

START support to Karlovy Vary & Sokolov-East micro-region

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(START), Initiative for Coal Regions in Transition*



Agenda

01

**EU Initiative for
Coal Regions in
Transition**

02

**START support
facility**

03

**START support
to Karlovy Vary
Region and
Sokolov-East
micro-region**

04

**Approaches to
local
development
and employment
creation**

05

**Lessons for the
Sokolov-East
micro-region**

06

**Key issues:
Building
capacity and
priority actions**

EU Initiative for Coal Regions in Transition

- **Created in 2017** to address the unique contexts of coal regions
- **Open forum** gathering all relevant stakeholders to discuss common challenges and solutions
- **Multi-stakeholder Dialogue** (Working Groups and Annual Political Dialogue)
- **Resource Materials:** toolkits, guidelines and reports
- **Technical Assistance:** START (September 2019) and TARGET (November 2021)
- **Peer to Peer encounters:** ExchangeEU (November 2021)



START support facility

- **Tailor made** technical assistance for EU coal, peat and oil shale regions:
 - **Strategy** development
 - **Project** identification, prioritisation and development
 - **Governance** and planning
- **Open procedure** for applications
- **7 regions** selected
- **Complementary** with other existing EC support efforts
- **Targeted** and needs-orientated expertise (circa 50 to 110 days per region)
- **Co-creation** approach, engaging closely with recipients of support



START support to Karlovy Vary Region

- Field visit (February 2020)

Karlovy Vary Outputs

- **Regional Profile** of socio-economic and industrial context
- **Good practice** for regional and sub-regional strategies in coal regions in transition (June 2021)
- **Employment** creation opportunities and future skills requirements (January 2021 & April 2021)
- **Renewable energy:** heating solutions and energy efficiency in buildings (July 2021)



START support to Sokolov-East micro-region

Sokolov East Outputs

- **Socio-economic analysis**
- **Local Development & Employment Creation**

Contents & purpose

- **Provide relevant examples** of potential local development and job creation approaches and options
- **Motivate local and regional organisations** to identify priorities
- **Encourage co-ordinated action** for local and regional planning and application of funding



SWOT: Sokolov-East micro-region

STRENGTHS

- Proximity to Germany (Zwickau 80km)
- Proximity to Karlovy Vary, Cheb and Pilsen
- Land availability
- Anchor firm (SUAS)
- BMW investment
- Expanding rural settlements

WEAKNESSES

- Demographic decline, especially in urban centres
- Unemployment and economic inactivity
- Low educational achievement
- Lack of businesses with higher added value
- Social deprivation
- Infrastructure (inter-regional / international)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Business start-ups and expansion
- German investment / networking with German companies / marketing and awareness
- Greening of landscape and economy
- Renewable energy / energy transition
- New remote / ICT models of working
- Radical new narrative for sub-region

THREATS

- Social exclusion
- Future of urban centres
- Increasingly uncompetitive labour force
- Limited opportunities for young, ambitious or qualified persons
- Insufficient public and private action / investment / co-ordination

Approaches to local development and employment creation

Linking local strengths and assets to **‘external’ opportunities**:

