little attractive: one of the reasons why industrial regions suffer from brain-drain, even though jobs are available. Industrial companies, on the other hand, 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 concept of Industrial Culture is tested in this WP in its contextual capability to secure labour force and bind companies: On the one hand, focus is 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. Throughout the WP, research partners support with input, reflection, evaluation.

As main WP output, regions issue action plans for deploying Industrial Culture on labour issues and company commitment.

These plans are based on inter-regional peer review and research input. They are finalized and supplemented to the regional strategy after results of practice tests are available and shared, a.o. :

- increasing 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
- approaching companies to bind work force through culture-related measures, boosting their corporate social responsibility;
- dismantling cultural prejudices on employers' and employees' sides as one main obstacle in matching job demands and offers.

Based on peering, action T.3.4.4. foresee that Project Partners test the proposals for companies and their workers to create Industrial Culture.

2. Introduction

Within the InduCult2.0 project, Industrial Culture is understood as a variety of both **tangible** (buildings, machinery, entire towns and landscapes) **and intangible heritage** (traditions, specific mind-sets and skills) as well as referring to the reservoir of cultural meaning and practices the actors construct in contemporary and active industrial production units.

Focus groups organized in both regions showed that workers are not fully aware of the cultural importance of their work; in the same time many young people don't find the work in industry attractive, even if there are high wages, compared with other economical sectors. Industrial companies have highlighted the difficulty to keep especially the educated youth, which prefer often to consider job offers in an urban environment and in other economical sectors. Involving young industrial workers in industrial culture can help to build stronger ties to industry.

3. Objective

In the framework of InduCult 2.0 thematic workpackage 3 the City of Leoben and Padova Chamber of Commerce aimed at testing a joint concept (deliverable 3.4.3) to help companies and workers to develop their own understanding of industrial culture and its features, to raise their awareness of the value of the Industrial Culture, and how they are part of this specific culture of the region they are living in.

The focus groups in both involved regions have shown that in many cases there isn't a clear link between the concepts of industrial work and industrial culture, and that particularly young employees are not aware of the cultural value of their work in the industry.

4. Applied Approach

Based on the concept outlined in D.T.3.4.3., both partners involved industrial workers in social art production activities.

The approach in **Leoben and in the region of the Styrian Iron Route** was to involve industrial workers by making them tell their "stories": about work itself as well as the general worklife environment. The interviews carried out with the workers were used to write theatre plays, and workers were asked to act as "amateur" actors.

The approach in **Padova and Veneto Region** was to involve industrial workers in the production of social artworks (paintings, sculptures) linked with the setting up of a specific installation in Arte Padova, International Exhibition of Art.

5. Results

5.1 Implementation in the Region Styrian Iron Route - City of Leoben

In **Leoben and in the region of the Styrian Iron Route** industrial workers have been involved in the industry-cultural festival. They have been interviewed about their life and work and their stories had been documented and used as input for theater plays.

In addition they have been involved as actors in the theater performances as well as in the social art event "Hüttenzauber" which was the opening event of the festival. At the opening event industrial workers showed their own understanding of industrial culture through several art performances. 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!), 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.

In Leoben the concept of gathering stories among industrial workers and using the stories for theatre plays worked very well. The main play “Styrycal” was very successful although only industry-related amateur actors performed: a social art event with a lot of different inputs of industrial culture. It has shown that a lot of people are engaged with the topic of industrial culture and use art as a form of expression of industrial culture.



HÜTTENZAUBER - ERÖFFNUNGSFEST

1. SEPTEMBER, 14:00 - 22:00 Uhr

Museumscenter Leoben

Austropop
MirSöwa

Rock
mit Bateman's Kitchen

Lesung & Gespräch
Erwin Holzer: Literatur der Arbeitswelt

Ausstellungseröffnung
Die Zeit mäht.

Premiere Kurzfilm
Working? Klass!

Industriekultur-Ausstellung
Wandel mit Wirkung

Industrie-Clubbing

Flying Fox

Spielzone für Kinder

Köstlichkeiten
aus der Werkskantine

Information & Kontakt: kunsthalle@leoben.at



Programm

August 2018
Werkspuren - Kunst im öffentlichen Raum

01.09.2018
Verhüllungen - Einblicke.
Porubsky-Halle

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: **Styrcal**
Leoben - Stadttheater

September 2018
Vom Stein zum Eisen
Leoben/Vordernberg







5.2 Implementation in Veneto Region

In **Veneto Region** there were already initiatives like that promoted by PP3 (e.g. [Artificare project](#), financed by ESF Programme). After discussion within the focus group and contacts with representatives of companies and Associations, moving on from concept D.T.3.4.3, Padova Chamber of Commerce decided to involve directly industrial workers in the concept and realization of an installation to be displayed in Arte Padova international exhibition.

