

Economy at high level



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Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego S.A.
Bielsko-Biala

In focus
SMART SPECIALISATION AT CITY LEVEL



URBACT
Driving change for
better cities



Bielsko-Biala



Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level



Economy at high level!

It has been said that Bielsko-Biala is a city of hundred industries, city of industry, city that assists good business management. Our cultural and industrial heritage have become the basis of successful economic transformation during last twenty five years. Here at the foot of Beskids a lot of great Polish and foreign investments have found their place and local entrepreneurs and tradespeople have found their development tracks in market economy. We can without any doubt say that our economy is at high – not only in geographic way – level.

For many years Regional Development Agency has been engaging in economic area of Bielsko-Biala. In the history of our activities we have started many initiatives supporting business. Among them we can indicate for example launching the Beskid Technology Accelerator as typical regional start-up fund that allowed entrepreneurs to gain access to capital during project's early development phases. Thanks to that several new companies that function and develop on the basis of innovative ideas involving Regional Development Agency's capital have already been created. What is more, since 2006 Regional Development Agency has carried out

the Beskid Technology Incubator, whose aim is to create favourable conditions or the development of local small and average entrepreneurship.

However – as expressed by a famous saying – one that does not develop oneself moves backwards. That is why we strive to shape new solutions that makes Bielsko-Biala a strong business centre. Acting in this spirit we decided to once again use the potential of business people, education and local government from Bielsko-Biala towards creating new future solutions by using the backup of URBACT initiative. In 2016 we took up the challenge of running the works on action plan towards the development of Bielsko-Biala economy in 2017-2025. The greatest reason for satisfaction for me is the fact that many business representatives gladly joined this process and the local government and the University of Bielsko-Biala declared their ongoing support and active participation. We worked out a packet of specific solutions that we were able to discuss with the experts consociated around European URBACT initiative. The results of our works have been presented below.

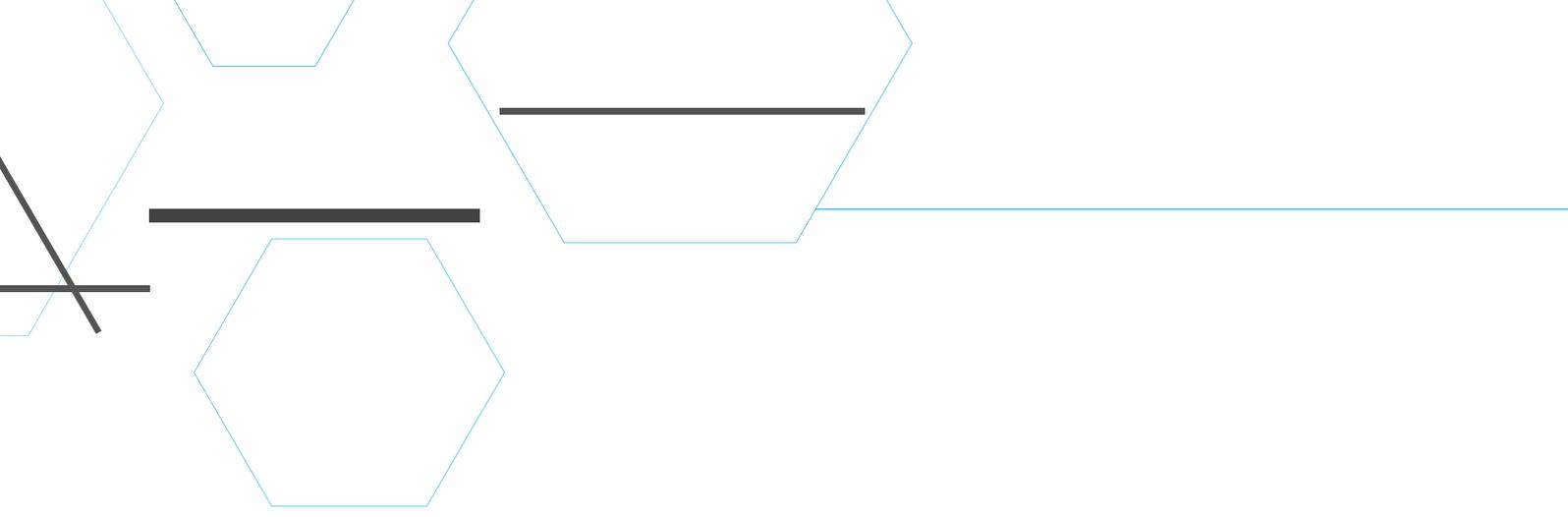
I hand in to our readers' hands the effect of the works of this team: Action plan for 2017-2025. We all want Bielsko-Biala economy to stay on high level. That is why, within this document we show clear suggestions and we declare our engagement in realizing them.

We have made it rather clear: the economy of Bielsko-Biala is now and is to be always an economy at high level. That is why we want to implement our action plan. It is not a closed list of suggestions of consortiums and projects though. Everyone can find their place in implementing an idea that we are presenting you now. While writing this words I assure you all about our openness and I encourage you to contact the Regional Development Agency.

Stanislaw Ginda

The Chairman of Regional Development Agency

*The Chairman of European Association of
Development Agency*



Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level



University of Bielsko-Biala- resilient growing scientific centre. Its potential is reflected in a number of scientific-research projects from various fields, financed both from national and international resources. It is also the only public university in the region the priority of which has from its very beginning been the quality of education. Our graduates are well-assessed and handle the labour market with success, which is confirmed among others by the reports elaborated by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

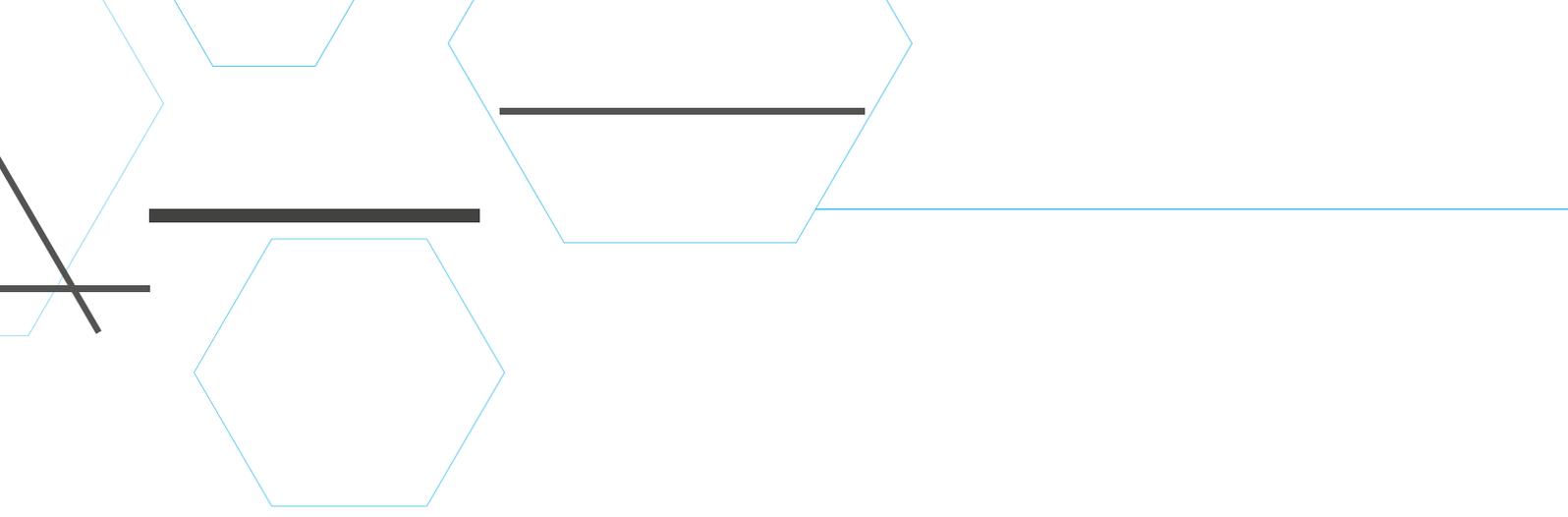
The University continues to face new challenges, such as for example adjustment to the requirements of dynamically changing labour market and an unflagging, almost increasingly urgent in the region demand for engineering

personnel, or introduction of effective mechanisms of commercialisation and research and development cooperation in modern, floating market environment. The key for such a cooperation is efficient diffusion of innovation from the world of science to the world of business, supported by adequate actions of institutions implementing the UE funds and the assumptions of regional policies. Therefore, with openness and engagement we have accepted an invitation for co-creation of the plan of actions towards the development of Bielsko-Biala economy for the years 2017-2025, actively supporting the discussions devoted to the shaping of dualism, research-development cooperation and broadly understood education.

Henry Ford, who was well-familiar with both business and innovations once said, that "To meet is a beginning; to agree is a progress; to work together is a success". I believe that such initiated cooperation of the three key partners for innovation: business-science- regional authorities and business environment institutions will not be left fruitless, but instead, it will be a beginning of further joint work and common successes. The elaborated strategy will thus become a significant component for discussions concerning the shape of local economy. Especially considering some key issues for its development: innovativeness and cooperation of scientific societies, business and local government representatives in the shifting market conditions and strengthening the actions of our university in building the academic world of Bielsko-Biala.

Prof. dr hab. Jarosław Janicki

Rector of the University of Bielsko-Biala



Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

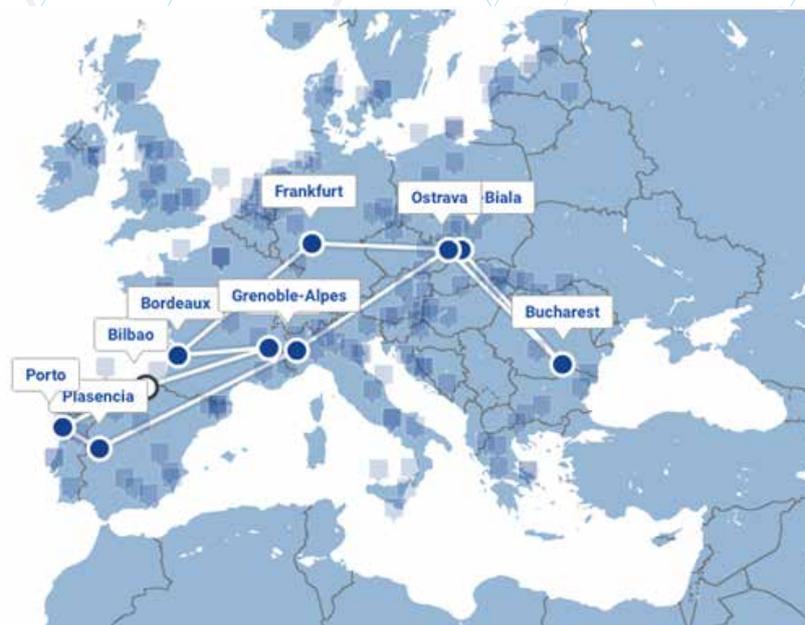


In Focus is a network of cities that are willing to enhance their competitiveness and job creation capability by positioning in the new economic landscape according to their specialisation strategies, which are each of them currently focused on a variety of different productive backgrounds and sectorial priorities. The key challenge to be addressed by this network is to develop better and more efficient urban policies in order to reinforce and create economic activity on prioritized business sectors. This means to facilitate the identification and capturing of new emerging sectorial opportunities, but it also embraces cross-cutting features like talent development and entrepreneurship, innovation or branding and marketing the city as business location, among others.

Despite the proliferation of the so-called smart specialisation strategies at regional and national levels, there remains a shortage of experimentation on how to design and implement those strategies in urban economies, duly articulated to those upper scales. That challenge is also linked to the limited experience in building up consistent industrial policies at urban level in most of the Member States. All of this shows the need for exchanging knowledge, under an integrated urban development perspective, on how sectorial policies can be improved and better connected to Smart Specialisation Strategies at city level, in order to crystallize into an Integrated Action Plan by each of the partner cities.