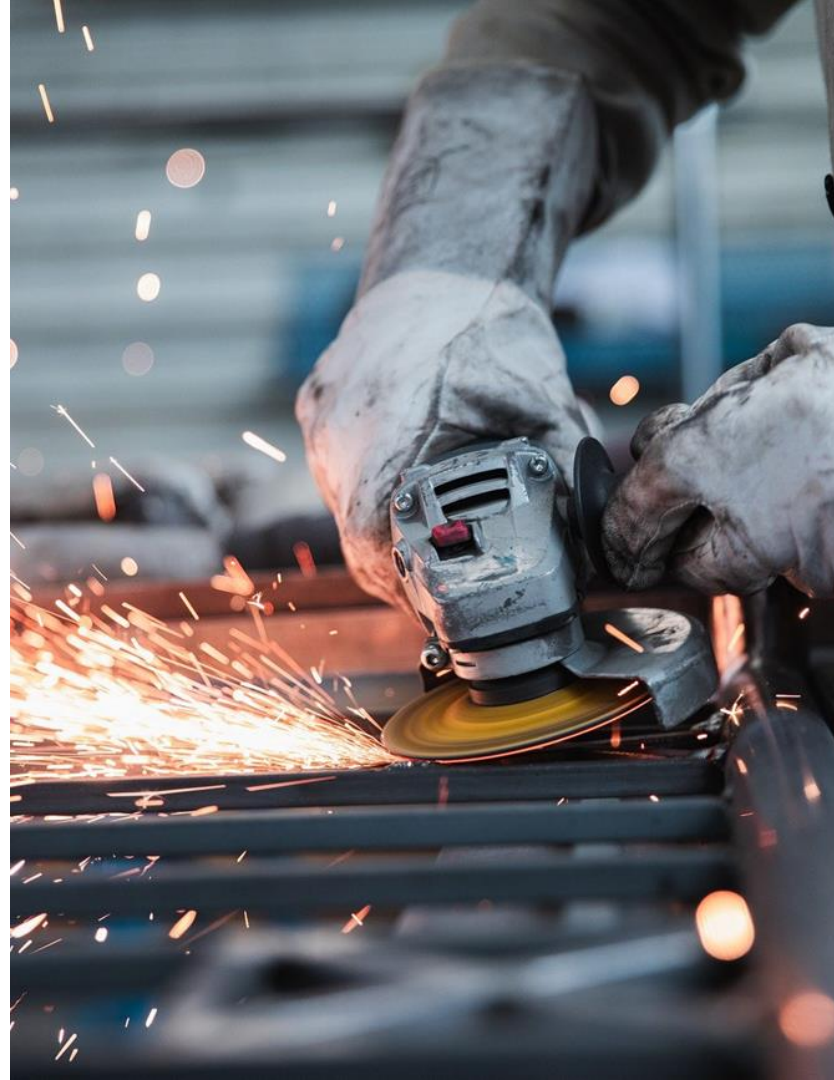
- **Attracting external investment**
 - Terhills Tourism, Limburg (BE)
 - Fantanele-Cogealac Wind Farm, Dobruja (RO)
- **Technology transfer**
 - Dinopol packaging, Wielkepolskie (PL)
 - O'clock, Île-de-France (FR)
- **Redeployment of public service employment**
 - Relocation of public sector broadcasting, Manchester (UK)
 - Crichton University Campus, Dumfries and Galloway (UK)



Approaches to local development and employment creation

Linking local strengths and assets to **'internal' opportunities**:

