



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund



**SKILLS+**  
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**SKILLS+**

**ACTION PLAN FOR THE MORAVIAN  
SILESIAN REGION**



Date: September 16 2019



*Part I – General information*

Project	PGI 00088 SKILLS+
Partner Organisation	VSB – Technical University Ostrava
Country	Czech Republic
NUTS2 Region	Moravian Silesian Region
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*Part II – Policy context*

The Action Plan aims to impact  **Investment for Growth and Jobs programme**

Name of the policy instrument addressed: Operational Programme Enterprise, and Innovations for Competitiveness

**Type 1: Implementation of new projects**

Type 2: Change in the management of the policy instrument (improved governance)

Type 3: Change in the strategic focus of the policy instrument (structural change)

European Territorial Cooperation programme

Other regional development policy instrument

### *Part III – Details of the actions envisaged*

#### **The background**

There is a strong need to support economic development in the EU regions that are suffering from the industrial shift away from the heavy mining industry. Therefore, the so called "Mining Platform" was recently established. Besides the Ústí Region, also the Moravian-Silesian Region belongs to this platform. To support the regions undergoing structural change, especially in the former mining and industrial regions such as the Moravian-Silesian and the Ústí Region, the Czech government develops the supporting programmes. The Moravian-Silesian region is currently involved in the RESTART programme that will support competition in the business sector, with focus on regional SME's development. The aim is to launch incentives, and to create an environment that will enable sustainable economic growth and to reduce the share of public funding. The investment in innovation and support of research and development activities will contribute to this development. The Moravian-Silesian region, especially the City of Ostrava and its metropolitan area, disposes with the wide research infrastructure. VSB–The Technical University Ostrava, as the main educational and research institution in the region established several research centres: The IT4Innovations, which belongs to a TOP research centres at the EU level, Centre Energy Units for Utilization of Non-Traditional Energy Sources (ENET); Institute of Environmental Technology (IET) and other. As a part of these activities we provide consultation, courses, seminars with the aim knowledge sharing and improving.

The VSB–TUO focused on the Policy Instrument Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovations for Competitiveness, Priority Axis 1: Development of research, and development for innovations, Specific objective 1.2: Increase of intensity and effectiveness of cooperation in research, development and innovations for the Czech Republic in the 2014 – 2020 financial period. The OP is managed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic. The desired output is to extend number of well-prepared project applications for the committed Policy Instrument by encouraging SMEs from the Moravian-Silesian Region to participate and hereby to increase the impact of the Policy Instrument to the structural change of this region.

The Moravian-Silesian region, like many of the cities and regions of the world, is interesting on "smart", "smart cities" or "smart regions" concepts, and wants to promote the practical implementation of this concept in the region.

The Moravian-Silesian Region intends to commit itself to the implementation of the long-term objectives and the implementation of the proposed measures and projects in five

priority areas - Transport, ICT Infrastructure, Healthcare, De-Bureaucracy and Savings. This are activity within the RIS3 strategy vertical and horizontal priorities (action 3 below).

The aim of the Moravian-Silesian Region is to contribute to the development and use of smart technologies, increase the competitiveness of the region and the quality of life of its inhabitants, while contributing to the goals of the long-term development strategy of the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Czech Republic. One of the offers how to reach it is/was project SKILLS+.

Project SKILLS+ help (by information spreading, stakeholders meeting, consultation during project Skills running) SMEs better to use the effect of expected long-term benefits from Development Strategy of the Smart Region of the Moravian-Silesian Region, like:

- Increasing the capacity, speed, availability and quality of ICT infrastructure for the inhabitants and business entities in the region. Infrastructure and conditions for the collection, storage and rapid use of data and information of the required quality.
- Usable high-capacity backbone infrastructure for data, audio, graphics and video transmission, which are a prerequisite for delivering innovative solutions for online services and products.
- Higher efficiency of both public and private services through a functional and affordable Internet of Things, Automation, and Extensions to End-User and Developer Deduction.

