



Kulturentwicklungsplan
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CULTURE.CHANGES.LINZ

A New KEP–Cultural Development Plan (adopted in 2013)

This City's Commitment to Culture

Linz has successfully completed a structural transformation over the last few decades from an archetypal industrial metropolis to a dynamic commercial and cultural center. The efforts that paved the way to capital of culture status were initiated in the 1970s and '80s.

Linz made its first high-profile statements with the opening of the **Brucknerhaus** (1974) and the founding of the **Bruckner Festival** (1977). The **Nordico Museum of the City** of Linz opened in 1973, and the College of Art and Industrial Design that had been established in 1947 was upgraded to an institution of higher education now called **Linz Art University**. The College of Social Sciences and Economics founded in 1966 formed the core of **Johannes Kepler University** in 1975, and the **Linz Music School** was enhanced and expanded into the Music School of the Province of Upper Austria in 1977.

Linz also staked a claim to themes and areas of activity that had played a subsidiary role in Austrian cultural life prior to that time (**forum metall 1977, Ars Electronica Festival 1979, forum design 1980, Prix Ars Electronica 1987**). Moreover, the city developed cultural offerings designed to appeal to broad segments of the populace (**Klangwolke 1979, Pflasterspektakel 1987, Linzfest 1990**), and accorded recognition to sub-cultures and the alternative scene as essential elements of cultural life worthy of support and subsidy (Stadtwerkstatt 1979, KAPU and Posthof 1984, Kulturzentrum HOF 1985, Kulturplattform Oberösterreich 1986, Theater Phönix 1989, Movimiento art cinema 1990). This phase can thus be termed The Founding Years, a time of cultural ferment that culminated in 1990 with the celebration of Linz's 500th anniversary (opening of the Kuddelmuddel children's center and music pavilion; expansion of Posthof). The opening of the OK Center for Contemporary Art (1989) and the StifterHaus (1993) as well as the founding of the afo architekturforum oberösterreich (1994) also occurred within this timeframe.

This initial phase of cultural development in Linz is also a reflection of its time, one characterized by the opening up of social-cultural life and by new social movements. Linz was the first Austrian city to make a formal commitment to **Culture for All** and thus acknowledge the significance of the democratization of culture, the importance of expanding the conception of culture, and facilitating access to cultural offerings by enabling participation and mediating the public's encounters with culture.

Emerging within the context of this **emancipation movement in Linz** were also new initiatives in the indie art & culture scene such as maiz (1994), servus.at (1996), Time's up (1996), Radio FRO, KunstRaum Goethestrasse and FIFTITU% (1998). This was also when the city's Department of Cultural Affairs began to focus greater attention on nurturing cultural life in individual neighborhoods, propagating insights from the field of peace studies, and fostering intercultural encounter by developing new formats and offerings. In 1996, the Linz City Council resolved to support **scholarly research on the time of National Socialism** in Linz.

With the construction of the **Ars Electronica Center – Museum of the Future** (1996), the City of Linz's cultural policymaking intensified its focus on high-tech and new media. Also in the mid-'90s, broad agreement emerged in favor of establishing an administrative foundation for cultural development in Linz and setting up long-term structures and infrastructure to nurture the city's cultural and artistic potential. In autumn 1997, a first draft of **Linz's Cultural Development Plan (KEP)** made its public debut, and went on to be the subject of extensive discussions in 1998, particularly in the context of the **European Month of Culture**. In early 2000, the City Council adopted the KEP, and thus made Linz one of the first Austrian cities with a mission statement formally delineating its cultural strategy.

During the first decade of the 21st century, the city stepped up investment in cultural infrastructure, particularly in anticipation of Linz's term as **European Capital of Culture in 2009**: a newly-constructed facility for the **Lentos Art Museum** (2003); adaptation of a former soup kitchen to serve as headquarters of afo architekturforum oberösterreich and the MAERZ artists' association (2003); the new **Wissensturm** (2007); **expansion of the Ars Electronica Center (2009)**; construction of the Schlossmuseum's new south wing (2009); renovation and expansion of the Library of the Province of Upper Austria (2009); and founding of the **Salzamt atelier facility** (2009). The highpoint of this string of successes was the brilliant lineup of events staged in conjunction with **Linz09 European Capital of Culture**. The opening of the Kulturquartier (2011), the new **Music Theater** in Volksgarten park (2013) and the **Anton Bruckner Private University** (2014)—all under the aegis of the Province of Upper Austria—have brought this infrastructure improvement program to a preliminary conclusion. The development of the former tobacco processing plant purchased by Linz in 2009, portions of which are being used as studios/ateliers and by entrepreneurs in the creative economy, is another location with tremendous promise for the city's cultural future. Thus, Linz has at its disposal comprehensive, state-of-the-art cultural infrastructure that is absolutely exemplary for a city of its size.

