



Past - Present - Future



PREPARATION OF SCHOOL INITIATIVES PROMOTING INDUSTRIAL CULTURE

Thematic - Implementation

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0. Abstract

In the framework of InduCult 2.0 thematic work package 3 Padova Chamber of Commerce aims at conceiving a concept to promote the attractive cultural/historic dimension of industrial work, jointly with industrial museums, companies, schools.

The goal of Padova Chamber of Commerce is to promote a new type of action, designed after peering with partners and analysis of successful experience in other Central European Regions, involving the schools and the pupils into “Open Factory Festival”, valued as the most important festival in North-East Italy focussing on Industrial Culture.

Padova Chamber of Commerce proposed therefore to the organizers of the Industrial Festival to work together on an initiative dedicated to students and schools involving the companies participating in the Festival “Open Factory”.

It is a new initiative, whose name will be “Open Factory Schools”: on the Friday before the Festival the companies are invited to open their doors to the schools (mainly secondary schools, but not only). The schools can choose and visit a company and participate in the activities proposed by the company on its premises. The first edition has been realized in November 2017, the second edition has been realized in November 2018, with the participation of more than 5.000 students and more than 20 companies.

The organizers of the Festival, the companies and the schools have already agreed to keep the initiative also for the next years, beyond InduCult2.0 project.

1. Project Context

[InduCult2.0 project \(www.inducult.eu\)](http://www.inducult.eu), 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 adaption. 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 draft action plans for deploying Industrial Culture on labour issues and company commitment.

These drafts 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.3.3.1. foresaw that Project Partners prepare innovative school initiatives promoting the attractive cultural/historic dimension of industrial work, jointly with industrial museums, companies, schools, to be implemented in T.3.3.2.

2. Introduction

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

Even if Padova Chamber of Commerce has been a pioneer in the realization of projects linking (industrial) companies and schools (our "Marco Polo" project was awarded as best practice by the European Union more than 15 years ago) and it is still performing many activities in this domain, mainly aiming at orienteering of the youth in the further study or working path, or

aiming at the realization of training and work experiences, in Veneto Region there is no record of school related initiatives linked to the Industrial Culture concept. Moreover, schools often visit industrial companies, but this didn't happen in an organized way, stressing the Industrial Cultural aspect. Students visiting a company get acquainted with their strategy, mission, organizational model, products. What is often missing is the cultural aspect. The peering with project partners and the analysis of the current initiatives being realized by schools/companies and by public/private organizations like Chambers of Commerce/Industrial Associations/Regions brought us to analyse and consider as a best practice the initiative "Schau Rein – Woche der offenen Unternehmen", realized in Saxony/Germany as a successful private/public partnership.

One of the more relevant features of the German experience is the joint communication and the fact that it's a fixed week, where all participating companies open their doors to students and follow a shared path.

Padova Chamber of Commerce decided therefore to implement these activities following the concept developed in T.3.3.1, partnering with Open Factory Festival, in order to maximize the communication action and give the schools the possibility to get aware that all companies are like tiles in the mosaic of the Living Industrial Culture.

3. Objective

In the framework of InduCult 2.0 thematic work package 3 Padova Chamber of Commerce aims at implementing an action to promote the attractive cultural/historic dimension of industrial work, jointly with industrial museums, companies, schools.

The goal of Padova Chamber of Commerce is to promote a new type of action, proposing to the companies to work on an agreed set, stressing the Industrial Cultural aspect, and to the schools to seize the opportunity to choose among a variety of proposals, in order to provide an insight of the real industrial culture of the Region. Partnering with "Open Factory Festival", valued as the most important festival Italy focussing on Industrial Culture is also a way to invite the students to become ambassadors of the Industrial Culture, inviting their families to visit the companies on the following Sunday, during the Festival. The participating students have a clearer idea of the Living Industrial Culture of the Region, and become more keen to consider industry as a work option, or as an orientation for their further study. Open Factory Schools is also a way to help companies to get in touch with school and teachers, in order to set up joint actions and have the possibility to offer work experiences to the students of the Region.

As the discussion within the focus group has shown, students and workers often are not aware of the link between the concepts of Industrial Work and Industrial Culture. The youth is not fully aware of the cultural value of industry and how every single factory industry is living part of our (industrial) Cultural Heritage, tending a evaluating a company as an "island", not as part of a set.

