

Žd'ár
nad
Sázavou*

***Integrated Action Plan
URBACT IV - In4Green**

version 10/2025



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Section 1

★ GREEN TRANSITION IN EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL CITIES

The URBACT In4Green network aims to empower and build the capacity of local actors in industrial areas to overcome the barriers that prevent the transition to greener economies while remaining competitive and inclusive cities.

The overall challenge that the In4Green network wants to address is the green transition in small and medium-sized European cities with an industrial past.

The green transition in industrial cities is a major challenge. These areas face obstacles to adopting more sustainable practices due to their dependence on traditional industry and lack of resources. However, it is crucial to include these cities in the transformation towards a greener economy. They contribute significantly to the economic development of their territories and represent an important part of EU employment and GDP.

The green transition can be an opportunity to revitalise these areas, improve the quality of life of inhabitants and reduce pollution. To achieve this, public authorities need to be empowered and industrial actors need to be trained.

It is also essential to involve all stakeholders and civil society in the development and implementation of local green transition policies.

Collaboration and networking are key to overcoming challenges and moving towards a more sustainable future. Modernising industries and improving urban management are key elements in this process. Only through the joint efforts of all actors involved will we be able to lead the transformation towards a more efficient and environmentally friendly economy, improving the quality of life of our communities.

In short, the green transition in industrial cities is essential to achieve sustainable development. Despite the challenges, these areas have much to gain by adopting more sustainable practices and promoting innovation. Working together, we can drive positive change and make these cities examples of success in the transition to a greener economy.

★ CURRENT SITUATION IN ŽDÁR NAD SÁZAVOU

The Shrinking City of Ždár nad Sázavou

Between 2001 and 2021, Ždár nad Sázavou experienced a steady population decline, classifying it as a "shrinking city." This phenomenon is widespread across Europe, with Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and Southern Italy seeing the most significant changes. Between 2011 and 2018, 23% of functional urban regions in Europe continued shrinking, with a total population decrease of up to 12%.

The shrinking process affects multiple dimensions of a city, including its physical infrastructure (hardware), socioeconomic and demographic structure (software), and perception (mindware). Based on population loss trends, Ždár nad Sázavou falls into the category of cities with long-term population decline but a stable hinterland. The city is part of the "inner peripheries" alongside other towns in the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands, such as Havlíčkův Brod and Pehřimov.

By 2031, the population is expected to drop by 10-15% (from 20,124 in 2021 to approximately 17,630). The aging population is also a growing trend, with seniors (65+) projected to constitute 31% of the population by 2031. The city views this demographic shift as an opportunity, aiming to enhance services and infrastructure for seniors while attracting young professionals, particularly in healthcare and social services.

Low Unemployment

Despite population decline, Ždár nad Sázavou maintains one of the lowest unemployment rates in the In4Green network. In April 2024, EU unemployment stood at 6%, with the Eurozone at 6.4%, while the Czech Republic reported just 3.7%. Historically, unemployment in Ždár has been 14.3% lower than the national average. However, since 2022, the ratio of job seekers per vacancy has increased, which may impact future investors considering business expansion in the city.

Industrial Powerhouse

The city grew significantly in the second half of the 20th century due to the establishment of ŽDAS, a major engineering company founded in 1951. Industry remains a key economic sector, with 34.8% of the workforce employed in manufacturing, surpassing both the regional (34.2%) and national (27.3%) averages. However, with rising automation and robotization, future employment in this sector will demand a highly skilled workforce.

Declining Entrepreneurial Activity

In recent years, Ždár nad Sázavou has seen a decline in business registrations, particularly in wholesale and retail. Once a regional leader in business density, the city has now fallen to the regional average. In 2023, entrepreneurial activity was 20% lower than the national average. Mayor Martin Mrkos emphasizes the need for a new entrepreneurial boost, advocating for the development of small and medium-sized businesses rather than relying on a single major company.

Clean Air

Air quality is a crucial factor for urban livability, and Ždár nad Sázavou benefits from its location in the protected Ždárské vrchy landscape. In 2022, the city's air quality station ranked 6th lowest in PM10 pollution out of 123 national stations, while its PM2.5 levels were the lowest recorded. However, NO2 and O3 levels are not monitored within the city.

Strategic Location

Situated in the heart of Europe, Ždár nad Sázavou boasts a strategic position for trade and connectivity. Its central location provides easy access to major cities and European markets,

making it an attractive hub for businesses seeking logistical advantages. This geographic advantage strengthens its potential as a gateway to broader European trade networks.

★ EXISTING STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

Local level

Green Transition in Urban Industry

The transition to a green economy in industrial areas is a multifaceted challenge that cities must address at multiple levels. In addition to supporting innovation, technological advancements, and energy efficiency, cities must also focus on housing availability, quality services, and urban mobility. **The Development Strategy of Žďár nad Sázavou (2016-2028)** defines five key thematic areas:

- **Area A:** Governance, public communication, and security
- **Area B:** Social and healthcare services, housing
- **Area C:** Technical infrastructure, environment, and urban planning
- **Area D:** Urban economy, business development, and tourism
- **Area E:** Education, culture, sports, and leisure activities

The main focus for industry lies within **Area D**, emphasizing business development and tourism. Strengths include low unemployment, an established industrial zone, and industrial heritage. Challenges involve long-term unemployment, limited job opportunities, reliance on major employers, and a shortage of skilled labor in technical fields. Opportunities include regional economic growth, investment in high-value industries, and tourism development. Risks encompass workforce drain, economic downturns, industrial decline, and regional competition.

To address these, the city established a **10-hectare industrial zone in 2020** as part of the Smart Parks for the Future initiative. This area caters to SMEs in Industry 4.0, low-carbon technologies, software, advanced manufacturing, medical tech, and biotechnology. The project integrates **blue-green infrastructure principles**, providing a sustainable industrial environment. Due to global crises (COVID-19, geopolitical instability), some investors postponed their plans but are now resuming relocations.

Support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

Recognizing demographic challenges, Žďár nad Sázavou has engaged in the URBACT program to transform the local economy. The city aims to enhance workforce skills, foster entrepreneurship, and create startup incubation conditions.

In 2022, the city acquired the former glassworks site, intending **to develop an innovation hub** integrating a FabLab, co-working spaces, and a knowledge-sharing community center.

Decarbonization Commitment

The **Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP)** reflects the city's pledge under the Covenant of Mayors, aiming for a **40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030**. Since 2000, emissions have already **dropped by 38%** due to building insulation, cleaner fuel adoption by ŽĎAS, a.s., and increased solar energy installations. **Achieving the remaining 2% reduction requires additional measures**, such as:

- Energy-efficient public lighting
- Participation in Horizon EU CityCalc for energy optimization
- Further solar panel installations on public buildings
- Sustainable heat supply project in collaboration with a city-owned company

Urban Mobility Plan

Transport significantly impacts industry and business. A 2021 transport study found that **76% of commuters use personal vehicles**, with only one in eight cars carrying passengers. Rising car ownership is leading to severe parking shortages, particularly in the city center.

Proposed solutions include:

- **Expanding cycling infrastructure** to improve accessibility to business zones
- **Enhancing pedestrian crossings** and optimizing public transport routes for efficiency
- **Implementing residential parking zones** to regulate congestion
- **Reducing vehicle traffic in the city center** to create a more business-friendly environment

Recent initiatives include a 2024 shared bike pilot program, allowing citizens to adopt alternative transport methods. Sidewalks have also been opened to cyclists where safety permits. An online platform has been launched to inform residents about urban transport options. Concurrently, a new parking zone system is being introduced to address long-standing parking challenges.