As one of Nazi Germany's so-called **Cities of the Führer**, another top-priority mission to which Linz is committed is setting a political and moral example in coming to terms with the time of National Socialism. The process of dealing with the city's Hitlerite legacy has resulted in numerous publications and exhibition projects, many produced under the auspices of the **Municipal Archive**. The Linz09 program included new forms of mediating laypeople's encounters with contemporary historical scholarship. These discussions and endeavors are ongoing.

The artistic and cultural offerings that Linz proffers have contributed mightily to this city's ascent to European Capital of Culture status, to making it a so-called Second City within Austria. Linz has emerged as a prime cultural tourism destination since holding Capital of Culture honors in 2009, whereby several newly established festival formats—the **Crossing Europe Film Festival**, **Schäxpir Theater Festival for young people**, **Festival 4020**, **More than Music**, **Nextcomic**—have been added to previously existing mainstays—Brucknerfest and Ars Electronica—and enabled Linz to achieve truly wide-ranging renown. Right from the start, the substantial basis for lively cultural life in Linz has been driven by an interesting array of personalities and artistic associations that have succeeded in making a name for themselves locally, nationally and worldwide across the creative spectrum—in architecture, the graphic & performing arts, design, film & photography, new media, music and literature. Thus, Linz does justice to its official role as capital of the Province of Upper Austria, not only as this region's administrative, educational and commercial center but also as prime provider of cultural content to the 1.4 million people who live here.

So, now that the “hardware” is in place, the job for the next five years is to work consistently on expanding and upgrading the “software.” The City of Linz’s new KEP is to be assessed in light of this concise strategy statement.

A New KEP—Cultural Development Plan

Linz’s new KEP is designed to govern cultural development over the next 10-15 years. Created with broad-based input, it lays out a strategy that is binding on cultural policymaking. The aim is to assure this city’s continued cultural dynamism. It defines cultural policymakers’ framework for action, formulates strategic goals, specifies corresponding measures to achieve them, but also provides for sufficient leeway to respond effectively to future trends and challenges. Demarcating the agenda are four guidelines (to each of which three areas of cultural policymaking emphasis have been assigned):

- 1. Increase Equality of Opportunity**
- 2. Nurture Potential**
- 3. Facilitate Access**
- 4. Open This City Up**

The four main points on the 2000 KEP’s agenda—Culture for All, New Media & Technology, the Indie Scene, and Open Spaces—have been updated and integrated into the new KEP. In addition to manifesting global issues, it reflects factors and considerations specific to Linz and the city’s strengths and potential. It enunciates commitments to the indie art & culture scene, to the special status of digital media art, to dealing with the legacy of National Socialism, and to an approach to educational endeavors and audience participation in the spirit of Culture for All. Global issues such as the increasing importance of international networks, interdisciplinarity in art, cultural education and science, as well as equality of opportunity with respect to barrier-free design, interculturality and gender fairness are likewise matters of utmost importance in the new KEP. Planning and carrying out the Linz 2009 European Capital of Culture program imparted key impetus to this intensified process of confronting social and urban issues; the aim of the new KEP is to sustainably carry this on.

Each of the new KEP’s 12 chapters formally elaborates on the visions and objectives of Linz cultural policymaking with respect to the particular topic, and puts forth a series of measures to be implemented in order to achieve the stated aims.

Like the city’s first KEP, this updated version is meant to be a work in progress. The objectives and measures are by no means carved in stone; rather, the new KEP should be fine-tuned on an ongoing basis, and remain somewhat flexible in order to respond appropriately to future developments, changed framework conditions, and new challenges. Every three years—i.e. 2016, 2019, 2022 and 2025—the Linz City Council will be informed of the extent to which provisions of this KEP have been implemented and the goals attained. For this report, implementation progress will be evaluated in cooperation with the City of Linz’s Cultural Advisory Board, the KEP’s measures will be assessed with respect to their relevance and completeness, and revised measures added.

