culture 21
Agenda 21 for culture

OPEN COMMONS LINZ

JOBS ECONOMIC GROWTH **CREATIVE INDUSTRIES**
STRATEGY PUBLIC SPACE KNOWLEDGE **INNOVATION**
DEVELOPMENT ATTRACTIVITY **PARTICIPATION**

1.   Context

The capital of the State of Upper Austria is located in the heart of Europe. With approximately 195,000 inhabitants, Linz is Austria's third-largest city. It is considered the driving force of the nation's economy and perceived as a forward-looking center of industry, technology and culture with a wide-ranging network of international relations. To get where it is now, Linz has undergone an extraordinary, all-encompassing economic, ecological, social and cultural metamorphosis over the past century. "Linz Changes"—like its motto says, Europe's 2009 Capital of Culture stands for transformation, openness, willingness to experiment and flexibility.

The city is open to both cultural and technological change as important drivers for an improved quality of life and inclusion of citizens in decision-making. In 1979, the City of Linz became known for its pioneering experiments with digital culture by hosting the "Ars Electronica," an initiative that is an avant-garde festival, a showcase for excellence in digital art and a media art lab providing artistic expertise for R&D projects all in one. OPEN COMMONS LINZ is based on a motion in the municipal council of Linz as to whether the City of Linz should become an Open Source Region. A study by the Johannes Kepler University of Linz analysed the potential of digital assets and open knowledge.

The report summarises the role of local government in establishing an Open Commons Region. In the past, public funds for economic development had largely focused on capital-intensive infrastructures like roads or civic institutions. In a knowledge economy, it makes sense to also invest in intellectual growth, shared data and ideas in order to stimulate economic progress. In this context, the role of the government is to create a framework for making the sharing of information and knowledge easier. This means enacting appropriate legislation, building public awareness and supporting new Open Commons initiatives as proposed by citizens and private enterprises.

For an information and knowledge society, free data, free information and free knowledge represent the basis for being able to develop itself further. The concept of Open Commons is freely based on the principle "Knowledge is the only resource that becomes more abundant when you share it!" OPEN COMMONS LINZ attempts to convey this awareness to society, environmental issues, culture-related fields, education, science and business. With Ars Electronica, the City of Linz has a long history of dealing with digital media and culture. For this reason, it is only logical to extend this to digital assets in general and to provide this access to the broad public and stakeholders.

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2. Linz and culture

Linz's development over recent decades has been closely linked to the dynamism and diversity of this city's media & digital culture. Accordingly, it's no wonder that so many media culture and media art initiatives, programmes and projects have been emerging in Linz. Linz is home to Ars Electronica. Over the last 34 years, its various divisions—Museum, Festival, Prix, Export, Archive and Futurelab—have made Linz one of the world's most influential hubs of digital art and culture.

2.1. New cultural development plan

The new cultural development plan, which is to be valid for the subsequent 10 to 15 years, is a binding cultural policy paper that was created with wide support and is intended to ensure the cultural dynamism in the city for years to come. It was developed with the participation of Linz's culture-related businesses, the cultural scene and Linz's citizens. Four guidelines that each have three cultural policy focuses set the direction:

- Improving the equality of opportunities
- Fostering potentials
- Creating gateways
- Opening the city

2.2. Living Interculturality

With its concept of interculturality, the City of Linz is pursuing an approach in the field of culture that is conform with the urban reality of life and does not reduce the population with a migration background to the sole dimension of integration. Interculturality means a "culture in the middle" and is aimed at everyone in a city. It considers ethnic and religious diversity a normal state in the society and has the potential of allowing new forms of art, culture and interaction in the "hybrid culture". With it, being different and foreign is not seen as a threat, but rather as an opportunity and enrichment. The objective set for the intercultural programme is to perceive and live the diversity of a city as a matter of course. Its purpose is not to exclude, but rather to recognise the diversity and heterogeneity of a city's population. Interculturality should be seen as one of several aspects of social policy. The concept of the existence of a homogenous majority population, a concept which by no means corresponds to the realities of an individualised society anymore, is therefore also dismissed. This benefits not only migrants, but rather Linz's entire population. Through these actions, the plan clearly

promotes Agenda 21 principles of social justice and inclusive governance.

The regulated and free access to digital artefacts is becoming increasingly important for cultural diversity in an information and knowledge society. A major part of cultural development takes places at a digital level (e.g. media arts) or is at least marketed via the Internet and social media. This new and contemporary type of use is faced with the issue of copyrights in many parts of the world. Free licences that protect the rights of creative minds and make reuse, remix and further development possible create a creative environment that makes a contribution to cultural diversity. Cultural assets, knowledge, information and data can be used internationally thanks to digitalisation and therefore foster an international exchange between cultures, societies, cities and countries. OPEN COMMONS LINZ has dedicated itself to this cultural diversity in the fields of open government, open science, open educational resources and open GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives and museums) and supports them at the regional level. In particular, cities are the cultural focus here and also contribute to a cross-cultural exchange at the regional level.