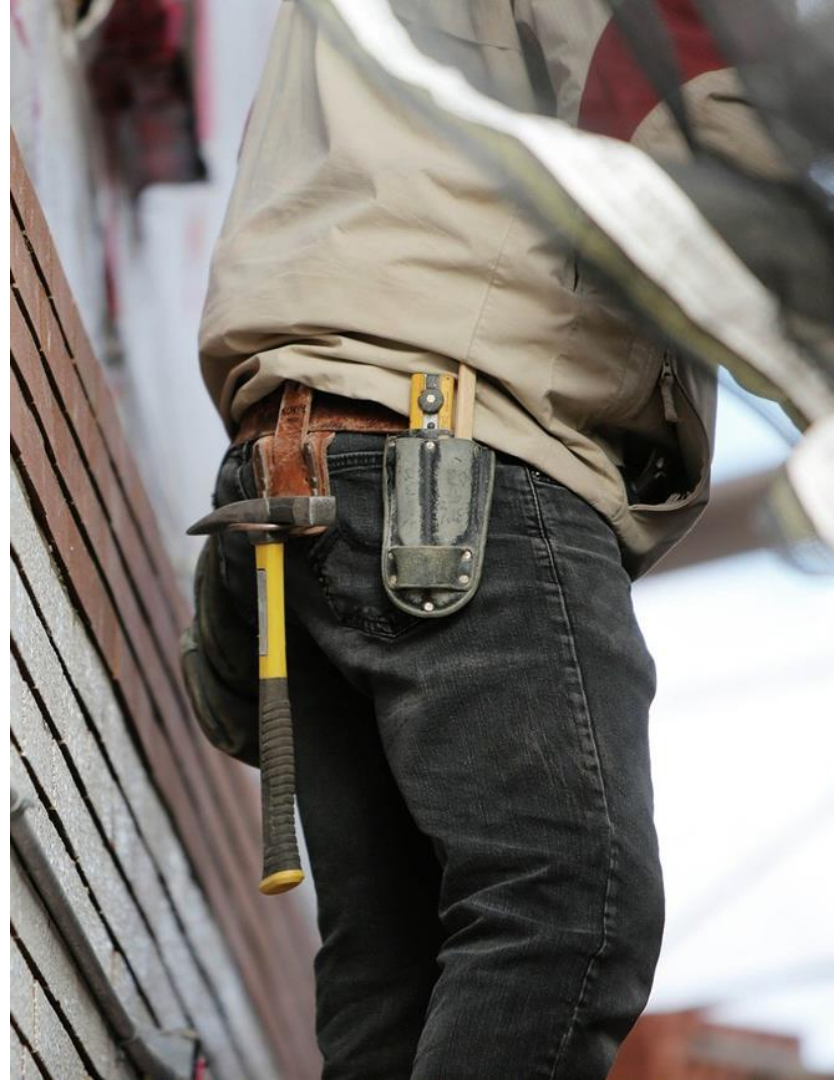
- **Entrepreneurship**
 - GrowBiz, Perthshire (UK)
 - Coop cross-border business exchange, (EE & LV)
 - Cowocat-Rural, Catalonia (ES)
- **Expansion and diversification of existing businesses (including anchor companies)**
 - ZMW, Sumalki (PL)
 - PISMO Business Incubator, Sisak-Moslavina (HR)
 - BnM Brown to Green programme, Midlands (IE)



Approaches to local development and employment creation

Linking local strengths and assets to **internal opportunities**:

- **Social Economy**
 - Ludgate Hub, Skibbereen (IE)
 - Across the Country, Cserehat and Zala (HU)
 - Oksigen Lab, Brussels (BE)
- **Involving citizens in planning and development**
 - Vistula valley cultural and culinary brand, Kujawsko-Pomorkie (PL)
 - You have the energy, you have the power, Catalonia (ES)



Approaches to local development and employment creation

Other considerations:

- **Skills and training:** address skills gaps and shortages in the current workforce and prepare the young for future opportunities
- **Keeping money in the community:** ensure that local public, private and residential expenditures are used to optimise local employment (e.g., Community Wealth Building)
- **Profile and perception:** many localities have reinvented how they are perceived externally



