



Past - Present - Future



IMPLEMENTATION OF TOURIST ACTIONS COMBINING INDUSTRIAL HISTORY AND PRESENT

Implementation of regional cooperation
concept

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PP3, city of Leoben



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0. Abstract/summary

Industrial cultural tourism is a chance for old industrial and mining regions to promote their heritage as well as living industry. Benefits can be gained by tourism itself as well as by shaping the regions' image and of regional identity. 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. Living industry and mining is present at the Erzberg and at successful industrial companies and plants such as voestalpine in Leoben. A concept for tourist actions combining industrial history and presence developed within the InduCult2.0 project aimed at forming new touristic offers by combining past and presence. This was achieved with new packages, creative events and supporting promotion (cross-wise promotion etc.). Based on the concept pilot actions were successfully carried out in 2018 including the production of marketing material presenting the newly developed offers.

1. Project Context

The Central Europe Project InduCult2.0 (www.InduCult2.0.eu) addresses Central European regions mono-focused on industrial production. Through InduCult2.0 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;
- empowerment of 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.

Work package 2 - "Priming Industrial Culture as a unique feature of regional identity" - compiles a range of awareness-raising activities: (1) promoting cultural resources of industry: 'industry goes public', (2) industrial tourism combining heritage and present, (3) image-shaping through industry-related cultural events, interlinked with an eye-catching transnational feature. All WP activities are laid out to connect industrial heritage and current/upcoming cultural resources. Among others, activity T2.5.2 deals with testing measures fostering industry cultural tourism; the concept development for tourist actions combining industrial history and presence is part of it - besides industry-related experimental accommodation facilities and mapping tools for industrial tourism.

2. Introduction

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 breath-taking site “ore mine Erzberg” (where according to the legend, ore has been extracted for more than 1300 years) - in its centre.

Industrial Culture has shaped the regions’ cities, villages and landscapes for centuries. Heritage and history and thus the roots of IC can be experienced in a dozen museums of the “museum association Styrian Iron Route”: from the first blast furnaces up to the industrial history of the 20th century. In addition IC comes to life also outside museums - through stories told by people, buildings and landscapes.

Industrial Culture has been an attractive resource for tourism for the past decades. The outstanding visitor centre and tours at Erzberg (www.abenteuer-erzberg.at), together with other industry/mining-related sites and traditions, are well-known touristic hotspots. The IC sites and offers are one of the key USPs of the touristic region “Hochsteiermark” (Upper Styria) to further promote tourism and thus create jobs.

Outstanding and unique is that industry and mining cannot only be experienced in form of the “golden past”, but mining as well as industrial production are still not only ongoing but are accessible and visible by fascinating tours. That makes it possible to create unique touristic experiences (and storytelling of IC) hardly found in any other parts of Europe.

3. Objective

The regional argumentation paper “10 good reasons for a living Industrial Culture in Upper Styria” has listed the touristic potential of living industry and its remains as one of the key arguments for IC.

Following the argumentation paper a concept was developed to show possible ways of how to create (mingle existing/improve) and promote tourist products combining industrial history and present and use them for the benefit of strengthening the regions’ tourism (T2.5.3). It was based on improved tourist cooperation between industrial museums, companies, IC organisations, tourism associations and the mining university Leoben. The concept was now test-wise implemented in the region to check in practise the possibilities

for promotion of IC through cooperation of the most important organisations, institutions and touristic actors. The focus was on low budget measures.

4. Applied Approach

In the region “Styrian Iron Route” a focus group on Industrial Culture was established in autumn 2016. To structure and focus its work a workshop series on IC was organized from June to August 2017 (4 workshops). It was carried out in form of a “design thinking” process based on the method of appreciative inquiry. One outcome was the above mentioned concept for tourist actions combining industrial history and presence. Led by the city of Leoben and the museum center Leoben, various measures of the concept were tested.

The major players in the field of industrial tourism along the region Styrian Iron Route which were involved were:

- The museum association Styrian Iron Route (www.eisenstrassenmuseen.at), which offers a roof for 13 museums in the region (umbrella branding, mutual activities etc.)
- The industrial and mining companies
 - voestalpine in Leoben (steel plant; free tours offered regularly)
 - Gösser brewery (museum and tours of operating brewery - Austria´s largest brewery)
 - VA Erzberg (operating opencast mine in Eisenerz with touristic profit center)
- The mining university of Leoben (> 4000 students)
- The tourism association “Hochsteiermark” (regional tourism marketing of “Upper Styria East”)
- The local tourism associations Leoben, Herzbergland & Erlebnisregion Erzberg
- The heritage association Styrian Iron Route

5. Results

5.2.1 Integrative touristic IC products

There are several options in the region for the development of integrative touristic products. It was suggested to use a set of „modules“ which can be combined individually in respect to the interest of visiting groups or for certain target groups (families, silver ages, kids or schools, etc.). Through skilful combination of different actors/institutions/companies interest for a visit can be raised for the different target groups. In addition a couple of standard tours were provided.

