TechDiversity

Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems

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1. TechDiversity

TechDiversity is an URBACT network of eight partners representing small and medium-sized European cities, that aim to boost and facilitate diverse local communities that are not active in Tech & Digital sector, facing specific challenges in terms of diversity, gender equality and inclusion. Furthermore, the partner cities will mainly focus on an identified pressing aspect and will support at least one diverse local group in each of the participating cities, through the action plans.

The network operated from July 2023 to December 2025.

- e-Trikala
- Amarante
- Municipality of Arezzo
- Bielsko Biala Regional Development Agency
- Bucharest District 6
- Idrija
- Larnaka
- National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Evripos Complex, Psachna)

2. URBACT Integrated Action Plans

An URBACT Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is a city-level output that defines actions to be implemented within the city to respond to a specific urban policy challenge - reflecting the lessons learned from local stakeholders, transnational partners and the testing of actions at local level.

IAPs thus provide both a focal point and end goal of the action planning journey that cities undertake within their URBACT Action Planning Network (APN). IAPs help to ensure that both local-level discussions (within the URBACT Local Group) and transnational exchange (between the network partners) have a practical focus on planning a coherent set of actions to address the local policy challenge in each participating city, embedding an integrated and participative approach.

IAPs are future oriented – setting out the actions that cities will implement beyond the life cycle of the URBACT network. For this reason, each IAP not only sets out what the city intends to do on its specific topic, but also has a strong implementation focus, for example through the identification of specific funding opportunities, governance structures and timelines for how the actions will be implemented and monitored.

3. Context, needs and vision

Overall theme being addressed – Current situation (including Related strategies)

Bielsko-Biala is a leading city in the southern subregion of Silesia Voivodeship, located at the foothills of the Beskidy Mountains, on the Biała River. Bielsko-Biala is the administrative, industrial and cultural center of the region known as **Podbeskidzie**. Due to its proximity to the Upper Silesian conurbation and Krakow, as well as to the Czech city of Ostrava and the Slovak city of Zylina, Bielsko-Biala is an important center of cross-border development.
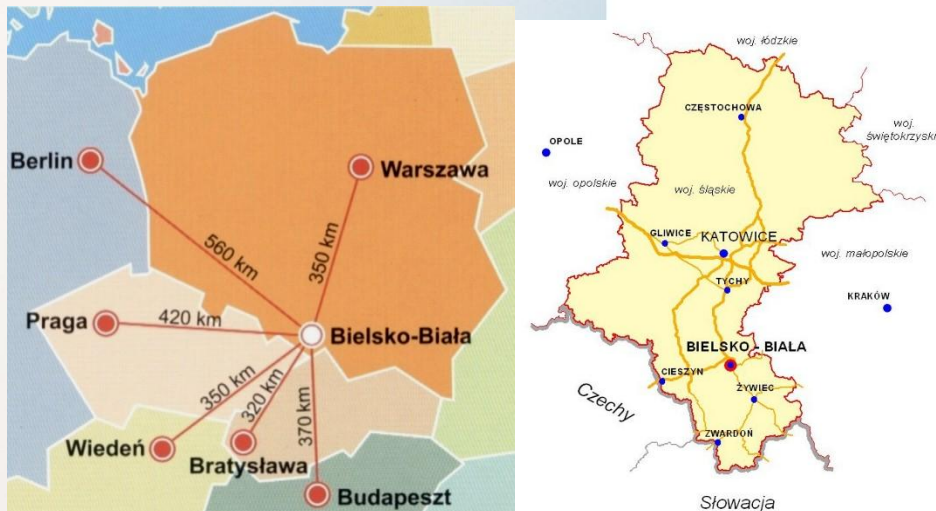
The city's dynamic development is also facilitated by its location at the intersection of international and national transport corridors, making it an important road junction in the south of the Silesian region. The population of the city is app. 168 106 inhabitants with density of 1350 pax/km2. There is a bit more women (53%) than men (47%) in the population. Likewise in other European cities, also Bielsko-Biała is struggling with the aging of the population and increase in the number of people in post-working age.

Bielsko-Biała historically used to be called **a city of hundred industries** and it continues its diverse economic traditions. To this day, Bielsko-Biała is a significant industrial center, with manufacturing and automotive industry at the forefront. However, year by year, the city is also becoming an increasingly important center of modern technology where the dynamic development of the IT industry in particular is clearly visible.

Bielsko-Biala is **a city of enterprising and hard-working people** what is evidenced by the very high share of micro and small businesses in the total number of business entities registered. It is also worth noting, that Bielsko-Biała is the second, after Katowice, city with district rights in the Silesian province in terms of the number of entities registered in the REGON register per 1,000 residents that is 165,4 and is 50 % higher than the average in the region. In terms of total number of economic entities registered it is almost 28 000.
Bielsko-Biała also attracts investors both Polish and foreign. Many family businesses have located their offices here as well as large global corporations, which have allocated huge budgets for investments in the city.

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In terms of employment the demand for specialists and workers with higher education is also growing. According to the statistical data, job announcements in the banking, transportation and logistics, insurance or IT are increasing in recent years. Specialists in these fields are regularly supplied by, among others, universities and schools in Bielsko-Biała.

The unemployment rate in the city is very low – 1,7 % - and it is below average both on regional as well as national level.

According to **the fertile ground for tech sector development** described above, Bielsko-Biała decided to be a part of TechDiversity project, which main goal is to address the lack of diverse communities in small and medium sized EU Cities that are looking to grow knowledge based, digital and tech ecosystems.

Diversity and inclusion in the innovation ecosystem is the very important issue in relation to growing and building competitiveness of the city. The strength of the ecosystem of Bielsko-Biała relays on the strong technological sector. And as global research shows, **diverse and inclusive technological sector is developing and growing faster.**

The city authorities are aware of this relation and tries to be close to the sector, investigates its needs and facilitates its growth. The latest report **"Investment potential of Bielsko-Biała" (2022),** confirms the shift of the city towards the technology and digitalization. It shows the directions where Bielsko-Biała should go and what resources would be needed to get there in terms od workforce, employment trends, education and competences.

In terms of the topic of diversity and inclusion itself, Bielsko-Biała does not keep any data. However, in the strategic documents we can find priorities related to inclusion of underrepresented groups, equalization of educational & work opportunities, boosting technology & entrepreneurship, activation of seniors & silver economy development, lifelong learning or startup support and multisectoral cooperation.

Moreover, a local NGO Startup Podbeskidzie Foundation is creating a yearly report based on the surveys conducted in local technological companies and startups, in which, among other data, position of women in tech sector is examined.

The survey **"Barometer of Occupations 2023"** determines the demand for workers in the following year for the city: deficit occupations are related with digital sector and sustainable professions are related also with digital sector. This fact could act as a starting point to measure also some data related with people of diverse groups that are able to cover some of the deficit occupations opportunities.

Having in mind above mentioned, 3 common challenges indicated at the project level are also relevant for the city level of Bielsko-Biała:

- **Tech Talent -** Explore what cities can do to better prepare underrepresented communities for employment opportunities and connect them into roles in local tech and digital businesses. Investigate the possible obstacles like unclear career pathways, lack of role models, and the prevalence of informal networks in hiring as well as learning from others about how to overcome them

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- **Tech entrepreneurship -** Explore what cities can do to support those communities to build, run and scale tech and digitally enabled companies. Determine what works, such as pre acceleration, acceleration, investment readiness activities plus mentoring, coaching, and peer support networks, and test various strategies locally before implementing them at the local level. Existing barriers may include access to workspace, access to diverse talent, access to funding, access to support, and access to social capital.
- **Understand the "what's & why's" of diversity and inclusion -** Support cities to understand the different characteristics and communities within their populations and what it takes to create inclusive and diverse digital ecosystems. The different characteristics include women, people of colour , migrants, older people, people from lower socio economic backgrounds and intersectionality. Cities will require to comprehend what success looks like and develop effective metrics to track their progress.

TechDiversity challenges

TechTalent

supporting underrepresented communities in finding employment opportunities in the local technology sector

TechEntrepreneurship

supporting underrepresented communities to build, run and scale businesses in the technology and digital industries

What, why & how?

- defining potential barriers
- indicating guidelines, patterns, good practices
- strategic approach
- small-scale testing

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Bielsko-Biała also recognizes that once the local digital ecosystem is not using the potential & skills, is not taking the advantage of diverse teams and is not knowing "what's" and whys" of diversity and inclusion (both from the perspective of local governments and company owners), than it comes to policy issue that needs to be addressed.

According to that, several general policy issues were indicated at the initial phase of the project:

(1) High number of migrants especially from Ukraine often well educated, but work below their qualifications

(2) More women in the population of the city, more unemployed women

(3) Growing IT, technology and modern business services sectors

(4) Gender balance issue tackled in strategic documents

(5) Tech related higher education opportunities

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Three main groups are initially indicated in terms of the need of their better connection to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the sector: **Women, migrants and seniors**. A fourth group, (also treated as cross sectoral for women and migrants) may be also young people.

Together with the ULG members, both the pressing issue as well as target group were specified and a set of tailored activities has been indicated to facilitate the process of boosting innovation ecosystem of the city by improvement of diversity and inclusion settings.

Problem identification by local stakeholders

Problem identification

The **city of Bielsko-Biała ambition** is to strengthen its local economy through the dynamic development of the technology sector. One of the instruments supporting this ambition is the TechDiversity Integrated Action Plan (IAP), which implementation aims to enhance the effectiveness of existing local strategies, initiatives, and activities.

The foundational analysis and objectives of the project have been shared with key local stakeholders, who were invited to participate in shaping a common vision for an inclusive and innovative tech ecosystem.

A broad consensus has emerged around the importance of diversity and inclusion as critical elements for the sustainable growth of the digital sector. As part of the initial assessment, various existing mechanisms supporting different segments of the local population — including youth, older adults, and people with migrant backgrounds — were identified. These initiatives already contribute meaningfully to strengthening digital competencies and increasing participation in the tech economy.

However, some significant gaps remain. For instance, support specifically designed to improve equity in terms of gender — particularly the representation and role of women in technology and innovation-driven industries — is still limited.

In response, one of the priorities of the city's strategic focus of TechDiversity to foster better representation of underrepresented groups, with particular attention paid to enabling fair access to both employment and entrepreneurship opportunities within the tech and business landscape.

Facilitation of improvement of presence & position of women in tech sector and business environment – from employment and entrepreneurship perspective

The strengths of Bielsko-Biała's local innovation ecosystem are significant. The city benefits from strong and long-standing collaborations among key actors, including public institutions, the education sector, business support organizations, NGOs, and private companies. Events such as the BBDays4.IT festival — the largest technology-focused event in southern Poland — exemplify the high level of activity and cooperation in this field.