4. Applied Approach

4.1. Background

In the region of Padova focus groups on industrial culture were established in autumn 2016. Padova Chamber of Commerce invited qualified stakeholders (teachers involved in project related to Industrial Culture, representatives of Companies and Industrial Museums, member of Industrial Businessmen Association Confindustria) and published an open invitation, so that every interested person (students, professionals, entrepreneurs) could join the focus group and take part in it.

One of the topics the focus group has been discussing about the way to promote Industrial Culture to the schools and the youth. The input of the focus group has been the base for the Regional Argumentation Paper and for the concept paper. Padova Chamber of Commerce and the focus group analysed then the international experiences brought in by InduCult 2.0 partner regions, and the input from the scientists.

The focus group agreed on the following points for the implementation phase:

- Capitalize past experiences, in Italy and abroad. Particular attention has been given to the Saxony experience “Schau rein”;
- Partner with industrial culture festivals, in order to stress the cultural aspect of the initiative;
- Give companies a common guidance and fix a single day (Friday or Saturday) for the realization of the event, so that schools can choose where to go and be prepared.
- Foresee a free of charge participation for all schools. Only expenditure for the schools, the travel costs.

The research input paper *“INDUSTRIAL CULTURE, LABOUR FORCE AND COMPANIES - Academic recommendations for practical intervention on how to deploy Industrial Culture for securing labour force and strengthening the regional ties of companies”*, published within InduCult 2.0 states: “Against the background of global structural changes and transition processes, the requirements of a knowledge-based economy and a (post-) industrial society respectively, the current demographic trends and the prospective labour supply are big issues especially for (old-) industrial peripheral regions outside agglomeration. Knowledge-based economy leads to an increased demand in well-skilled work force. Otherwise, the interregional competition for workforce has been increasing and many regions suffer from brain drain, lacking in-migration and demographic decline, even in cases, where jobs are available.

In this context, **recruiting young talents and highly qualified labour for industrial jobs has become increasingly difficult**. Because of the industry’s image of dirtiness and pollution, the youth is more interested in jobs in other economic sectors. In order to prevent skills shortage in the future there is a necessity in recruiting young talents also for industrial jobs and of promoting the innovative opportunities of “Industry 4.0” under the condition of a globalized, highly networked economy.

A strong potential can be seen in the proactive utilisation of industrial culture as an asset for future development. However, industrial culture has to be reinvented and reinterpreted –

getting rid of negative images often prevailing in industrial regions. Cleantech, innovative and intelligent systems based on revolutionary communication technologies have provided the ground for such a reinterpretation.”

4.2 Open Factory Industrial Culture Festival

"Open Factory" is the most important event in Italy regarding industrial and manufacturing culture: an initiative that has come to the third edition, which aims to open up to the public about hundred companies in the Venetian Region territory, to tell the story of the companies, reveal the “secrets” behind design, products, success and show the manufacturing skills behind the industrial products...in one concept, what means “living industrial culture”.

Every year, some categories of companies - mechanical and robotics, design, food & wine, services, infrastructures - and special sections - open buildsites and open labs - are identified. The companies lead to the creation of many thematic routes for visiting and "discovery" of the territory and entrepreneurial environment, especially in North East Italy, where the festival, from 2018 nationwide, was born.

Open Factory becomes therefore a way to promote industrial culture and industrial tourism.

Companies participating in “Open Factory festival” are generally aiming at their promotion to the general public, at increasing their reputation, or at showing their CSR level. They are not keen on considering their participation as a mean to attract the youth and get in touch with future applicants/future workers. The fact that the festival is taking place on Sunday is a huge limit to the organized participation of schools. The events in the companies are structured more to meet the interests of tourists interested in the industrial culture than to meet interests and need of children and students, even if there are relevant exceptions (e.g. in the cosmetic industry BIOSLINE in the edition 2017: a specific lab for children was realized, where the young visitors were accompanied to discover and experiment how to create cosmetics and make some scientific trials).

Open Factory was 2016 and 2017 the most important festival promoting Industrial Culture in North-East Italy. 2018 it became the most festival at national level.

4.3. The intervention path

Padova Chamber of Commerce contacted the organizers of “Open Factory” to conceive and test a new format: “Open Factory-School”.

This path required a commitment of the involved companies, which must organize the opening of the company to the schools and teachers. A best practice studied through the peering activities has been the “Schau Rein!” initiative in Saxony/Germany (week of open companies).