Following IC modules were suggested and made available:

- Visits in the 13 museums of the Styrian Iron route (www.eisenstrassenmuseen.at).
Highlights:
 - Museum center Leoben with strong IC focus
 - World-wide unique blast furnace museum Radwerk IV in Vordernberg incl. modern presentation of voestalpine production process
- Visit of “Abenteuer Erzberg” (“adventure Erzberg”) - living mining industry in combination with adventure tours and a visit of the visitor mine
- Tour with mining railway “Erzbergbahn” (connecting the village of Vordernberg with its old blast furnaces with the Erzberg)
- Free tour of voestalpine steel plant (can be arranged individually for groups; in addition fixed tours approximately every month in summer season); guides are partly recruited from the mining university Leoben
- Tour of Gösser brewery (brewery museum and brewery plant)

1-day standard tours which were offered to the regional tourist associations and incoming agencies were:

Standard tour 1:

- Voestalpine tour in Leoben in the morning (2 hours)
- Lunch in the city center Leoben
- Afternoon city tour with visit of museum center

Standard tour 2:

- Visit of Adventure Erzberg (morning)
- Lunch in Eisenerz
- Gösser brewery tour (afternoon)

Standard tour 3:

- Visit of Radwerk IV (old blast furnace + modern visual multimedia art installation about industrial introduction of voestalpine)
- Lunch in Vordernberg (restaurant “Goldener Adler”)
- Afternoon: Visit of Erzberg or Gösser brewery or city center Leoben

The tours were offered on the websites and on tourism fairs (e.g. “Steiermarkfrühling” in Vienna). Also individual packages (modules) were offered - e.g. “Incoming Steirische Eisenstrasse” - <http://www.eisenstrasse.co.at/ueber-uns/incoming-2/>



5.2.2 Special Events

Events provide the opportunity to raise additional touristic interest to visit the region.

- Rostfest (August 16th-18th 2018): A post-industrial festivals which uses the remains/setting of the mining heritage in combination with the still operating mine at Erzberg. So far more than 1000 visitors stay overnight at the festival. “Industrial Camping” (InduCult2.0 action T2.5.2) was made available at the Rostfest providing additional accomodation; and the InduCult2.0 Industrial Caravan Tour made a stop at the festival. The Rostfest was also promoted in the Industrial Culture festival brochure as a satellite.

5.2.3 Other offers

- Accomodation: The hotel “Kongress” in Leoben offers now special “industry”-dedicated rooms - e.g. a “industry-romantic room” oder a “Gösser brewery”-room, which are well booked and of high demand.
www.hotelkongress.at/de/zimmer/themen-zimmer.html
- App Abenteuer(E)Reisen: The app offers a journey through the Styrian Iron Route. Visitors can download the app on the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store. User will go on a scavenger hunt and will visit different industrial cultural sites in Leoben, Eisenerz and along the Styrian Iron Route. By scanning a QR-Code the visitor receives interesting information about the site. Once the user has visited all the places the person will receive a travel book of the Styrian Iron Route.

5.2.4 Promotion

Promotion is essential to raise attention for the touristic topic “industry/industrial culture”. Promotion was carried out by

- Brochure presenting attractive packages of integrative tourist actions combining history and present and the IC festival. It was distributed at regional heritage institutions, monuments, places of excursion in the region, tourist information offices and hotels and companies.

- Cross-wise promotion: Industrial tourism is a key element in the promotion material of the tourism associations (print, websites) and was used in their marketing and promotion activities (e.g.
 - www.erzberg-leoben.at/at/kultur-ausfluege/fuehrungen/werksfuehrung-voestalpine-donawitz.html
 - www.tourismus-leoben.at/en/tourist-information/parking/12-tourismus-leoben/sehenswertes/museen-ausstellungen/1446-factory-tour-voestalpine-donawitz.html
- One marketing product already realised in 2017 is the guide book “(R)EISEN - Erzberg. Eisenstrasse. Hochsteiermark”, which tells the story of the industrial region’s past and presence and vivid language and pictures. If you finish the IC app-tour (T.2.3.3) you receive one copy at the museum center Leoben.
- The region “Styrian iron Route” is member of the ERIH network (European Route of Industrial heritage) -with the anchor point Erzberg mine as well as a thematic industrial heritage route. This network also allows the promotion of the region’s industrial assets transnationally. Regional touristic representatives took part in the annual ERIH events to promote the IC touristic product mix.

6. Evaluation/transnational added value

The exchange with the InduCult2.0 project partners in the work group meetings of T2 has shown possibilities how cooperation between living industry, museums and other heritage institutions can be carried out. It has also proved that the concept of forming tourist products with industrial past and presence is quite innovative in Central Europe and is a sort of pioneer work which is well appreciated by a niche target group. This is also proved by ERIH (European Route of Industrial Heritage), with whom the InduCult2.0 consortium is in close contact and a memorandum of understanding has been signed.

7. Outlook and sustainability

At the moment the association Styrian Iron Route and the museum association Styrian Iron Route (13 museums) are in charge of the coordination, preservation and continuation of the region’s mining and industrial culture and heritage (on behalf of the municipalities). They are the key actors to build stronger ties with the local living industry and to stimulate the cooperation of all actors (including the tourism associations) in the field of IC. They will be also in future in charge of bundling existing offers and developing interesting new touristic offers combining the region’s industrial past and presence. The touristic actors (associations, incoming agencies, hotels etc.) receive thereby attractive products to offer to their clients.

8. Annex: Brochure