

REGIONAL CCI POLICY PAPER

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0. Abstract

The CCI policy paper for Upper Austria “Upper Austria + CCI = Future” argues for an integration of CCI, its approaches and its “raw material” - creativity - into traditional industries, education, public administration, and regional planning. It connects to existing regional and national strategies, shows success stories, advocates five main objectives and recommendations for action, gives examples for concrete measures and aims to inspire decision makers to get active in fostering the regional CCI landscape to be equipped for answering the challenges of the 21st century.

1. Introduction

As an organization working with and for CCI for 10 years, we knew of the potential of CCI and what they could offer the region of Upper Austria. The challenge that we often faced, however, was to convince decision-makers and industrial companies of the same. We lacked a position paper grounded in reports and other strategies that would be accepted by them as a relevant reference - something that would bring together good practice examples, recommendations and more importantly, an argumentation line that they could support, in order to add to their picture of CCI as artistic work and show options for cooperation.

The test cases within the InduCCI project showed that in an economically strong region with many industrial companies a focus needed to be put on creative economy as an entry point and connector of CCI on one hand and traditional industries and administrations on the other.

2. Main Policy Contents

The Regional Policy Paper for Upper Austria points out the importance of creativity as a skill for mastering challenges of the future. It starts with a short analysis of the strengths of Upper Austria and its economy that build a sound base for a lively and flourishing CCI. Furthermore, it underlines the necessity of understanding innovation not purely as technological innovation, as this is currently the case.

In the second half of the Policy Paper, five objectives with specific recommendations for action and examples of measures to be taken are explained. Apart from this, findings of the regularly published *Österreichische Kreativwirtschaftsberichte* (Reports on Austrian CCI) are put into dialog with the claims and goals of the Upper Austrian Economic & Research Strategy upperVISION2030 and the Upper Austrian Regional Strategy upperREGION2030, to make clear which points regional CCI can address, support, and thereby help implement.

The five objectives with their respective recommendations of action are:

1. Raise awareness for the value of CCI
 - a. Increase the visibility of CCI and its services by i.a. providing empty shopwindows in the city center for CCI product presentations, organizing Open Studios, launching a Long Night of Creativity along the line of know formats as Long Night of Museums, establishing the Creative Week Austria.

- b. Integrate CCI into regional value partnerships and networks by i.a. installing a coordinating point on local level for the integration of CCI into value networks, considering local CCI companies for tenders.
2. Support the establishment and growth of CCI
 - a. Create an optimal framework to attract companies of CCI by i.a. offering affordable offices and housing, initiating contests for the re-vitalization of industrial wasteland, investing in a good public transport, stimulating an attractive cultural life.
 - b. Foster the emergence of creative communities by i.a. engaging in a dialogue with active persons in the community, creating spaces for encounter, establishing Living Labs, supporting local associations and their work.
 3. Anchor CCI in the innovation ecosystem
 - a. Consistently consider CCI in strategies by i.a. creating an up-to-date database about CCI as a basis for decision-making, include the Creative Region GmbH in strategy creation, programming, and evaluation processes.
 - b. Open up funding programs to the creative economy by i.a. making financial support programs more accessible for CCI, establishing regional innovation funds, expanding consulting services for CCI.
 4. Stimulate cooperation with CCI
 - a. Initiate cross-sectoral cooperation with CCI by i.a. establishing initial funding for it, supporting match-making and ideation formats such as the Creative Hackathon, creating co-working spaces, strengthening the alliances between universities and industrial companies, involving CCI in developing new forms of tourism.
 - b. Apply creative approaches and concepts in industrial production processes by i.a. organizing Pitch Your Patent formats and establishing Creatives in Lab Residencies both at universities and in companies, starting a co-creation-platform.
 - c. Use CCI for the modernization of public administration by i.a. discovering the Creative Bureaucracy concept, implementing Upper Austria GovLabs on the basis of GovLabAustria, organizing study trips for administrative staff to get to know local CCI, promoting Erasmus+ mobility possibilities, organizing meet-ups for administrative staff, initiating citizen participation formats.
 5. Establish CCI as a promising future field of work and occupation
 - a. Foster creativity as competence and skill in all educational institutions by i.a. fostering future skills, training teachers in creative approaches, organizing summer schools with CCI involvement.
 - b. Show career paths and career options in CCI by i.a. visiting local CCI enterprises during the vocational orientation at schools, strengthening the contact between educational institutions and CCI for job fairs, internships, school projects.
 - c. Train skills for creative entrepreneurship by i.a. strengthening founders' service and coaching offers, offering free of charge modular training for young CCI entrepreneurs.