Furthermore, the structure of the local tech sector itself is diverse. It encompasses software houses, family-run businesses, branches of global corporations, as well as micro and small enterprises. The operational scope of these companies also varies — from service providers to product developers — with both national and international reach. This heterogeneity is seen as a distinct advantage in building a resilient and adaptable ecosystem.

To further develop this ecosystem, the Integrated Action Plan concentrates on four key aspects:

1. **Fostering collaboration** among key institutional stakeholders — including those from business, education, civil society, and support organizations.
2. **Raising awareness** around diversity and innovation as engines of growth.
3. **Providing capacity-building opportunities** through events, workshops, and trainings that promote inclusion and skill development.
4. **Creating synergies** by identifying existing initiatives, connecting them, and enhancing their impact through coordination and shared vision.

Throughout the process, an emerging theme has been the importance not only of identifying barriers to participation in tech, but also of actively promoting positive narratives — highlighting success stories and showcasing the added value that diverse perspectives bring to innovation and economic development.

BBDays4.IT festival - biggest & longest tech festival in the region

6 editions
5000+ participants
200+ partners
100+ events

Composition of the TechDiversity Urbact Local Group:

When planning the composition of the local group, the key issue taking under consideration was to invite representatives of all relevant public, educational and non-for-profit institutions and to take advantage of active private tech sector in the city by inviting their representatives to the works of the group.

List of active participants of the ULG & their core competence in the group:

1) **City Hall** – Strategy and Economic Development Department – direct contact with city authorities, strategic point of view on the project issues, promotion & dissemination channel
2) **University of Bielsko-Biała** – main higher education institution in the city, education sector point of view, assistance in research, access to kn0owledge & potential target group, promotion & dissemination channel
3) **Youth City Council & its Plenipotentiary** – young people view on the issues related to diversity and inclusion, access to potential target group, promotion & dissemination
4) **NGOs** – related both to the employment (education and talent management) as well as entrepreneurship (startup support and business management), promotion & dissemination
5) **BSOs** – representatives of other departments of ARRSA (like FabLab or Entrepreneurship Support Fund), access to knowledge & space, promotion & dissemination
6) **Local IT Companies** – of different characteristics (family businesses, companies operating on the global market, product development and service providers, freelancers)
7) **IT in the Mountains Association** – established during the TechDiversity project lifetime and become core organization to cooperate with in terms of implementation of planned activities

Along the project implementation and development of the IAP together with the ULG members, ideas for involvement of other entities are evolving. Just to mention – Institute of Culture, created for the sake of - preparation of the application for European Capital of Culture 2029 (as an institution dealing with diversity and social inclusion in different fields) or Beskid Chamber of Commerce (as a BSO with direct access to many local companies).

The IAP will be introduced to the regional authorities and business support organizations operating on the regional level (Katowice Special Economic Zone, Upper Silesian Acceleration for Commercial Entreprises Ltd.).

General info, inputs & methodology

At the first meeting the project was introduced to the Mayor of the City to ensure his awareness and involvement in TechDiversity. He agreed with the importance of diversity and inclusion in creating innovative and sustainable cities and committed support during the project implementation.

The rest of the meetings were more content related, and they follow the rhythm of the project – starting with the problem identification, through the roadmap & vision to testing action scope definition and implementation plan.

In the meantime, between the meetings, bilateral discussions with the ULG members as well as new entities willing to discuss defined pressing issue and engage in the project activities in the future.

The core of the TechDiversity local group was the private sector. Representatives of local IT companies were truly engaged in the process of creating the action plan as well as implementation of the testing action – HerStory in IT.

Key insights from the ULG works:

(1) Creation of the common workspace (Miro Board) - according to the suggestions of the ULG members we created a common workspace with tools used on the meetings and where every one can share the ideas of the actions to be implemented, institutions/people to be contacted, calendar of events or any other issue related to the project implementation.

(2) Problem identification – tool: Problem Tree – conducted on the second ULG meeting to define the most pressing issue. Thanks to the construction of the tool, visually enabling to look at the problem from different perspective of causes and effects, we were able to define most pressing issue and three areas of intervention, furthermore extended with the forth one, invented while discussing on the project vision

   a. IT Inspiration - how to START in IT?
   b. IT Specialization – how to EXPERTISE in IT?
   c. IT Leadership - – how to LEAD in IT?
   d. Community Building & strategic approach

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Areas of interventions - actions to beimplemented

Creating women in IT community

IT Inspiration   **IT Specialisation**   **IT Leadership**

surveys, workshops, mentoring, networking events, creating a community

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(3) Small scale activities – self-activity of ULG members – as mentioned above, one of the strengths of local ecosystem is the engagement and commitment of the stakeholders. It is clearly visible among the ULG members, thanks to which, following activities have been undertaken:
   a. International Women Day video with inspiring stories of women in IT
   b. Presentation of the TechDiversity project on the Blended Intensive Program of Applied Artificial Intelligence
   c. Presentation of the project on the European Urban Initiative capacity building event in Tampere (29-30.05.2024) – within the presentation on "Breaking borders to elevate innovation". How Bielsko-Biała harnessed EU value to develop innovation ecosystem"
   d. Poster presentation of the TechDiversity project on EuroScience Open Forum – international conference in Katowice (11-14.06.2024)

(4) Creation of the vision – tool: Newspaper of Tomorrow – the vision of the project was discussed on the third ULG meeting. The Newspaper of tomorrow tool was introduced, however not used on the meeting itself. One of the members proposed to introduce this tool to the students at the University of Bielsko-Biała at the Business Analysis Faculty. Two workshops were successfully implemented with students and the results were included in the first draft of the vision of the project

(5) Definition of the testing action –ULG members were working on the Testing Action Canvas and end up with the concrete idea of activity to be implemented within the BBDays4.IT festival in September 2024.

(6) Testing action feedback and definition of the actions – on the few consecutive ULG meetings the core topic was to evaluate the testing action, discuss strategic objectives and plan the IAP actions using the Action Table Tool

(7) Endorsement of the IAP – core ULG members agreed on the overall scope of the project, defined actions and activities as well as implementation, monitoring and evaluation plan

Testing action at local level

To connect the dots of already existing formats and TechDiversity testing action, it was decided to integrate the implementation of the1st edition of testing action into the format of BBDays4.IT festival, which is a great opportunity to reach wider audience, be more visible and create more impact. BBDays4.IT is the key tech related event in the region, each year gathering more that 1500 participants, combining conferences, hard skills & soft skills development workshops with informal integration, networking as well as sport and recreation.

The concept was agreed together with the ULG. To follow the flow of the festival, It was decided to organise an event, that will be a combination of integration and networking with content related presentations about trends as well as hot topics on the sector.
On the one hand we want make women already working in IT sector more visible, and on the other we wanted to provide valuable content for the participants. The event isn't "a female only" – as our main goal is to integrate women into whole IT community.

On the ULG meetings the name of the overall initiative and the event itself was co-created. At the end it was decided to choose the name **HerStory in IT.**

Key aspects of the testing action:
1. Boosting the impact by combining with BBDays4.IT festival
2. Integration & competence building as two main goals
3. Content wise related to megatrends like importance of soft skills in tech jobs and leadership and team management issues
4. Presentation of "herstories"
5. Workshop about next activities to be undertaken within the TechDiversity project – feeding of the IAP
6. Collecting feedback and motivation – in registration form participants have to answer why they want to participate in the event, what will be the value for them.

During the project life time 6 editions of small scale testing actions were implemented, each dedicated to the different topic and related to the other actions form the IAP:
- HerStory in IT: Soft skills & Leadership (September 2024)
- HerStory in IT: Spotlight (January 2025)
- HerStory in IT: Two perspectives on AI (March 2025)
- HerStory in IT: Outdoor Edition (June 2025)
- HerStory in IT & Beyond (September 2025)
- HerStory in IT: Data & Relations (December 2025)

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In total, more than 300 participants took part in the events.
Each of the HerStory in edition topic and formula were agreed with the ULG members and was in line with the trends and local needs. On the other hand, each of the activity was testing the actions indicated in this integrated action plan. Along their implementation, proper adjustments in the plan were made.

HerStory in IT
- 09.09.2024 -
(I) INSPIRE & TRENDS
(II) SOFT SKILLS & LEADERSHIP

HerStory in IT:Spotlight
- 16.01.2025 -
RÓŻNORODNOŚĆ W IT

HerStory in IT
- 09.09.2024 -
(I) INSPIRE & TRENDS
(II) SOFT SKILLS & LEADERSHIP

TESTING ACTION: HERSTORY IN IT

HerStory in IT:Spotlight
- 16.01.2025 -
RÓŻNORODNOŚĆ W IT

HerStory in IT & BEYOND...
- 08.09.2025 -
@ BBDAYS4.IT VOL. 7

HerStory in IT
- 02.12.2025 -
Data vs. Relations

MORE THAN 300 PARTICIPANTS

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Main integration challenges

Main Integration Challenges Identified in the Development of Bielsko-Biała's Integrated Action Plan (IAP)

Broader stakeholder engagement:
- Need to involve a wider range of stakeholders, especially underrepresented groups such as women, migrants, seniors, and youth.
- Ensuring their participation is meaningful, not merely symbolic.

Embedding cross-cutting themes:
- Gender equality: Strategic priorities exist, but there is a lack of operational mechanisms and data collection to track gender-related outcomes.
- Digital inclusion: Additional tailored educational formats are needed to accommodate varying levels of digital skills and access.
- Green transition: Environmental aspects are not yet integrated into the tech and entrepreneurship ecosystem; sustainability remains disconnected from innovation efforts.

Strengthening multi-level cooperation and governance:
- Local networks between public institutions, education, and private sector are strong, but strategic cooperation with regional and national stakeholders needs to be better structured.
- Improved coordination could unlock more resources, shared expertise, and policy alignment.

Data gaps and evidence-based planning:
- Absence of detailed local data on diversity and inclusion in the tech sector limits the ability to design responsive and measurable interventions.

Ensuring alignment with broader strategies:
- The IAP must remain coherent with regional innovation strategies, smart specialization agendas, and national policies related to digital transformation and inclusion.

Financial sustainability:
- Strong reliance on EU funding highlights the need to explore alternative sources, including private sector investment, public-private partnerships, and local funding mechanisms.

Monitoring, evaluation, and long-term impact
- Development of robust monitoring tools is needed to measure progress, adapt actions, and ensure sustainability of inclusive practices over time.

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4. Overall logic and integrated approach

The vision created together with the ULG is tackling all the issues that were discussed on the meetings and corresponds to the strategic objectives of the city's development strategy.