The road map has been the following:

- Concept of the initiative and its content (by September 2017);
- Promotion it to schools and companies (by October 2017 -2018);

- Organization of the “matching” between schools and companies;
- Definition of the procedures for the implementation and selection of the workers which will take part to the process (guidelines for companies);
- Assistance to companies and schools in their participation to the event, which has taken place on Friday 24. November 2017, and on Friday 23 November 2018;
- Getting a feedback/evaluation (interviews to participants)

5. Results

The first edition of the “Open Factory-School” has been realized on Friday, 24. November 2017, the second on November 23, 2018.

The expected results were the participation of at least 10 companies and 10 schools (with groups of students and teachers) in the proposed “Open Factory-School” event, and through it an increased awareness of the concept of industrial culture, of the companies working and living in our region, the establishing of new ties which could lead to new collaboration projects (like training and work experience) between schools and companies.

After the first edition, we worked to improve it through the following measures:

- extension to the Veneto Region, not only Padova area;
- involvement of Unioncamere del Veneto for promotion to schools and companies in the whole Region;
- better communication of InduCult2.0 project and its values;

The results have been extremely positive, in terms of acceptance of the proposals by the companies and participation of the schools.

Regarding the link with Industrial Culture, two positive aspects to consider are

- the area covered (not only Veneto Region, but also near Regions of Central Europe Area, Friuli and Lombardy);
- the different kind of industries the students could choose to visit.

The following 11 companies have taken part in the event on 23.11.2018 organizing specific activities for the students (listed with Name of the Company (link to its website), place of the factory to visit, code for the Province (e.g. PD for Padua, VE for Venice).

- **Cartotecnica Postumia**, Carmignano di Brenta (PD)
- **Cofil**, Montemurlo (PO)
- **Colorificio San Marco**, Marcon (VE)
- **Irsap**, Arquà Polesine (RO)
- **Keyline**, Conegliano (TV)
- **Lago**, Villa del Conte (PD)
- **Silgan**, Romano d’Ezzelino (VI)
- **Tecnoeka**, Borboricco (PD)
- **Tessuti di Sondrio**, Sondrio (SO)

- **themissingpiece**, Udine (UD)
- **Venezia Heritage Tower**, Venezia (VE)

As a result, more than 5.000 students visited the open factories in 2018 edition. Interviews made by Chamber of Commerce staff as well as by Open Factory staff to students, teachers, workers and company managers on site testify the great appreciation of the action both by company staff and school representatives.

Padova Chamber of Commerce, through InduCult2.0 project funded the startup costs (concept of the event, organization of the first two editions, promotion to companies and schools, matching, creation of the calendar, evaluation of the event and follow-up measures).





6. Evaluation/transnational added value

The results have been evaluated and shared with the partners of InduCult 2.0 project during the meeting in Sisak (HR), October 2018. All T3 interested stakeholders have been invited to take part in the event.

We reached our objective:

- students and teacher, participating in a visit organized during a relevant Industrial Culture festival, become more aware of regional Industrial Culture and its features;
- teachers make a preparation work with the students (about industrial culture and its features, about the company the students will visit) and a follow-up discussion after the visit (in some case also a written relation for the teacher/s);
- companies appreciate a new way to get in touch with schools and teachers and can “test” the procedure/timing/skills of the involved workers before the real Festival, which take place on the following Sunday;
- it’s an investment free and low cost initiative: schools cover (normally involving the families) the transportation costs, companies cover the costs for the involved personnel and materials for workshops;