Partnership:

Bilbao Spain
Porto Portugal
Plasencia Spain
Torino Italy
Ostrava Czech Republic
Bucharest Romania
Bielsko-Biala Poland
Frankfurt Germany
Bordeaux France
Grenoble-Alpes France



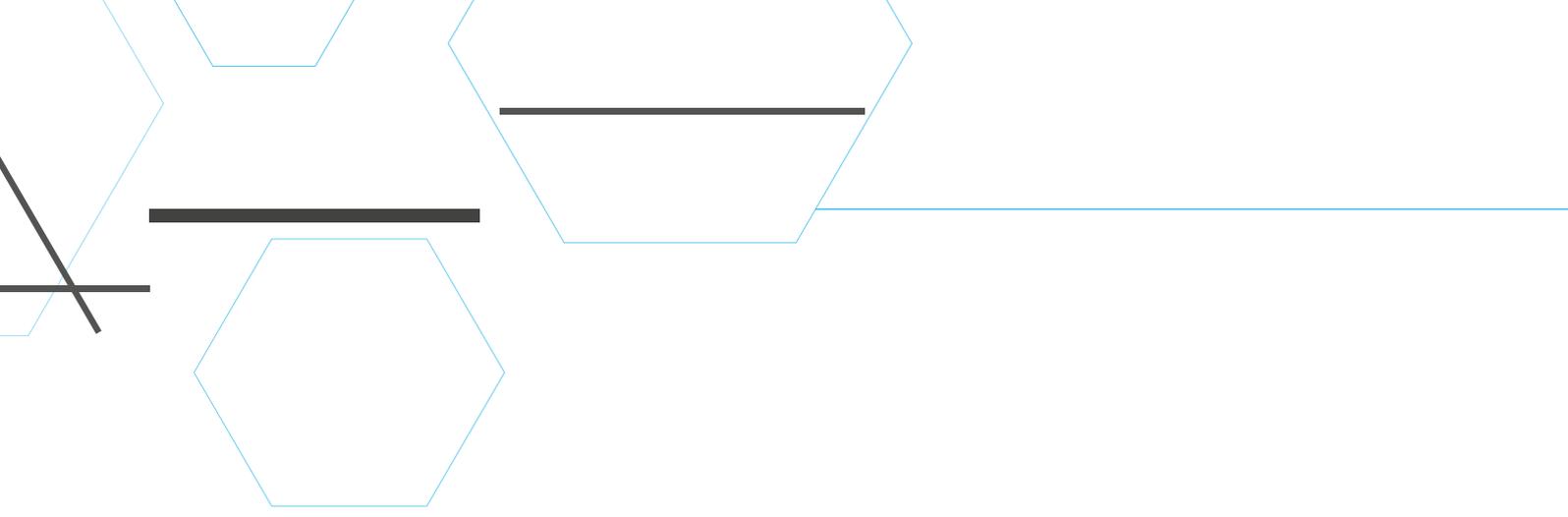
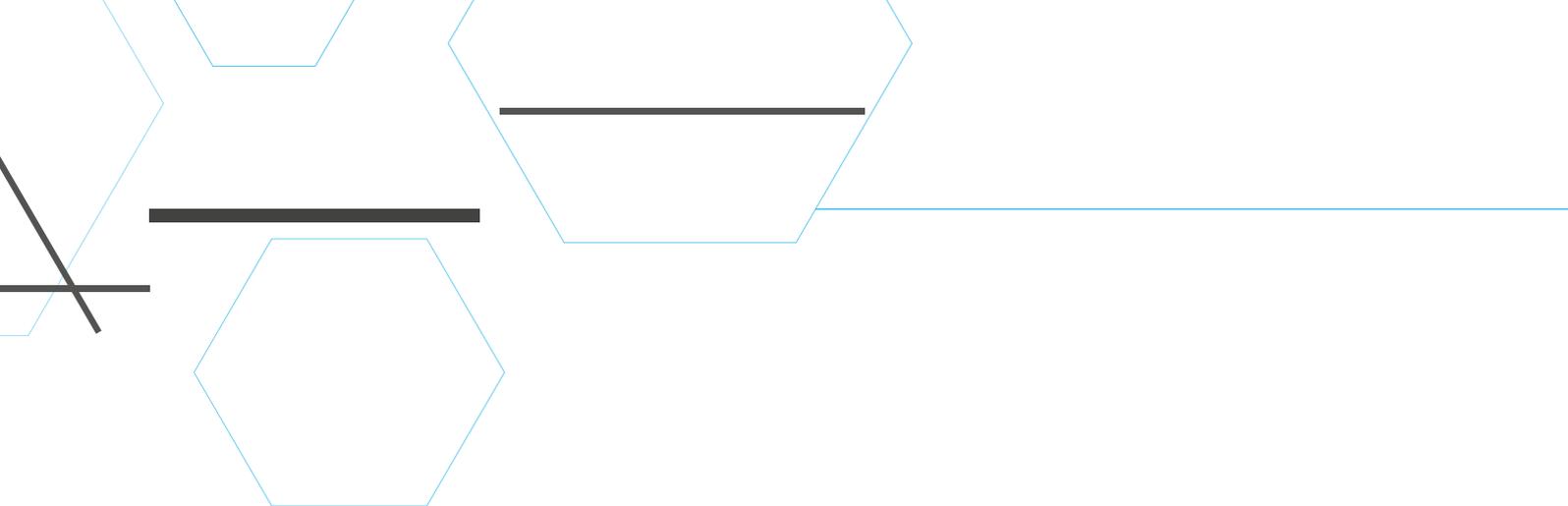


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Summary

The action plan was worked out by the local group URBACT organized in Bielsko-Biala within „In Focus“ project financed by Urbact program. More than sixty participants of works came from business and academic environments; municipalities and institutions of social and economic development agreed that economic profile of Bielsko-Biala in 2025 will indicate: advanced industrial production, modern material technologies and specialized IT products. Each of these fields is a current city's economic specialty that has to be reinforced in order to increase competitive advantage of companies localized in Bielsko-Biala on the international stage. In the action plan some key factors of Bielsko-Biala economy system success were indicated. If they are to be present in local economy, joint

operation around three guiding forces indicated by the action group is necessary. These forces include: modern technical training, research & development cooperation, revitalization of exogenous functions (e.g. entrepreneurship, trade, services). In accordance with it, three fields and six strategic objectives that can only be achieved thanks to realizing portfolio of thirteen projects realized in cross-sectorial partnership have been defined. Participation of Bielsko-Biala in „In Focus“ project's consortium and therefore the cooperation in the forum of Urbact program enabled the provision of initial assessment of a plan suggested by international experts and the identification of action methodology that is necessary for creating particular projects.

From local URBACT group to action plan for 2017-2025

The work on this document was carried out within the „In Focus“ project financed by Urbact program. More than 60 representatives of business, schools, University of Bielsko-Biala and local government participated in the series of workshops and meetings on arranging city's strategic lines of the support of economic development and on developing the packet of projects that are to be completed in the coming years. The Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biala was responsible for managing this process. Before formulating the scope of work of the local URBACT group the Regional Development Agency and its partners had performed the diagnosis of the situation with the use of the methodology produced for the whole „In Focus“ consortium for the support of preparing the so called baseline report.

From the beginning of the joint work the local group URBACT has been directed towards issues relevant to the development of economy and modern business services. Accordingly, it has not consciously taken trade, services for the inhabitants or tourists into consideration of the



work of local URBACT group, which deliberately focused on an attempt to exit the impasse experienced in local environment relevant to reaching the borders of reinvigoration of the economic development. Staff shortage, little ability to cooperate in technology fields, little investment areas of green kind in connection with major need of brownfield revitalization – these issues determined the discussion in the

local URBACT group. Reacting to them has been considered as the most important issue from the perspective of current needs of economic environments in the city. The action plan is of mid-term character. At this point in time, as the participants of the working team effectively implemented projects that are able to satisfy identified deficits are urgently needed. The creation of huge strategic enterprises for the city will be connected with the process of updating the strategies of Bielsko-Biala's development planned for the coming years.

The members of the local URBACT group participated in the works of thematic groups that they had chosen.

The first of them focused on the issues of education and labour market because the lack of workers and shortcomings in the technical education system are considered by the entrepreneurs the biggest current development barrier in the economy of Bielsko-Biala.

The second group discussed the issues relevant to innovativeness and research & development activities. After all, Bielsko-Biala needs new identity and new activity in the range of R&D.

The third group started work on the issues of revitalization of industrial premises in the central parts of Bielsko-Biala. The old factory floors and their construction are the integral part of the urban area. Part of them were successfully transformed into vibrant places.

In each of these groups, creative workshops with the use of brainstorming technique and metaplan were performed. Thereafter on the basis of the results of the workshop activities strategic assumptions for the action plan were created and the suggested project fiches were prepared. The initial version of the fiches were placed on a virtual hard drive which enabled the participants of the activities to make supplementations, to lead discussions on presented concepts and to declare their engagement. In this process the real interest in the created ideas was verified. The concepts that had successfully survived this test became the subject of the projects' mapping workshop which resulted in an agreement on the final range of projects that the plan included.

Fiches were created for the purposes of these projects. And the entities interested in realizing these projects created their own task forces devoted to them.

The results of the working groups' actions that were aggregated and agreed on the local URBACT group's forum have been presented on the subsequent pages.

The suggested solutions were consulted with Urbact network partners during international meetings in which the representatives of Regional Development Agency and the local government participated. Within the framework of the network the participants exchanged examples of good practices and warned one another against the possible difficulties relevant to implementing the chosen projects.

Economic overview of the city

Bielsko-Biala and towns adjacent to it constitutes one of the most important economic areas of Southern Poland. The city, years ago called "the city of one hundred industries", follows economic tradition of the region. To this day, industry and trade have been continuously developing. Year by year the city becomes an increasingly more important centre of modern technologies in which a dynamic development of IT field in particular can be noticed. Taking into account the closeness of Upper Silesian conurbation as well as Cracow and Czech Ostrava and Slovak Žylina, Bielsko-Biala is an important development centre of cross-border character. What is more,



the location on intersection of international and national transport corridor favours the dynamic development of the city and, consequently, it is an important node in the south of Lower Silesia.

The demographic situation of the city can be determined first of all with the use of population growth which (per 1.000 inhabitants) in 2016 was slightly negative and stood at -0,49 (by comparison the average number for the region of Silesia was -1,36). According to GUS (Central Statistical Office of Poland) data at the end of 2016 the working-age population constituted 59,3% of over 172 thousands inhabitants of the city. With regards to the old-age dependency ratio, which is a relation of people in non-productive age against 100 people in productive age, then in the analogue period to it its value amounted to 68,5.

At the end of 2016, 26,107 entities were registered as having a registered seat in Bielsko-Biala within the REGON database. The companies from micro sector and small companies constitute about 98,98% of this number. It is worth mentioning that, apart from local companies, international companies such as Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, General Electric or Philips also have their business premises here. The fact that the inhabitants of Podbeskidzie capital are good entrepreneurs is supported by the high rate of entities entered in the register and falling per 1.000 inhabitants, which at the end of 2016 stood at 152. After Katowice (159) it was the second best result in the Silesian Voivodeship amongst urban districts. By comparison, in other cities of the Silesian Voivodeship in the analogue period this rate amounted to, respectively: in Gliwice – 133, in Częstochowa – 118, in Tychy – 108 and in Rybnik – 99.

What is also important for the development of entrepreneurship is the existence of the Beskid Technology Accelerator that is run by Regional Development Agency the idea behind which is to support innovative ventures. The Beskid Technology Accelerator is a typical example of regional start-up fund that allowed entrepreneurs to gain access to capital during project's early development phases. Since May 2009 the Regional Development Agency has already made capital investments in 17 partnerships created on the basis of innovative ideas.