The vision may be defined as follows:

Bielsko-Biała is a city with diverse & inclusive environment ensuring possibility of equal participation of women in tech sector and empowering them by vivid, supportive local community

The logic of intervention foreseen with the action plan activities is based on multistakeholder engagement, co-creation and alignment with both strategic overview on the city level as well as needs indicated by the local business and education sector. Both horizontal and vertical integration of the development of ideas were ensured.

The overall logic of the project follows the rules set by the URBACT program and may be described as follows:

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- **Vision** – long-term goal that was set up on the city strategic level, defined in line with already existing strategies and based on the needs analysis
- **Areas of intervention** – specific areas with certain thematic focus
- **Strategic objectives** – results that we want to achieve, defined in the SMART way
- **Actions** – that needs to be taken to fulfil the strategic objectives
- **Activities** – concrete steps to achieve the actions
- **Resources, key results & outputs**

Infographic 1. Vision, areas of intervention and strategic objectives of the Integrated Action Plan.

As indicated in the Section 4, agreed vision of the TechDiversity project Integrated Action Plan is:
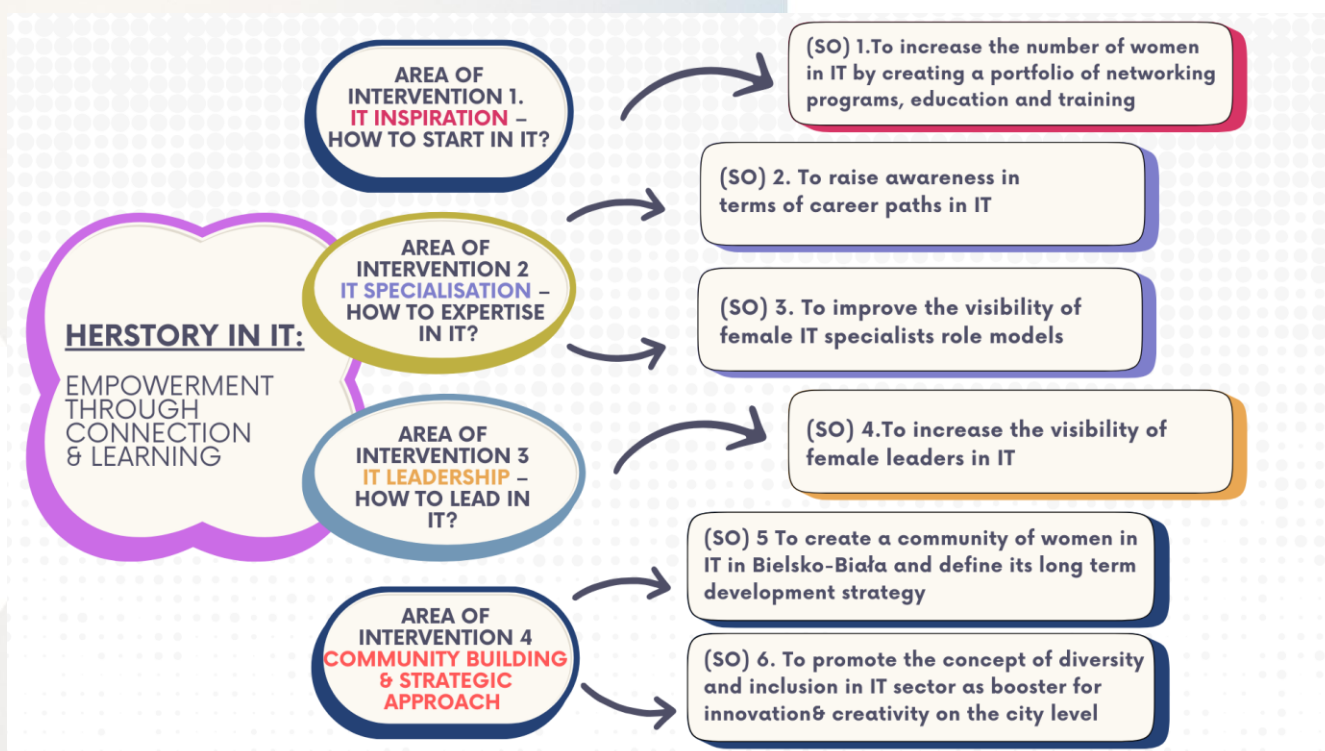
Bielsko-Biała is a city with diverse & inclusive environment ensuring possibility of equal participation of women in tech sector and empowering them by vivid, supportive local community

As the topic of gender equality, diversity and inclusion in tech sector is complex, the areas of intervention of our action plan also tackle different layers of the issue. From changing the mindset at the pre-entry level, through showing cases and role models of the existing possibilities, to community building, networking and strategic level actions.

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1st Area of Intervention – IT Inspiration – how to START in IT?

One of the main points to tackle when it comes to improvement of number of women in the IT sector is to inspire those who are hesitating or are at the beginning of their career path. The best way to do that is to showcase success stories and organize a room for exchanging among those already in the sector and those who wanted to start. In this area of intervention we will focus on young women, in high schools and universities and also those willing to reskill from other sectors to IT. We will propose formats like events with moderated networking, workshops and courses that may facilitate their decision making process.

2nd Area of Intervention – IT Specialisation – how to EXPERTISE in IT?

Second highlight will be made on showcasing clear career paths in IT. It might be integrated as next step after 'How to START in IT?'. Within this area of intervention, we want to tackle the issue of lack of awareness among women about how they can specialize in IT – what job opportunities this sector has for them and what competences are needed. In this area of intervention we plan to focus on competence building schemes, both technical as well as non-technical, and improvement of visibility of women IT specialists.

3rd Area of Intervention – IT Leadership – how to LEAD in IT?

Third important focus will be made on the improvement of position of women in IT. In this area of intervention we want to implement activities that will empower women with leadership skills on the one hand, and that will showcase the successful examples of female leaders in IT sector on the other. Very low number of women is clearly visible on IT events, especially those in management and C-level positions. With our action we want to change this situation by providing tailored support in the form of workshops, trainings and mentoring

4th Area of Intervention – Community Building & strategic approach

Our 4th area of intervention tackles the issue of building community of women working and willing to work in IT sector as well as creating long term linkages between institutions, companies and organizations involved in the promotion and dissemination of diversity in tech concept. It is also about bringing diversity and inclusion topic in tech sector on the city strategic level and emphasizing theirs impact on the economic development of the city.

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In the following areas of intervention, we indicated a list of strategic objectives that will enable us in reaching the overall goal:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE (SO) 1.To increase the number of women in IT by creating a portfolio of networking programs, education and training

The goal is to create a diverse and inclusive IT sector by offering structured networking programs, specialized education, and hands-on training for women. These initiatives will provide opportunities for skills development, mentorship, and career growth, ensuring a more balanced workforce in the tech industry.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE (SO) 2 To raise awareness in terms of career paths in IT

The goal is to educate and inform about diverse career opportunities in IT, breaking stereotypes and demystifying IT career paths, making the field more accessible to women. By highlighting diverse career trajectories and providing role models, it aims to encourage more women to explore IT professions and equip them with the necessary skills to enter and thrive in the industry.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE (SO) 3. To improve the visibility of female IT specialists role models

This objective aims to highlight women contributions in the IT sector, share their stories, and create platforms where they can inspire others. Featuring female specialists in media, events, and educational programs will contribute to normalizing women's presence in IT.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE (SO) 4.To increase the visibility of female leaders in IT

Leadership roles in IT remain predominantly male, and this objective seeks to change that by promoting female leaders in the sector. It includes showcasing successful female executives, entrepreneurs, and decision-makers, encouraging mentorship programs, and fostering leadership development initiatives for aspiring women in IT.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE (SO) 5 To create a community of women in IT in Bielsko-Biała and define its long term development strategy

A strong, connected community of women in IT can provide peer support, mentorship, and advocacy for career advancement. This objective focuses on establishing such a network in Bielsko-Biała, ensuring its sustainability through strategic development plans, networking events, and collaboration with tech-business stakeholders.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE (SO) 6. To promote the concept of diversity and inclusion in IT sector as booster for innovation& creativity on the city level

Diversity in the IT workforce leads to greater innovation and creativity. This objective promotes inclusive policies and practices in the sector, advocating for equal opportunities at the city

level. Awareness campaigns, industry partnerships, and policy recommendations will help create a more inclusive IT environment, benefiting both businesses and employees.

A set of actions has been established to achieve the listed strategic objectives. Infographics below shows the relation of actions to certain areas of intervention. In the table – summary of the activities to be undertaken in each of the action.

AREA OF INTERVENTION 1. IT INSPIRATION – HOW TO START IN IT?

A.1.1 Entry portfolio – GIVE IT A TRY!
a portfolio of networking events, and entry level education schemes and trainings

A.1.2 STARTER KIT
set of downloadable guides (user friendly and visually attractive) designed to help individuals explore and embark on IT careers.
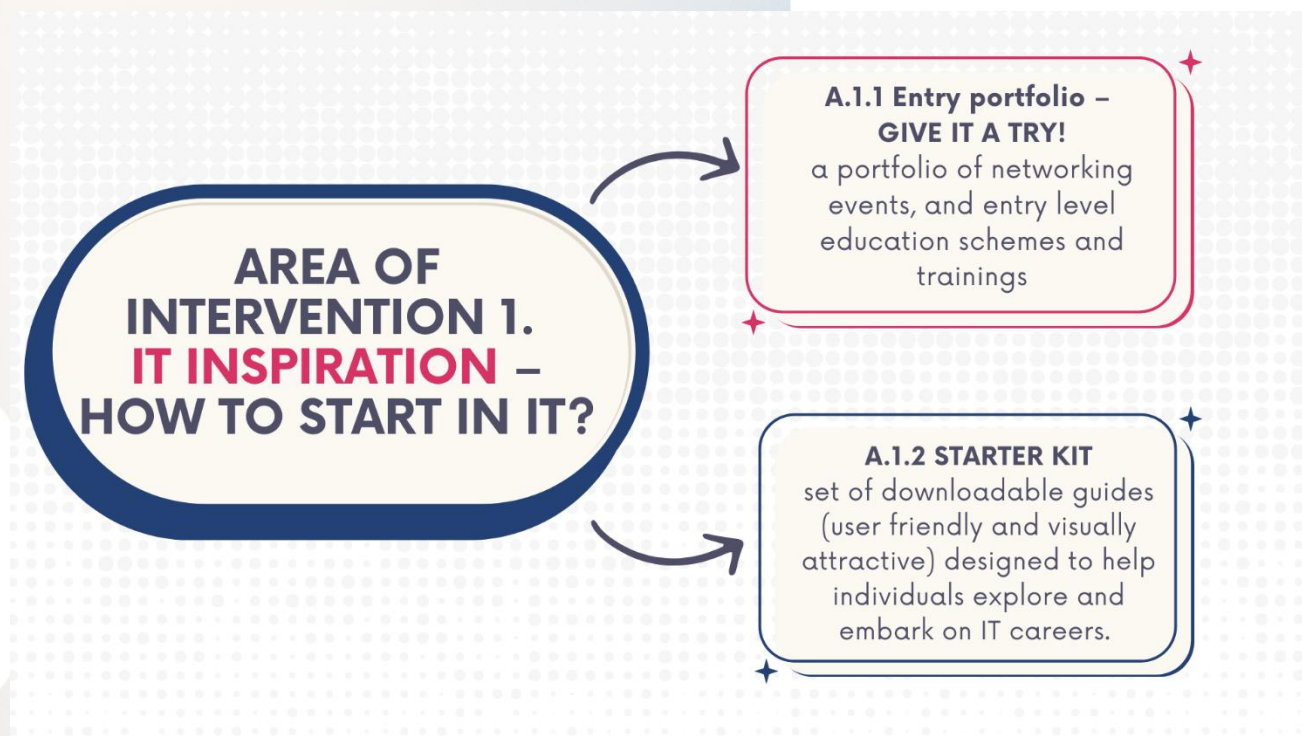
Infographic 2. List of actions in Area of Intervention 1

AREA OF INTERVENTION 2 IT SPECIALISATION – HOW TO EXPERTISE IN IT?