Regional level

In the context of the In4Green network and the green transition of industrial cities, several strategic documents from the Vysočina Region provide key guidance and opportunities for Žďár nad Sázavou. These strategies outline the regional development priorities, sustainability initiatives, and economic transformation plans that can directly support the city's shift towards a more competitive and environmentally friendly economy.

Vysočina Region Development Strategy 2021–2027

The regional level of the green transition is shaped by several key strategies that guide the economic and environmental transformation of industrial cities in the Vysočina Region. The Vysočina Region Development Strategy (2021–2027) outlines priorities for strengthening regional competitiveness, supporting SMEs, improving public services, and enhancing transport and environmental sustainability. It emphasizes the need for better infrastructure, sustainable mobility solutions, and energy efficiency measures to support economic growth while reducing the environmental footprint.

Vysočina Regional Energy Concept 2017–2042

The Vysočina Regional Energy Concept (2017–2042) focuses on ensuring energy security, promoting renewable energy, and improving energy efficiency across industrial and urban areas. This long-term strategy is designed to support the decarbonization of industry, encourage local energy production, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Vysočina Region Mobility Plan

At the same time, the Vysočina Region Mobility Plan aims to improve public transport, expand cycling infrastructure, and develop smart transport solutions to minimize emissions and create a more business-friendly environment.

RIS3 Strategy for the Vysočina Region 2021+ (Smart Specialization)

Innovation and technological development are also a strong focus at the regional level. The RIS3 Strategy for Vysočina supports the transition to a high-tech economy by fostering research and development, digital transformation, and upskilling the workforce. This strategy aligns with national and European goals by promoting green and digital business models, particularly for SMEs looking to adapt to changing economic conditions. These regional policies create a foundation for industrial cities to become more sustainable, competitive, and resilient in the face of global economic and environmental challenges.

National level

Economic Strategy of the Czech Republic

This strategy defines the key economic priorities of the Czech Republic until 2040, aiming to position the country among the ten most developed economies in the EU in terms of GDP per capita. It focuses on human capital development (education and research), infrastructure modernization (energy, transport, and digital), industrial transformation (digitalization, sustainable technologies, innovation), and strategic investment financing (utilization of national and EU funds). The key objective is to support the competitiveness of Czech industry and transition to a high-value-added economy.

Industry 4.0 Strategy

Digitalization, automation, and robotics in manufacturing are the main focus of this strategy, aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of Czech industry on the global market. The strategy promotes the implementation of artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT), and data analytics in industrial production, enabling more efficient management of production processes and reducing energy consumption. Special emphasis is placed on integrating smart manufacturing systems, which contribute to lowering material and energy demands in industry. The government also invests in education and worker retraining to ensure a smooth transition to modern technologies.

Czech Recovery Plan

This is the financial plan for the Czech Republic to recover the economy post-pandemic, with a strong emphasis on industrial modernization and green transition. It provides investments in digital infrastructure, renewable energy, and industrial decarbonization. A key focus is on supporting research and development in sustainable technologies, helping Czech companies remain competitive within the EU. A significant portion of the funds is allocated to worker retraining and education, ensuring skills match the needs of the new industrial era.

Czech Energy Development Strategy to 2040

The industrial sector is one of the main consumers of energy, and this strategy focuses on modernizing energy infrastructure, expanding renewable energy sources, and reducing energy intensity in production. The plan includes the gradual phase-out of coal by 2033, which will significantly impact energy-intensive industries such as metallurgy, chemicals, and heavy manufacturing. Support for hydrogen energy and battery storage will enable more stable energy supplies for industrial enterprises. The strategy also emphasizes the development of smart grids, improving the efficiency of energy consumption in industrial zones.

European level

At the European level, the Pact of Amsterdam, which establishes the Urban Agenda for the European Union, does not mention industry directly. However, many priority themes are linked to the industrial sector, in fact most of them are: Air quality, Circular economy, Jobs and skills in the local economy, Energy transition, Sustainable use of land and Nature-Based solutions, Urban mobility, and Digital transition.

The European Union Cohesion Policy is a set of funds aimed at supporting regional development and economic cohesion in the EU Member States. The policy is based on the principle that all EU citizens, regardless of where they live, should have access to the same economic and social opportunities.

Cohesion policy has been used to support a wide range of industry-related projects, including:

- The construction of industrial infrastructure, such as factories, ports and airports.

- Funding for industrial research and development.
- Supporting industrial innovation.
- Promotion of industrial cooperation between European companies.
- Helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to access financial markets and technical assistance.

Cohesion Policy has had a positive impact on the EU's industrial sector. It has helped to create new jobs, increase investment and improve the competitiveness of European companies. Cohesion Policy has also helped to reduce regional disparities in the EU by providing stronger support to regions lagging behind.

Today, Cohesion Policy is being reoriented to focus on the challenges of the green and digital economy. The policy is being used to support European businesses to adapt to the transition to a more sustainable and digital economy. Cohesion Policy is also being used to support European regions most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The European Green Deal is a European Union policy initiative that aims to make the EU the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. The Green Deal focuses on a number of areas, including energy, mobility, agriculture and industry. In the field of industry, the Green Deal sets out a number of targets, including:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from industry by 40% by 2030 and 80% by 2050.
- Promote the development of clean and innovative technologies in industry.
- Increase energy efficiency in industry.
- Reduce the EU's dependence on fossil fuels.
- Create new jobs in green industry.

The Green Deal is an ambitious initiative, but it is necessary to tackle climate change and to ensure a sustainable future for the EU. Industry has a key role to play in the transition to a greener economy, and the Green Deal offers a number of opportunities for European industry to become a world leader in clean and innovative technologies. In this framework, the European Commission updated the EU Industrial Strategy in 2022 to ensure that its industrial ambition takes full account of the new circumstances following the COVID-19 crisis and helps drive the transformation towards a more sustainable, digital, resilient and globally competitive economy.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as the main innovation actors in the different ecosystems, must be taken into account in all actions carried out under this Strategy. This is reflected across the board in the increased focus on regulatory burdens for SMEs. New actions will greatly benefit SMEs and start-ups, whether through a strengthened Internal Market, reduced supply chain dependencies or accelerated green and digital transitions. The Strategy also includes some specific measures for SMEs, such as increasing resilience, tackling late payments and supporting solvency.

Across all these initiatives and policies the European Commission has identified the following main challenges facing European industry:

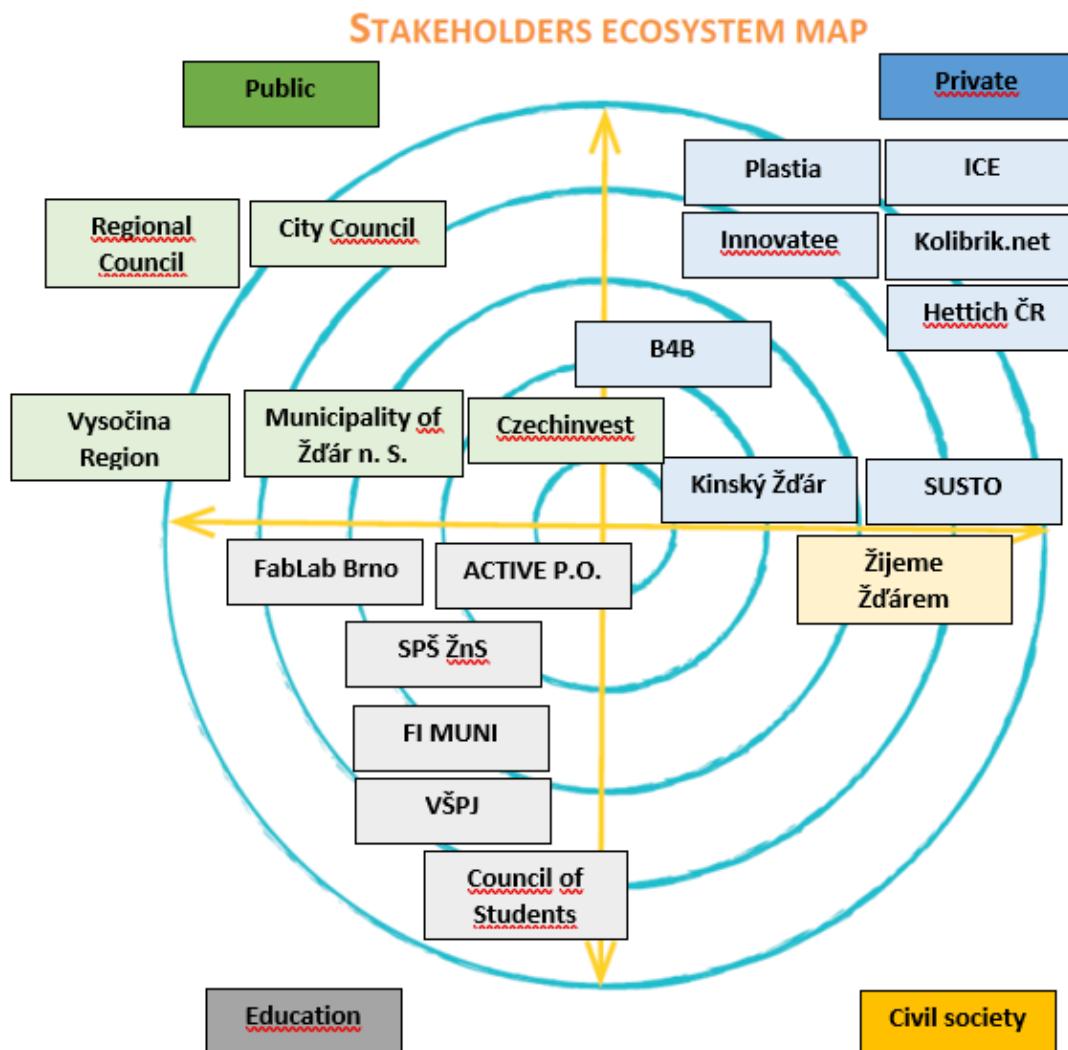
- The transition to a greener and digital economy: the EU is committed to achieving climate neutrality by 2050 and to being a leading digital economy. This will imply major changes for European industry, which will need to adapt to new technologies and forms of production.
- Competition from other regions: European industry faces strong competition from other regions, such as China and the United States. These regions are investing heavily in

research and development, enabling them to develop new technologies and products.

- Talent shortage: European industry faces a shortage of skilled talent. This is due to a number of factors, such as an ageing population, low scientific literacy and a lack of investment in education and training.
- Lack of investment: European industry faces a lack of investment. This is due to a number of factors, such as the 2008 financial crisis, legal uncertainty and lack of public funding.

★ PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Stakeholders' ecosystem mapping



Local Strengths and Opportunities

1. Established Industrial Base

- Strong industrial heritage with a **high share of the workforce in manufacturing (34.8%)**, exceeding both regional and national averages.
- Existing industrial infrastructure, including **Smart Parks for the Future** initiative, which supports **SMEs in Industry 4.0, low-carbon technologies, and biotechnology**.

2. Education and Talent Potential

- Active collaboration between schools, universities, and businesses, ensuring workforce alignment with industry needs.
- Potential to attract young professionals, particularly in green and digital industries, through targeted education programs and training hubs.

3. Green Transition as an Economic Driver

- The shift toward low-carbon technologies and sustainable business practices presents new investment opportunities.
- The city's clean air and natural landscape provide a competitive advantage for eco-friendly business models.

4. Networking and Innovation Ecosystem

- Plans for an Innovation Hub to support startups and entrepreneurs in sustainable and high-tech sectors.
- Existing collaboration frameworks between the public and private sectors facilitate knowledge sharing and project implementation.

Local Challenges and Weaknesses

1. Financial and Investment Barriers

- Insufficient funding for innovation – local businesses struggle with securing grants or investment for green technologies.
- SMEs and startups lack access to financial support, slowing down their ability to transition to sustainable models.

2. Legislative and Administrative Bottlenecks

- Slow policy adaptation to green economy needs – businesses face unclear regulations and bureaucratic hurdles when implementing sustainable solutions.
- Public perception of sustainability as a burden rather than an economic opportunity, limiting widespread adoption of green initiatives.

3. Workforce and Education Gaps

- Mismatch between industry needs and workforce skills – the lack of specialized training in greentech, automation, and digitalization.
- Challenges in attracting talent from outside the region, especially in emerging industries like IT and engineering.

4. Entrepreneurial and Business Development Constraints

- Declining entrepreneurial activity – the number of business registrations has dropped 20% below the national average, highlighting a need for better support for SMEs and startups.
- Limited collaboration between businesses and academia, reducing opportunities for applied research and industrial innovation.

Local priorities

Encouraging Entrepreneurship and Business Support

- Establishing an Innovation Hub as a central point for startup incubation and SME support.
- Creating mentorship programs and networking platforms to connect local businesses with industry leaders.
- Developing targeted financial incentives for companies adopting green and digital technologies.

Strengthening Education and Workforce Development

- Enhancing cooperation between technical schools, universities, and businesses to develop specialized programs in Industry 4.0 and sustainability.
- Supporting schools in adopting modern teaching methods to attract and retain young

talent.

- Promoting lifelong learning and reskilling programs to help the local workforce adapt to new technologies.

Improving Communication and Public Engagement

- Implementing **awareness campaigns** to shift the perception of sustainability from a **costly obligation** to an **economic opportunity**.
- Strengthening public-private partnerships to **streamline administrative processes for green investments**.
- Engaging the **local community in green initiatives** to ensure broad support and participation.

Developing Smart and Sustainable Infrastructure

- Expanding **low-carbon industrial zones** to attract sustainable enterprises.
- Improving **urban mobility solutions** to reduce the **city's environmental footprint**.
- Enhancing **renewable energy integration** in industrial and residential areas.

Based on the research among ULG members the main priorities for Žďár nad Sázavou's green transition center on supporting **entrepreneurship and education** as key drivers of economic sustainability and competitiveness. There is a strong push to create an Innovation Hub that will help startups and SMEs thrive in green and digital industries by providing mentorship, financial incentives, and networking opportunities. Strengthening ties between businesses and research institutions is also a priority to encourage industrial innovation and ensure that companies can adapt to the changing economic landscape.

At the same time, **education and workforce development** play a crucial role in preparing the city for the future. Schools, universities, and businesses need to work together more closely to align education with industry needs, ensuring that students gain skills relevant to automation, sustainability, and IT. Introducing modern teaching methods, expanding vocational training, and creating reskilling programs will be essential to equipping the workforce with the capabilities required for emerging industrial trends.

By prioritizing entrepreneurship and education, Žďár nad Sázavou aims to **attract talent, foster innovation, and create a business environment that supports sustainable economic growth while ensuring long-term prosperity**.

★ VISION

Original Vision Statement (created by the URBACT Local Group – ULG)

“At the beginning of the fourth decade of the 21st century, the city of Žďár nad Sázavou is a driver of innovation and transformation towards sustainability in the Highlands, provides a space for knowledge sharing in the center of the Czech Republic and is an example of good practice for similar cities in Central Europe. Deep collaboration between the private, public, educational, and civic sectors contributes to the economic development of the city, which benefits from mastering new trends and opportunities. Local companies have an abundance of quality and talented workers to drive their innovations and prosper, strengthening the city's position as a leader in automation and engineering. The environment attracts and prepares new generations of entrepreneurs, innovators, and creatives who further enhance the city's economic strength, which in turn improves other aspects of the city's quality of life.”