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The fact that the economy of Bielsko-Biala is successfully developing is confirmed also by the fact that the unemployment has constantly been falling since February 2015. The unemployment

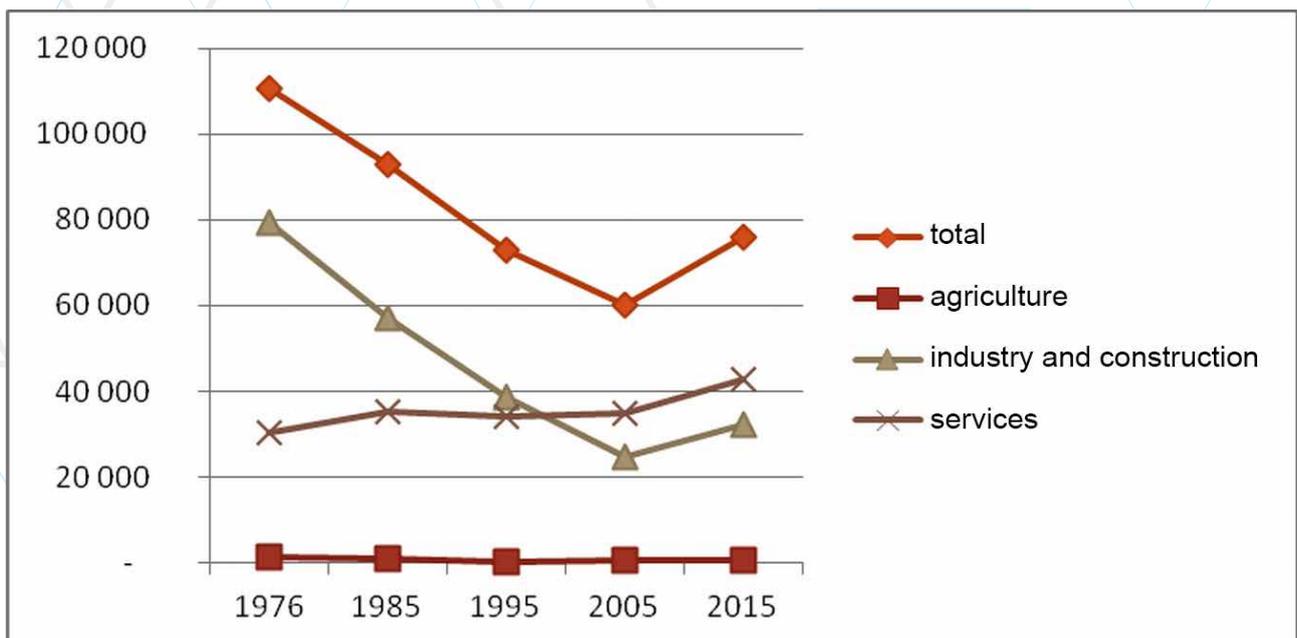


rate at the end of June 2017 stood at 2,8%. This is the second best result in the whole Silesian Voivodeship. By comparison, in other cities of the region the rate stood at, respectively: in Katowice – 2,5%, in Tychy – 3,1%, in Gliwice – 3,9% and in Rybnik – 4,8%.

Bielsko-Biala is the city of a successful economy restructuring. The graph below, that illustrates the changes in the number of people working

in Bielsko-Biala since 1976, when the peak point of Bielsko-Biala development occurred both within textile and car industry, throughout the year 2005 when the results of almost complete closure of textile industry were visible, up to the picture of the city from the end of 2015 when the general number of working people from 1995 was exceeded, provides the scale of economic breakdown between XX and XXI century. What is also worth noticing is the current number of people working in service sector which has the biggest value in the history of modern technology in Bielsko-Biala. This indicates that diversification of the economy is not largely determined by the industry.

The improving economic situation after the year 2000 and Poland's accession to the European Union contributed to the re-development of entrepreneurship in the city. The industrial production was transferred into new areas localized at the outskirts of the city by the roads leading out of the city, inter alia, in Wapienica, Komorowice Śląskie and Komornice Krakowskie. A significant number of new investors in the city function within the Katowice Special Economic Zone and thanks to that they are able to take advantage of tax exemption while the city gains new investments and new workplaces. Today in



Graph: the number of people working in Bielsko-Biala during 1976-2015 on the basis of GUS data.

Bielsko-Biala the status of Katowice Economic Zone covers 4 zones in which both local enterprises with Polish assets (such as Polmotors, Szczesniak Pojazdy Specjalne, Takoni) and international concerns with the partnerships of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles Group at the lead (FCA Powertrain Poland, Magneti Marelli Suspension Systems Bielsko) or American concerns such as Eaton Automotive System, Cooper Standard Automotive and AVio Polska partnership that belongs to American General Electric concern. According to Katowice Economic Zone data, the companies that prosper inside it in Bielsko-Biala up to today have already invested over PLN 2,8 billion and created about 5.000 workplaces. Of course the area of Katowice Economic Zone is not the only place where direct investments take place. Outside the zone there are factories that belong to: Shiloh Industries, Electrical Components International, GE Power Controls, ASK Poland or local companies of global range such as: Marbet, Wawraszek ISS, Rosinski Packaging.

According to 2017 ranking conducted by "Forbes" magazine Bielsko-Biala is the fifth most business attractive city in the country in the category "Cities with 150-300 thousands inhabitants". Bielsko-Biala has successfully exited the period of economic transformation. Local businessmen that were supported by direct investments from abroad and by pro-investment policy of local authority found their way in the new reality. In many fields they are the leaders not only at nationwide level but also at a global one. The redevelopment of the labour market after the breakdown in the textile industry lasted only for a short while and today, thanks to workplaces created in the industry and service area, the city may be called one of the most important economic development centres of the Silesian Voivodeship and of the Southern Poland. According to the ranking of incomes of entities of local government conducted by the local magazine "Wspólnota", Bielsko-Biala is placed on the 11th place out of 48 cities functioning according to the district laws with regard to per capita wealth (2016).

It is crucial for Bielsko-Biala authorities that the city develops in accordance with the rules of balanced development. That is why the strategy

of city development presupposes harmonizing ecological, social and economic purposes of the development which is to enable the creation of even more friendly living and working conditions for all city inhabitants.

Priority issues

The economic profile of Bielsko-Biala in 2025 will be indicated by:

- Advanced industrial production,
- Modern material technologies and
- Specialized IT products.

Each of these fields is the city's so far economy specialization that will be strengthened in order to increase competitive advantage of companies located in Bielsko-Biala on the international stage.

These development directions are consistent with regional specialization of the Silesian Voivodeship which also strengthens the ability to gain support from government departments and from various regional, national and Union funds for their further development. Simultaneously, they are selected in a way that minimizes the risk of marginalization of Bielsko-Biala in the area of the Silesian Voivodeship which is an urban and business centre.

Regional specializations of Silesian Voivodeship

Regional specializations of the Silesian Voivodeship have been defined in the Regional Strategy of Innovation for years 2013-2020. In this document it is indicated that the areas of technological specialization include: medical technologies, energy and mining technologies, environmental protection technologies, IT and telecommunication technologies, materials production and processing, transport and transport infrastructure, industry: machinery, car, aviation and mining industry, nanotechnology and nanomaterials. On the other hand, what is considered as the so called intelligent specializations of the region are: energy, medicine, IT and telecommunication technologies.

From amongst the above presented regional

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specializations, what is characteristic for Bielsko-Biala is the high concentration of activity in the field of: advanced industrial production, modern material technologies and specialty products and IT services.

Specializations of Bielsko-Biala economy

Advanced industrial production is currently mostly related to the functioning within the car industry of companies' value chains. The construction of Small Cars Factory (FSM) in 1971 was a turning point for Bielsko-Biala industry, having a huge influence on further city's economy as well as its subsequent social and spatial changes. As a result of the systemic transformation that occurred in Poland after 1989 the Small Cars Factory was taken over by Fiat Auto Poland. Thanks to the substantial financial resources that the partnership used for company's modernization it was possible to significantly increase the production and therefore to increase the level of employment. In 2003 during the cooperation of Fiat and General Motors concern, Fiat Powertrain Poland, that is still producing new generation engines for the whole concern, was created. At the beginning of 2014 the process of Fiat's takeover of Chrysler ended. As a result Fiat Chrysler Automobiles was created and Fiat Auto Poland was transformed into FCA Poland.



The leading sector in which production companies in Bielsko-Biala function is a car industry which is as important for the local economy as the electrical machinery branch, represented by the abovementioned GE Power Controls or Philips Lighting Bielsko or Belos PLP, followed by the logistics sector with Panattoni

Europe Bielsko-Biala logistic centre at the forefront. Textile industry does not play such an important role in Bielsko-Biala as it used to, but there are specialized companies that use textile technologies in the city. Also, current clothing brands such as Wójcik Fashion, ArtLethe, Brugi, Natasha Pavluchenko come from the city.

In February 2017 in Bielsko-Biala (according to REGON data) there were 64 registered entities within the car industry. The division of these entities with regards to their size that was made on the basis of predictable number of employees is as follows: 42 microenterprises, 7 small, 5 average and 7 large companies (3 entities did not provide data on the number of employees). In 43 companies the prevailing activity code is the 29.32.Z code which means that, for the most part, they remain active solely in the production of other parts and accessories for motor vehicles excluding motorcycles. Among the biggest companies of this sector which are located in Bielsko-Biala the aforementioned partnerships from FCA group include: FCA Poland, FCA Powertrain Poland or Magneti Marelli Suspension Systems Bielsko, and moreover: Eaton Automotive Systems, Hutchinson, ZW TRW, TI Poland, Adler Poland and finally Wawrzaszek ISS, which should also be mentioned. Among the most important companies located in Bielsko-Biala that also produce goods for the needs of automotive sector companies one must mention: Cooper Standard Polska, Nematik Poland, Hutchinson Poland and Shiloh Industries. The current development of the advanced industrial production in Bielsko-Biala has had a significant impact on the local and regional background. The indicators relevant to investments and employment in both local companies and in their providers' circles are beneficial. This is a derivative of significant production volume in car industry.

Modern material technologies have been historically present in the Bielsko-Biala identity even though the picture of the sector has radically changed. Erstwhile strong textile centre is currently a place in which totally different fields accompany the modern textile industry and clothes production. In the textile producers' circle companies such as: Beزالin, Lenko, Rytex ought to be indicated. Material Technologies are a good field of joint actions of science

and business worlds. The example being the cooperation of the University of Bielsko-Biala and BezaIn company within which new solution on the use of fibrillated polypropylene for minimizing cracking made by the shrinkage of concrete was elaborated. However, not only the



textile industry is important in this perspective. Pilot industrial production of grapheme petal which is to be used by Bielsko-Biala company Sempre Fabry for the production of a new kind of styrofoam, which is used for warming the buildings, is in process. This will be the first attempt to implement grapheme technology on such a large scale in Poland. Products made of polyurethane, rubber and plastic are made by Gasket. However in the circle of entities offering advanced coatings companies such as: Zandleven Polska, Paint-Serwis and Sempre Farby ought to be mentioned. Companies that produce metal products (inter alia foundries – Nematik Poland or Shilog Industries) also play an important role.

Specialized informatics products

IT industry plays a significant role in the service sector. In Bielsko-Biala there are quite a few IT companies. This industry is currently one of the most dynamically developing sectors of the city's economy. At the end of February 2017 there were 632 companies from IT industry registered in the city. Almost 95% of them are microenterprises. Out of the 14 small companies registered, only one was classified as an average size company. 18 companies did not provide data of the employment size. The local leaders of IT industry include: Rekord SI, Evatronix, Inelo, Infonet Projekt. Other companies from the sector are: Jantar, WizjaNet, Multic Technology, Selleo,

DaVinci Studio, Examobile. Moreover, there are some important companies' branches such as: Pitney Bowes, ADP Polska, Salutaris or Ailleron located in the city.