Culture for All in the 21st Century

Culture for All remains this city’s cultural policymaking watchwords and thus the overarching principle to which all provisions of the new KEP are subsumed. This approach emerged in West Germany during the time of social ferment in the wake of the upheavals of 1968 and established itself as a maxim in Austria

as well. In addition to democratization of cultural policymaking and expansion of the very concept of art and culture, integral elements of Culture for All are emancipatory measures to foster participation and cultural self-organization, as well as to nurture the humanization of society as a means of empowering individuals to appreciate the aesthetic forms of art and culture and the content they aim to get across. Linz was Austria's first city to actively stress Culture for All—which also necessarily means of all and by all—and to implement this philosophy in diverse ways. In addition to setting up new cultural infrastructure, concrete actions have included expanding subsidy programs in the spirit of a very inclusive concept of culture, and developing formats that offer the general public low-threshold access to art and culture.

In the meantime, the social framework conditions in which Culture for All is embedded have changed significantly. Reinterpreting and updating this concept necessarily entails taking into consideration these changes—e.g. globalization, individualization, pluralization, ecological considerations, the advent of the internet and new media, gender mainstreaming, interculturality and historical milestones such as the fall of the Iron Curtain and the expansion of the European Union. Redefining the term calls for conceptual fundamentals and theoretically justified objectives, which the new KEP now provides. At present, Culture for All in the context of Linz means establishing preconditions that make it possible to continue to lower existing barriers tending to prevent people from accessing art and culture. The way to do this is not by dumbing down the offerings but rather by developing new approaches to mediating audiences' encounters with art and culture and using the latest means to advance active participation in artistic and cultural production. Making access to digital media and information as barrier-free as possible—for example, in conjunction with Open Commons Region Linz—delivers an essential contribution to this; so does cultural education. In this day and age, Culture for All means considering the diverse forms of art and culture as equally valid and valuable, fostering the empowerment of individuals and the activation of their own creative capabilities, integrating members of the general public in decision-making processes, and scrutinizing offerings of so-called high culture with respect to their social relevance.

The point of departure of all objectives and measures in the context of the KEP is always the city and the needs of its inhabitants. At the same time, the commitment to artistic freedom, to experimentation and diversity guarantees development and progress. Significant in this connection is, among other things, inculcating an aesthetic practice that enables people to differentiate and that recognizes differences in a pluralistically organized society as a precondition for enlightened, responsible behavior. In this sense, encountering art and culture and involvement in them play a key role in an open city.

I. Increase Equality of Opportunity

In line with Linz's overall political orientation as a city in which social justice prevails, providing equal opportunity for all is also the basic principle governing cultural policymaking here. The City of Linz is thus committed to equality of opportunity in social and cultural affairs for all individuals and social groups, and to providing for fairness in enabling all people to partake of social and cultural life.

The aim is to eliminate any remaining barriers hindering access and usage, to institute gender fairness on all levels, and to consider social diversity—both ethnic and religious—as a normal state of affairs. These aims constitute the indispensable preconditions for putting the concept of Culture for All into actual practice.

II. Nurture Potential

Cultural development & planning are the driving force behind cultural progress and the basis of fruitful encounters with socially relevant issues and artistic trends. To assure that this takes place, it is imperative to do everything possible to nurture the potential that is already present in a city—on one

hand, in the form of acknowledging the municipality's responsibility to support art and culture, including providing financial subsidies for both public sector institutions as well as those active in the indie scene; on the other hand, by providing adequate infrastructure, which is, after all, the *sine qua non* of any cultural and artistic production.

Moreover, interdisciplinary activities and leading-edge forms of creative expression are formally acknowledged to constitute the core of Linz's artistic and cultural potential.

III. Facilitate Access

Participation and facilitating encounters are the preconditions of Culture for All. Accordingly, cultural education is an essential part of genuine participation in cultural life on the part of as many segments of society as possible. One area of emphasis of cultural policymaking in Linz is thus to target kids, young people and young adults who, regardless of their ethnic origins or social background, have a right to art and culture. In this connection, the prime settings for providing access to art and culture are public spaces, which are defined as not only physical venues but also as media sites that enable people to intensively engage in discussions, encounters and criticism.

IV. Open This City Up

Inherent in urbanity is openness, complexity, networking and compression. As Upper Austria's metropolitan area, Linz plays a special role with key responsibilities in this respect, not only as the province's administrative center but also as the cultural center of gravity of a prospering regional economy.

For Linz as a cultural center, this means continuing to expand the national and European networks in which it is integrated, to promote the internationalization of artistic and cultural creativity here, and to further optimize the breadth and depth of the city's cultural offerings by cooperating with institutions, producers, etc.

The process of analyzing the past and imagining the future in this city is meant to serve as a basis for responding to an increasingly complex world with solutions and projects that solidify Linz's status as an innovative, cosmopolitan city with a bright future, one in which acknowledgment of responsibility for the past, and particularly the City of Linz's National Socialist legacy, is precisely what establishes the preconditions for a humane, democratic present and future.