IAP Vision (condensed version based on ULG work)

“Žďár nad Sázavou is a regional hub of innovation and sustainability, where education, business, and community cooperation drive economic growth and quality of life. Through strong partnerships across sectors, the city attracts and develops talented, creative, and entrepreneurial people, reinforcing its role as a leader in automation, engineering, and green transformation in Central Europe.”

★ MAIN INTEGRATION CHALLENGES

Žďár nad Sázavou is undergoing a necessary transition toward a more sustainable and resilient economy, but several key **integration challenges** must be addressed:

- **Stakeholder engagement is weak**, with businesses, schools, and the public not fully involved in planning and implementation.
- **Existing strategies are only partially aligned**, and sustainability goals need stronger integration with regional and EU policies.
- **Economic, social, and environmental sustainability are not balanced**, with an over-reliance on traditional industry and insufficient investment in green and digital skills.
- **Sectoral cooperation is fragmented**, requiring better connections between industry, transport, housing, and education.
- **Spatial and territorial integration are lacking**, with limited collaboration with neighboring municipalities and underdeveloped links between key city districts.
- **Long-term planning and financial mobilization need improvement**, as many initiatives remain short-term and underfunded.

To move forward, Žďár must **strengthen collaboration**, enhance **investment strategies**, and adopt a **phased approach** to sustainable urban development, ensuring economic growth while meeting green and digital transformation goals. The **URBACT IV framework** provides a critical opportunity to refine and implement a truly integrated strategy.

★ TESTING ACTIONS

Testing Action	Objective	Methodology	Target Group	Expected Outcomes	Measurement
Guided Tour of the Innovation Centre	Identify public needs for the redevelopment of the former glassworks into an innovation hub.	Public tours during events, guided by former glassworkers and city representatives, collecting ideas via a feedback wall.	General public, stakeholders, students.	Gather public input on potential uses for the innovation hub and generate interest in the project.	Number of attendees, number of collected ideas, quality of feedback.
Open Fablab for Public	Assess public interest in Fablab technologies and evaluate the potential for an innovation center.	Public access to Fablab facilities in a local school, guided sessions with experienced tutors.	Creative individuals, aspiring entrepreneurs, and students.	Determine the feasibility of establishing a larger Fablab in the city and create a creative community.	Number of participants, survey on user interest and needs.
Testing Urban Mobility Improvements	Explore potential solutions for reducing car dependency and improving sustainable transport.	Piloting temporary bike sharing points in close proximity to local companies.	Commuters, local businesses, residents.	Evaluate the usage of bike sharing in testing points.	Changes in traffic flow, commuter surveys, and reduction of CO2.

Section 2

★ STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To achieve the vision of **Žďár nad Sázavou as a driver of innovation and sustainability**, the following strategic objectives have been identified:

SO1: Strengthening Entrepreneurial Ecosystem and Business Development

- Support the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups, especially in sustainable and digital industries and automatization companies.
- Enhance collaboration between businesses, research institutions, educational entities, and public bodies.

SO2: Advancing Workforce Education and Skills Development

- Improve alignment between workforce skills and emerging industry needs (Industry 4.0, automatization, green technologies).
- Support lifelong learning programs and technical education initiatives.
- Create offer bridging the gap between high-school level of education and joining the workforce due to lack of proximity to universities.

SO3: Transitioning Towards a Green and Sustainable Economy

- Encourage local industries to adopt low-carbon technologies and circular economy practices.
- Promote energy-efficient infrastructure and sustainable urban mobility solutions.

SO4: Enhancing Quality of Life and Retaining Talent

- Improve urban livability by investing in sustainable transportation, housing, and public spaces.
- Develop a structured communication and engagement strategy to retain young professionals and skilled workers.

★ AREAS OF INTERVENTION

The following intervention areas have been identified to achieve the strategic objectives:

Entrepreneurial and Business Support

- Creation of an Innovation Hub at the former glassworks site.
- Support for startups and SME development through funding and mentorship programs.
- BID (Business Improvement District) implementation in the city center.
- Online investment platform model for attracting investors.

Education and Workforce Development

- Strengthening technical education and vocational training in green technologies.
- Collaboration between schools, universities, and businesses to develop specialized courses.
- IT Non-School education and Pedagogical Center at ACTIVE initiative.
- Silver Economy initiative for lifelong learning and senior education.
- New technical workshops and after-school programs to increase STEM participation.

Green Transition and Sustainability

- Development of low-carbon industrial zones.
- Promotion of renewable energy and circular economy practices among local businesses – Blue-Green Infrastructure
- Energy-efficient public lighting and industrial heating solutions.

Urban Mobility and Infrastructure

- Expansion of cycling infrastructure and shared mobility solutions.
- Development of sustainable public transportation initiatives.
- Addition of new bike-sharing stations in industrial areas.
- Programs like Cycle to Work and 10,000 steps challenge.

Public Engagement and Awareness

- Community-driven sustainability programs.
- Strengthening alumni networks and urban branding efforts.
- Annual Education Festival to promote lifelong learning and business-education cooperation.

★ SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Entrepreneurial and Business Support:

- **Entrepreneurial and Business Support:** Establish at least 3 new startup incubations per year within the Innovation Hub after the set-up by 2032.
- **Entrepreneurial and Business Support:** Establish Business Improvement District in the city center by 2028 and engage at least 50 % of stakeholders identified.
- **Entrepreneurial and Business Support:** Increase number of economically active entities on local level per 1000 capita back above regional average by 2031
- **Green Transition and Sustainability:** Engaging 5 companies per year through platform for investors.

Education and Workforce Development

- **Education and Workforce Development:** Increase student participation in technical education programs by 20% by 2030 in local high schools.
- **Education and Workforce Development:** Increase number of cooperative projects between education entities and business by 25% and increase number of participants on both sides of these projects by 25%.
- **Education and Workforce Development:** Create a lifelong learning system bridging high school education level and matching it for technical, IT and silver economy companies needs by 2030.
- **Education and Workforce Development:** Have 50% of local schools certified for entrepreneurship education aspects implemented in curriculum by national NGO agency definition by 2029.

Green Transition and Sustainability

- **Green Transition and Sustainability:** Achieve a 5% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2030.
- **Green Transition and Sustainability:** Implement blue-green infrastructure principles on at least 25% of land area a 5% on construction on at least 3 current industrial sites by 2030.
- **Green Transition and Sustainability:** 250 new job vacancies in companies settled in new industrial zone in industry 4.0 segment by 2028.

Urban Mobility and Infrastructure

- **Urban Mobility and Infrastructure:** Increase cycling as a mode of commuting by 6% by 2030.
- **Urban Mobility and Infrastructure:** Increase number of employees participating in sustainable modes of transportation challenges by 30% by 2030.

Public Engagement and Awareness

- **Public Engagement and Awareness:** Have more than 250 people engaged in Žďár Alumni program by 2031.

★ INTERVENTION LOGIC

The intervention logic for the **Integrated Action Plan (IAP)** of Žďár nad Sázavou ensures that the strategic objectives are directly linked to specific actions within defined intervention areas. This logic ensures a **cohesive and integrated approach** to addressing local challenges while capitalizing on opportunities for sustainable growth and innovation.