> IN LINE WITH AGENDA 21, (...) OPEN GOVERNMENT DATA FACILITATES PARTICIPATION BY CITIZENS, SINCE THEY ARE BETTER INFORMED ABOUT THE CITY AND ARE ABLE TO TAKE PART IN THE PROCESSES OF BUILDING THE CITY. GEOCODED COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT (LIKE CLICK-FIX) GIVES CITIZENS THE CHANCE TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN DESIGNING AND IMPROVING THE CITY.

In line with Agenda 21, democratically oriented approach is also a significant factor in OPEN COMMONS LINZ. Open government data facilitates participation by citizens, since they are better informed about the city and are able to take part in the processes of building the city. Geocoded complaint management (like SeeClickFix) gives citizens the chance to take an active role in designing and improving the city. The responsibilities of the city are extending more and more from real space to digital space. The responsibilities of municipalities are being re-defined regarding culture, environment, democratic participation and dialogue.

3. Aim, goals and implementation of the project

3.1. Aim and specific goals

The mission statement is defined as follows: The duty of OPEN COMMONS LINZ is the provision of responsible access to digital assets. With that, the city is constantly confronted with the conflict between openness and transparency on the one hand and data protection and personal rights on the other. Linz wants to ensure that business, science, culture and all the citizens of the region are aware of these particularities, understand that these are aligned to Agenda 21 and provide support to the conscious and responsible handling of digital data.

A high-priority objective is to make Linz Europe's first Open Commons Region. This unique open-data initiative is designed to expedite free access to as well as the use and dissemination of its digitally stored common property—cultural assets, data, software, teaching materials—and, in doing so, to lead the way for other cities, both in Europe and beyond. Doing so in partnership and within the context of Agenda 21 would be an optimal opportunity for Linz.

At a very basic level, the objective is to proffer a rich assortment of data and works that can be used free-of-charge and developed further by the general public, government agencies, private firms, cultural organisations and educational institutions. However, the wider aim is open and inclusive governance, cultural vitality and economic progress.

3.2. Actions

In a network-linked information society, free software, free data, free knowledge and free cultural assets constitute a major precondition for positive social and economic development. In political discussions here, these are subsumed under the term Open Commons, which thus refers to all types and aspects of intellectual community property.

The study suggested three major activities to establish an Open Commons Region. The first step was to explain the relevance of Open Commons to the inhabitants of Linz through a public awareness campaign and to develop a brand. The second step was to organise, coordinate and encourage Open Commons activities by means of an office for coordination and assistance, and to establish a system of open data for local government. "The City of Linz needs to open its data sets," noted Leonhard Dobusch, researcher in the Department of Management at the Free University Berlin and co-editor of the book Freie Netze. Freies Wissen (Free Networks. Free Knowledge). "If the city fails to be a positive role model, the Open Commons Region will fail. In circumstances where the government has neither the resources nor the incentives to innovate, the public can take the lead and use the data for productive purposes." The third step called for the city to network with other regions, to establish national and international co-operation projects to spread the idea of Open Commons and to learn from other cities in Europe.

WITH ITS CONCEPT OF INTERCULTURALITY, THE CITY OF LINZ IS PURSUING AN APPROACH IN THE FIELD OF CULTURE THAT IS CONFORM WITH THE URBAN REALITY OF LIFE AND DOES NOT REDUCE THE POPULATION WITH A MIGRATION BACKGROUND TO THE SOLE DIMENSION OF INTEGRATION.

Office of OPEN COMMONS LINZ

At the end of 2010, the office for coordination of the Open Commons activities was launched. Its first project, begun in October 2011, was an open government data platform to provide statistical data about Linz, election results, orthophotos (geometrically corrected aerial photographs), maps, real-time public transport data and records of the municipal council (Stadt Linz, 2010).

"Schau.auf.Linz.at" supporting inclusive governance

The second initiative was Schau.auf.Linz, a geodata-based complaint management tool that lets Linz's citizens report problems online. Inspired by the internationally well-known SeeClicFix or Fixmystreet, the system makes reports on each problem visible for everybody to see. It's a win-win situation for both sides: citizens know how the city deals with their problems and the city government can show how fast and reliable they are in solving a problem. During the first year over 4,400 reports were made by citizens and most of them could be handled in line with citizens' wishes.