A.2.1 PATHWAYS
clear, actionable resources and guidance for women exploring career opportunities in IT.

A.2.2 BOOTCAMP
short-term, intensive bootcamps aimed at equipping participants with foundational IT skills in high-demand areas
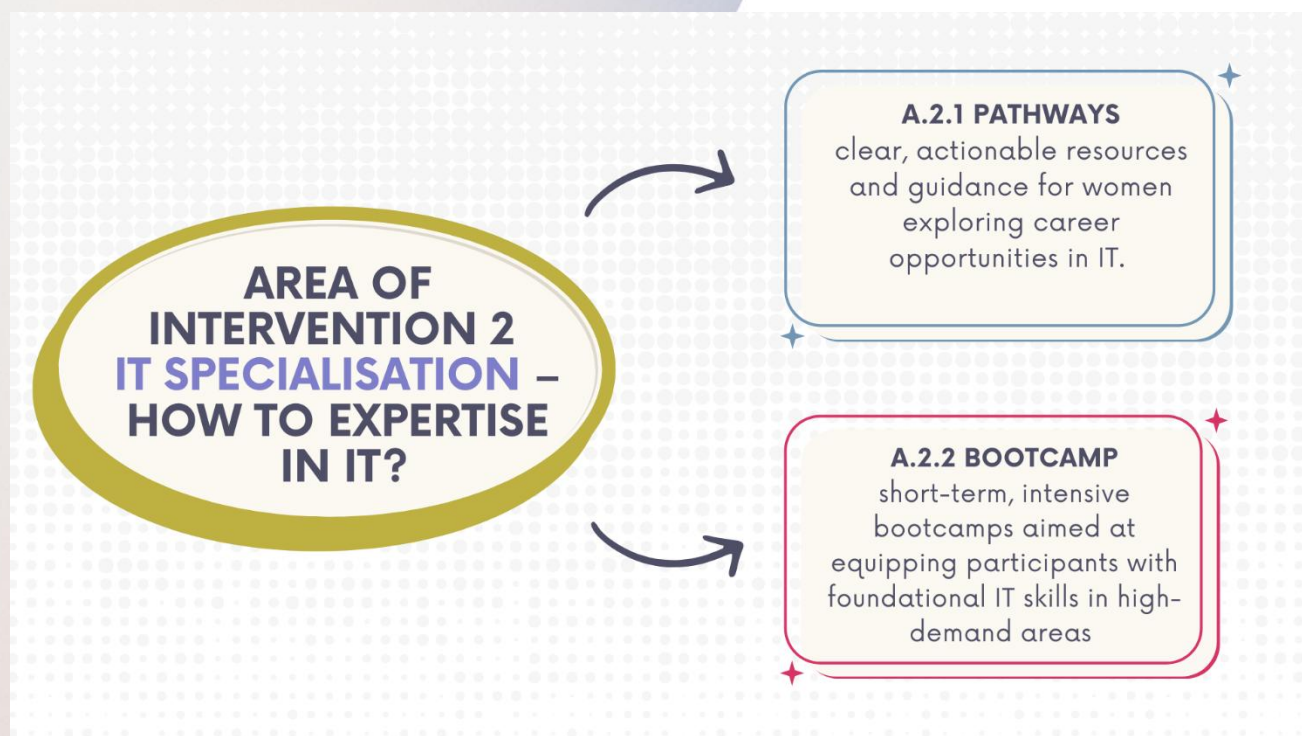
Infographic 3. List of actions in Area of Intervention 2

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AREA OF INTERVENTION 2
IT SPECIALISATION – HOW TO EXPERTISE IN IT?

AREA OF INTERVENTION 3
IT LEADERSHIP – HOW TO LEAD IN IT?

A.3.1 & A.4.1 SPOTLIGHT VOICES
gallery will be created with the personal stories of female IT specialists & leaders working in the IT sector in Bielsko-Biała.
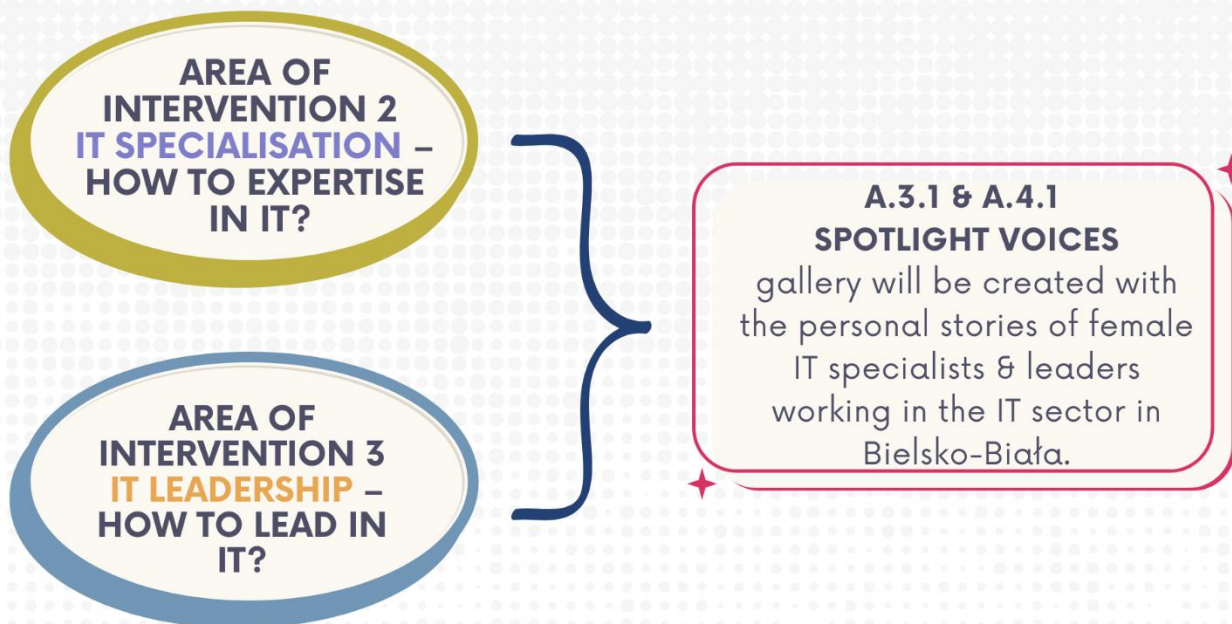
Infographic 4. List of actions in Area of Intervention 2 &3

A.4.1 TOOLS & PLATFORM FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING

(I) comprehensive **digital hub** designed to bring together all elements of the HerStory in IT initiative, creating a one-stop platform for inspiration, education, and connection.
(II) **Survey & Report** initiative aims to analyse and document the current presence and position of women in the IT sector in Bielsko-Biała
(III) **Association** aims to establish a formal organization dedicated to promoting the presence, visibility, and influence of women in the IT sector in Bielsko-Biała and beyond

AREA OF INTERVENTION 4
COMMUNITY BUILDING & STRATEGIC APPROACH

A.6.1 TechDiversity PROMOTION & CITY LEVEL ADVOCACY

initiative aims to strategically **promote diversity and inclusion** in the IT sector at the city level combines digital and social tools to build a women–in–IT community.

It includes launching a platform for connection and learning, conducting a survey with a follow-up report, and forming an association or network to ensure long-term engagement and visibility.

Infographic 5. List of actions in Area of Intervention 4

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Integrated Approach to IAP Development

The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) aims to increase women's participation in the IT sector through a multidimensional and sustainable urban development strategy. Its compliance with 12 key integration aspects has been assessed. Collaboration with local authorities, NGOs, tech companies, and educational institutions ensures a broad perspective, though further ULG meetings and strengthened partnerships are needed. The IAP aligns with local, national, and EU policies, with regular compliance reviews and active participation in city strategy updates planned.

The plan includes short- and long-term goals with monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, as well as testing of initial actions. Stakeholders are engaged at all stages, and strengthening collaboration through the new formats of multistakeholder cooperation like IT in The Mountains are planned. The IAP integrates education, technology, and social policy, requiring the strengthening of existing partnerships and the establishment of new ones. While spatial integration is not applicable, actions can be replicated in other regions, and expanding cooperation with national institutions is planned. Cooperation between the private sector, education, and administration needs further structuring to enhance multi-level governance.

Gender and digital inclusion are key thematic areas, with further monitoring of effectiveness essential. Complementary types of investment are not applicable to the project, but planned actions can utilize various funding sources, necessitating ongoing monitoring of available funds and budget strategies. In summary, the IAP employs a comprehensive approach to urban development but requires further refinement in environmental impact, territorial integration, and governance structuring.