Logical Flow:

- **Challenges & Needs Identification:** Assessing local economic, environmental, and social challenges related to industrial transformation, workforce adaptation, green transition, and urban mobility.
- **Strategic Objectives Definition:** Establishing high-level goals focused on entrepreneurship, education, sustainability, and infrastructure.
- **Areas of Intervention:** Determining focus sectors such as business development, education, industry decarbonization, and public engagement.
- **Action Planning:** Developing specific projects and programs under each intervention area to implement concrete, measurable changes.
- **Integration & Monitoring:** Ensuring that the approach remains cross-sectoral and aligns with regional, national, and European policies.

The following table outlines how strategic objectives align with intervention areas and key planned actions:

Strategic Objective	Area of Intervention	Key Actions
Strengthen Entrepreneurial Ecosystem	Innovation & Business Support	Establish Innovation Hub, Support SMEs, Develop investment attraction models
Advance Workforce Education & Skills	Education Training	Strengthen vocational training, lifelong learning, and STEM initiatives
Transition Towards Green Economy	Industry Decarbonization	Implement Blue-Green Infrastructure, support low-carbon industries
Improve Urban Mobility & Infrastructure	Transport Accessibility	Expand cycling infrastructure, introduce shared mobility solutions
Enhance Public Engagement & Awareness	Civic Participation & Branding	Develop sustainability campaigns, alumni networks, and business-education cooperation events

★ ACTIONS

To achieve Žďár nad Sázavou's vision of becoming a **hub for innovation, sustainability, and economic transformation**, the following concrete actions are planned:

Entrepreneurial and Business Support

- **Innovation Hub Development:** Establish a startup incubation center with co-working spaces and mentoring programs.
- **Business Improvement District (BID) Implementation:** Create a structured approach to revitalize the city center's business ecosystem.
- **Investor Engagement Platform:** Develop an online tool to attract sustainable business investments.

Education and Workforce Development

- **Workforce Reskilling Program:** Upskill workers in green technologies and digital industries.
- **STEM & Technical Training Expansion:** Partner with local high schools to increase participation in technical education.
- **Lifelong Learning for Silver Economy:** Establish courses for senior citizens to engage in economic activities.
- **Entrepreneurship Education Certification:** Aim for 50% of local schools to integrate entrepreneurship education into curricula.

Green Transition and Sustainability

- **Low-Carbon Industrial Zones:** Implement sustainable infrastructure in business parks.
- **Renewable Energy Adoption:** Support solar panel installations on public buildings.
- **Blue-Green Infrastructure Initiatives:** Apply BGI solutions to industrial sites and urban areas.
- **Circular Economy Platform:** Facilitate networking between local businesses for waste reduction and material reuse.

Urban Mobility and Infrastructure

Cycling Infrastructure Expansion: Develop new bike lanes and shared mobility points.

Sustainable Commuting Incentives: Encourage companies to promote green commuting options.

Parking & Traffic Management Solutions: Pilot a smart parking initiative to optimize urban space usage.

Public Transport Improvement Plan: Assess the feasibility of improving existing transit routes.

Public Engagement and Awareness

Žďár Alumni Program: Create a network for past residents and professionals to stay connected with local development.

Urban Branding & City Positioning: Strengthen Žďár's image as an innovation-friendly, green city by marketing campaigns.

Education Festival: Promote collaboration between educational institutions, businesses, public and civil sector.

★ INTEGRATED APPROACH

Žďár nad Sázavou's IAP is built on an integrated approach, ensuring that economic, environmental, and social sustainability are **balanced and interlinked**.

Key Principles of Integration:

- **Cross-sectoral Collaboration:** Active involvement of businesses, educational institutions, public administration, and civil society.
- **Alignment with National & EU Policies:** Ensuring compatibility with regional and European strategies such as Industry 4.0, Circular Economy, and the European Green Deal.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Leveraging private sector expertise to drive industrial transformation and sustainability projects.
- **Multi-Level Governance:** Cooperation between local, regional, and national authorities to ensure coherence in policy implementation.
- **Digital & Smart City Elements:** Incorporating technology for data-driven decision-making in business support, urban mobility, and energy efficiency.
- **Social Inclusion:** Ensuring that all segments of society benefit from economic transformation and sustainability initiatives.

By implementing this **Integrated Action Plan**, Žďár nad Sázavou will reinforce its position as a forward-looking city that embraces innovation, sustainability, and entrepreneurship to secure a **resilient and prosperous future**.

Section 3

Action Title	IT NeŠkola – Regional IT Talent and Innovation Hub															
Description	<p>IT NeŠkola is an educational and innovation initiative co-founded by the Vysočina Region, the City of Žďár nad Sázavou, and the Polytechnic University Jihlava.</p> <p>Its purpose is to create a <i>practice-based alternative education pathway</i> in information technologies, bridging the gap between secondary schools, higher education, and employers.</p> <p>The programme offers hands-on, project-based learning focused on programming, cybersecurity, and digital innovation, implemented in partnership with leading regional IT companies.</p> <p>Expected outcomes include the creation of a sustainable IT education ecosystem, increased employability of young people in the region, and support for the digital transition of local industry.</p>															
Link to Vision & Objectives	<p>This action supports Žďár nad Sázavou's vision of becoming a driver of innovation and sustainability in the Vysočina Region.</p> <p>It contributes to the following IAP strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SO1: Strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem and business development. ○ SO2: Advancing workforce education and skills development. ○ SO4: Enhancing quality of life and retaining talent. <p>By integrating education, public administration, and private industry, IT NeŠkola increases the city's capacity to generate, attract, and retain IT professionals essential for digital and green transformation.</p>															
Area of Intervention	Education and Workforce Development / Digital Transition															
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ [Institutional Setup (2024 – mid-2025): formal establishment of IT NeŠkola z.s.; governance structure; partnership agreements. ○ Recruitment & Bootcamps (may-september 2025): launch of online recruitment game (Ylands platform); two selection bootcamps in Žďár nad Sázavou. ○ Pilot Programme Launch (Oct 2025): opening ceremony; start of first cohort; integration of project-based modules with industry mentors. ○ Infrastructure and Equipment (2025 – 2026): adaptation of temporary premises, purchase of IT hardware, learning platforms, and furniture. ○ Partner Network Expansion (2026 – 2027): new corporate partnerships, regional outreach to schools. ○ Monitoring & Evaluation (2025 – onwards): student progress tracking, partner feedback, graduate employment survey. 															
Timeline	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Activity</th><th>2024</th><th>2025</th><th>2026</th><th>2027</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Institutional setup</td><td>X</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Recruitment & bootcamps</td><td></td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Activity	2024	2025	2026	2027	Institutional setup	X	X			Recruitment & bootcamps		X		
Activity	2024	2025	2026	2027												
Institutional setup	X	X														
Recruitment & bootcamps		X														

	Pilot launch		X														
	Infrastructure development		X	X													
	Partner expansion			X	X												
	Monitoring & evaluation		X	X	X												
Responsible Organisation(s)	Lead: IT NeŠkola z.s. Partners: Vysočina Region, City of Žďár nad Sázavou, Polytechnic University Jihlava, Secondary Technical School in Žďár nad Sázavou Supporting Private Sector: Aricoma, HRDLIČKA spol. s r.o., Dell a.s., ICZ a.s., SATT a.s.																
Estimated Costs	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th><th>Estimated Cost (€)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Setup and legal establishment</td><td>75 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Infrastructure and equipment</td><td>150 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Programme delivery (first 3 years)</td><td>300 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Marketing and outreach (first 3 years)</td><td>30 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total (2024–2027)</td><td>555 000 €</td></tr> </tbody> </table>					Category	Estimated Cost (€)	Setup and legal establishment	75 000	Infrastructure and equipment	150 000	Programme delivery (first 3 years)	300 000	Marketing and outreach (first 3 years)	30 000	Total (2024–2027)	555 000 €
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Funding Sources	Vysočina Region, Municipality of Žďár nad Sázavou, private sector co-funding, possible Erasmus+ or Interreg Funding																
Monitoring Indicators	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 20 students enrolled annually, ○ 5 active company partners, ○ 2 bootcamps per year Result Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 60 % graduate employment in the regional IT sector within 1 year of completion ○ 15 % increase in district IT jobs by 2030 																
Risk Assessment	Identified Risks: low student interest; partner withdrawal; funding delays; infrastructure readiness issues; curriculum misalignment. Likelihood & Impact: medium to high impact for funding and infrastructure risks; medium likelihood for student and partner risks. Mitigation Measures: targeted recruitment campaign via Ylands game and media; multi-year partnership contract with partners; early grant applications and reserve budget; phased deployment of facilities; continuous industry consultation on curriculum.																