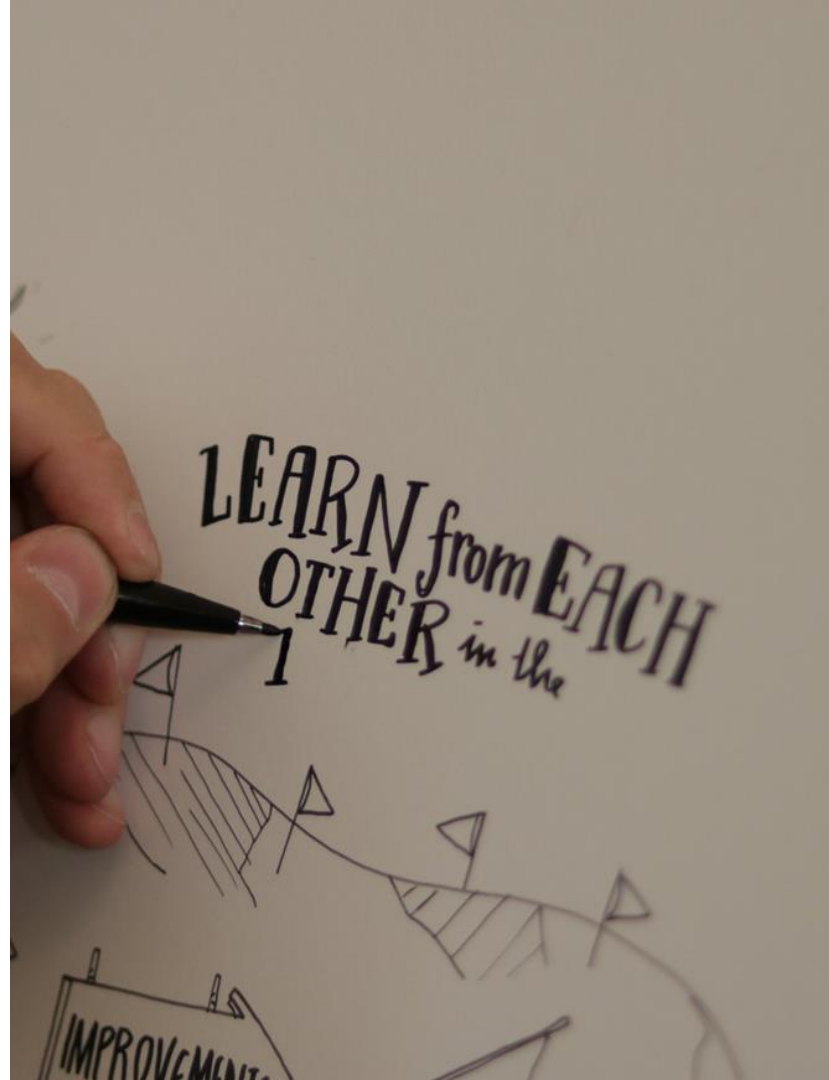
Lessons for the Sokolov-East micro-region

Partnerships:

- **Local development involves many actors:** public, private (SMEs, anchor companies, inward investors etc.) civil society organisations, residents
- **Different scales of government and business need to be engaged:** local, regional, national and international
- **Creating internal and external linkages and networks is vital:** a local economy is not an island

Learning:

- **Policy and practice innovation is important:** failures as well as successes will occur, learn from them



Lessons for the Sokolov-East micro-region

A locality needs local capacity for local development:

- **Knowledge and foresight** to understand the present and the future
- **Develop a strategy** and / or engage with strategy development processes
- **Build partnerships** and networking across diverse actors and across scales
- **Communicate** to build consensus, transparency, legitimacy and trust
- **Accessing and co-ordinating resources** (local, regional, national and EU)
- **Identify, develop and implement projects**
- **Engage and co-creation** with external expertise and public and private assistance



Building capacity in the Sokolov-East micro-region

Potential priorities for strengthening capacity in the micro-region ?

- **Strategy implementation**
- **Optimise co-ordination**, partnership working and networking
- **Identify and optimise development possibilities** and funding opportunities
- **Address both urban and rural dimensions** of local development
- **Co-ordination and sharing of resources** for development across the communities of the micro-region



Actions for the Sokolov-East micro-region

Potential priority actions for the micro-region ?

- Mobilise capacity for planning and delivery
- Develop collective understanding and acceptance of challenges and opportunities
- Develop a unifying vision for the Development of the micro-region
- Develop an action plan, prioritising projects / initiatives in the short and longer terms
- Develop a stakeholder engagement plan to engage, influence and lobby key actors at local, regional, national and international levels
- Deliver "early wins"



Thank you

For more information, please visit EC Coal regions webpage

coalregions.eu

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