Confindustria proposed to involve the group “18+1”, a group of industrial workers from different companies with passion for the art, who were happy to volunteer for the realization of the action.

During a workshop held in October 2018, it was proposed the “title” of the installation, with the inspiring word “OPERAIO”, meaning in Italian “industrial worker”, but written as a sum of “OPERA=work, artwork” and “IO=myself”.

The workers realized and displayed different ways to interpret industrial culture, with paintings, sculptures, pictures.

During Arte Padova 2017 we launched as well the Social Art Competition “Arte e Cultura Industriale”, promoting then it among local industries.

We encountered some difficulty in the involvement of workers. Companies are more keen to hire known artists than give place to their workers, and the workers tend to separate artistic passion with the working life.

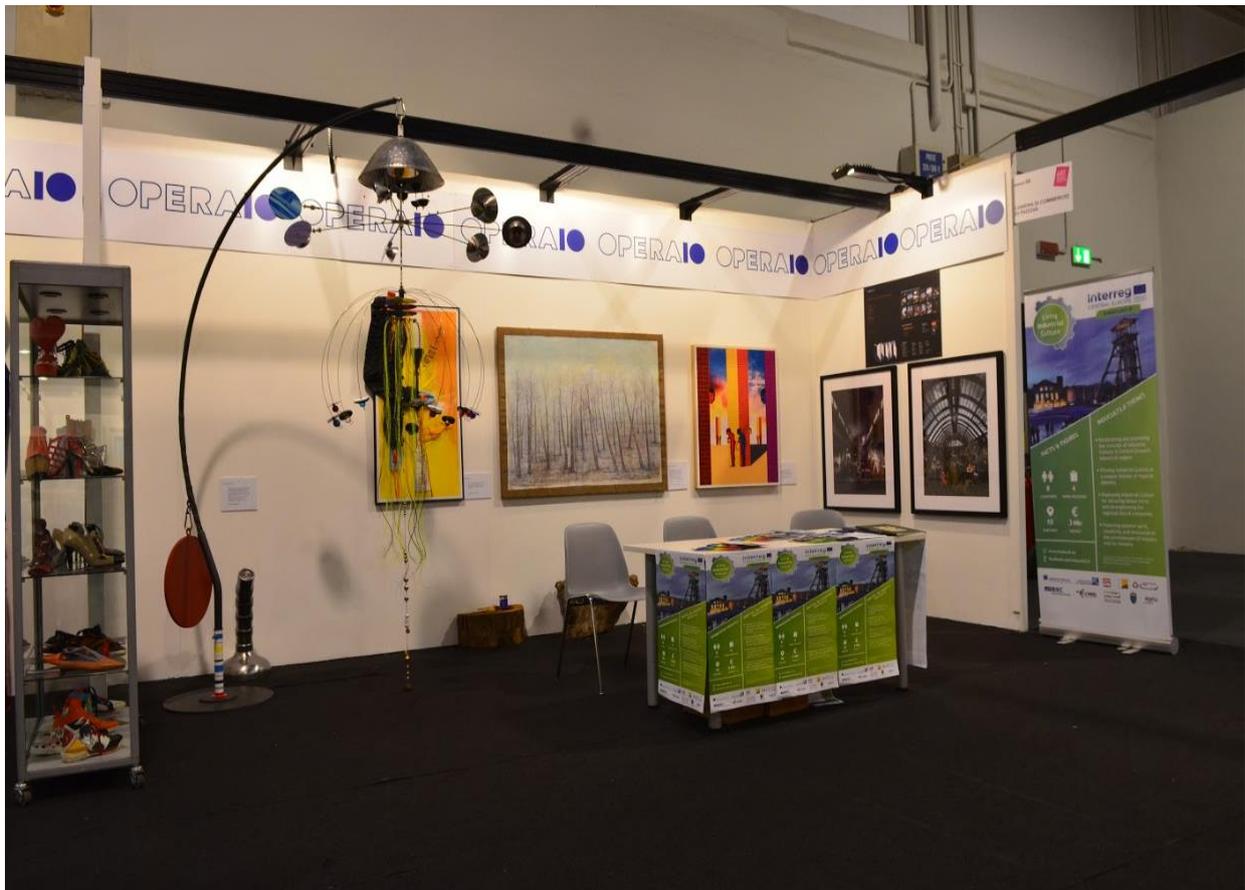
A different response was that of single workers with artistic passion, or, like the Group 18+1, that of an organized group of workers-artists.

