

MANUSCRIPT “Introducing Industrial Culture”

Policy Seminar InduCult2.0, European Parliament, Brussels – 22.3.2018

Carsten Debes, District of Zwickau (Germany)

Dear Ivo Belet, dear honourable members of the EP,

dear guests,

dear partners,

I feel greatly honoured to open this seminar in the name of the Inducult2.0 partnership. We are very happy for the high interest in this seminar which you all show by attending it. Thank you especially, Mr. Belet, for inviting us into the European Parliament.

My name is Carsten Debes, I speak to you on behalf of the district of Zwickau (Germany) who is the lead partner of the Inducult2.0 project. This project is a Central Europe initiative funded through INTERREG-B and it provides the frame for this seminar.

Let me start my presentation by putting forward a first guiding statement (**SLIDE 2**): **„Things are only real if you give them a name“**

In fact, Industrial Culture is a new name.

You could even say: It is a term – as much as a field of action – currently under construction.

A common denominator of understanding – at least in the German-speaking realm – is industrial heritage: Industrial heritage here is broadly considered as a synonym for Industrial Culture.

With our project InduCult2.0, we bring a new impulse into this discursive construction: We go beyond equating IC and industrial heritage. We understand IC as much connected to the industrial past, as to the industrial present and future.

What does that mean practically?

- (1) IC does no longer only comprise industrial monuments, but it includes as well contemporarily designed modern factories and graffiti artwork on industrial ruins.
- (2) IC does no longer only draw on traditions, but it relates to the habits of the present, and even of the upcoming industrial work patterns.
- (3) IC does no longer only refer back to the pioneer spirit of a “golden past”, but it asks for what is needed today/tomorrow to be industrially innovative, creative and thriving.

In industrial regions outside agglomerations, the understanding of these cultural layers of past, present and future is usually not used to its full potential. As well, these time layers are neither perceived as interconnected with each other. For that reason, this culture and its potential power are hardly utilised in a coherent way yet.

Our project was founded to help this situation by showing that separated aspects of industrial life actually belong together. And – coming back to my opening sentence – we make this visible and real by giving it an overarching name: Industrial Culture.

The 2nd statement I would like to add onto the 1st one, reads **(SLIDE 3): “Real things can be shaped by policy”**

Having been working on the topic of Industrial Culture for almost 2 years, the InduCult2.0 partnership sees the outlined dynamic approach as an outstanding chance, you could even say: as an urgent need, for industrial regions in Central Europe.

Why is this so?

These regions have gone through hard times recently. They have just coped with profound transformations, foremost: automation, transition from state-led to market economies, globalization. Right now, they are facing another one, usually being labeled with terms such as digitization, Industry4.0 or artificial intelligence.

The current speed of change is once more creating uncertainty and worries in the industrial communities. People ask themselves: Will there be a place for me and my qualifications in the future? Or am I going to fall behind? Such discomfort is a common starting point for people to turn backwards and to lock themselves up in traditional patterns.

The danger is obvious – it is like when driving a car: While it is good to look from time to time into the rear-mirror; you better have your key focus on the road ahead with the lights switched on.

With our embracing approach of Industrial Culture, we support those communities in gaining confidence and resilience. Industrial Culture enables them to realize their strengths. It allows them to cultivate their roots, and at the same time to adapt to a changing environment, or even more: to co-create these environments. Self-perception gets changed towards: “We managed before, we can cope as well tomorrow – and even better than before, because we are experienced and we can actively influence the transition”.

Through the project InduCult, we are discovering this transformative potential step by step – you can have a look at our key findings which we collected for you in the “Transnational Argumentation Brochure” shared out on your seats. While working on the project, we were repeatedly surprised in two ways: (1) our idea of IC brings together actors in the regions which have not been in touch with each other before and (2) these actors start cooperating on a joint topic they had not been aware of before. Let me illustrate this with some examples from our project:

- an industrial museum director and an industrial CEO jointly invite pupils for hands-on experiences
- creatives and makers cooperate with cities for revitalising old-industrial sites as places for new work and living
- industrial festivals bring together actors in charge of such different and innovative themes as open factories, industrial art, industrial camping

Let me conclude. (SLIDE 4 with words popping up “transformative power”, “dynamic”, “Industrial Culture”, “rooted perspectives”, “agile communities”, “future industry”)

With this seminar, we want to draw your attention to the transformative power of Industrial Culture. It needs political support on all levels (regional, national, European) to develop the proposed dynamic understanding of Industrial Culture and to utilize the synergies between the time levels.