The total amount of funds regarding Priority Axis 1 is 1,342,600 EUR. The specific objective 1.2 "Increase of intensity and effectiveness of the cooperation in research, development and innovations" foresees, among other measures, the support of the uptake of ICT and the development of new ICT based products and services by Czech SME's. The key activity of the respective OP priority is to support the innovations and application of research in industries, with the main focus on development of new methods and technologies supporting innovative products, materials and software creation. This is linked with the development of new job positions. Supported activities include joint research and technology transfer projects among several SME's and/or with R&D institutions, as well as innovation within individual SME's. The 1st Priority Axis also provides funding for the IraSME projects, in particular, those projects submitted by two SMEs from eligible countries: (Austria, Germany, Belgium (Flanders, Wallonia), Germany, Russia (MP only) and France (Nord-Pas de Calais region).

The policy instrument works on a national level, so VSB-TUO targeted the Action Plan activities on enhancement of the cooperation between the university and regional SME's, with the specific focus on small companies with less than 50 employees, registered in the

Moravian-Silesian Region rural areas. The Action Plan activities shall support new project applications provided in a better quality, submitted by new applicants from SME's targeted to implementation of innovation and new IT solutions. The VSB-TUO also aims to improve the cooperation among regional SME's, and to support the transfer of knowledge among SME's in the educational and research sector, and aims to increase the number of small companies participating in the Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovations for Competitiveness in this manner. Consequently, this objective determined the practices (increase IT use, testbed building, using the support of mentoring specialist from University) that VSB-TUO proposed and discussed with stakeholders firstly in the preparation of Baseline study, secondly during the preparation of the Action Plan.

This AP based especially on the Modern Business Program: focuses on the development of digital competences of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, reduction of the primary (digital illiteracy) and secondary (low degree of utilization) digital divide, enabling micro and small enterprises to recognize business opportunities resulting from the introduction of ICT systems and to make use of those opportunities, as well as making available the benefits of the digital ecosystem to those lagging behind more durable (e-inclusion)

The action plan focuses mainly on the use of international experience and its implementation in the national structural funds. All national specifics will be respected.

The most useful information gathered within the project is: DIGIBOOSTI: Supporting the SMEs to hire a digitalization specialist. To hire graduating students to local SMEs is a good way to keep talent in the region and to develop the businesses in digitalization.

From the DIGIBOOSTI was minimum learned how could be defined a clear digitalisation strategy and how could be the ICT strategy set on national level and region set priorities for ICT development for higher level. The collected information and knowledges were implemented and spread mainly to the SMEs.

The collected information and knowledges from DIGIBOOST were implemented and spread mainly to the SMEs. As the Technical University we can help in identifying improvements to individual sites to improve digitalization and SME development in this area. For example: In this moment is the necessarily understanding of digitalisation, it's advantages and it's utilisation in business operations. Because it's the way for the SMEs how to increase sales of current products, services and ideas and to ensure competitiveness between the companies. Digitalisation help to identification new protentional customers, employee and thereby expand own company. It's very important started to use social media for promotion of products, visibility of the company, establishing closer contact with the customer. Improve the quality of websites, improve the use of Internet services. The information was used for the actions below.

As the Technical University has an objective academic environment, its actions are mainly focused on support measures.

These support measures can help – to increase use of operational programs and the more targeted themes of the remaining calls Priority Axis 1. We will support the SMEs and other stakeholders for the better understanding the policy priorities and according the knowledge from other BP we will to support they on the way, according the OP Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovations for Competitiveness 1st Priority Axes, which supports cooperation between SMEs and Research organisations (Universities, Czech Academy of Sciences, other research organisations), but now on higher level with respect of local specific, eg. Underdevelopment regions in Czech Republic.

We as the University are not able to make direct a changes at the Operational Programme, but according the Ministry's support letter we could help to target challenges, to achieve a better effect of the proposed projects within the OP.

All action below Support the cooperation among regional SME's and the educational and research institutions to prepare projects for funding to reach better proposals content and effects.