In Arte Padova 2018 we decided to display a different installation, with the final selection of the Industrial Art competition, and a social art workshop held on November 15 for the setting-up and the decoration of the booth.

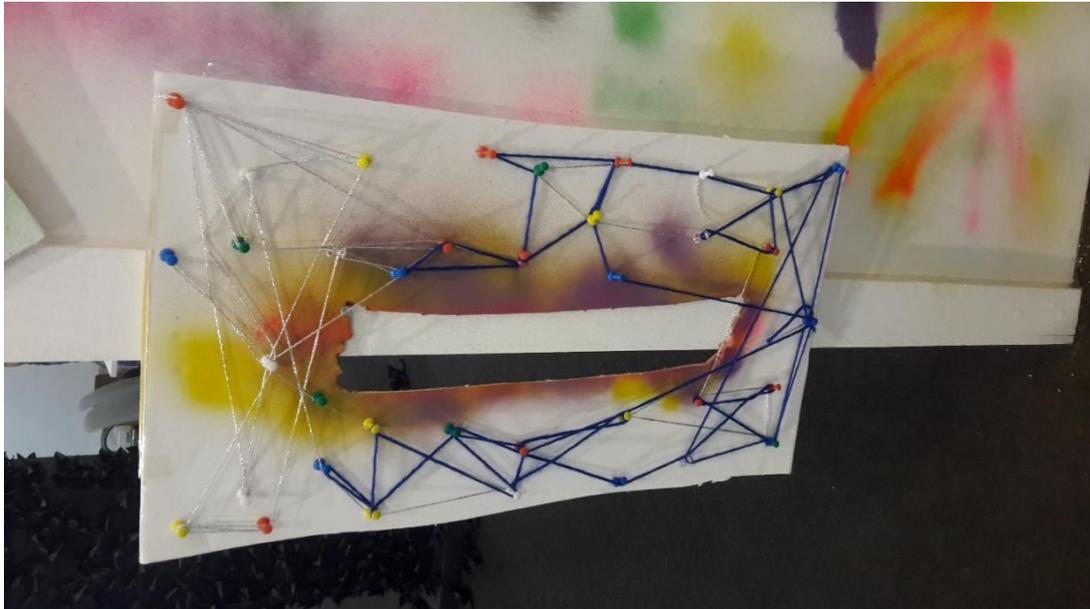
The workers were invited to realize different installations to present InduCult2.0 project and Central Europe's industrial culture.

We registered positive feedbacks both by the workers involved as well by the public.

Many workers and entrepreneurs proposed to realize social art workshops in vacant, abandoned industrial places as well as to involve workers in the realization of artistic installations using industrial waste from their companies (we had some sample at Arte Padova exhibition installation).







6. Outlook and Sustainability

As stressed presenting the action realized in Leoben and in the Styrian Iron Road, for a sustainable identification process it is important to involve people right from the beginning. This format of reflecting work and life should start an identification process and should raise awareness for the topic of industrial culture. The theatre performance again will raise awareness for the topic to the audience and with this circle industrial culture will become alive.

Similar considerations can be drawn regarding painting, sculpture or photography, arts considered in Padova experience.

The installation realized in Padova will be re-used and displayed in Chambers' events in Veneto Region, from January to May it will be exposed in Piazzola sul Brenta former Jute Factory, in May it will be exposed within Padovafiore at the most important public trade fair organized in Padova, Fiera Campionaria.

Art can prove a powerful way for storytelling. The outlook is to involve companies in the realization of similar events, involving workers and creatives, in the coming months in both involved Regions.

We can register an increased interest by companies in partnering with artists and in valorizing social art as a way, not only of expression, but to rethink industrial spaces (the use of spray colours in 2018 installation was meant to recall the different features of industrial culture, the industrialization of varnish production), how writers occupy often the vacant industrial spaces.

The core issue of sustainability is the commitment of the actors.

As we noticed, the involvement of workers as artists is a quite low cost solution.

It can be then combined with Public/private funded cultural projects.



7. Transnational added value



The cooperation of the partners gave valuable input and inspiration for their individual planned measures.

The cooperation with local Industrial Association, Social artistry and workers led to a general conceptual approach which is easily applicable for similar Central European regions.

Social art confirmed its value to communicate in an innovative and immediate way, and the actions realized can be used as an example of an intervention to replicate also in other industrial regions.