HerStory in IT: Empowerment through connection & learning

QUARTERLY GANTT CHART

Action	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Q4 2025	Q1 2026	Q2 2026	Q3 2026	Q4 2026	Q1 2027	Q2 2027
SPOTLIGHT VOICES										
collect of HerStory in IT VOICES										
promotion & dissemination of the initative										
evaluation										
PLATFORM										
develop the design & architecture of the plartform										
integrate outputs from other actions into the platform										
evaluation of the concpet										
SURVEY & REPORT										
design of the survey										
conduct of the survey in collaboration with IT companies										
analyse the results and prepare the report										
offcial premiere of the report										
dissemination of the results										
evaluation of the concpet										
ASSOCIATION										
Define the Mission and Structure										
Secure Key Partnerships										
Launch & Community Engagement										

HerStory in IT: Empowerment through connection & learning

QUARTERLY GANTT CHART

Action	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Q4 2025	Q1 2026	Q2 2026	Q3 2026	Q4 2026	Q1 2027	Q2 2027
TECHDIVERISTY PROMOTION										
Awareness and Education Campaigns		███	███							
Inclusive Hiring and Training Programs				███	███	███				
Policy Advocacy and Industry Engagement						███	███	███		
evaluation of the concpet										███

5. Actions Infographics

TechDiversity

#1.1 ENTRY PORTFOLIO
GIVE IT A TRY!

Develop and implement a comprehensive portfolio of networking, promotional and educational activities targeting women interested in entering the tech sector.

Stakeholders involved

IT in the Mountains Association
University of Bielsko-Biała
City of Bielsko-Biała
Beskidzka Chamber of Commerce
HR agencies
Local IT companies

1.1.1 Map the Existing Offer in the Region

coordinated outreach, structured data collection, and development of a simple, verified database to map current IT entry opportunities for women in the region

1.1.2 Mastermind Sessions

delivered quarterly in casual, discussion-based format with minimal presentation, maximum interaction.

1.1.3 Company Open Days

Establish cooperation with IT companies, launch sign-ups, tailor the format, conduct the events

1.1.4 Beginner-Friendly IT Courses Portfolio

Courses will be delivered in short formats (20–30h each), either live or hybrid, with practical tasks and basic certification

HerStory
in IT

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TechDiversity

#1.2 STARTER KIT

Design and distribute a comprehensive digital and print guide to help individuals explore and navigate IT career entry points

Stakeholders involved

IT in the Mountains Association
University of Bielsko-Biała
City of Bielsko-Biała
Youth City Council
Local schools
Tech communities (Crossweb, SoDA, IT Girls Foundation, Women in Tech)
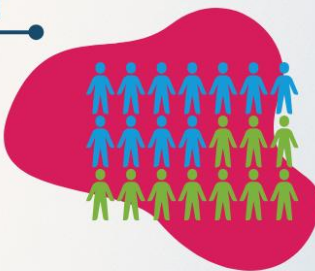
1.2.1 Content Creation – Writing and Expert Input

A visually engaging, downloadable starter guide with information on entry-level IT roles, learning resources, and practical steps for launching a tech career

1.2.2 Promotion & distribution

Create mailing list → print teasers → launch online campaign, Schools/NGOs prioritize distribution
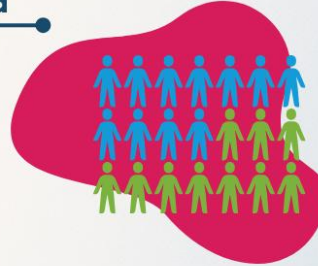
TechDiversity
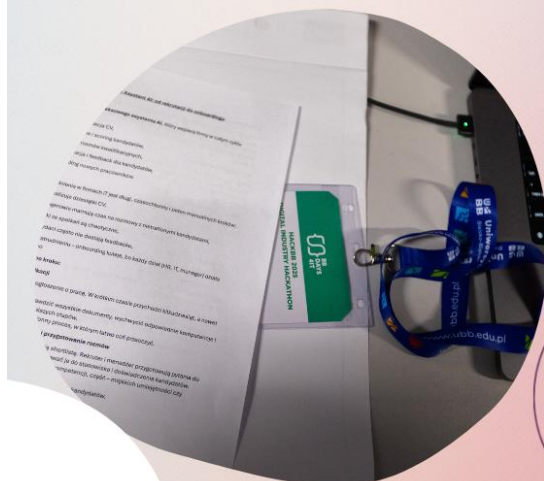
#2.1 PATHWAYS

Launch a city-wide mentoring and job-shadowing program tailored for women considering IT careers, including profile diagnostics and growth mapping

Stakeholders involved

IT in the Mountains
Local IT companies
University of Bielsko-Biała
Career offices
NGOs focused on women empowerment

2.1.1 Career Exploration Workshops

Workshops will be held quarterly, each exploring a different IT role, with short talks, Q&A and takeaway materials.

2.1.2 Career Mapping Digital Tool

The tool guides users toward IT roles based on interest/skills and offers links to further training. Steps: Content logic -UX design-testing with users-online deployment

2.1.3 Mentoring Groups & AMA Series

Launch two formats: (1) small online mentoring groups (monthly), (2) live AMA (Ask Me Anything) sessions with women in IT on social media.

HerStory
in IT

TechDiversity

#2.2 BOOTCAMP

Organize thematic bootcamps for women exploring IT, including real-case projects and skill demonstrations.

Stakeholders involved

IT in the Mountains
Local IT companies
Trainers and educators
Career offices

2.2.1 Bootcamp Design & Preparation

Develop curriculum for beginner-friendly IT Bootcamp (UX/UI, QA, Junior Dev tracks).
 Steps: Needs assessment → define tracks → recruit trainers → develop schedule → prepare promotional campaign.

2.2.2 Bootcamp Delivery

To initiate: Deliver intensive, 6–8 week beginner Bootcamp in selected IT fields.
Steps: Launch participant recruitment → onboarding sessions → intensive classes → certification of completion.

2.2.3 Bootcamp Post-Support & Matchmaking

Offer post-Bootcamp support: individual mentoring, matchmaking events with companies, and CV workshops.
 Steps: Assign mentors → organize matchmaking event → track participants' career progress.

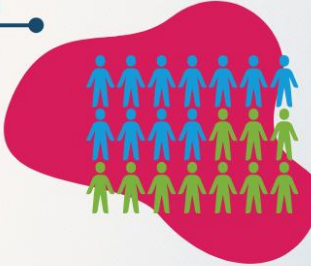Her Story in IT

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TechDiversity

#2.3 & 3.1 SPOTLIGHT VOICES

Develop a storytelling campaign with interviews, video profiles, and social media series showing diverse journeys and career successes of women in IT.

Stakeholders involved

·Women in IT already working locally
·IT in the Mountains
·Local media
Communication and PR professionals

2.3.1 & 3.1.1 Interviews with Role Models

Conduct and publish a series of interviews with diverse female role models from IT.
Steps: Identify profiles → schedule interviews → record/edit → publish on Platform and social media.

2.3.2 & 3.1.2 Leadership Labs

Deliver short-format leadership events focused on women's soft skills, assertiveness, and confidence in tech roles. Steps: Define themes → recruit trainers → promote and enroll → deliver workshops → collect feedback

HerStory in IT

TechDiversity

# #4.1 TOOLS AND PLATFORMS FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING

digital and social tools to build a women-in-IT community. It includes launching a platform for connection and learning, conducting a survey with a follow-up report, and forming an association or network to ensure long-term engagement and visibility.

Stakeholders involved

·IT in the Mountains
·Local IT companies and professionals
·Community managers and facilitators
·Communication and design professionals
Policy makers and local government
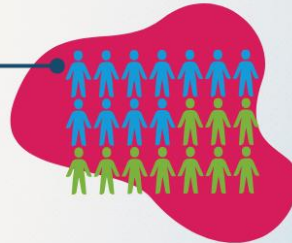
4.1.1 HerStory Platform
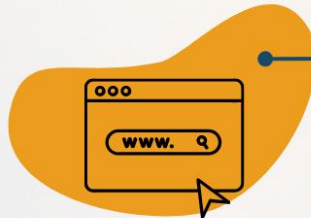
Develop a central digital platform for all HerStory content, tools, events, and community.
Steps: UX planning →
backend/frontend development →
integrate tools and media → launch
→ maintain content

4.1.2 HerStory Annual Report

Conduct an annual survey targeting local companies, universities, and selected schools to collect quantitative and qualitative data on women's participation in IT

4.1.3 HerStory Association / Network

Form a formal network or association to sustain HerStory activities post-project.
Steps: Draft statute → gather founding team → register entity → define 1st year strategy

HerStory
in IT

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TechDiversity

#5.1 PROMOTION & CITY LEVEL ADVOCACY

A city-level campaign promoting diversity in IT through a mix of public events, media storytelling, and policy engagement. Activities include presence at tech events, meetings with decision-makers, and a coordinated social media and visual outreach effort.

Stakeholders involved

·IT in the Mountains
·Local IT companies and professionals
·Community managers and facilitators
·influencers and community leaders
Policy makers and local government
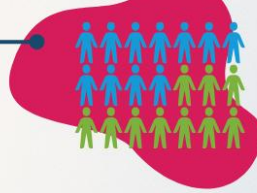
5.1.1 Diversity in Tech Roundtables

Organize two high-level roundtable discussions bringing together policymakers, businesses, educators and civil society to identify local barriers and opportunities for diversity in IT.

5.1.2 TechDiversity Awareness Campaign

Design and run an awareness campaign promoting diversity and inclusion in IT at the city level.
Campaign to include:
short video testimonials from diverse IT workers,
social media graphics and carousels,
articles in local press and online portals,
informational posters in public spaces

5.1.3 TechDiversit at Public Events

Arrange HerStory in IT presence at at least two major public tech/business events to engage the public and showcase initiatives (i.e. BBDays4.IT). Activities include pop-up stands, printed materials, video displays, and informal networking.

TechDiversity

#5.1 PROMOTION & CITY LEVEL ADVOCACY

A city-level campaign promoting diversity in IT through a mix of public events, media storytelling, and policy engagement. Activities include presence at tech events, meetings with decision-makers, and a coordinated social media and visual outreach effort.

5.1.4 Advocacy Meetings with Decision-Makers

Schedule and conduct 5+ advocacy meetings targeting key policymakers, public institutions, and industry leaders to present recommendations, campaign results, and promote policy change.

5.1.5 Engagement Toolkit Distribution

Develop and distribute a digital/print toolkit for partners and institutions to replicate HerStory activities, share campaign content, and run independent events or discussions.