Key factors of success

Competitive position within the framework of Bielsko-Biala specialization will be, in the coming years, decided by two direct and two indirect key factors of success which are:

Direct factors

- Qualified employees (labour market)
- Innovative solutions (research & development base and revitalization)

Indirect factors

- The attractiveness of residence (place for living)
- Thriving creative industry and leisure time spending (entertainment, culture, sport)

Labour market

Currently, on the Bielsko-Biala labour market personnel opportunities in the field of engineering work are being exhausted. According to the Shortage and Surplus Occupations Monitoring of the Poviast Labour Office in Bielsko-Biala, in 2016 the biggest inflow of job offers concerned mostly such professions as: machinery and devices operators and repairmen, industrial workers and

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craftsmen. The detailed analysis of job vacancies reported to the Poviát Labour Market in Bielsko-Biala has shown that the biggest number of job vacancies reported in 2016 concerned the positions of Industrial products' quality verifiers (581 job vacancies). The second place was taken by positions of other repairmen of machinery mechanical appliances (494 job vacancies). Subsequently, there were job vacancies for: other repairmen of other machinery and processing devices not classified elsewhere (300 job vacancies). In 2016 the greatest shortage noting occupations may include, inter alia, rudimentary group of Packing and labelling devices operators and filling devices operators. And the shortage noting occupations will include the rudimentary group of Network applications and multimedia designers, Plant materials processing workers, Masters of production in processing industry and Electrical engineers. The natural consequence of industrial concentration in the area of Bielsko-Biala is the prevailing demand for specialists of car industry and the related sectors. But the closeness of urban agglomerations such as Katowice and Krakow and the attractiveness of their local labour market increase the negative effect of exodus of talents and negative natural growth.

Occupational education

University of Bielsko-Biala educates the students, inter alia, in technical courses such as: IT, Robotic and Automation, Mechanical Engineering and Machine Building, Production Engineering and Management, Civil Engineering, Material Engineering or Environmental Engineering. But the local labour market's demand for qualified specialists exceeds the number of graduate students of technical studies that graduate from the University of Bielsko-Biala which means that there are still not enough people with technical education that would satisfy personnel demand of local companies. One barrier in employing new people from out here is the level of remuneration in Bielsko-Biala which is below the average of the remuneration in academic cities competing with Bielsko-Biala such as: Katowice, Gliwice or Krakow, from where the graduates of colleges generally come. According to the Local Data Bank of GUS, the average gross wage in relation to national average stood at the level of 98,9%

for Bielsko-Biala, 112,9% for Katowice, 112,9% for Gliwice and 108% for Krakow. In Bielsko-Biala technical education is being carried out at academic level at the University of Bielsko-Biala. The university offers studies in 17 fields of study on 5 faculties: Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and IT, Faculty of Materials, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Management and Transport Faculty, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences. The university has rights to grant a Ph.D. degree in three disciplines: Machinery construction and operation, Textile industry and Engineering and to grant technical sciences post-doctoral degree in the discipline of Machinery construction and operation. The university hires about 400 academic teachers. Currently about 5500 students study there. What is more, technical education is held in technical institutes and vocational schools – Bielsko-Biala's Industrial School, Technical School of Electronics, Building Schools Complex, Electronic, Electric and Mechanic School Complex, Complex of Economics Schools, Automotive and Comprehensive School Complex, Combined School of Commerce and Technology and Basic Vocational Stanislaw Staszic School no. 4. Even though this type of education has its own long standing history, due to the fact that Bielsko-Biala has always been an important industrial centre, during the period of systemic transformation a huge part of natural school bonds, which is the industry, has been lost. In their place new connections appeared, often animated by local economic circles such as the Beskid Craftsmanship and Entrepreneurship House and Regional Trade and Industry House. Additionally, the promotion of technical education was held by realizing the Union projects such as "I have a profession – I have a job in the region", "The factory of knowledge and skills", "Education for the future – the attractive offer of education in vocational schools" etc. And at the university level the University of Bielsko-Biala has also held similar activities while realizing projects such as "The XXI century Engineer", "The University of Bielsko-Biala connects – a way to common goal – the knowledge based economics", "The Engineer at request". The changes in education system are forced by the needs of modern industry, including also the Bielsko-Biala industry. The form and content that are nowadays being taught in technical and vocational schools should

be kept up-to-date. The opportunity to improve the knowledge and adjust it to the needs of the industry is teaching things that the employer will expect from the employee. This can come true by creating a training network, modification of curriculum, further equipping of school machinery parks with modern tools and also by an attempt to create the conditions that a graduate will meet in his or her work, which are also related to their field of study.

Research & development stage

Bielsko-Biala is a city that has gone through the period of thorough economic restructuring. This explains why the industrial fabric of the city is modern. But it doesn't mean that it does not need further impulses relevant to innovativeness.

The creation of Industrial and Technological Park and the Beskid Technology Incubator was important for economy innovativeness. Many direct foreign investments and investments of local companies were connected with restructuring processes. A lot of them, which was already outlined, have taken advantage of preferences made by the Katowice Special Economic Zone. According to the Local Data Bank of GUS Bielsko-Biala took the fifth position in the region on the basis of capital expenditures in enterprises per 1 inhabitant in 2015. These expenditures reached the value of PLN 7.115 upon the value for the region amounting to PLN 4.394. Bielsko-Biala has also taken the fifth place on the basis of gross fixed capital formation in enterprises per 1 inhabitant (PLN 93.107 in Bielsko-Biala; PLN 55.182 in Silesian Voivodeship)

The existence of Beskid Technology Accelerator in Bielsko-Biala which is run by the Regional Development Agency with the main idea of supporting innovative enterprises is also important for the development of the industry. Beskid Technology Accelerator is a typical example of the regional start-up fund that allowed entrepreneurs to gain access to capital during project's early development phases.

Within the newest investments with the high innovative potential the activation of new, most advanced worldwide factory of General Electric concern in 2015 will be indicated. Apart

from the production section there are advanced laboratories designated for fast prototyping, developing technology, conducting researches and certifications and also exposure-training centre serving the function of enhancing the cooperation with clients from all over the world. The factory produces, inter alia: distribution facilities of electrical energy, high and low-voltage switchgears, powerhouses' control cabinets, electricity switches, emergency power supplies. Also, Technical Centre of Steering Equipment ZF TRW was launched in 2015 in Bielsko-Biala. ZF TRW is the leading producer and distributor of active and passive security systems that operates all biggest vehicle manufacturers all over the world. The centre in Bielsko-Biala is the ninth Technical Centre of the concern. It strives to develop steering systems that would be powered electrically. In 2016 the foundation stone was built in under the construction of research & development centre of a factory from Bielsko-Biala called Wawrzaszek Special Vehicles Engineering. Within the framework of investment, a new centre building with contiguous infrastructure and research testing ground will be created. The centre and its technical equipment with specialized laboratory equipment, will constitute a research base for Wawrzaszek Special Vehicles Engineering partnership, becoming a place where research & development entities cooperate with institutes. The opening of the centre has been announced for 2019. Also in 2016 the IT company REKORD SI began the construction of their own Research & Development Centre. The centre will include, inter alia, 9 IT laboratories, modern server room, technical equipment and laboratories serving the function of knowledge transfer. The newly created building will enable about 50 computer technicians to work in favourable conditions. The completion of the planned investment will occur in the fourth quarter of 2017. A lot of other companies from Bielsko-Biala have sectors dedicated for research & development in which many qualified specialists are employed. Companies such as: Hutchinson, Avio Poland, or Klingspor may be indicated here.

The data of Silesian Entrepreneurship Centre concerning the usage of Regional Operation Program for years 2007-2013 dedicated to developmental enterprises in micro, small and

Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

average companies indicate that businessmen from Bielsko-Biala have already realized, with support of UE funds, 262 projects co-financed for the total sum of PLN 85 million. It is the second highest score in the region. However, with the use of funding from the Innovative Economy Program for the years 2007-2013 in such fields as: innovativeness, B+R and modern technologies – entities from Bielsko-Biala realized 129 projects co-financed for the total sum of over PLN 219 million. It is the third highest score in Silesian Voivodeship after Katowice and Gliwice.

One of the examples of creating a joint research & development infrastructure is the laboratory of fast prototyping and 3D spatial modelling "FabLab" created near the Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biala. This laboratory is one of 20 international centres that cooperate within the FabLabNet network. The FabLab Bielsko-Biala project is the realization of the program of intelligent specialization thanks to the combination of IT and modern production methods. It includes the creation of technical and IT platform for knowledge and experience exchange in the field of fast prototyping, implementing innovations, modern IT technology solutions etc. It is equipped with the most modern 3D printers, replicators, 3D caner and CO2 cutting-engraving laser for the realization of projects from the idea through digital modeling, prototype production, small-series production, or so called reverse engineering. FAB-LAB from Bielsko-Biala has also enabled undertaking of training projects with the nearby boroughs and colleges and creating a service offer for businessmen and private clients in the abovementioned range.

On the other hand, the Institute of Textile Engineering and Polymer Materials that functions within the University of Bielsko-Biala continues the tradition of the Institute of Textiles that was established in 1973, in the neighbourhood of the former building of the Lodz University of Technology. Currently, the main directions of research of the Institute are: modifications of polymers, conducting filaments, composite fibres, filtering materials, composite fibres with graphene. In 2017, for the purpose of the 'TermoGrafen' project, the largest production line for graphene was launched at the Institute. The

project was prepared for the contest organised by the National Centre for Research and Development as a part of the Regional Research Agenda. The obtained grant allows for research and industrial-scale production of graphene, and consequently putting it into Styrofoam that will be produced by the Sempre Farby company located in Bielsko-Biala. This production will be Poland's first and largest implementation of graphene technology, and the University of Bielsko-Biala may quickly become the leading manufacturer of graphene. The graphene technology production will be developed to produce it in larger quantities and supply it to the manufacturer for the production of Styrofoam with improved thermal insulation. This technological solution is currently at the application stage. This means that the realised implementation may usher in further cooperation with the most powerful entrepreneurs of this region, which will use this technology as well to produce composite polymers that include graphene. The research potential of the city of Bielsko-Biala is not only its University. Active since 1973, the Automotive Research and Development Institute BOSMAL is also deeply rooted in the local economy. It specialises in research and development by order of the national and foreign companies operating mainly in the car industry.

A Place to Live

It is a common thought that the city is considered a good place to live. The location of Bielsko-Biała is a deciding factor about its attractiveness; it lies at the foot of Silesian Beskids and Little Beskids, therefore closeness to nature combined with intimate character of the city centre makes the friendly atmosphere of the city easy to sense. People that would like to settle in Bielsko-Biała should not have any problems with finding a flat. The aftermarket as well as the primary market present a wide range of offers that vary in terms of prices, yardage, or trim levels. In 2016, 554 new flats were completed altogether, including: 292 flats for purchase or rent, and 262 flats in individual housing. In the whole Silesian Voivodeship, in 2016 more new flats were built only in Katowice (1,675). The average price of 1m² at that time amounted to circa PLN 3,800. In terms of public transport, it is important to look at two parameters that determine the accessibility of public transport: density of the road systems and length of the roads per 1,000 of inhabitants. In 2015 in Bielsko-Biała, those values reached, respectively, 4.79 km/km² and 3.47 km. In terms of technical condition of the



road network in Bielsko-Biała, unfortunately, it indicated a significant decapitalisation; that is why a considerable investment is put into traffic infrastructure each year. In 2015, PLN 22.7 million from the local budget were earmarked for this purpose. Urban mass transit in Bielsko-Biała consists of 46 bus lines that are comprised of: 38 urban lines, 6 suburban lines (in directions: Czechowice-Dziedzice, Bestwina, Jasienica and Wilkowice) and 2 night lines. Joint length of public transport communication lines

amounts to 518.2 km. In 2015, the services of Miejski Zakład Komunikacyjny were used by 16,365,780 passengers (according to the number of sold tickets). In 2015, the bus fleet consisted of 137 vehicles (including 82 vehicles facilitated for passengers with disabilities). The bus fleet is gradually modernised; old vehicles are exchanged for the new ones, which meet high exhaust-emission standards. In terms of education, Bielsko-Biała offers 70 kindergartens (public and private), 26 primary schools, 23 secondary schools, 8 high schools and 23 local vocational schools. Tertiary education in Bielsko-Biała consists of 7 universities educating circa 7,900 students altogether. Bielsko-Biała is claimed to be a safe city as well, which is supported by the police records. The amount of committed crimes in the city in 2015 was one of the lowest, taking into account other cities with similar number of citizens in the area of Silesian Voivodeship. It is also worth noting that the number of committed crimes in the city follows a downward trend. In 2015, that number decreased by more than 13% in comparison to the year 2014.