**Challenge addressed:**

Actions:

- 1. SME's direct support**
- 2. Workshops**
- 3. Projects preparation, Project consultation**

### 1. **SME's direct support**

VSB-TUO will organize seminars, to provide the regional SME's with updated information and practical advice to support them in development and submission of applications (projects preparation, needs and opportunities). This is new action which can be realised by obtained the knowledge from Skills+ project, we can be more specific and addressed on the regional/rures area need.

According the plan we will organise min 1 seminar every 6-month, duration min 1 day Seminars will be realized by school staff in cooperation with other organizations, eg with AVO, Chamber of Commerce. Companies will be sent an electronic circular, information about the event will be published on the website. The target companies are mainly SMEs from the region of Moravia and Silesia. The head of the seminar will be the staff of the university, who will also be responsible for the content of the seminar. Invited guests according to their specialization will participate in the seminar. The seminars will be held at the university premises or in other suitable locations, eg the Chamber of Commerce, in order to achieve the best effect (time and cost savings). During the seminars, besides lectures, sufficient time will be provided to discuss the topic among the participants.

**gained knowledge:** work with the OP project application, important project content, IT skills, possibility of IT support using

**The policy impact of this action:** well prepared proposals, these seminars should enable small companies from rural areas to seize opportunities offered by the OP. The OP's effectiveness is hence strengthened because a new but relevant target group of the OP is (better) reached.

#### **Output: Project applications submitted by regional SME's min. 3**

The purpose of this activity is to enhance collaboration between the different stakeholders in Moravian Silesian Region with the focus being on the implementation of innovation and technology transfer as well as maximizing opportunities arising from the cooperative projects between SMEs and research organisations.

**Impact on the police instrument** - During the last period of the programming period the Ministry of Industry and Trade will open the call under the Program Axis 1 (the calls structure is not known presently, operation program is presently still under negotiation with EU), Technical University Ostrava will try to play important role on **the definition of topics for these calls** for SME's and will support the SMEs by proposals preparation for better use of financial support and results. The summaries from all action will be forwarded and discus to improve call's results.

All activities refer to the current OP 2014-2020

### 1.1. Players involved

VSB – TUO – SKILLS+ project partner, main coordinator and provider of the activity - university will organise some special meetings to serve the Stakeholders.

### 1.2. Stakeholders - beneficiaries

- Association of Research Organisations – participate on seminars, providing consultations with SMEs
- Business Chamber – participate on seminars, providing consultations
- Enterprise Europe Network
- SMEs – Beneficiaries, Clusters, – participate on seminars, using served knowledges

### 1.3. Timeframe

4/2019 – 3/2021, every 6 month will be take min. 1 action

### 1.4. Costs

Personal costs, room sharing, consultation – own sources min. 1 person (10 % of capacity)

### 1.5. Funding sources:

own sources - 10 % of the involved personal cost will be paid by the university,  
Expected min. 1 persons for 10 % capacity till 6/2021.



## 2. Courses – supported action

Support education of regional SME's at the field IT knowledge, courses will be innovated by the knowledge of project Skills+. The courses will be upgraded by integration of the need to use the IT knowledge gained from the project. It will be served also by project's good practices -- <http://kurzy.vsb.cz/>.

We will update the courses e.g. Computer course Internet and Outlook, MS PowerPoint, preparation for ECDL test, Work with digital photos, Windows Network Management - Security and Data Protection. The update of course will be based on the specifics need of SMEs, IT knowledge, working on web platforms, the necessarily understanding of digitalisation.

We will open also **new course Skills** for SME's – based on the good practise exchange, especially is necessary to improve the knowledge how could be the ICT integrate to the SMEs common activities and increase their professional capability. Under the title e.g. **Digital Skills for SMEs**. (such general courses are presently not running, it helps the companies by the identification new protentional customers, employee and thereby expand own company, how important is to start to use social media for promotion of products, visibility of the company, establishing closer contact with the customer. Improve the quality of websites; improve the use of Internet services. All this should result to the better proposals for OP calls and this to the better results of such running projects)

Aims: work with Web, outlook, data protection, ability to understand the possibilities of using IT in the company environment

Duration 1 day

Campaign every month, according need (minimum 5 participants)

**Output: running courses – 5**

The purpose of this activity is to provide trainings to improve capacity and support the implementation of the innovation in SME's in the Moravian Silesian Region that will enhance the economic development of this region and help with the new orientation to Industry 4.0 according the calls for the current OP 2014-2020.