6. Action planning details

ACTION 1.1 Entry Portfolio – Give IT a try! **Action summary:** Develop and implement a comprehensive portfolio of networking, promotional and educational activities targeting women interested in entering the tech sector.		**Entity responsible for the action: Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała**		
Short description: A portfolio of entry-level networking events and educational formats designed to attract women to the IT sector. Activities include masterminds, networking events, company open days, and beginner-friendly IT courses	**Stakeholders involved:** IT in the Mountains Association University of Bielsko-Biała City of Bielsko-Biała Beskidzka Chamber of Commerce HR agencies Local IT companies	**Areas of intervention:** IT Inspiration – How to START in IT?	**Strategic reference objective:** (SO) 1.To increase the number of women in IT by creating a portfolio of networking programs, education and training	**Contribution to political mandate lines** Supports gender equity and digital inclusion objectives in local strategic documents
		Possible risks: Low attendance due to lack of awareness Coordination challenges across multiple institutions	**Possible barriers:** Limited time availability of target group Stereotypes regarding gender roles in tech	**Readiness for action:** High - strong partner network already engaged (action partially tested with TechDiversity testing action)
Outputs: - Map of existing offers 4 networking events (e.g. mastermind sessions) - Open days in IT companies 4 beginner-level IT courses		**Outcomes:** - Increased participation of women in IT - Improved stakeholder cooperation - Stronger ecosystem visibility		
Budget: estimated budget 23.500 EUR		**Timing: Q2 2025 – Q1 2027**		
Sources of funding: European Social Fund+, Local grants, Partner in-kind support		**Monitoring:** Participant satisfaction and attendance Number of events and initiatives launched		
ACTIVITIES				
Activity	**Implementation details and possible problems**	**Other related IAP actions**	**Responsible entity and Stakeholders involved**	**Cost and source of funding**	**Target Indicators**	**Timing**

1.1.1 Map the Existing Offer in the Region	**Implementation details:** coordinated outreach, structured data collection, and development of a simple, verified database to map current IT entry opportunities for women in the region **Possible problems:** Potential low response rate from institutions; need for regular updating post-project.	Starter Kit (A1.2) and Platform (A4.1)	Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała IT in the Mountains Association	**FINANCE:** 10.000,00 EUR Research team, Online database platform license or tool setup, communication campaign, graphic design **SOURCE:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Sielsia, local grants	Map of existing initiatives supporting women's access to the IT sector	Q2 2026
1.1.2 Mastermind Sessions	**Implementation details:** The mastermind sessions will be delivered quarterly in casual, discussion-based format with minimal presentation, maximum interaction. **Possible problems:** Low attendance → mitigated by direct recruitment and social media push	A2.1 (Career Pathways) and A3.1 (Role Models – Spotlight Voices)	IT in the Mountains Association	**FINANCE:** 1.000,00 €/per session Moderator honoraria (if needed, venue rental, catering, promotion materials **SOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Sielsia, local grants	4 mastermind sessions delivered (1 per quarter)	Q3 2026 – Q3 2027
1.1.3 Company Open Days	**Implementation details:** Establish cooperation with IT companies, launch sign-ups, tailor the format, conduct the events **Possible problems:** difficulty in aligning dates across companies, Risk of no-show participants	Links to Bootcamp (A2.2), Pathways (A2.1) and Spotlight (A3.1)	Regional Development Agency, Beskidzka Chamber of Commerce, IT in the Mountains Association *(direct cooperation with: HR agencies & selected partner IT companies*	**FINANCE:** 2.500,00 EUR/event Coordination team, promotional materials, events logistics, **SOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Sielsia, local grants	Number of events (min. 4) Number of participants per event (min. 20)	Q3 2026 – Q3 2027
1.1.4 Beginner-Friendly IT Courses Portfolio	**Implementation details:** Courses will be delivered in short formats (20–30h each), either live or hybrid, with practical tasks and basic certification (Curriculum development in collaboration with trainers, Scheduling and promotion, Participant selection and onboarding, Delivery, monitoring and feedback analysis) **Possible problems:** Mismatch between course level and participant expectations, Difficulties in recruitment	Bootcamp (A2.2), Starter Kit (A1.2) and during Mastermind Sessions (A1.1)	University of Bielsko-Biała, IT in the Mountains Association	**FINANCE:** 10.000,00 €/per one session of portfolio (portfolio is 4 different courses) Legal consultants, financial advisors, accounting software **SOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Sielsia, local grants	4 beginner-level courses developed and delivered Number of participants of portfolio of courses (min. 60 in total)	Q3 2026 – Q3 2027

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ACTION 1.2 Starter kIT	Entity responsible for the action: Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała		
Action summary: Design and distribute a comprehensive digital and print guide to help individuals explore and navigate IT career entry points.			

Short description: A visually engaging, downloadable starter guide with information on entry-level IT roles, learning resources, and practical steps for launching a tech career	**Stakeholders involved:** IT in the Mountains Association University of Bielsko-Biała City of Bielsko-Biała Youth City Council Local schools Tech communities (Crossweb, SoDA, IT Girls Foundation, Women in Tech)	**Areas of intervention:** IT Inspiration – How to START in IT?	**Strategic reference objective:** To improve accessibility and awareness of IT career opportunities.	**Contribution to political mandate lines** Promotes equal access to education and employment in emerging sectors.
		Possible risks: Limited reach without supporting events or campaigns	**Possible barriers:** Complexity of information if not well adapted to entry-level audience	**Readiness for action:** Medium – Content developers and graphic team needed; distribution channels confirmed

Outputs: • 1 downloadable HerStory in IT: STARTER KIT • Distributed via events and digital platforms	**Outcomes:** • Raised awareness of entry paths • Increased digital literacy
Estimated Budget: 5.000 EUR	**Timing: Q4 2025 – Q1 2027**
Sources of funding: European Social Fund+, Local grants	**Monitoring:** Number of downloads and views, Distribution reach at events and online

ACTIVITIES						
Activity	**Implementation details and possible problems**	**Other related IAP actions**	**Responsible entity and Stakeholders involved**	**Cost and source of funding**	**Target Indicators**	**Timing**
1.2.1 Content Creation – Writing and Expert Input	**Implementation details:** Align with brand, create templates, insert content, accessibility check **Possible problems:** Design not aligned with tone of voice	-	Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała Freelance graphic designer, external experts (outsourced)	**FINANCE:** 2.500,00 EUR Fee, stock illustrations, fonts, licences, accessibility consultant **SOURCE:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants	1 fully designed PDF Starter Kit + optional print-ready version	Q3 2026
1.2.2 Promotion & distribution	**Implementation details:** Create mailing list → print teasers → launch online campaign, Schools/NGOs may not prioritize distribution **Possible problems:** No engagement if not combined with events or follow-up	-	Regional Development Agency, Beskidzka Chamber of Commerce, IT in the Mountains Association	**FINANCE:** 2.500,00 EUR Printed leaflets for events, paid social media campaign, **SOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants	1000+views/downloads, Printed materials at 5+ events, social media campaign reach: 5000+	Q4 2026 – Q1 2027

ACTION 2.1 PATHWAYS		Entity responsible for the action: Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała		
Action summary: Launch a city-wide mentoring and job-shadowing program tailored for women considering IT careers, including profile diagnostics and growth mapping.				
Short description: Mentoring and shadowing activities offering real-world insight into tech career paths. Supports women in choosing development directions and setting goals.	**Stakeholders involved:** • IT in the Mountains • Local IT companies • University of Bielsko-Biała • Career offices • NGOs focused on women empowerment	**Areas of intervention:** IT Specialization – How to EXPERTISE in IT?	**Strategic reference objective:** To improve individual decision-making by exposing participants to varied IT career journeys and development tools.	**Contribution to political mandate lines** Supports gender equity and digital inclusion objectives in local strategic documents
		Possible risks: Difficulty recruiting mentors Misalignment between mentees and available roles	**Possible barriers:** Limited time availability of target group Stereotypes regarding gender roles in tech	**Readiness for action:** Medium – Requires commitment from partner companies and career experts
Outputs: • 2 editions of mentoring program • At least 15 women mentored • Online diagnostics and career map tool		**Outcomes:** • Better career awareness • Enhanced self-confidence • Stronger networks in tech		
Budget: estimated budget 15.000 EUR		**Timing: Q2 2026 – Q4 2027**		
Sources of funding: European Social Fund+, Local grants, Company sponsorships		**Monitoring:** Number of participants Completion rate Satisfaction and feedback		

ACTIVITIES

Activity	Implementation details and possible problems	Other related IAP actions	Responsible entity and Stakeholders involved	Cost and source of funding	Target Indicators	Timing
2.1.1 Career Exploration Workshops	**Implementation details:** Workshops will be held quarterly, each exploring a different IT role, with short talks, Q&A and takeaway materials. **Steps:** Theme selection → speaker coordination → event delivery → feedback collection **Possible problems:** Risk of low participation without aggressive promo; speaker availability can delay planning, Attendance fluctuation	A1.1 (Entry Portfolio), A2.2 (Bootcamp) as these may feed from workshop participation Supports storytelling in Spotlight Voices (A3.1)Promoted via Platform (A5.1)	Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała	**FINANCE:** 6.000 EUR (total amount for 6 workshops) Speakers, venue (platform), promotion & dissemination, printed materials, catering, coordination **SOURCE:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Sielsia, local grants	6 workshops, at least 20 attendees each	Q4 2026 – Q2 2027

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2.1.2 Career Mapping Digital Tool	**Implementation details:** The tool guides users toward IT roles based on interest/skills and offers links to further training. **Steps:** Content logic -UX design- testing with users-online deployment **Possible problems:** Lack of interest, too generic data	A2.1 (Career Pathways) and A3.1 (Role Models – Spotlight Voices) hosted on platform (A5.1.)	IT in the Mountains Association, Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała	**FINANCE:** 5.000,00 € Developer, UX/UI designer, testing, hosting **RESOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Sielsia, local grants	1 public, mobile friendly mapping tool with analytics dashboard	Q4 2026 – Q2 2027
2.1.3 Mentoring Groups & AMA Series	**Implementation details:** Launch two formats: (1) small online mentoring groups (monthly), (2) live AMA (Ask Me Anything) sessions with women in IT on social media. Steps: Recruit mentors → set group dates → prepare tools - launch AMA stream **Possible problems:** AMA flooded with off-topic questions, lack of engaged mentors	Builds community for Platform (A5.1) Connected to Spotlight Voices (A3.1) Informs future Bootcamp recruitment (A2.2)	Regional Development Agency, IT in the Mountains Association + thematic partner (i.e. Women in Tech, IT Girls Foundation….)	**FINANCE:** 10 000,00 EUR; mentors fee & AMA moderators fee, venue and logistics, promotion **RESOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants	3 active mentoring groups + 6 AMA sessions (recorded & archived)	Q1 2027 – Q3 2027