Action Title	Technical Education Support Programme																								
Description	A city-led initiative creating a coordinated system for technical and STEM education supporting the green and digital transition. The programme inspires young people toward higher value-added STEM careers while strengthening general vocational skills to ensure local economic resilience. Core activities include technical clubs, roadshows, teacher upskilling, and setting up a small FabLab/Workshop within ACTIVE as a practical learning hub.																								
Link to Vision & Objectives	<p>Contributes to Žďár's vision of a resilient, innovative city leading the regional green transition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SO1 – Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: connects schools, firms, and universities for innovation. ○ SO2 – Workforce Education & Skills Development: builds green and digital competences. ○ SO3 – Green Transition: supports adaptation of local industry through skilled workforce. ○ SO4 – Talent Retention: strengthens local opportunities and quality of life. 																								
Area of Intervention	Education and Workforce for Green Transition																								
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a coordination & communication platform (2025) consisting of key stakeholders from the public, private, and educational sectors ○ Set up a small FabLab/Workshop at ACTIVE for schools and community use. ○ Run technical clubs and STEM roadshows in partnership with local firms. ○ Host annual Festival of Science & Technology (FVTM) and "Hrajeme si s technikou". ○ Train teachers and career counsellors in green and digital skills. ○ Pilot new vocational/technical classes where demand exists. 																								
Timeline	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Activity</th><th>2025</th><th>2026</th><th>2027</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Coordination & setup</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>FabLab installation</td><td>X</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Clubs & roadshows</td><td>X</td><td>X</td><td>X</td></tr> <tr> <td>Festivals & teacher training</td><td>X</td><td>X</td><td>X</td></tr> <tr> <td>New class pilots</td><td></td><td>X</td><td>X</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Activity	2025	2026	2027	Coordination & setup	X			FabLab installation	X	X		Clubs & roadshows	X	X	X	Festivals & teacher training	X	X	X	New class pilots		X	X
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New class pilots		X	X																						
Responsible Organisation(s)	<p>Lead: ACTIVE, Municipality of Žďár nad Sázavou</p> <p>Partners: Vysočina Region, Vysočina Education, Chamber of Commerce, local schools, Private companies: ICE, TOKOZ, CECHO, VŠPJ, Hettich</p>																								
Estimated Costs	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th><th>Cost (€)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>FabLab setup & equipment</td><td>250,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Coordination & programme delivery</td><td>60,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Communication & events</td><td>30,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total (2025–2027)</td><td>340,000</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Cost (€)	FabLab setup & equipment	250,000	Coordination & programme delivery	60,000	Communication & events	30,000	Total (2025–2027)	340,000														
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Funding Sources	ESF+ (Employment+), MMR Smart Cities fund, Vysočina Region funds, Municipal budget, Private sector in-kind support, Erasmus+/Interreg for exchange, URBACT IV
Monitoring Indicators	<p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 10 clubs/year; ○ 2 public events/year; ○ 50 teachers trained, ○ creation of polytechnical Fablab/workshop hub in ACTIVE <p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ +20% in technical/STEM enrolments by 2030 (proportional to the demographic change); ○ functioning FabLab as shared city facility.
Risk Assessment	<p>Risks: limited teacher capacity; variable firm engagement; modest funding base.</p> <p>Likelihood/Impact: medium.</p> <p>Mitigation: phased rollout, partnerships with firms, cross-financing, teacher training, well-structured planning, and supplementing teachers' work with trained external educators.</p>

Action Title	Žďár Alumni – Connecting People, Retaining Talent																
Description	<p>The Žďár Alumni initiative will be restructured into a local engagement and talent-retention programme linking former students/citizens, schools, and the city.</p> <p>After several years of limited impact, the project will be reconnected to the “Den Žďáru” city festival, when schools will host small alumni meet-ups during open days.</p> <p>The aim is to strengthen ties between graduates and their home city, collect updated alumni contacts, and encourage them to return, invest, or participate in Žďár’s innovation and education ecosystem.</p>																
Link to Vision & Objectives	<p>Contributes to the IAP vision of a resilient, learning, and community-driven city:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SO4 – Talent Retention & Quality of Life: fosters belonging and encourages young people to stay or return. 																
Area of Intervention	Talent Retention & Community Networks																
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Audit and redesign of existing alumni platform and communication channels. ○ Integration with “Den Žďáru” – schools organise simple alumni events during their open days. ○ Promotion campaign through city and school media. ○ Data collection & contact database update during events. ○ Follow-up activities – newsletters using social media, mentoring, alumni involvement in education and city projects. 																
Timeline	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Step</th><th>2025</th><th>2026</th><th>2027</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Platform audit & redesign</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>School coordination</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>“Den Žďáru” Alumni event</td><td></td><td>X</td><td>X</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Step	2025	2026	2027	Platform audit & redesign	X			School coordination	X			“Den Žďáru” Alumni event		X	X
Step	2025	2026	2027														
Platform audit & redesign	X																
School coordination	X																
“Den Žďáru” Alumni event		X	X														

	Contact database & follow-up		X	X												
Responsible Organisation(s)	Lead: City of Žďár nad Sázavou (Education & Culture Department) Partners: Secondary schools, local companies, media partners, and alumni volunteers.															
Estimated Costs	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th><th>Cost (€)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Platform update & coordination</td><td>2 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Communication & marketing</td><td>2 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Event logistics (annual)</td><td>2x3 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Data management & follow-up</td><td>2 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total (2025–2027)</td><td>12 000 EUR</td></tr> </tbody> </table>				Category	Cost (€)	Platform update & coordination	2 000	Communication & marketing	2 000	Event logistics (annual)	2x3 000	Data management & follow-up	2 000	Total (2025–2027)	12 000 EUR
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Total (2025–2027)	12 000 EUR															
Funding Sources	Municipal budget, local business sponsorship, and in-kind support from schools															
Monitoring Indicators	Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2-3 schools involved each year ○ 200–300 alumni contacts collected by 2027 ○ 100 alumni attending events annually Results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase in the number of graduates staying or returning to Žďár after studies ○ Functioning alumni database and annual programme integrated with Den Žďáru 															
	Risks: low participation; limited school capacity; privacy concerns. Likelihood / Impact: medium / medium. Mitigation: simple event templates; direct school support; consistent communication and data consent process.															