During the courses will be the innovation processes from SKILLS+ integrated (according the Peer review recommendation and learned knowledge form BP) – especially

- the fears of the SMEs for the digitalisation in Ostrava and North-Moravian Region
- increase the opportunities to be more capable for the digital area
- the best practices and their share

- possibilities of simplification of institutional background
- best way how the SMEs could use the ICT for marketing and management
- offering job opportunities in the region to graduating students

#### 2.1. Players involved

VSB – TUO – SKILLS+ project partner, provider of the activity

#### 2.2. Timeframe

Continually, but in the campaigns, every 6 month min. 1 action

#### 2.3. Costs

Personal costs, room share, consultation – own sources, 10 % of the involved personal cost will be paid by the university,

#### 2.4. Funding sources: n/a

Extra - Partly paid by the participants and/or by the government – only as the Demonstration of participant interest (expecting better motivation of participant)

When ordering the second and other courses for the same participant is a 10 % discount (not applicable for retraining courses).

Unemployed, seniors, full-time students and women (men) on RD have a 50 % discount (not for retraining and online courses).

Education employees have a 25% discount (unless stated otherwise).

For holders of VŠB-TUO graduate card discount 10 %

Repeating the course within one year is free of charge.

If someone is not sure whether the course is suitable for him / her, he / she can attend the first day of the first training for free (applies to most 3-day and longer courses).

First preparation of the courses was made by the previous projects, added courses by Skills+ knowledge.

### 3. Projects preparation, Projects consultation

The close cooperation and support of the Cluster operating in e-mobility in development and submission of project application under respective OP Axis and Priority. Communication with the stakeholders (consultation, idea brainstorming, Collection of SMEs needs, networking partners).

University will active involve the stakeholders to participate on the consultations, offer the join work, etc. with support of the web portals, personal contacts, professional groups and organization (e.g. business chamber) all the projects preparation and support will refer to the current OP 2014-2020.

Some examples for support could be taken also from <https://cpi.vsb.cz/cs/sluzby/projektova-podpora/> - support of proposal preparation, project's running

<https://cpi.vsb.cz/cs/sluzby/projektova-podpora/konzultace-a-priprava-projektu/> - support of proposal preparation, project's running

The prepared courses/meetings/consultations will enable to better fulfill the OP 2014-20 priority objectives and increase the OP impact capacity.

Consultation of project plans, which are planned to be carried out by holders from the Moravian-Silesian Region in this period, their orientation (specification) to horizontal OP priority areas and control of fulfillment of the strategic and specific OP objectives will improve the effectiveness of results and targeted impact of measures.

Consultation of project plans, which are planned to be carried out by holders from the Moravian-Silesian Region in this period, their orientation (specification) to horizontal OP priority areas and control of fulfilment of the strategic and specific OP objectives will improve the effectiveness of results and targeted impact of measures.

During the consultation, the stakeholders' interests in the OP will be monitored and they will be provided with feedback on the possibilities of their ideas. The Ministry of Industry and Trade (as the guarantor of the OP) will be informed about their interest, the boundary conditions of the calls will be refined, thus achieving better effects of the OP

**Output: Number of developed applications** – min. 2  
**Output: Number of consulting projects** – min. 2

The purpose of this activity is to improve the quality of the project's applications and their impact to the competitiveness of the SMEs from the Moravian Silesian Region. Individual project consultation will assist in the whole process of project preparation from networking, logical frame consultation and also advisory services providing marketing and financial analysis. Hereby the capacity obstacles SMEs faces will be eliminated, SMEs will be able to work with new partners on the improvement of their products, technology or knowledge. Innovations will inevitable support the economic growth of SMEs and also of the Moravian Silesian Region.