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ACTION 2.2 BOOTCAMP **Action summary:** Organize thematic bootcamps for women exploring IT, including real-case projects and skill demonstrations.		**Entity responsible for the action: Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała**		
Short description: A hands-on IT bootcamp (1–3 days) focused on practical digital skills and team collaboration in simulated work environments.	**Stakeholders involved:** • ARRSA • Local IT firms • Trainers and educators • Job offices	**Areas of intervention:** IT Specialization – How to EXPERTISE in IT?	**Strategic reference objective:** Demystify tech jobs and boost participant engagement through experiential learning .	**Contribution to political mandate lines** Accelerates digital competence and career change opportunities.
		Possible risks: Low enrollment due to time pressure Content may be too advanced or not aligned with expectations	**Possible barriers:** • Limited digital literacy • Lack of confidence to engage	**Readiness for action:** Medium – Needs curriculum, trainers, and facilities
Outputs: • 1 bootcamp • 25+ participants • Project-based learning results		**Outcomes:** • Increased readiness to pursue further IT learning • Improved confidence • Better understanding of IT career options		
Budget: estimated budget 18.000 EUR		**Timing: Q3 2026 – Q4 2027**		
Sources of funding: European Social Fund+, Local grants, Company sponsorships		**Monitoring:** Pre/post participation surveys Participant tracking after bootcamp		

ACTIVITIES						
Activity	**Implementation details and possible problems**	**Other related IAP actions**	**Responsible entity and Stakeholders involved**	**Cost and source of funding**	**Target Indicators**	**Timing**
2.2.1 Bootcamp Design & Preparation	**Implementation details:** Develop curriculum for beginner-friendly IT Bootcamp (UX/UI, QA, Junior Dev tracks). Steps: Needs assessment → define tracks → recruit trainers → develop schedule → prepare promotional campaign. **Possible problems:** Mismatch between market needs and course focus, difficulty in recruiting qualified trainers for beginner level	Connected to Career Pathways (A2.1) and Platform (A5.1) Feeds Bootcamp participants into further mentoring and employment support (A2.2.3)	Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała, IT in the mountains association educational partner: University of Bielsko-Biała, content partners: IT companies	**FINANCE:** 5 000,00 EUR; curriculum development, tool preparation, promotional activities **RESOURCE:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants	Defined Bootcamp structure (2–3 learning tracks) + recruited trainers + promo materials prepared	Q3 2026 – Q1 2027

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2.2.2 Bootcamp Delivery	**Implementation details:** **To initiate:** Deliver intensive, 6–8 week beginner Bootcamp in selected IT fields. **Steps:** Launch participant recruitment → onboarding sessions → intensive classes → certification of completion. **Possible problems:** Participant drop-out due to intensity, varying digital skills among participants.	Supports further actions in employment matching (A2.2.3) and Platform visibility (A5.1)	Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała,	**FINANCE:** 10 000,00 EUR trainer fees, venue/online hosting, learning materials, certification costs **RESOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants	1 completed Bootcamp (at least 25 participants enrolled, minimum 15 graduated)	Q1 2027 – Q3 2027
2.2.3 Bootcamp Post-Support & Matchmaking	**Implementation details:** **Offer post-Bootcamp support:** individual mentoring, matchmaking events with companies, and CV workshops. Steps: Assign mentors → organize matchmaking event → track participants' career progress. **Possible problems:** Low employer engagement, difficulty matching participants without formal experience	Connected to Spotlight Voices (A3.1) and Platform (A5.1)	IT in the mountains association; career consulting partners (HR companies), IT companies	**FINANCE:** 6 000,00 EUR; mentoring fee, employment matching events, participant support logistics **RESOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, career support programs	1 matchmaking event + min. 10 participants supported through mentoring/career services	Q3 2027 – Q4 2027

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ACTION 2.3 & 3.1 SPOTLIGHT VOICES		Entity responsible for the action: Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała/IT in the Mountains Association		
Action summary: Develop a storytelling campaign with interviews, video profiles, and social media series showing diverse journeys and career successes of women in IT.				
Short description: A communication campaign highlighting stories of local women in tech to build community, showcase role models, and normalize female presence in the sector	**Stakeholders involved:** • ARRSA • Women in IT already working locally • IT in the Mountains • Local media • Communication and PR professionals	**Areas of intervention:** IT Specialization – How to EXPERTISE in IT? (Who's already in IT?) IT Leadership – How to LEAD IT?	**Strategic reference objective:** To increase visibility of women in tech and inspire others to pursue similar paths..	**Contribution to political mandate lines** Promotes diversity and positive narratives within innovation and entrepreneurship sectors
		Possible risks: Limited engagement if distribution channels are weak Underrepresentation of certain subgroups	**Possible barriers:** Reluctance to share personal stories Difficulty capturing high-quality material	**Readiness for action:** High – Strong access to participants and local media partnerships (partially tested with TechDiversity testing action)
Outputs: • 10+ spotlight stories • 3 events – Leadership Labs • Multimedia materials (videos, graphics, interviews) • Social media presence and dedicated campaign landing page		**Outcomes:** • Increased awareness and relatability • Strengthened sense of belonging in IT for women • Better social recognition of female tech leaders		
Budget: estimated budget 10.000 EUR		**Timing: Q2 2026 – Q4 2027**		
Sources of funding: European Social Fund+, Partner contributions (media & comms)		**Monitoring:** Pre/post participation surveys Participant tracking after bootcamp		

ACTIVITIES						
Activity	**Implementation details and possible problems**	**Other related IAP actions**	**Responsible entity and Stakeholders involved**	**Cost and source of funding**	**Target Indicators**	**Timing**
2.3.1 & 3.1.1 Interviews with Role Models	**Implementation details:** Conduct and publish a series of interviews with diverse female role models from IT. Steps: Identify profiles → schedule interviews → record/edit → publish on Platform and social media. **Possible problems:** Limited diversity in available profiles, low engagement if format too static.	Feeds Platform content (A5.1), supports awareness in Career Pathways (A2.1) Boosts visibility of post-Bootcamp success (A2.2.3)	Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała, IT in the mountains association, media (promo) partner) - podcaster, influencer, tech media	**FINANCE:** 4.000 EUR filming/editing, transcription, media promotion (no fee for role models – the concept is to have them form local community) **RESOURCE:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants	10 video/audio interviews + written articles with diverse female tech professionals	Q2 2026 – Q3 2027

| 2.3.2 & 3.1.2 Leadership Labs | **Implementation details:** Deliver short-format leadership events focused on women's soft skills, assertiveness, and confidence in tech roles. Steps: Define themes → recruit trainers → promote and enroll → deliver workshops → collect feedback. **Possible problems:** Low confidence of participants in leadership contexts, inconsistent attendance | Supports further actions in employment matching (A2.2.3) and Platform visibility (A5.1) | IT in the Mountains Association, Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała; | **FINANCE:** 12 000,00 EUR; trainers' fees, workshop materials, coordination, venue/online tools **RESOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Sielsia, local grants | 3 events delivered for up to 20 participants each, post-event materials available online | Q2 2027 – Q4 2027 |

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ACTION 4.1 TOOLS AND PLATFORMS FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING **Action summary:** This action combines digital and social tools to build a women-in-IT community. It includes launching a platform for connection and learning, conducting a survey with a follow-up report, and forming an association or network to ensure long-term engagement and visibility.		Entity responsible for the action: Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała/IT in the Mountains Association		
Short description: A set of interconnected actions aimed at building a lasting community of women in IT. It combines digital tools, social mechanisms, and knowledge-based resources to empower women, strengthen networks, and support inclusion in the local innovation ecosystem.	**Stakeholders involved:** • ARRSA • IT in the Mountains • Local IT companies and professionals • Community managers and facilitators • Communication and design professionals • Policy makers and local government	**Areas of intervention:** IT Inspiration – How to START IT? IT Specialization – How to EXPERTISE in IT? IT Leadership – How to LEAD IT? (How we can stay in IT?)	**Strategic reference objective:** To build digital infrastructure that supports community cohesion, visibility, and shared learning among women in tech To create an enabling environment for women in IT through community-building tools and support mechanisms.	**Contribution to political mandate lines** Strengthens civic engagement, gender equity, and sustainable development policies aligned with local innovation agendas
		Possible risks: Insufficient survey responses or data qualityDifficulty in mobilizing long-term engagement Low uptake of the platform without targeted promotion	**Possible barriers:** Technical challenges in platform development Lack of incentives to join or sustain the association Time constraints among community members	**Readiness for action:** Medium – Requires survey design, IT development support, communication planning, and legal groundwork for association
Outputs: • 1 local survey conducted (min. 100 responses) • 1 analytical report published • Online platform or integrated microsite launched • New association or informal network for women in IT created		**Outcomes:** • Stronger peer community and support structure • Greater data-based understanding of women's needs in IT • Recognition and sustainability of HerStory in IT initiative		
Budget: estimated budget 35.000 EUR		**Timing: Q2 2026 – Q4 2027**		
Sources of funding: European Social Fund+, Partner contributions(e.g. tech companies, design professionals)		**Monitoring:** Survey participation numbers Report dissemination and media mentions Platform analytics (users, engagement) Association/network membership and activities		

ACTIVITIES

Activity	Implementation details and possible problems	Other related IAP actions	Responsible entity and Stakeholders involved	Cost and source of funding	Target Indicators	Timing

4.1.1 HerStory Platform	**Implementation details:** Develop a central digital platform for all HerStory content, tools, events, and community. Steps: UX planning → backend/frontend development → integrate tools and media → launch → maintain content **Possible problems:** Overloaded interface, low traffic if not promoted well	Connected Hub for all actions	IT in the Mountains association, technical partner (digital platform provider)	**FINANCE:** 20 000,00 EUR; design and development, content integration, user testing, analytics **RESOURCE:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants	1 responsive web platform with full HerStory in IT structure and resources	Q2 2026 – Q2 2027
4.1.2 HerStory Annual Report	**Implementation details:** **To initiate:** Conduct an annual survey targeting local companies, universities, and selected schools to collect quantitative and qualitative data on women's participation in IT. Focus areas: number and % of women in IT positions, distribution by role (developer, analyst, support, leadership etc.), university enrollment and graduation stats in IT fields, interest in IT careers among secondary school girls. Steps: Design questionnaires → distribute to firms, schools, universities → collect and analyze data → write report → publish findings and recommendations. **Possible problems:** Low survey response rate, incomplete data sets from institutions, limited willingness to share sensitive statistics	Supports strategic lobbying (A6.1) and sustainability actions	IT in the Mountains Association, Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała, Beskidzka Chamber of Commerce, University of Bielsko-Biała, local technical schools	**FINANCE:** 9 000,00 EUR; survey design, data collection, analysis, report writing, design, dissemination, final event **RESOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Sielsia, local grants	1 comprehensive annual Women in IT report with statistics, analysis, case studies and policy recommendations; 1 local media release campaign to promote findings.	Q1 2026 - Q1 2027 (first full report release)
4.1.3 HerStory Association / Network	**Implementation details:** Form a formal network or association to sustain HerStory activities post-project. Steps: Draft statute → gather founding team → register entity → define 1st year strategy **Possible problems:** Low engagement after project ends, unclear responsibilities	**Ensures long-term sustainability (SO5)** Hosts future editions of Bootcamp, Mentoring, etc	IT in the Mountains association	**FINANCE:** 5 000,00 EUR; legal and registration costs, branding, strategy meeting facilitation **RESOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Sielsia, local grants; Own funds, volunteer support	1 registered legal body + action plan for 2028	Q1 2026 - Q4 2027