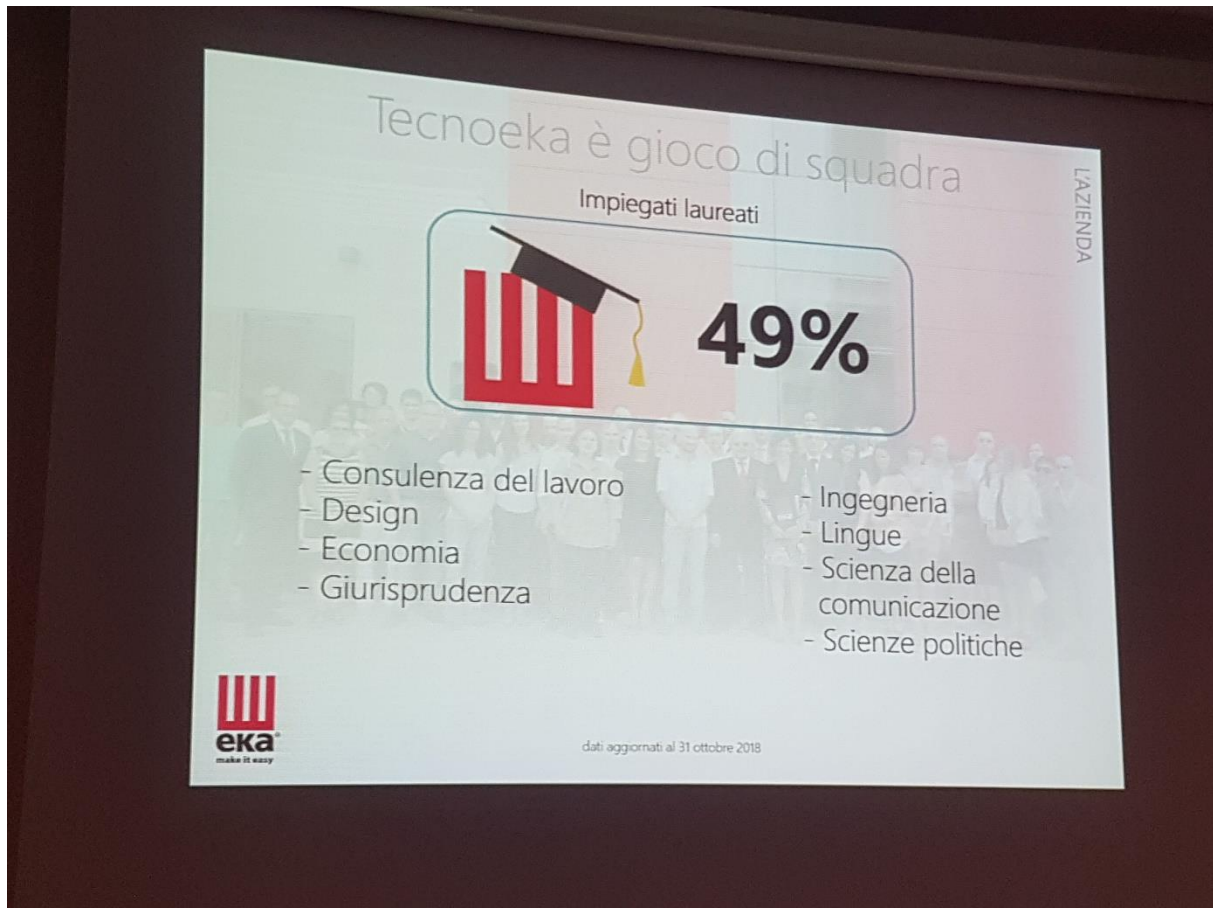
Pictures of the event have been published on Open Factory/InduCult2.0 facebook page.

The added value is the realization of an action to invite students, teachers and schools on a set date, during an Industrial Festival.

The schools have the possibility to have a list of available companies to choose, the companies can “test” the foreseen actions and workshops they will organize on Sunday, and get in touch with students and teachers.

The students could experience the Living Industrial Culture, speak with managers and workers, and involve their families to go and visit the companies on the following Sunday.

Companies presented their vision, how they are producing, which competences they are looking for (e.g. the pictures below, listing the different types of University degrees of the workers in the company TECNOEKA).



Possible improvements are the extension of the network, in order to involve more companies, and the promotion to the schools.

Another possible improvement could be to differentiate the companies according the proposed offer, in order to present the teacher the possibility of "thematic visits" (e.g. energy, buildings, machinery, old industrial sites, automotive, etc.). This possibility is already proposed for Open Factory Festival, while it has not been realized for Open Factory Schools.

Another possible improvement could be the extension beyond the national border, with the participation of schools and companies of other countries.

The format is quite simple, but effective, and could be tested also in different countries.

A "collateral result" of this action has been the contacts with schools which asked Padova Chamber of Commerce team to help them in the organization of a study visit in other

InduCult2.0 regions. 2017 they visited Austria and Slovenia, 2019 they will visit Limburg and Genk.

7. Outlook and sustainability

The action has been considered a success by the companies, the Open Factory Network, and the Schools.

The costs for the replication are relatively low (matching schools/companies - promotion): the companies care for the activities to be proposed with their internal staff, the schools care for the transportation and tutoring of the students.

The companies decided to keep organizing the event also after the project's end, funding the secretariat and the promotion, while the schools will cover, like in these two editions, costs for transportation of students and teachers.

There is an agreement of Open Factory board to keep the action running after the project's end. The Chamber of Commerce will promote it to companies and schools within its action for binding schools and companies.

A long term effect we expect is a better awareness of the real content of today's industrial work and of the industries in the Region, also in terms of choice of the University study or work option after the end of the school.