Open government data supporting inclusive governance

The City of Linz currently offers 200 data sets of the local government for re-utilisation and is continually expanding this offer. Of these data sets, numerous geodata (plans, photos) and the schedule data for public transport are the most popular. Statistical data, the outcomes of surveys, election results and verbatim transcripts of the municipal council are available. These data are offered within the scope of a Creative Commons attribution (CC-by) licence.

Apps4Linz supporting economic progress and cultural vitality

In association with the data, an award was organised where mostly pupils and students, but also companies submitted their mobile applications, visualisations and concepts (38 projects).

Open innovation supporting economic progress and cultural vitality

The city is currently working together with the Fachhochschule Hagenberg (UAS) and a group of students on the topic of open innovation. In addition to a fundamental scientific approach to and explanation of the topic, it especially wants to create a practical advantage for business, science and non-profit organisations. Linz is creating an open innovation toolbox that lists and describes the wide array of digital tools and provides information about their use. In order to take advantage of the wisdom of the crowd, it will also be possible to leave evaluations and comments.

Open educational resources und open science supporting social justice and environmental balance

In association with Linz's Johannes Kepler University, Linz would like to initiate a project regarding

the topics of open educational resources and open science next autumn. The purpose is to conduct basic research for the region of Linz and Upper Austria and to ascertain how to support and foster open educational resources at schools and open science at universities.

Congress supporting inclusive governance, social justice and environmental balance

The OPEN COMMONS KONGRESS, which hosts more than 100 participants, will be organised for the third time. With that, the main topics have been expanded this year and there are tracks on the topics of education & science, culture & tourism, health & data protection, media & data-driven journalism as well as business & open data. Those who are interested will be introduced to these topics at a low-threshold level.

The Open Commons Region is still a nascent project. But, so far, the response of Linz's citizens, academics, business and culture community is encouraging. Many institutions have problems in understanding and identifying with the philosophy behind OPEN COMMONS LINZ. However, the City of Linz and the many dedicated stakeholders of the new public-civil-private ecosystem are determined to fulfil the vision of an Open Commons Region and Agenda 21 is an excellent framework for this purpose.

THE OBJECTIVE IS TO PROFFER A RICH ASSORTMENT OF DATA AND WORKS THAT CAN BE USED FREE-OF-CHARGE AND DEVELOPED FURTHER BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, PRIVATE FIRMS, CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. HOWEVER, THE WIDER AIM IS OPEN AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE, CULTURAL VITALITY AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS.

4. Impacts

4.1. Impact on the local government

Since then, government and politicians have dealt intensively with the issue of openness in terms of open government. Providing access to local government's data, including interested parties in the drafting of the cultural development plan and recording as well as presenting citizens' complaints are the first steps for opening local government and politics. The hurdles for citizens' participation regarding the number of required signatures have also been significantly lowered.

4.2. Impact on culture and its local workers

In the cultural scene, openness is not a matter of course. Sharing contents and works under fair conditions is also a new way of thinking here. OPEN COMMONS LINZ has been able to give an impetus to artists regarding new licensing methods like Creative Commons. Various museums are pondering on how they can provide digital access to their cultural works whilst at the same time taking copyrights into consideration.

4.3. Impact on the territory and on population

Culture, science, business and the entire population benefit from the free hotspots (WiFi), the Public Space Server (free web space for every citizen) and the apps based on open government data. The City of Linz provides its citizens with a digital infrastructure in this regard.

4.4. Cross-sectorial Impacts

Thanks to publishing the data of public transport, the transport routes and traffic ways can be planned more quickly and in a more environmentally sound manner. Schau.auf.Linz also makes a contribution to Linz's citizens feeling more responsible for their city and reporting their complaints and concerns. At the OPEN COMMONS_KONGRESS and every event, Linz especially attempt to support women by selecting appropriate speakers. That is very important in the case of a subject area associated with technology savvy.

By commissioning the study for Open Commons and establishing the office for OPEN COMMONS LINZ, the City of Linz created the chance to even be able to establish this initiative and laid the foundation for continuity. The office has a budget for one person as well as a project-related budget. Within the various organisations of the City of Linz, the principle of openness is anchored in principles, strategies and mission statements.

IN A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY, IT MAKES SENSE TO ALSO INVEST IN INTELLECTUAL GROWTH, SHARED DATA AND IDEAS IN ORDER TO STIMULATE ECONOMIC PROGRESS. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT IS TO CREATE A FRAMEWORK FOR MAKING THE SHARING OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE EASIER.

5. Other Information

The City of Linz was a candidate to the first edition of the "International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21" (January-May 2014). The Jury of the Award elaborated its final report in June 2014 and requested that the UCLG Committee on Culture promotes this project as a good practice of the implementation of Agenda 21 for culture.

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Good practice published in October 2014.

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