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ACTION 5.1 PROMOTION & CITY LEVEL ADVOCACY **Action summary:** A city-level campaign promoting diversity in IT through a mix of public events, media storytelling, and policy engagement. Activities include presence at tech events, meetings with decision-makers, and a coordinated social media and visual outreach effort.		**Entity responsible for the action: Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała/IT in the Mountains Association**		

| **Short description:**
A coordinated communication and advocacy campaign to promote TechDiversity goals, raise awareness about the role of women in IT, and engage decision-makers and the general public in supporting diversity in the tech ecosystem.
. | **Stakeholders involved:**
• ARRSA
• IT in the Mountains
• Local IT companies and professionals
• Community managers and facilitators
• influencers and community leaders
• Policy makers and local government | **Areas of intervention:**
IT Inspiration – How to START IT?
IT Specialization – How to EXPERTISE in IT?
IT Leadership – How to LEAD IT?
(Why does IT matter?) | **Strategic reference objective:**
To promote the value of diversity in tech, influence public discourse, and position HerStory in IT as a recognised local movement. | **Contribution to political mandate lines**
Supports long-term advocacy for inclusive policies and aligns with strategic objectives around equality, innovation, and digital development. |
| | | **Possible risks:**
Message fatigue or limited media reach
Political disinterest or resistance | **Possible barriers:**
Limited PR/marketing resources
Competing priorities in local development agenda | **Readiness for action:**
High – Many elements can build on previous campaign materials and partnerships |

Outputs: • Campaign presence at 2+ public events • 5+ advocacy meetings held • Visual materials (videos, social media, posters) • Engagement toolkit distributed to stakeholders	**Outcomes:** • Increased visibility of HerStory in IT • Improved public awareness of diversity value • Policy attention and support for inclusion

Budget: estimated budget 20.000 EUR	**Timing: Q1 2026 – Q4 2027**

Sources of funding: European Social Fund+, Municipal awareness budgets, Private sector sponsorships	**Monitoring:** Event participation & reach Media coverage and online engagement Feedback from advocacy targets

ACTIVITIES

Activity	Implementation details and possible problems	Other related IAP actions	Responsible entity and Stakeholders involved	Cost and source of funding	Target Indicators	Timing
5.1.1 Diversity in Tech Roundtables	**Implementation details:** Organize two high-level roundtable discussions bringing together policymakers, businesses, educators and civil society to identify local barriers and opportunities for diversity in IT.	Connects to TechDiversity Awareness Campaign (5.1.2) and Platform promotion (4.1.1)	Regional Development Agency, City of Bielsko-Biała Administration + policy partners (City Council, City Mayor) Tech companies, educational institutions	**FINANCE:** 4 000,00 EUR; organization of roundtable sessions, moderation, materials, logistics **RESOURCE:**	2 policy roundtables + 1 policy brief with recommendations for local action	Q2 2026 – Q4 2027

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	Steps: Define key issues → invite stakeholders → facilitate structured debate → collect action points → publish recommendations. **Possible problems:** Low commitment from senior city officials, general declarations without actionable points	Feeds future policy recommendations and lobbying activities.		European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants		
5.1.2 TechDiversity Awareness Campaign	**Implementation details:** Design and run an awareness campaign promoting diversity and inclusion in IT at the city level. Campaign to include: short video testimonials from diverse IT workers, social media graphics and carousels, articles in local press and online portals, informational posters in public spaces (optional). Steps: Develop content → create visuals → schedule posts and releases → monitor engagement → publish final campaign results. **Possible problems:** Low reach if not cross-promoted with events, risk of symbolic messaging without real connection to community needs.	Connects to Roundtables (5.1.1) and Annual Report dissemination (4.2.1).	IT in the Mountains Association, Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała, + media partner (local press, city media channels)	**FINANCE:** 8 000,00 EUR; campaign design and execution, visual materials, social media promotion, local media articles **RESOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants	1 city-wide campaign with 5+ media releases, 10+ social media posts, 3000+ reach	Q1 2026 - Q1 2027
5.1.3 TechDiversity Presence at Public Events	**Implementation Details:** Arrange HerStory in IT presence at at least two major public tech/business events to engage the public and showcase initiatives (i.e. BBDays4.IT). Activities include pop-up stands, printed materials, video displays, and informal networking. **Possible problems:** Poor visibility or foot traffic at events	Awareness Campaign (5.1.2), Community Platform (4.1.1)	Regional Development Agency IT in the Mountains association City of Bielsko-Biała Event organizers	**FINANCE:** 3 000,00 EUR; event logistics, visual materials, branded stands **RESOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants; Own funds, volunteer support	Presence at 2+ major public events	Q1 2026 - Q4 2027
6.1.4 Advocacy Meetings with Decision-Makers	**Implementation Details**: Schedule and conduct 5+ advocacy meetings targeting key policymakers, public institutions, and industry leaders to present recommendations, campaign results, and promote policy change. **Possible problems:** Bureaucratic delays, scheduling conflicts, superficial outcomes	Roundtables (5.1.1), and Annual Report dissemination (4.2.1).	Regional Development Agency IT in the Mountains association City of Bielsko-Biała	**FINANCE:** 2 000,00 EUR meeting preparation, expert facilitation, travel costs **RESOURCES:** European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants; Own funds	5+ advocacy meetings held	Q3 2026 – Q3 2027

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| 6.1.5 Engagement Toolkit Distribution | **Implementation Details:** Develop and distribute a digital/print toolkit for partners and institutions to replicate HerStory activities, share campaign content, and run independent events or discussions.
 Possible problems: Low follow-up usage, unclear instructions | Awareness Campaign (5.1.2), Platform Tools (4.1.1) | Regional Development Agency
 IT in the Mountains association
 City of Bielsko-Biała | **FINANCE:**
 3 000,00 EUR <br> design, printing, distribution
 RESOURCES:
 European Social Fund+, European Funds for Silesia, local grants; Own funds | Toolkit distributed to at least 20 stakeholders | Q3 2026 – Q4 2027 |

7. Implementation framework

The Implementation Framework outlines the key organizational structures, financing mechanisms, stakeholder engagement processes, and monitoring systems that will support the delivery of Bielsko-Biała's Integrated Action Plan (IAP) for the TechDiversity project. This framework ensures a transition from strategic planning to action, by establishing clear governance, timelines, risk mitigation strategies, and sustainability mechanisms aligned with the city's development priorities.

Governance

The implementation of the IAP will be coordinated by the **Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała (ARRSA)**, which will act as the lead coordinating institution. ARRSA's extensive experience in regional development, entrepreneurship support, and cross-sector collaboration makes it a natural anchor for the governance structure.

Governance responsibilities will include:

- Strategic oversight and coordination of all IAP activities.
- Monitoring progress and alignment with the city's broader innovation and inclusion strategies.
- Facilitating cross-sector cooperation among public institutions, universities, NGOs, business support organizations (BSOs), and the private sector.
- Coordinating reporting duties and communication with stakeholders and the wider public.
- Ensuring operational continuity between planning and implementation phases.

A **core coordination team** will be established within ARRSA, with designated liaison persons in partner institutions, particularly the City of Bielsko-Biała, University of Bielsko-Biała, and IT in the Mountains Association.

Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement

Building on the structure of the URBACT Local Group (ULG), a **TechDiversity Implementation Forum** will be established to maintain multistakeholder engagement. This forum will include key institutions involved in the IAP co-creation and remain open to new partners.

Confirmed participants include:

- **City of Bielsko-Biała** (strategic alignment and public policy integration)
- **University of Bielsko-Biała** (education, research, and student engagement)
- **IT in the Mountains Association** (sectoral coordination, community building)
- **Startup Podbeskidzie Foundation** (entrepreneurship and startup support)

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- **Beskidzka Chamber of Commerce** (business outreach and SME engagement)
- **Local NGOs and youth organizations** (diversity advocacy, community perspective)
- **University of Bielsko-Biała and other local universities**

This forum will meet quarterly and use a shared digital workspace (e.g., Miro) to collect input, update progress, and co-design follow-up actions.

Overall Costing and Funding Strategy

The implementation of the IAP will rely on **blended financing**, combining:

- **European Social Fund+** and other EU structural funds,
- **Regional funds** under the Śląskie 2030 Strategy,
- **Local public funding** (e.g., City of Bielsko-Biała),
- **In-kind support** from partner institutions,
- **Private sponsorships and CSR contributions**, especially from local IT companies.
- **Own funds**

Each action has been individually costed in the action tables. Budget planning includes resource allocations for coordination, training, platform development, promotional campaigns, and event delivery.

Implementation Timeline

A detailed Gantt chart has been developed, covering the full implementation period (Q4 2025 – Q1 2027), with clear sequencing of:

- Platform development,
- Event cycles (quarterly),
- Surveys and reporting,
- Bootcamps and mentoring programs,
- Monitoring and evaluation checkpoints.

Milestones align with the academic calendar and major tech events (e.g., **BBDays4.IT**), to maximize visibility and impact.

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Risk Assessment

Key risks identified include:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Low stakeholder engagement post-project	Medium	High	Maintain regular meetings, share ownership, highlight quick wins
Limited data for impact assessment	High	Medium	Collaborate with University & IT companies for ongoing data collection
Funding gaps	Medium	High	Diversify funding sources, prepare project pipelines for regional/national grants
Low participation in events or trainings	Medium	Medium	Intensive outreach via social media, schools, NGOs, use of peer ambassadors
Coordination overload	Low	High	Assign clear roles in the coordination structure, limit overcommitment

Monitoring and Reporting Strategy

Monitoring will be carried out by ARRSA in cooperation with implementation partners. The following elements will be used:

- **KPIs** defined for each action (e.g., number of participants, tools used, downloads, visibility metrics).
- **Post-event surveys** and skill self-assessment forms.
- **Annual progress report** summarizing outcomes, barriers, and success stories (to be disseminated both digitally and in print).
- **Platform analytics** (HerStory in IT) to track engagement, reach, and resource usage.
- **Feedback loops** via workshops and stakeholder forum to adapt activities based on emerging needs.

An internal review will be conducted biannually, with a final **impact and sustainability report** to be prepared in Q1 2027.

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