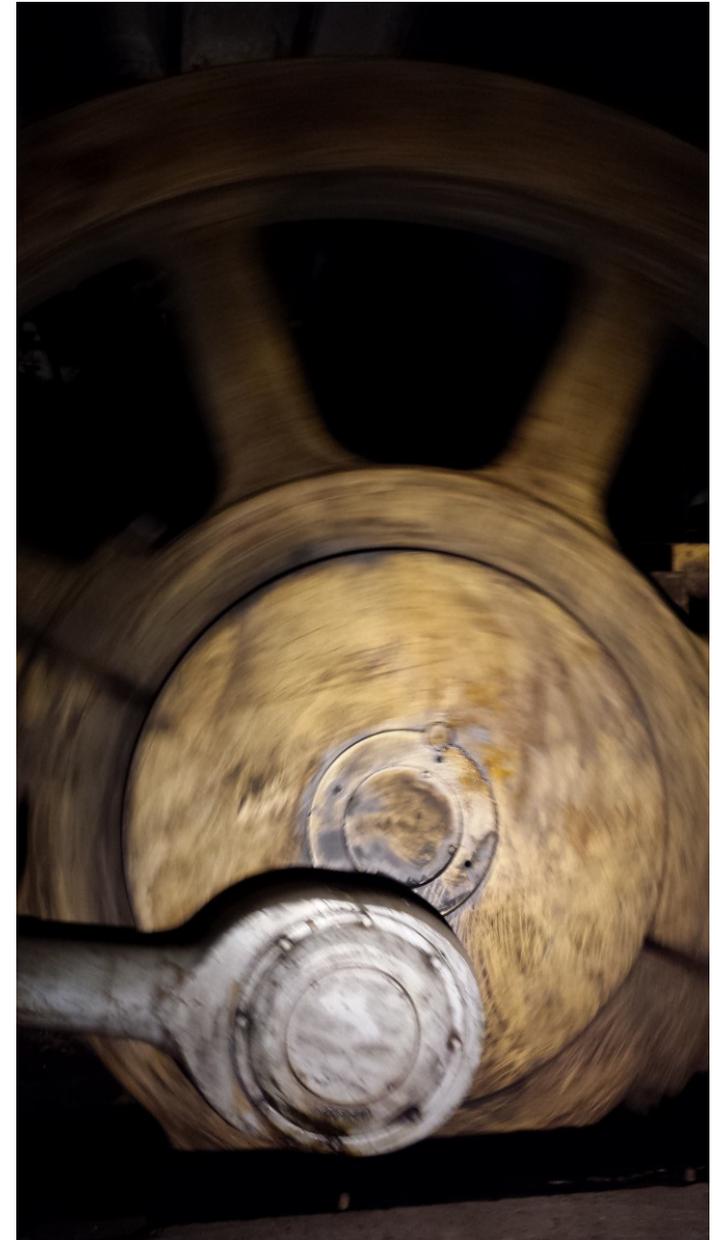
IC links neatly to territorial, economic and sociocultural policies on European level, especially Smart Specialisation and other place-based policies. **(SLIDE 5)** In fact, the best political support in respect to its multidimensional character would be to enter Industrial Culture as a topic into the outlined funding strands.

With InduCult2.0, we are in the pilot phase of bringing Industrial Culture into existence. Test results are promising. Our project is promoting Industrial Culture at the right point of time, just when the next industrial transformation is kicking-in. We are happy to discuss with you how to continue, extend and mainstream our results - with your political support. Thank you for your attention!

InduCult2.0

INTRODUCTION TO INDUSTRIAL CULTURE

Brussels, 22/3/18
Carsten Debes, District of Zwickau
Lead Partner



(1) „Things are only real if you
give them a name“



(2) „Real things can be shaped
by policy”



Transformative Power

Agile Communities

Rooted Perspectives

Dynamic Identity

Industrial Culture

Future Industry

Industrial Culture fits with ...

... EU territorial policies

- Europe2020
- Territorial Agenda
- Smart Specialisation

... EU economic/labour market policies

- 'Re-Industrialisation of Europe'
- 'Industry 4.0'
- ESF education, inclusion

... EU cultural policies

- European Agenda for Culture
- Year of Cultural heritage
- Cultural and Creative Industries