Leisure, culture and sports

One of the most important factors determining the attractiveness of Bielsko-Biała as a place to live is the development of its creative industries and ways of spending free time in the city.

In Bielsko-Biała, free time can be organised in various ways. Lovers of mountaineering as well as those who love to spend time on fresh air cannot complain about the lack of possibilities. Bielsko-Biała as the only city of that size in Poland possesses over a dozen of mountain peaks within its administrative boundaries, and many hiking trails of Silesian and Little Beskids begin on its territory. The city itself is not lacking recreational areas as well as recreational and sport centres (such as swimming pools, recreational areas, playgrounds, outdoor gyms), where people of all ages may actively spend their leisure time. The mountains have a lot to offer during the winter as well as during the summer. For skiers, there is the Dębowca mountainside with a ski run equipped in a modern ski lift and artificial snow-making system. Those more demanding will certainly appreciate the possibility of a fast commute from the city to the nearby locations, such as Szczyrk

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or Wisła, which are also in possession of a wide range of ski runs. One of the main attractions in the city is the possibility of using a cable car to reach the peak of Szyndzielnia to admire the city panorama from the observation tower. On the other hand, the extreme sports lovers will surely be interested in the ski runs of Kozia Góra and Szyndzielnia, where various specially prepared ski runs for mountain bikes are available. From one year to the next, the joint length of bicycle paths continues to increase, as they are starting to entwine the city more densely. Not having one's own bike is not a great problem, as there are 120 city bikes available for rent, which are spread across 12 stations located throughout the whole city. With a view for those who enjoy spending their leisure time skating near recreational airports in the Aleksandrowice district, there is a special route which can be used by adults as well as children. What makes Bielsko-Biala stand out from other cities of the region is the outstandingly rich and diverse cultural offer. A number of concerts, exhibitions, plays and festivals are organised in the city as well. The major part of those events is cyclic, which means that they gained recognition in the eyes of the citizens as well as other visitors of the city. Such events as Bielska Zadymka Jazzowa, International Military Vehicles Rally „Operacja Południe” or FotoArtFestival are just a few of the events, well-known in the country and abroad, organised in Bielsko-Biala.

Driving Forces

In order to strengthen the key factors for the success of the local economy of Bielsko-Biala, joint action around the three driving forces identified by the local group URBACT is necessary. These forces are:

- modern technical training,
- cooperation in Research & Development,
- revitalisation of the exogenic functions.

There are 6 shortages to these driving forces in the work of the local URBACT group that make the exploitation of the full potential of the local economy impossible. These are the following:

Modern technical training

- Lack of the dual training programmes within the technical training (Engineer and Master level)
- Lack of a systematic approach to technical training in local economy on various stages of lifelong education.

Cooperation in Research & Development

- Poor knowledge of mutual entities that are active in Research & Development and implementation.
- Low degree of crosslinking the local economy in forward-looking technical fields (lack of the information exchange platform).

Revitalisation of the exogenic functions

- The problem with seeing a city as a place for a professional career in industry.
- Insufficient investment in revitalisation of the post-industrial sites localised in the city centre.

Modern technical training. It is a generally held opinion that the city lacks a consistent policy of talent retention, which, consequently, makes the well-trained graduates and company experts 'flushed out' of the labour market by larger urban centres. Shortages in technical training are currently deemed the biggest barrier to the development of the economy in Bielsko-Biala by entrepreneurs.

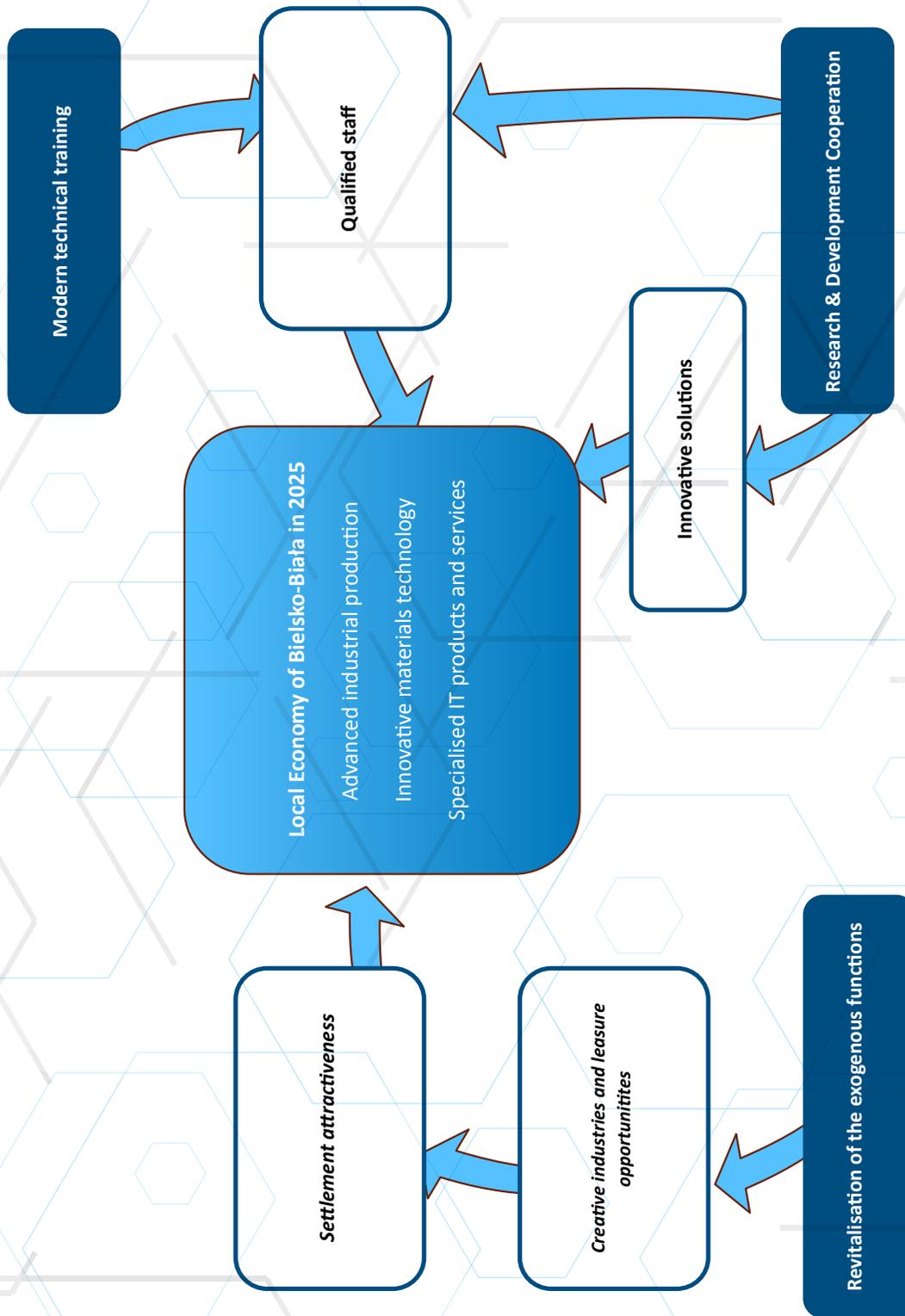
Cooperation in Research & Development. Before the transformation of the economy, institutions that were considered the research facilities of textile and motorization industry were operating in the city. Currently, in their own facilities, multinationals promote their own technologies; nevertheless, there is a need of creating bottom-up solutions that include their implementation through cooperation with small businesses, which are frequently a part of the Global Value Chains. Obvious partners in this kind of actions may be: the University of Bielsko-Biala, or Automotive Research and Development Institute BOSMAL.

Revitalisation. In recent years, there has been a growing demand for modern office space localised in the city centre, for the purpose of which the former production sites have been customised. The latest examples of revitalisation of post-industrial sites in Bielsko-Biala are the new projects such as 'Nowe Miasto' on Legionów Street, „Przędzalnia” on Partyzantów Street and „Grępielnia” also on Partyzantów Street. Despite the given examples of revitalisation of post-industrial sites, there are still a few of them that require revitalisation. The majority of them are post-industrial buildings localised in the city centre which have a huge potential to develop into modern office and service spaces. The following should be considered as places that require an urgent revitalisation in the city centre: former Merilan buildings on Młyńska Street, the building complex that belongs to GE Company on Partyzantów Street, buildings belonging to LENKO Company on Gazownicza Street, post-industrial buildings on Traugutta Street and many warehouses and halls in use, the appearance and technical condition of which require considerable investments. Unfortunately, the problem is not in the ownership structure of those properties; most frequently, they are owned by individuals who are the only ones to decide about their investments. Realisation of such projects as Nowe Miasto or Grępielnia by the private sector shows that it is not easy without cooperation with the council. Repeatedly, such action may turn out to be unprofitable if the public sector does not implement any actions aiming at reducing investment risk. Hence, modern instruments are needed in this field, which would change the investment process dynamics of post-industrial sites.

In later stages, reducing these shortages became the base of setting goals and developing projects. Such an action is in accordance with the establishments made within the group described in the previous chapter 'Works of the local URBACT group has been purposefully redirected towards the attempt of resolving an impasse related to reaching the boundaries of economy development dynamics, felt particularly in the local environment. (...) The action plan is medium-term. During this time, according to the participants of these actions, a successful implementation of the projects is particularly required, allowing a fast alleviation of the identified shortages.

In this way, the field of activity that falls within this plan has been drawn. A modern technical training is the main cause of assuring the local economy well-educated employees. The more dynamic the revitalisation processes, which will make the city more attractive supralocally through creation of new services and functions, the more willing these employees will be to include Bielsko-Biala in their life-plans. In turn, first and foremost it is the cooperation in Research & Development that affects the availability of modern solutions adjusted to the needs of the city's companies; it is also one of the elements of life-long education of engineers in those companies. The structure of driving forces and the key factors of success perceived in this way is the source of defining the goals and projects proposed within the works of the local URBACT group.

Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level



Strategic orientation of action plan

Local Economy of Bielsko-Biała in 2025:
Advanced manufacturing
Innovative materials technologies
Specialised IT products

Strategic Area 1. Modern technical training

Strategic Goal 1.1.
Dual training in the key fields for the local economy

Projects:

- 1.1.1. Dual training on the Faculty of Material, Construction and Environmental Engineering (within the range of material engineering).
- 1.1.2. Dual training in the production engineering in the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and IT (within the range of production engineering)

Strategic Goal 1.2.
Practical and lifelong training

Projects:

- 1.2.1. E-Platform for the Student-School-Employer Cooperation (USP)
- 1.2.2. Academy of Technical and Managerial Knowledge
- 1.2.3. The Bielsko-Biala Coding Academy

Strategic Area 2. Research & Development Cooperation

Strategic Goal 2.1.
Effective communication within Research and Development

Projects:

- 2.1.1. Promotion of Research and Development cooperation

Strategic Goal 2.2.
Network cooperation in prospective areas of technological development

Projects:

- 2.2.1. 'Man, city – smart technologies' network
- 2.2.2. 'Application and processing of materials' network
- 2.2.3. 'Control engineering and production management' network

Strategic Area 3. Revitalisation of the exogenous functions

Strategic Goal 3.1.
Bielsko-Biała brand as a career location

Projects:

- 3.1.1. Study in the mountains
- 3.1.2. Career in the mountains

Strategic Goal 3.2.
Investments in post-industrial sites

Projects:

- 3.2.1. Investment incentives system
- 3.2.2. Research and Development Labs Park

Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

Specialisations of the local economy of Bielsko-Biala, which have been earlier identified by the URBACT group and described in the previous chapters, as well as driving forces that influence the development of these specialisations comprise the base for the strategic objectives of the action plan; they accordingly result in a picture of the city's expected economy of 2025 and in strategic vision. In each of the strategic areas two strategic objectives have been established, which will be realised through the projects of the local URBACT group.