Action Title	Establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) in the City Center
Description	<p>The aim is to create a Business Improvement District (BID) in Žďár nad Sázavou's historic city center to sustain and amplify the effects of recent public-space investments.</p> <p>Despite urban revitalization and infrastructure improvements, the center lacks economic vibrancy, coordinated management, and joint marketing. The BID will bring together local businesses, the city, and institutions to coordinate services, events, marketing, maintenance, and investment in the downtown area.</p> <p>The initiative will enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of the center while promoting sustainable urban economy principles, circular practices, and cooperation between small businesses and the municipality.</p>
Link to Vision & Objectives	<p>This action supports Žďár's IAP vision of a resilient and vibrant city integrating economic vitality with sustainable urban living:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SO1 – Strengthening Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: joint platform for cooperation, shared services, and business innovation. ○ SO3 – Green Transition: encourages sustainable mobility, recycling, local sourcing, and quality public space management. ○ SO4 – Quality of Life & Talent Retention: makes the city center a lively, attractive, and safe place to live, work, and spend time

Area of Intervention	Urban Economy / City Center Revitalization / Sustainable Business [Specify the thematic area (e.g., mobility, circular economy, green spaces, etc.)]																								
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mapping & engagement (2025): Identify local businesses, property owners, and service providers; hold initial workshop on BID model. ○ Preparation (2025–2026): Develop governance model, legal framework, and financing scheme; draft charter and BID fund mechanism. ○ Pilot projects (2026): Joint marketing (“Shop Like a Local”), aesthetic upgrades (shopfronts, greenery, micro-revitalizations), and shared maintenance tasks. ○ Formal establishment (2026–2027): Register BID association/fund, form management board (city + business reps). ○ Operation & monitoring (from 2027): Regular events, cleaning/maintenance contracts, and transparent reporting of results. ○ Sustainability period (2028–): BID is set up on a sustainable long-term basis, where businesses are able to coordinate, co-finance the BID ecosystem 																								
Timeline	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Step</th><th>2025</th><th>2026</th><th>2027</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Stakeholder mapping & workshops</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Governance & financing design</td><td>X</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Pilot actions (marketing, urban micro-projects)</td><td></td><td>X</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Formal BID establishment</td><td></td><td>X</td><td>X</td></tr> <tr> <td>BID operation & evaluation</td><td></td><td></td><td>X</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Step	2025	2026	2027	Stakeholder mapping & workshops	X			Governance & financing design	X	X		Pilot actions (marketing, urban micro-projects)		X		Formal BID establishment		X	X	BID operation & evaluation			X
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BID operation & evaluation			X																						
Responsible Organisation(s)	<p>Lead: Municipality of Žďár nad Sázavou (Department of Development and Urban Planning)</p> <p>Partners: Local retailers and property owners, Tourist Information Center (TIC), Chamber of Commerce, municipal contributory organisations</p>																								
Estimated Costs	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th><th>Cost (€)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Coordination & facilitation</td><td>8 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Marketing & communication</td><td>6 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Pilot micro-revitalizations / signage</td><td>5 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Training & legal setup</td><td>3 000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total (2025 – 2027)</td><td>22 000 €</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Cost (€)	Coordination & facilitation	8 000	Marketing & communication	6 000	Pilot micro-revitalizations / signage	5 000	Training & legal setup	3 000	Total (2025 – 2027)	22 000 €												
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Total (2025 – 2027)	22 000 €																								
Funding Sources	[List potential or secured funding sources]																								
Monitoring Indicators	<p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1 BID group established (10–15 members) ○ 2–3 joint marketing or micro-revitalization actions annually ○ Shared online map or webpage of city-center businesses 																								

	<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved cooperation between city and entrepreneurs ○ Less vacant business premises within the city center ○ Decision and framework ready for a formal BID by 2027
Risk Assessment	<p>Risks: low engagement of businesses; unclear governance or funding; initial skepticism.</p> <p>Likelihood / Impact: medium; high if coordination fails.</p> <p>Mitigation: early participatory workshops, transparent financial management, and visible pilot successes to build trust.</p>

Action Title	Investor Engagement Campaign – “Invest in Žďár” Platform												
Description	<p>The action will establish a coherent system for attracting sustainable and innovative investors to Žďár nad Sázavou.</p> <p>Between 2025 and 2026, the municipality will set up a platform podnikani.zdarns.cz portal, create high-quality promotional materials, and design a welcoming “landing experience” for potential investors — including fast communication, transparent processes, and assistance.</p> <p>After 2027, the focus will shift to activation, networking, and long-term management, turning the platform into a strategic tool connecting the city, businesses, and regional partners.</p>												
Link to Vision & Objectives	<p>Supports Žďár's IAP vision of a resilient and innovation-driven city:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SO1 – Entrepreneurial Ecosystem & Business Development: structured approach to investment attraction and after-care. ○ SO3 – Green Transition: promotes investment in low-carbon, circular, and high-value-added sectors. ○ SO4 – Talent Retention: generates sustainable jobs and reinforces Žďár's regional competitiveness. 												
Area of Intervention	<p>Economic Development / Investment Promotion / Green Economy[Specify the thematic area (e.g., mobility, circular economy, green spaces, etc.)]</p>												
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Concept & content development (2025) – define investor profiles, value proposition, communication tone, and data structure. ○ Platform creation (2025–2026) – design podnikani.zdarns.cz; integrate digital maps, investment zones, and contact forms. ○ Communication & onboarding system (2026) – develop investor welcome pack, quick-response workflow, and partner database. ○ Promotion & outreach (2027–2028) – national and regional campaigns, participation in trade fairs, targeted digital advertising. ○ Networking & lead management (2028–2029) – organise annual investor forums, match-making events, and business visits. ○ Long-term maintenance (2030 →) – continuous platform updates, monitoring investment impact, and integrating with regional strategies. 												
Timeline	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Activity</th> <th>2025</th> <th>2026</th> <th>2027</th> <th>2028</th> <th>2029</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Strategy & content design</td> <td>X</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Activity	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Strategy & content design	X				
Activity	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029								
Strategy & content design	X												

	Platform & digital tools	X	X																		
	Investor onboarding system		X																		
	Promotion & outreach			X	X																
	Networking & lead management				X	X															
	Maintenance & impact tracking						X														
Responsible Organisation(s)	<p>Lead: Municipality of Žďár nad Sázavou – Department of Strategic Development and Investments, Department of Education, Culture, Sports, and Marketing.</p> <p>Partners: CzechInvest, Chamber of Commerce, ACTIVE, local firms, property developers (ČPP-Transgas), Business for Breakfast, Vysočina Innovation Platform</p>																				
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Funding Sources	<p>Municipal budget; Vysočina Region innovation support; CzechInvest partnership programmes; EU ESF+/Interreg for green-transition entrepreneurship; private-sector co-marketing.</p>																				
Monitoring Indicators	<p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated platform launched by 2026. ○ Investor onboarding system operational. ○ 5 promotional events and 3 regional trade-fair participations by 2029. ○ Database of \geq 75 investor contacts. <p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At least 5 new investment or expansion projects supported by 2030. ○ Growth of sustainable business sectors and employment in Žďár. ○ Established long-term cooperation model between city, ACTIVE, and investors. 																				
Risk Assessment	<p>Risks: limited visibility; insufficient investor data; low follow-up capacity.</p> <p>Likelihood / Impact: medium / medium-high.</p> <p>Mitigation: phased rollout; cooperation with CzechInvest; high-quality online design; dedicated city contact person for investors.</p>																				

Section 4

★ GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION

The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) will serve as both a **roadmap for short-term implementation (2025–2030)** and a **strategic foundation for Žďár nad Sázavou's new Long-Term Development Strategy**, to be prepared during **2026–2027**.

This new strategic document will align the city's priorities with the **EU Cohesion Policy period 2028 – 2034**, as well as with **national and regional programmes** (Vysočina Region Strategy, Czech Smart Specialisation Strategy 3, and SECAP).

Lead Coordination

Implementation will be led by the **Department of Strategic Development and Investments**, which will host the **IAP Coordinator**.