The addressee of the Policy Paper are policy makers and decision makers on provincial, regional, district and communal level in Upper Austria. Also, companies can benefit from acquainting themselves with the Policy Paper because their initiative can as well be the starting point for reaching the objectives.

3. Applied Approach and Transnational Value

After a regional policy analysis and the first focus group meeting, a draft for a regional policy paper was developed and presented to the project partnership. Throughout the whole writing process, we benefited from the InduCCI setting, because we received valuable feedback and examples for papers of other regions that were an orientation and inspiration for us.

The final paper is now embedded in two important regional strategies (see above) and the Austria Strategy for CCI. Overall, it includes 24 references to strategies and good practices in Europe. With the focus group, we had two feedback loops and incorporated the received input. For the fine tuning of the paper, we called in an expert that has experience with policy drafting, researching and knows the Upper Austrian CCI well. Involving the twelve members of the focus group and the expert was in our view crucial to increase the credibility of the paper.

The paper was graphically designed and printed to have visual material at hand when approaching decision makers of different administrative levels. In Jan 2022 the final paper including the action plan abstracts was presented by our CEO to the city counselor for CCI of Linz and to the mayor of Linz in separate meetings. On 8 March 2022, it was presented for adoption to the supervisory board of our organization and adopted by it with a letter of intent.

4. Expected Impact and Benefits

We see several benefits of having a regional policy paper: it provides decision makers and us as an organization with a “roadmap” about which steps should be taken to strengthen the regional CCI. It is a platform for discussion about the future of the region and what role CCI will play in it. It serves as a reference when representing the Upper Austrian CCI more generally (in other regions, at presentations, etc.). And it breaks down the national CCI strategy to a regional level and thus supplements it and contributes to its implementation. It fosters the development of CCI in the region and ultimately, also the public benefits from a diverse, innovative, flourishing economy.

With the policy paper we want to consolidate the understanding of CCI as crucial pillar of the region’s future that necessarily needs to be taken into consideration to achieve the objectives of other regional strategies. Also, we would like to establish CCI as reliable business partners, as employees especially for the young generation, as critics of the status quo and provider of solutions for the future of the region.

5. Sustainability and Transferability

As a first step to push the implementation of the recommendations made in the policy paper, we want to create publicity: We presented it at our national dissemination event as part of the Upper Austrian Future Forum 2022 that addresses administrative staff and enterprises and plan to publish a press release.

Furthermore, we plan to advocate for the policy paper at every opportunity, provide our experience to other Austrian regions and thereby join forces for Austrian CCI. We expect different stakeholders, perhaps under our guidance, to formulate specific work packages based on the policy paper. For this, we invite the focus group for a meeting in April 2022.

The Upper Austrian policy paper can serve as an example for other Austrian regions. Those with less industrial focus can adapt it by focusing e.g. on the potential for tourism or culture, depending on the characteristics of the region.

What we learnt in the development of the paper is the importance of stakeholder involvement, of having several feedback loops, of visualizing the text and deriving different summaries of it for different audiences. Another learning was the immense amount of time that is needed to go through all these steps so that in the end the paper is accepted by as many stakeholders as possible.

6. Annexes

Regional CCI Policy Paper: “Oberösterreich + Kreativwirtschaft = Zukunft”, 2022 Creative Region