Dual training on the key courses for the local economy

The essential aim of the strategic objective 1.1 is the implementation of solutions relating to the tertiary and technical education known in other locations in the country, which are realised in close cooperation between universities and employers in Bielsko-Biala. Two identified dual training projects – introduced in the Faculty of Material, Construction and Environmental Engineering (within the range of material engineering) and on the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and IT (within the range of production engineering) – are to help in creation of the durable systematic solutions on the University of Bielsko-Biala, through which practises in the industry will become a permanent and intrinsic part of teaching. The courses have been chosen in agreement with the existing potential of the University as well as the expectations of the companies operating in Bielsko-Biala and its area. A successful implementation of the projects may result in introducing systematic relating to dual training on larger number of courses.

Practical and lifelong training

The essential aim of the strategic objective 1.2 is the introduction of better conditions for the development of the competence of the employees of the companies operating in Bielsko-Biala. The cooperation for the benefit of lifelong training is in major part pre-competitive, and is profitable for every participant of the local economy. The identified projects are directed towards preparing for a professional career, which includes an improvement in traineeship and apprenticeship system organised by educational institutions

operating in Bielsko-Biala; they are also directed towards organising attractive courses allowing for an improvement of knowledge and skills of the company employees. For a longer term, the developed solutions may lead to a natural excellence centre in the city within certain areas industry, which will become an important factor of competitive advantage for the companies operating in Bielsko-Biala.

Effective communication within Research & Development

The essential aim of the strategic objective 2.1. is the improvement of the diffusion of information relating to the potential of Research & Development in Bielsko-Biala and engagement of the economic environment and scientific communities within this range. Many of the processes involved in Research & Development are realised by entities operating in Bielsko-Biala in cooperation with partners from other areas of the country and the word, which frequently results from the lack of knowledge and limited possibilities of a successful diffusion of information in a local environment. The project of the promotion of cooperation in Research & Development aims at alleviation of these shortages. Consequently, a higher activity in innovation of the local business and scientific consortium will be expected.

Network cooperation in prospective areas of technological development

The essential aim of the strategic objective 2.2. is the launch of the local platforms directed towards commercialisation of technical, product and organisational innovations, based on economic links of the companies and research institutions (mainly those operating in Bielsko-Biala). The identified projects relate to the following thematic networks: man, city – smart technologies; application and processing of materials and control engineering and production management. In a cross-cutting, they link the areas of the economy specialisations in Bielsko-Biala. These projects should be treated as pilots, which will allow for development of the operating methodologies applicable in other thematic networks as well in the future.

Bielsko-Biała brand as a career location

The essential aim of the strategic objective 3.1. is strengthening of the Bielsko-Biała brand. The city is currently subjected to negative trends of qualified staff emigrating to larger centres, simultaneously not being recognisable enough in the outside world (particularly in the country and outside the eastern border) as a place for a career in technical and engineering professions. The identified projects of the study and career 'in the mountains', along with creating incentives allowing for holding the talents living and studying in Bielsko-Biała comprise a comprehensive solution for the image of the city. A consistent implementation of the following editions of these projects will allow for reinforcement of the message spreading to the outside world on the one hand, and on the other, it will ensure a positive experience-curve-effect among the partners responsible for the implementation of these initiatives.

Investments in post-industrial sites

The essential aim of the strategic objective 3.2 is the acceleration of the post-industrial sites revitalisation localised in the city centre. Directed towards its realisation is the plan of realisation of one system projects relating to preparation of the investment incentives package that would decrease the risk of operation on the sites of the brownfield type, and an investment project relating to the launch of incubation spaces for creative companies and construction of Research & Development laboratories of the share type (for a shared use by entities operating in Bielsko-Biała). Revitalisation of the post-industrial sites, respectively, will not only enhance the quality of the urban structure, but above all, it will help create new attractive central functions, or strengthen the old ones, which would make it easier to attract and retain the inhabitants of Bielsko-Biała.

The projects developed and agreed on by the local URBACT group do not comprise all of the possible projects within the determined strategic areas and objectives. During the implementation stage of the action plan, creating synergies with other projects realised or developed within the city's territory will be important.

Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

Portfolio of the projects comprising the action plan

Project Name:	1.1.1. Dual training at the Faculty of Material, Construction and Environmental Engineering within the range of material engineering.					
The project realises the strategic objective of:	1.1. Dual training in the key fields for the local economy					
Aim:	<i>Realisation of dual training within the range of material engineering in the academic year 2018/2019.</i>					
Work packages:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusion of the economic partners to the group of employers that cooperate with the faculty; constitution of the Policy Council of the course. 2. Examination of the needs of the local economy within the range of knowledge, skills and competence of the students and graduates of the course. 3. Development of the course programme and realisation rules in cooperation with the University and economic operators of Bielsko-Biala and its area. 4. Carrying out of the procedures within the structure of the University that relate to the conduct of the dual training 5. Promotional campaign of the recruitment. 6. Recruitment. 7. Joint didactic seminar for the academics and representatives of the companies responsible for working with students. 8. Realisation of the engineering training, which is dual at the University and company 					
Leader and Consortium:	The University of Bielsko-Biala, Bulten, Takoni, Bosmal, Hutchinson, Eaton, SHILOH					
Realisation Period:	09/2017-12/2022					
Funding Sources:	Own resources or Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, Development; action 3.1. Competencies in higher education; action 3.5 Comprehensive programmes of higher schools					
Key Product Indicators:	1 Policy Council of the field 1 analysis of the needs of the local economy 1 education programme of the course 4 promotional campaigns of the course 10 students educated at the university during the years 2018/2019, 2019/2020, 2020/2021, 2021/2022 each year					
Result Indicators:	Basic (2016)	The number of graduates that completed the course included in the programme: 0	Target (2025)	The number of graduates that completed the course included in the programme: 40	Data Source	POLON System, internal documentation of the University

Project Name:	1.1.2. Dual training in the production engineering in the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and IT.					
The project realises the strategic objective of:	1.1. Dual training in the key fields for the local economy					
Aim:	Launch of the dual training in the production engineering in the academic year 2018/2019.					
Work packages:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusion of the economic partners to the Workers' Council that cooperate with the faculty; constitution of the Policy Council of the course. 2. Examination of the needs of the local economy within the range of knowledge, skills and competence of the students and graduates of the course. 3. Development of the course programme and realisation rules in cooperation with the University and economic operators of Bielsko-Biała and its area. 4. Carrying out of the procedures within the structure of the University that relate to the adjustment and organisation of the classes of the course. 5. Promotional campaign of the recruitment. 6. Recruitment. 7. Joint didactic seminar for the academics and representatives of the companies responsible for working with students. 8. Realisation of the engineering training, which is dual at the University and companies. 					
Leader and Consortium:	University of Bielsko-Biała Evatronix, Polmotors, Hutchinson					
Realisation Period:	09/2017-12/2022					
Funding Sources:	Own resources or Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, Development; action 3.1. Competencies in higher education; action 3.5 Comprehensive programmes of higher schools.					
Key Product Indicators:	1 Policy Council of the field 1 analysis of the needs of the local economy 1 education programme of the course 4 promotional campaigns of the course 10 students educated at the university during the years 2018/2019, 2019/2020, 2020/2021, 2021/2022 each year					
Result Indicators:	Basic (2016)	The number of graduates that completed the course included in the programme: 0	Target (2025)	The number of graduates that completed the course included in the programme: 40	Data Source	POLON System, internal documentation of the University

Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

Project Name: 1.2.1. E-Platform for the Student-School-Employer Cooperation (USP)							
The project realises the strategic objective of:		1.2. Practical and lifelong training					
Aim:		Launch of the system targeted at young citizens and students that allows diffusion of information that relate to the possibilities of professional career development in 2020.					
Work packages:		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Detailed analysis of organisational and technical solutions that relate to the presentation of the offer of traineeships and apprenticeships by various providers (University of Bielsko-Biala, technical colleges, vocational schools, economic self-government institutions and business associations). 2. Researching of employers considering the future needs of the local labour market. 3. Creating a shared entity to govern the system (within the structure of one of the consortium members; co-financed by the consortium members). 4. Developing the structure of the E-Platform, including its database of traineeships and apprenticeships and: database of students and graduates; database of educational offer. 5. Developing the rules of functioning of the databases. 6. Preparing the content of the brochure for young people and their parents concerning the needs of the local labour market. 7. Developing a uniform visualisation of the method of presentation of the content, including the projects of: brochures in web version (element of the E-Platform) and in print. 8. Completion of the E-Platform and access methods for the users that manage content and make offers. 9. Integration of the content of existing databases. 10. Promotion of the E-Platform. 11. Organising the thematic meetings targeted at creating new offers of traineeships and apprenticeships. 12. Organising joint initiatives supporting practical cooperation between companies, universities and students. 					
Leader and Consortium:		The City of Bielsko-Biala, Municipal Education Management, University of Bielsko-Biala, Regional Development Agency					
Realisation Period:		01/2018-12/2023					
Funding Sources:		City budget, EU funds, The Agency for Regional Development , Horizon					
Key Product Indicators:		1 joint managing entity 2 researches of employers (editions 2018, 2021) 1 web page that includes databases of traineeships and apprenticeships 1 promotional campaign 10 thematic meetings in a year targeted at creating new offers of traineeships and apprenticeships 5 joint initiatives in a year supporting a practical cooperation between companies, universities and students					
Result Indicators		Basic (2016)	The number of students registered on the e-platform: 0 The number of employers registered on the e-platform: 0 The number of traineeships and apprenticeships offers on the e-platform: 0	target (2025)	The number of students registered on the e-platform: 2500 The number of employers registered on the e-platform: 50 The number of traineeships and apprenticeships offers on the e-platform: 35	Data source	Database of the e-platform

Project Name:		1.2.2. Academy of Technical and Managerial Knowledge				
The project realises the strategic objective of:	1.2. Practical and lifelong training					
Aim:	Launch of a continuous offer of lifelong training in the engineering and production management field in 2018					
Work packages:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analysis of the needs of the local economy in the field of trainings and workshops organised for the company employers. 2. Developing a detailed model of functioning of the Academy (organisational form, front-office, infrastructure and trainers, manners of settlement). 3. Developing training packages. 4. Preparing a market offer and promotional materials along with the webpage. 5. Promotional campaign. 6. Recruitment. 7. Realisation of training packages. 					
Leader and Consortium:	University of Bielsko-Biała Bosmal, Evatronix, Landster, Regional Development Agency					
Realisation Period:	09/2017-12/2020					
Funding Sources:	Own resources – commercial undertakings					
Key Product Indicators:	1 analysis of the needs of the local economy 10 developed training packages 1 long-term promotional campaign 900 people with completed university studies					
Result Indicators:	basic (2016)	...consortium...	target (2025)	...consortium...	Data source	...consortium...