The impact of these activities will help to increase join projects with the SMEs and University and better way of use the knowledges and infrastructures.

As important **impact** of this action is feedback from projects preparation and needs that will be shared with the Ministry of Industry and Trade for "improving" the police instrument.

This feedback will aim to better targeting the newly launched calls of OP 2014-2020 and the impacts received.

Impacts of this activity and form of realization:

- Face to face consultation with project output
- WSs for competitive projects writing – Title : Skills for SMEs
- Increase project numbers within the OP 2014-2020 Calls with participation of SMEs and TUO
- Implementation of collected Skills knowledges to new prepared projects with participation of SMEs and TUO

Improvement of SMEs competitiveness by providing IT tools to facilitate international trade, promotion of IT Supercomputing VSB – TUO Centre

Increase of IT tools utilisation by regional SME's to support their competitiveness

<http://industry.it4i.cz/en/>

<https://www.it4i.cz/2018/10/15-kolo-verejne-grantove-souteze/>

<https://www.it4i.cz/2018/10/8-vyzva-prace-shape-vypocetni-cas-pro-male-a-stredni-podniky/>

**Output: Number of supported SME's – 2**

Subsequently VSB -TUO will offer its services within this SME activity in various forms

- Direct involvement in projects through subcontracting
- direct partnership - as a member of a consortium

In some cases, the university will only fulfill the mentoring role of the state university - counselling.

The advantage will be the use within the OP of special calls for "mentoring" (the activity of experts in SMEs) to increase the incentive effect of the OP

### 3.1. **Players involved**

VSB – TUO – SKILLS+ project partner, provider of the activity, coordinator, consulter, will actively involve new SMEs for collaboration

Regional clusters, especial the e-mobility

Regional Business chamber

SME's

### 3.2. **Timeframe**

4/2019 – 3/2020, every 6 month min. 1 action (Consultation, WS, Training project writing)

### 3.3. **Costs**

Personal costs – own sources, min. 1 person for 10 % of month capacity

### 3.4. **Funding sources:**

According to the university's rules is a part of obtained overheads various project returned as such activity supports



Date:

07. 10. 2019

Signature:

prof. RNDr. Václav Snášel, CSc., rector of VSB-TU Ostrava

VYSOKÁ ŠKOLA BÁŇSKÁ  
TECHNICKÁ UNIVERZITA OSTRAVA

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Stamp of the organisation (if available): \_\_\_\_\_

To

Prof. RNDr. Václav Snášel, CSc.  
Rector of VŠB – TU Ostrava  
VSB – Technical University Ostrava  
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708 00 Ostrava-Poruba



## Declaration of Support

### Action Plan PGI 00088 SKILLS+

**SKILLS+** project and the implementation of the **SKILLS+ Action Plan** is targeted to the *Operational Programme Enterprise, and Innovations for Competitiveness, the Priority Axis 1: Development of research, and development for innovations, Specific objective 1.2: Increase of intensity and effectiveness of cooperation in research, development and innovations for the Czech Republic in the 2014 – 2020*. The Action Plan Activities aim to enhance of the cooperation between the university and regional SME's, with the specific focus on small companies with less than 50 employees, registered in the Moravian-Silesian Region rural areas. The Action Plan Activities objective is to improve the cooperation among regional SME's, and to support the transfer of knowledge among SME's in the educational and research sector, and aims to increase the number of small companies participating in the *Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovations for Competitiveness* in this manner. Therefore the Ministry of Industry and Trade consider the SKILLS+ Action Plan extremely valuable for competitiveness and innovation potential of SMES and, in general, for our national economy.

With this Letter of Support, we manifest intention to keep our focus on the implementation of the Action Plan in order to maximise the benefit from its activities. There are ongoing changes in the Moravian-Silesian Region to create an environment that will enable sustainable economical growth and we believe that the implementation of SKILLS+ Action is a good opportunity to support of research and development activities and hereby contribute to this development.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of fluid, overlapping strokes that form a stylized, elongated shape.

Ing. Marian Piecha, Ph.D., LLM  
Deputy Minister