The Coordinator's role will include:

- ensuring progress across all IAP actions,
- preparing progress reports and funding overviews,
- maintaining communication with regional and national partners,
- supporting the integration of IAP outputs into the new Development Strategy.

To strengthen economic and innovation cooperation, the city will **create a new municipal position** dedicated to **business cooperation, investment attraction, and innovation facilitation**.

This staff member will act as a first contact point for local and external investors, link the city to CzechInvest and the Chamber of Commerce, and manage the Investor Engagement Platform.

Steering and Coordination Structure

The implementation will be guided by a **Steering Structure** rather than a single large group. Coordination will take place through:

- **Core Implementation Team** – Municipal departments (Development, Education, Finance, Marketing, Environment) meeting quarterly under the IAP Coordinator.
- **Key Stakeholder Forum** – Partners from education, business, and regional institutions are informed **twice per year** and invited to thematic events
- **Expert consultations** – Held ad hoc for specific actions such as BID establishment or Investor Platform design.

This flexible approach reduces administrative load while ensuring continuity, transparency, and long-term engagement of core partners.

★ STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE

The stakeholder base established under URBACT In4Green will evolve into a **smaller working group preparing and maintaining actions**, providing a permanent communication channel between the city, schools, and businesses.. Working groups working on the basis of ULG methodology proved to be a valuable asset in the process of creating of the IAP and was decided that is going to be the most sustainable and viable framework.

ACTIVE will serve as a hub for communication and networking, hosting joint events and promoting knowledge exchange between stakeholders.

The partnership will meet at least **twice a year** and function as a consultative body, contributing to both the implementation of IAP actions and the preparation of the new Development Strategy 2026–2027.

Regular events such as **Den Žďáru**, the **Education & Innovation Festival**, and the **others** will

be used to share progress, celebrate results, and strengthen public ownership of the plan.

★ INTEGRATION WITH THE NEW DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Between 2026 and 2027, Žďár nad Sázavou will develop a **comprehensive Long-Term Development Strategy 2028 +**, aligned with the next EU financial period. The IAP will form the **core operational pillar** of this strategy. Data, outcomes, and experiences from the IAP's first phase (2025 – 2027) will be used to:

- define strategic objectives for the 2028 – 2034 programming period,
- identify funding priorities and investment needs,
- design the local implementation mechanism for EU and national funds.

A **Mid-Term Review in 2027** will consolidate progress data and feed directly into this new strategic document, ensuring that the city's next cycle of development planning builds upon evidence and tested local solutions.

★ FUNDING AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION

The total indicative cost of the IAP's implementation is **€1.0 – 1.5 million (2025 – 2030) for the proposed 5 actions, while the total budget of the successful implementation of the IAP will require a total budget of 10 million EUR until 2034.**

The major investment planned within the action plan is the construction and set-up of a local Innovation center in the brownfield within the city center, „Sklárna“. The estimated costs include an investment of 3 million EUR for the construction of the Innovation center, while running costs until 2034 are expected to reach up to 1 million EUR.

The second biggest planned investment is an upscaling of IT NeŠkola from the piloting phase to the projected spaces in the Secondary Technical School in Žďár nad Sázavou. Constructing permanent premises connected to the high school will require funds of 2-2,5 mil EUR but will enable IT NeŠkola to become a leading driver of digital transition in the Vysočina Region, enabling the institution to host 50 students at the same time. The main investor will be Vysočina Region.

Given limited municipal capacity, funding will be assembled from multiple sources and synchronised with future EU programmes. The budget:

Source	Purpose
Municipal Budget	Coordination, staffing, communication, pilot initiatives
Vysočina Region	Education, innovation, and technical skills programmes
EU Funds (ESF+, ERDF, Interreg, URBACT IV)	Green transition, entrepreneurship, digital education
CzechInvest / National Grants	SME and investment support, Sklárna Innovation center
Private Sector & In-Kind Support	Equipment, events, co-marketing

To address the **operational capacity bottleneck**, the city will gradually expand its **project-management competence** by:

- designating staff for project development and reporting;
- offering training in EU fund administration;
- using external experts during peak workload (e.g., grant applications, evaluations).

★ IMPLEMENTATION PHASES 2025 – 2030

Phase	Period	Focus	Key Deliverables
Phase I – Initiation & Capacity Building	2025 – 2026	Establish coordination structure; launch IT NeŠkola, Technical Education Programme, and Investor Platform	Operational team formed; core staff trained; IAP communication system launched
Phase II – Integration & Strategic Alignment	2026 – 2027	Embed IAP into new Long-Term Development Strategy; secure future funding; test BID pilot	Draft of Development Strategy 2031 + adopted; mid-term IAP review completed
Phase III – Consolidation & Scaling	2028 – 2030	Scale successful actions; secure long-term governance and financing	Functioning BID; full education-business network; established investor support desk; final evaluation feeding into new EU period

★ MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring will follow a **three-level approach**:

- **Output indicators:** measurable activities (trainings, events, digital tools, communication reach).
- **Result indicators:** changes in behaviour or performance (increased STEM enrolment, SME participation, investment inquiries).
- **Impact indicators:** broader outcomes (employment structure, youth retention, sustainability performance).

Reporting Cycle

- **Quarterly internal monitoring** by departments.
- **Bi-annual stakeholder information** through progress bulletins and meetings.
- **Mid-Term Review 2027** – updating baseline data, feeding into the new strategy.
- **Final Evaluation 2030** – assessing achievements and sustainability.
- **Sustainability evaluation 2034** – monitoring result and impact indicators

ACTIVE and the Department of Development will jointly maintain a **shared data dashboard**, allowing partners to access real-time progress information.

★ RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Insufficient staffing capacity	High	High	Establish new investment/innovation officer; use external experts for short periods
Delays in EU or national funding	Medium	High	Prepare projects in advance; combine funding streams; maintain reserve co-financing
Limited stakeholder engagement	Medium	Medium	Use existing events for outreach; communicate tangible results; maintain open data
Institutional changes or leadership shifts	Low	Medium	Embed IAP objectives in 2028+ Development Strategy Plan
Economic uncertainty	Medium	Medium	Focus on flexible, low-cost actions and diversification of funding

★ COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Effective communication will ensure transparency, visibility, and long-term buy-in.

- **Online channels:** website podnikani.zdarns.cz and ACTIVE's portal will publish updates, investment information, and project results, European project section updates on the main website
- **Public events:** Den Žďáru, Education & Innovation Festival, and others will showcase progress.
- **Local media:** short articles and video features will present real people and success stories in the municipal monthly newspapers
- **Social media:** become active in communicating Žďár nad Sázavou as a leading and aspiring city through green transition, especially on LinkedIn, rallying professionals, investors, and potential new employees.

★ SUMMARY

The implementation framework transforms the Žďár nad Sázavou IAP into a permanent, evolving mechanism for local development. Rather than ending with the URBACT IV In4Green cycle, it establishes the city's ability to plan, deliver, and evaluate integrated projects. The city recognises that skills, methodologies, and knowledge gained through URBACT IV — especially in participatory governance, cross-sector cooperation, and result-based monitoring — must remain an active part of its daily practice.

These new competences will not only guide the implementation of the five described actions in the section 3 but will also be applied to future action plans, grant programmes, and integrated strategies developed beyond 2030.

By embedding the IAP into the Development Strategy 2028 +, Žďár ensures that the lessons learned and partnerships built during In4Green continue to shape long-term policy.

Through this approach, Žďár nad Sázavou moves from project-based experimentation to a mature, learning city model, capable of continuously adapting to demographic, economic, and environmental change.

The IAP thus becomes both a tool for today's transformation and a foundation for the city's long-term green, digital, and inclusive future.