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Project Name:	1.2.3. The Bielsko-Biala Coding Academy					
The project realises the strategic objective of:	1.2. Practical and lifelong training					
Aim:	Promoting computer-coding skills among children and teenagers					
Work packages:	<p>1. Establishing a webpage of Academy of Computer-Coding in Bielsko-Biala</p> <p>2. Organising a programming course conducted by mentors from the IT sector of Bielsko-Biala for students of the local schools. (edition 2018)</p> <p>3. Organising a computer-coding competition (so-called hackathon), during which the competitors can use their practical knowledge acquired through computer-coding course (edition 2018).</p> <p>4. Creating an offer of traineeships and apprenticeships in the IT sector of Bielsko-Biala for the winners of the competition (edition 2018).</p> <p>2. Organising a programming course conducted by the mentors from the IT sector of Bielsko-Biala for students of the local schools (edition 2019)</p> <p>3. Organising a computer-coding competition (so-called hackathon), during which the competitors can use their practical knowledge acquired through computer-coding course (edition 2019).</p> <p>4. Creating an offer of traineeships and apprenticeships in the IT sector of Bielsko-Biala for the winners of the competition (edition 2019).</p> <p>2. Organising a programming course conducted by the mentors from the IT sector of Bielsko-Biala for students of the local schools (edition 2020)</p> <p>3. Organising a computer-coding competition (so-called hackathon), during which the competitors can use their practical knowledge acquired through computer-coding course (edition 2020).</p> <p>4. Creating an offer of traineeships and apprenticeships in the IT sector of Bielsko-Biala for the winners of the competition (edition 2020).</p>					
Leader and Consortium:	The Municipality of Bielsko-Biala, City Board of Education					
Realisation Period:	03/2018-12/2020					
Funding Sources:	Local budget					
Key Product Indicators:	<p>1 website of the project</p> <p>1 computer coding course (6 classes of 5h) each year</p> <p>1 hackathon competition each year</p>					
Result Indicators:	Basic (2016)	The number of people trained yearly: 0	target 2025	The number of people trained yearly : min. 30	Data source	The Municipality of Bielsko-Biala

Project Name:	2.1.1.Promocja kooperacji B+R					
The project realises the strategic objective of:	2.1. Effective communication within Research & Development					
Aim:	Launch of the new system solutions in 2018 to make the cooperation within Research & Development easier in a local environment.					
Work packages:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer stocktaking (of research bodies and companies) within the range of undertaken Research & Development projects that were ordered and consorted. 2. Launch of a virtual cooperation exchange: offers made by research institutions, research offers by companies, research topics suggestions (including engineer and BA theses etc. at the University of Bielsko-Biała). 3. Making the marketing offer of Research & Development attractive – internal workshops/training improving the potential of commercialisation. 4. Organisation of quarterly networking meetings ('business to science') in sectoral/branch-related thematic groups. 5. Creating a knowledge and innovation broker team in the city, sectoral/branch-related thematic group promoters. 6. Scientists' study visits of in companies and entrepreneurs' study visits in research institutions. 					
Leader and Consortium:	Regional Development Agency, University of Bielsko-Biała, Bosmal, GE					
Realisation Period:	07/2018-06/2021					
Funding Sources:	ROP (Regional Operating Programme) of Silesian Voivodeship, action 1.3. Professionalization of Business Environment Institutions					
Key Product Indicators:	1 virtual cooperation exchange 5 workshops improving the potential of commercialisation 10 networking meetings 3 knowledge and innovation brokers 30 study visits in local companies and research institutions					
Result Indicators:	basic (2016)	The number of companies using the advanced (new or improved) services provided by the business environment institutions: 0	target (2025)	The number of companies using the advanced (new or improved) services provided by the business environment institutions: 50	Data source	Project realisation documentation

Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

Project name: 2.2.1. Network 'man, city – smart technologies'						
Project pursues strategic objective:	2.2. Networking in prospective technological domains					
Objective:	<i>Starting from 2018, integration of communities carrying out implementation of smart city technologies</i>					
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Networking meetings. 2. Organization of contests for engineering/semestral works of different fields of study. 3. Internship recruitment fairs for students and scientific staff from different fields of study. 4. Thematic training. 5. Workshops on cooperative problem solving. 6. Creating joint offers of research and development cooperation with external partners. 7. Creating development plans for joint research and development infrastructure. 					
Leader and consortium:	The University of Humanities and Economics in Lodz, The Agency for Regional Development, Evatronix, Examobile					
Implementation period:	01/2018-12/2020					
Source of funding:	Ministry of Science and Higher Education's Program "Dialogue" or own funds (from participants' contribution) combined with financial contribution from the city budget					
Product's key indicators:	20 networking meetings 4 rounds of contests for engineering/semestral works 4 internship recruitment fairs 200 people who completed thematic training 8 workshops on cooperative problem solving 3 applications to national or international research and development programs, submitted jointly by the members of the network and external partners 1 feasibility study connected to the expansion of common research and development infrastructure					
Result indicators:	basic (2016)	The number of businesses using pilot pro-innovative services provided by university: 0	target (2025)	The number of businesses using pilot pro-innovative services provided by university: 15	Data source	Project's implementation records.

Project name: 2.2.2. Network 'applications and processing of materials'						
Project pursues strategic objective:	2.2. Networking in prospective technological domains					
Objective:	Starting from 2018, integration of communities carrying out implementation in terms of applications and processing of materials.					
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Networking meetings. 2. Organization of contests for engineering/semestral works of different fields of study. 3. Internship recruitment fairs for students and scientific staff from different fields of study. 4. Thematic training. 5. Workshops on cooperative problem solving. 6. Creating joint offers of research and development cooperation with external partners. 7. Creating development plans for joint research and development infrastructure. 					
Leader and consortium:	The University of Bielsko-Biala, The Agency for Regional Development, Evatronix, Examobile					
Implementation period:	01/2018-12/2020					
Source of funding:	Ministry of Science and Higher education's Program "Dialogue" or own funds (from participants' contribution) combined with financial contribution from the city budget					
Product's key indicators:	20 networking meetings 4 rounds of contests for engineering/semestral works 4 internship recruitment fairs 200 people who completed thematic training 8 workshops on cooperative problem solving 3 applications to national or international research and development programs, submitted jointly by the members of the network and external partners 1 feasibility study connected to the expansion of common research and development infrastructure					
Result indicators:	basic (2016)	The number of businesses using pilot pro-innovative services provided by the university: 0	target (2025)	The number of businesses using pilot pro-innovative services provided by the university: 15	Data source	Project's implementation records.

Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

Project name: 2.2.3. Network 'automation and production management'						
Project pursues strategic objective:	2.2. Networking in prospective technological domains					
Objective:	<i>Starting from 2018, integration of communities carrying out implementation in terms of automation and production management.</i>					
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Networking meetings. 2. Organization of contests for engineering/semestral works of different fields of study. 3. Internship recruitment fairs for students and scientific staff from different fields of study. 4. Thematic training. 5. Workshops on cooperative problem solving. 6. Creating joint offers of research and development cooperation with external partners. 7. Creating development plans for joint research and development infrastructure. 					
Leader and consortium:	The University of Bielsko-Biala, The Agency for Regional Development, Evatronix, Examobile					
Implementation period:	01/2018-12/2020					
Source of funding:	Ministry of Science and Higher education's Program "Dialogue" or own funds (from participants' contribution) combined with financial contribution from the city budget					
Product's key indicators:	<p>20 networking meetings 4 rounds of contests for engineering/semestral works 4 internship recruitment fairs 200 people who completed thematic training 8 workshops on cooperative problem solving 3 applications to national or international research and development programs, submitted jointly by the members of the network and external partners 1 feasibility study connected to the expansion of common research and development infrastructure</p>					
Result indicators:	basic (2016)	The number of businesses using pilot pro-innovative services provided by the university: 0	target (2025)	The number of businesses using pilot pro-innovative services provided by the university: 15	Data source	Project's implementation records.

Project name:	3.1.1. Studia w górach					
Project pursues strategic objective:	3.1. Bielska-Biała's trademark as the city of professional career					
Objective:	<i>Consistent positioning of Bielsko-Biala as an attractive location for studying and future career.</i>					
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring and evaluation of the campaign – 2017 edition. 2. Substantive preparation of the campaign – 2018 edition. 3. Organizational preparation of the campaign (budget, contractors) – 2018 editions. 4. Implementation of the campaign 2018. 5. Monitoring and evaluation of the campaign – 2018 edition. 6. Substantive preparation of the campaign – 2019 edition. 7. Organizational preparation of the campaign (budget, contractors) – 2019 edition. 8. Implementation of the campaign 2019. 9. Monitoring and evaluation of the campaign – 2019 edition. 10. Substantive preparation of the campaign – 2020 edition. 11. Organizational preparation of the campaign (budget, contractors) – 2020 edition. 12. Implementation of the campaign 2020. 13. Evaluation of the entire project. 					
Leader and consortium:	Consortium of the city Bielsko-Biała and The University of Bielsko-Biala					
Implementation period:	10/2017-12/2020					
Source of funding:	Budget of the city and The University of Bielsko-Biala					
Product's key indicators:	1 website of the campaign "Study in the mountains" Reaching at least 10000 hits on the website www.studiawgorach.pl					
Result indicators:	basic (2016)	The number of people studying at The University of Bielsko-Biala (1st year): 2039	target (2025)	The number of people studying at The University of Bielsko-Biala (1st year): 2500	Data source	ATH

Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

Project name: 3.1.2. Kariera w górach						
Project pursues strategic objective:	3.1. Bielska-Biała's trademark as the city of professional career					
Objective:	<i>Consistent positioning of Bielsko-Biala as an attractive location for living and making career.</i>					
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring and evaluation of the campaign – 2017 edition. 2. Identification of needs in the local economy: examination of the current demand for employees, interns, and students. 3. Creating and promoting systems of incentives for people being employed in partner companies of the project. 4. Creating and promoting systems of scholarships and incentives for the best students in Bielsko-Biala by partner companies. 5. Substantive preparation of the campaign; nationwide segment – 2018 edition. 6. Organizational preparation of the campaign (budget, contractors) – 2018 editions. 7. Implementation of the campaign 2018. 8. Monitoring and evaluation of the campaign – 2018 edition. 9. Substantive preparation of the campaign; nationwide segment – 2019 edition. 10. Organizational preparation of the campaign (budget, contractors) – 2019 edition. 11. Implementation of the campaign 2019. 12. Monitoring and evaluation of the campaign – 2019 edition. 13. Substantive preparation of the campaign; nationwide segment – 2020 edition. 14. Organizational preparation of the campaign (budget, contractors) – 2020 edition. 15. Implementation of the campaign 2020. 16. Evaluation of the entire project. 					
Leader:	City of Bielsko-Biala					
Implementation period:	10/2017-12/2020					
Source of funding:	City budget					
Product's key indicators:	<p>1 website www.karierawgorach.pl Reaching at least 25k hits on the website www.karierawgorach.pl Acquiring at least 25 local businesses for the campaign "Career in the mountains" Conducting at least 1 outdoor campaign in academic cities, where the graduates can be acquired for the local job market (Kraków, Gliwice) Distributing at least 7000 fliers promoting campaigns in colleges Organizing at least 1 nationwide event promoting Bielsko-Biala as an attractive location for making professional career</p>					
Result indicators:	basic (2016)	Population: 172030 Number of people employed: 77352	target (2025)	Population: 175000 Number of people employed: 80000	Data source	GUS

Project name:	3.2.1. System of investment incentives					
Project pursues strategic objective:	3.2. Investments in the former industrial facilities.					
Objective:	<i>Starting from 2019, decreasing the risk of private and public-private investment in revitalization of former industrial facilities</i>					
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreeing on the accessibility and possibility of integration of the data sources useful for investors (MPZP, communication, technical infrastructure, ownership data, and local analysis). 2. Creating a separate information portal that integrates information from various sources, including access to the information in GIS layers. 3. Specifying criteria and territorial scope for facilities which can be entitled to property tax relief. 4. Estimating financial consequences of the reliefs for the city budget. 5. Formal proceeding in the case of property tax reliefs (commissions, draft resolutions, permission from internal organs) 6. Deciding on a resolution about the property tax relief in the duration of revitalization. 7. Promotion of the incentive system. 					
Leader:	City of Bielsko-Biała					
Implementation period:	01/2018-12/2020					
Source of funding:	City budget					
Product's key indicators:	1 portal GIS informative for an investor 1 resolution about the property tax relief during the duration of revitalization					
Result indicators:	basic (2016)	The number of former industrial facilities undergone revitalization In the project: 0	Target (2025)	The number of the former industrial facilities that have undergone revitalization in the project: min. 5	Data source	City Council

Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

Project name:		3.2.2. R&D Labs Park			
Project pursues strategic objective:	3.2. Investments in former industrial facilities.				
Objective:	Utilization of former industrial facilities with the aim of adaptation to creating research and development labs for the joint usage by companies and the community of Bielsko-Biala's region				
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of the needs of local businesses in regard to the B+R works and the necessary equipment for joint use 2. Compiling a database and an offer of local businesses in the scope of offering research services and making accessible the equipment for conducting research and development works 3. Identification of the gaps between technical potential and the identified needs, with the aim of creating a design of lab equipment for joint use 4. Developing concepts for lab activity and the possibility of conducting research and development Works in regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the necessary equipment, - staff needs, - technical demands regarding lab rooms, - identification of possible locations (including former industrial facilities), - making an estimate of costs for the project implementation, - rules of joint use of equipment, - rules of funding works in the lab. 5. Preparation of the project application for funding of the lab construction. 				
Leader and consortium:	The Agency for Regional Development Bielsko-Biala City Council Consortium of companies and ATH				
Implementation period:	01/2020-12/2025				
Source of funding:	Program RPO WSL, PO IG, NCBR				
Product's key indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of joint needs in regard to B + R 2. Compiling a catalogue of offers and research potential of businesses in Bielsko-Biala 3. Elaboration of feasibility study 4. Submitting an application for grant-aid 				
Result indicators:	Basic (2016)		target (2025)		Data source Project's implementation records

Timetable for implementation

Project	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025	
	I	II																
1.1.1. Dual studies at the Faculty of Materials, Civil and Environmental Engineering (in material technologies)																		
1.1.2. Dual studies at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science (in production engineering)																		
1.2.1. . E-platform: student-school-employer (USP)																		
1.2.2. Academy of technical and managerial knowledge																		
1.2.3. The Bielsko-Biala Coding Academy																		
2.1.1. Promotion of R&D cooperation																		
2.2.1. Network 'man, city - smart technologies'																		
2.2.2. Network 'applications and processing of materials'																		
2.2.3. Network 'automation and production management'																		
3.1.1. Study in the mountains																		
3.1.2. Career in the mountains																		
3.2.1. System of investment incentives																		
3.2.2. R&D Labs Park																		

Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

Risk assessment

The last stage of the local group URBACT's works on preparing the action plan was conducted through the workshop method of risk assessment of the project's implementation. The occurrence probability of the five risk areas most characteristic for the planned actions has been analysed. In none of the cases the probability was identified as high. Results are shown in the table below.

Risk area	Occurs in projects:	
	with moderate probability	with low probability
Partners' lack of commitment	1.2.2., 2.1.1., 2.2.1., 2.2.2., 2.2.3., 3.2.1., 3.2.2.	1.1.1., 1.1.2., 1.2.1., 1.2.3., 3.1.1., 3.1.2.
Potential beneficiaries' lack of interest in action or products	1.1.1., 1.2.2., 2.1.1., 2.2.1., 2.2.2., 2.2.3., 3.1.1., 3.1.2., 3.2.1., 3.2.2.	1.1.2., 1.2.1., 1.2.3.
Lack of financial stability	1.1.1., 1.1.2., 1.2.2., 1.2.3., 2.1.1., 2.2.1., 2.2.2., 2.2.3., 3.2.1., 3.2.2.	1.2.1., 3.1.1., 3.1.2.
Occurrence of factors delaying commencement/ implementation	1.1.1., 1.1.2., 1.2.2., 2.1.1., 2.2.1., 2.2.2., 2.2.3., 3.2.1., 3.2.2.	1.2.1., 1.2.3., 3.1.1., 3.1.2.
Occurrence of factors that have negative impact on sustainability of results or execution of next editions	1.1.1., 1.1.2., 1.2.2., 2.1.1., 2.2.1., 2.2.2., 2.2.3., 3.2.1., 3.2.2.	1.2.1., 1.2.3., 3.1.1., 3.1.2.

The estimate of each risk area has been aggregated and matched with the estimate of probability of the projects having strong influence on the city's economy. Results are shown in the table below.

Strong influence on city's economy	Very probable	1.1.1., 2.2.3.	1.1.2., 1.2.1., 1.2.3., 3.1.2.
	Moderately probable	1.2.2., 2.1.1., 2.2.1., 2.2.2., 3.1.1., 3.2.1., 3.2.2.	---
		Moderately probable	Unlikely
Occurrence of the risks factors.			

Key: 1.1.1. Dual studies at the Faculty of Materials, Civil and Environmental Engineering (in material technologies); 1.1.2. Dual studies at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science (in production engineering); 1.2.1. E-platform: student-school-employer (USP); 1.2.2. Academy of technical and managerial knowledge; 1.2.3. The Bielsko-Biala Coding Academy; 2.1.1. Promotion of R&D cooperation; 2.2.1. Network 'man, city - smart technologies'; 2.2.2. Network 'applications and processing of materials'; 2.2.3. Network 'automation and production management'; 3.1.1. Study in the mountains; 3.1.2. Career in the mountains; 3.2.1. System of investment incentives; 3.2.2. R&D Labs Park.

Managing the implementation action plan

The role of the animator of the action plan and the institution that will manage its implementation will be The Agency for Regional Development in Bielsko-Biala. A steering committee for implementation of the action plan will be created, consisting of: a representative of the local government of Bielsko-Biala, the rector or patron of The University of Bielsko-Biala, a member of the local economic authorities or another business association, the chairman of The Agency for Regional Development in Bielsko-Biala. The role of the secretariat of the steering committee will be assigned to The Agency for Regional Development in Bielsko-Biala.

Members of the local group URBACT constituted in the project aided by URBACT will be invited with a consultative function for the annual seminars devoted to summing-up of the subsequent stages of implementing the action plan and consultation on the needed changes or supplements.

The proposals for Project presented in the action plan will be submitted by indicated leaders and consortium for detailed descriptions of projects and possible applications for grant-aids. Managing of the full project cycle will be each time the responsibility of the project leader.

Current monitoring of the action plan implementation is the responsibility of the Agency for Regional Development in Bielsko-Biala. It will be conducted with particular reference to the information resulting from the risk assessment. Data and conclusions from the monitoring, including recommendations for new actions, corrections and improvements, will be passed to the teams responsible for action plan implementation.

Current evaluation of the action plan implementation is the responsibility of the steering committee, which is supported by the consultative voice of the members of the local group URBACT formulated during the annual seminars. The Agency for Regional Development in Bielsko-Biala will be the organizer of the evaluation process.

Ex-post evaluation of the action plan implementation will be conducted in 2026 by an independent entity with adequate expert experience. The Agency for Regional Development in Bielsko-Biala will be the organizer of the ex post evaluation process.

Managing of the action plan implementation (including ex post evaluation) will be realized on the basis of the structure of objectives, product indicators, and result indicators that are listed in the chapter "Portfolio of projects constituting the action plan", taking into account the established timetable for implementation.

Project participants

Members of the local group URBACT:

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Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

Revitalization Maciej Brzezicki, Katarzyna Khanna, Katarzyna Reiter, Monika Wierzbińska, Monika Krawczyk, Grzegorz Nabagło, Jolanta Jędrzejczyk, Aleksandra Podsiadlik, Anna Jończyk, Waław Brachaczek, Hubert Walusiak, Janusz Michałek, Joanna Smala, Marek Danel, Ewa Janoszek, Ewa Grabska-Gawęda, Jarosław Janosz

Implementing works moderator in the local group URBACT: Marcin Baron

Editing of the action plan document: Marcin Baron, Jan Sienkiewicz, Aleksandra Podsiadlik

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In short – Bielsko-Biała: High Level Economy

Bielsko-Biała is not only a city located at the foot of the Beskids Mountains. It is above all a town of strong economic traditions, once called ‘a city of hundred industries’. The political change of 1989 undermined the existence of old businesses and enabled citizens, companies and foreign investors in pursuit of innovative opportunities in the local economy. Thus the transition, even though not easy, was successful. Nowadays **Bielsko-Biała enjoys high level of investments and low level of unemployment.**

In 2016-2017 industry leaders, the world of academia and city authorities gathered together under the umbrella of Urbact project called „In Focus” to discuss future actions that may give the city a further boost. This so called **Urbact local support group decided upon an action plan targeting three economic specialisations of Bielsko-Biała: advanced manufacturing, modern material technologies and specialised IT products and services.** We have given this action plan a name ‘**Bielsko-Biała: High Level Economy**’ as we believe that it is not elevation that makes the city so unique, but its innovative economy, world-class industrial solutions and a strong entrepreneurial milieu that we enjoy every day.

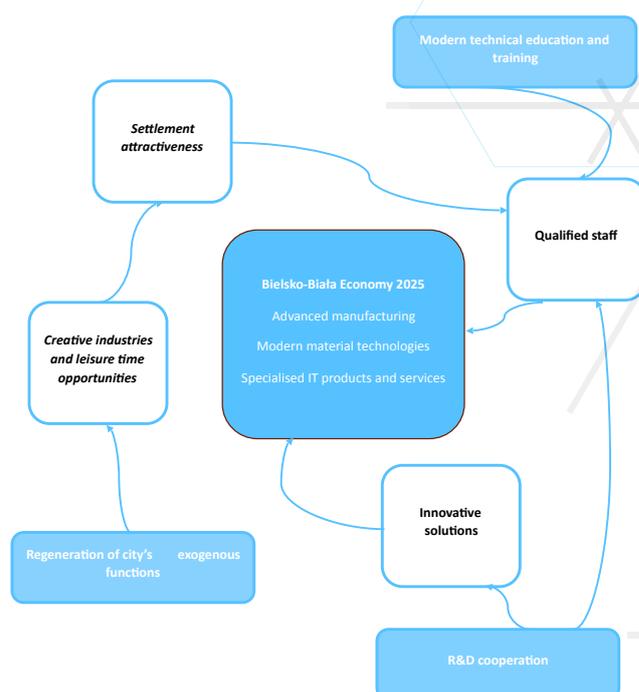
To avoid possible lock-in effects in **the local economy the local support group identified several actions in a time horizon 2017-2025 that are expected to catalyse further growth processes in business and consequently in a public**

sphere. The competitive position of Bielsko-Biała and its economic specialisations will be shaped by two direct and two indirect key success factors. The direct factors are: qualified staff and innovative solutions; the indirect are: settlement attractiveness plus creative industries and leisure time opportunities. They can be boosted by **three driving forces: modern technical education and training, R&D cooperation, regeneration of city’s exogenous functions.** See the next page for a graph depicting this logic.

Consequently, the strategic orientation of the action plan is presented on further pages. It consists of a **2025 vision, three strategic areas, six strategic objectives and 13 projects** – being at the heart of the action plan. The original document contains **project fiches** with defined: objectives, work packages, consortia, financing sources, timeframes, indicators etc.

Regional Development Agency of Bielsko-Biała will go on with its role of the action plan implementation facilitator. The steering committee for the action plan will be set up to enable evaluation of the undertaken actions.

For further info in English, please contact Jan Sienkiewicz at the **Bielsko-Biała Regional Development Agency** (phone: +48 33 816 91 62, e-mail: biuro@arrsa.pl).



Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

Bielsko-Biala Economy 2025 – vision:
advanced manufacturing,
modern material technologies,
specialised IT products and services.

Strategic area 1.
Modern technical education
and training

Strategic objective 1.1.
Dual education in key areas
of local economy

Projects:

1.1.1. Dual studies at the
Faculty of Materials, Civil
and Environmental
Engineering (in material
technologies)

1.1.2. Dual studies at the
Faculty of Mechanical
Engineering and Computer
Science (in production
engineering)

Strategic objective 1.2.
Practical training and
lifelong learning

Projects:

1.2.1. E-platform: student-
school-employer
1.2.2. Academy of technical
and managerial knowledge
1.2.3. The Bielsko-Biala
Coding Academy

Strategic area 2.
R&D cooperation

Strategic objective 2.1.
Effective communication
concerning R&D issues

Project:

2.1.1. Promotion of R&D
cooperation

Strategic objective 2.2.
Networking in the
prospective areas of
technological development

Projects:

2.2.1. Network 'man, city -
smart technologies'
2.2.2. Network 'applications
and processing of materials'
2.2.3. Network 'automation
and production management'

Strategic area 3.
Regeneration of city's
exogenous functions

Strategic objective 3.1.
Bielsko-Biala brand as
a career location

Projects:

3.1.1. Study in the mountains
3.1.2. Career in the
mountains

Strategic objective 3.2.
Investments in post-
industrial sites

Projects:

3.2.1. System of investment
incentives
3.2.2. R&D Labs Park



Bielsko-Biala: Economy at high level

URBACT's mission is to enable cities to work together and develop integrated solutions to common urban challenges, by networking, learning from one another's experiences, drawing lessons and identifying good practices to improve urban policies. The URBACT Programme is jointly financed by ERDF and the Member States.

www.urbact.eu

ARR^{cm}

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In focus

SMART SPECIALISATION AT CITY LEVEL



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Bielsko-Biała