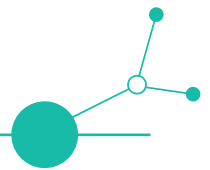




D4.2.1 Regional Action Plan



Czech Republic

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Contents

A.	REGIONAL CONTEXT AND ECOSYSTEM OVERVIEW	4
A.1	Main industrial sectors	4
A.2	Key regional actors	5
A.3	Existing platforms and support structures	6
B.	KEY REGIONAL NEEDS AND BARRIERS	9
B.1	Priority needs	9
B.2	Main barriers	10
C.	PRIORITY INTERVENTION AREAS	11
D.	REGIONAL MEASURES	12
E.	TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION MEASURES	16
E.1	Regional actors ready for cross-border cooperation	16
E.2	Forms of cooperation	17
E.3	Use of B2GreenHub tools for internationalisation	17
F.	INTEGRATION OF B2GREENHUB INTO REGIONAL WORKFLOWS	18
G.	IMPLEMENTATION AND GOVERNANCE	19
G.1	Implementation phases	19
G.2	Governance structure	19
H.	MONITORING AND KPI FRAMEWORK	20
I.	SUSTAINABILITY AND CAPITALISATION	21



A. REGIONAL CONTEXT AND ECOSYSTEM OVERVIEW

A.1 Main industrial sectors

The Ústí Region historically ranks among the most heavily industrialized territories in Central Europe. While it benefited immensely from massive mineral reserves and heavy industry in the past, it is currently undergoing a painful but necessary economic restructuring. The core industrial sectors include:

- **Automotive and Mechanical Engineering:** Manufacturing employs more than 25% of the region's workforce, with the production of motor vehicles alone accounting for over 15%, making it the largest industrial employer (Ústecký kraj, 2024). Historically, a large portion of foreign direct investment (e.g., Nematik, FTE Automotive) flowed into this sector. This established a strong supply chain that is now forced to invest heavily in digitalization and robotics to maintain global competitiveness (Koutský, 2011; Ústecký kraj, 2024).
- **Chemical Industry:** Representing approximately 10.4% of manufacturing employment, the chemical sector is a strategic pillar of the region (Ústecký kraj, 2024). Traditional enterprises (e.g., ORLEN Unipetrol RPA, Spolchemie) are deeply integrated into multinational structures. A major developmental trend is the shift from traditional chemical processes towards "green chemistry," circular economy, the utilization of waste plastics as secondary raw materials, and the development of modern catalysts and nanomaterials (Ústecký kraj, 2024).
- **Energy and Mining:** The region produces about 80% of Czechia's brown coal, which historically supported numerous thermal power plants (Koutský, 2011; Ústecký kraj, 2024). With the phasing out of the coal era, the sector is radically reorienting towards renewable sources (photovoltaics, geothermal energy) and energy storage. The region is profiling itself as a future hub of the hydrogen economy; notably, the Ústí Region is currently the only one in Czechia with its own comprehensive Regional Hydrogen Strategy (Ústecký kraj, 2024).

The degree of corporate digitalization is highly polarized in the Ústí Region. Multinational corporations and their subsidiaries (e.g., in the automotive sector) show a high level of Industry 4.0 implementation, integrating elements like the Internet of Things (IoT), digital twins, and advanced robotics (Mařík et al., 2024; Ústecký kraj, 2024). However, the situation is noticeably worse among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The region generally suffers from a "cognitive and political lock-in" typical of old industrial regions, which slows down adaptation to new technologies (Hruška et al., 2026; Koutský, 2011). The main barrier for SMEs is not just the cost of technology, but a fatal shortage of workers with appropriate digital skills. Companies lack employees with hybrid competencies—combining technical IT proficiency (Big Data analysis, AI) with soft skills such as creativity, flexibility, and critical thinking (Alhloul & Kiss, 2022; Kowal et al., 2022; Lehutova et al., 2025).

The green transformation is an absolute existential necessity and a primary developmental priority for the Ústí Region (Ústecký kraj, 2024). Transitioning from coal dependency, the region is becoming a laboratory for clean technologies (Cleantech). A massive emphasis is placed on building a complete hydrogen value chain (production, distribution, and utilization in local public



transport and industry) (Ústecký kraj, 2024). Another key theme is landscape restoration; the vast territories affected by surface coal mining (brownfields and reclaimed areas) offer immense space for building solar and wind parks or pumped-storage power plants (Hruška et al., 2026; Ústecký kraj, 2024).

Strategic regional priorities (RIS3 alignment) The updated Regional Innovation Strategy (RIS3) of the Ústí Region explicitly responds to decarbonization mandates. It focuses on three main transformative pillars:

1. Decarbonization: Developing new energy, hydrogen technologies, and efficient resource utilization (Ústecký kraj, 2024).
2. Landscape Restoration: Revitalizing industrially disrupted territories for 21st-century needs (Ústecký kraj, 2024).
3. Human Capital and Smart Region: Purposeful stabilization and development of competent talent alongside the promotion of innovative "smart" projects (Ústecký kraj, 2024). Significant support is directed toward cross-cutting Key Enabling Technologies (KETs), including applied digitalization, nanotechnologies, and cultural and creative industries, which aim to transform the region's overall image (Ústecký kraj, 2024).

A.2 Key regional actors

The Ústí Region operates a specific innovation ecosystem (a quadruple helix system). Important actors that can be connected to GREENE 4.0 / B2GreenHub include:

- Manufacturing SMEs / mid-caps: A network of local mechanical and mechatronic engineering firms, automotive parts suppliers, rubber, and plastics plants. A significant sector comprises traditional glassmakers (e.g., flat glass producer AGC Glass Czech) (Ústecký kraj, 2024). Large corporate drivers transitioning to green tech include the ORLEN Unipetrol group, ČEZ, Sev.en, Spolchemie, and Chart Ferox (Koutský, 2011; Ústecký kraj, 2024).
- Technology providers: Growth is observed among smaller tech firms and IT startups dealing with data processing systems, industrial sensorics, or the development of AI-based production planning algorithms. The development of these companies is intensively supported by regional incubation and acceleration programs (Ústecký kraj, 2024).
- Universities and R&D organisations: The crucial academic brain of the region is Jan Evangelista Purkyně University (UJEP). Key faculties include the Faculty of Environment (researching green chemistry and circular economy), the Faculty of Science (strong emphasis on applied nanotechnologies and nanomaterials), and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering (focused on hydrogen technologies and energy) (Ústecký kraj, 2024). Other notable R&D entities include the Research Institute of Inorganic Chemistry (VÚAnCH) (Koutský, 2011), the ORLEN UniCRE research center, the Czech Technical University (ČVUT) branch in Děčín focusing on smart mobility, and the large NanoEnvicZ research infrastructure (Ústecký kraj, 2024).
- Business support organisations: The main moderator and manager of the innovation ecosystem is the Innovation Centre of the Ústí Region (ICUK), which connects



academics, entrepreneurs, and the administration. Energy transition and management at the regional level are coordinated by the Energy Centre of the Ústí Region (ECUK) (Ústecký kraj, 2024).

- Clusters / innovation networks: The region employs the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP), utilizing informal and expert working groups connecting practice and academia (e.g., chemical platform, hydrogen platform, digitalization, and creative industry groups) (Ústecký kraj, 2024).
- Public authorities: The Ústí Region Authority and, centrally, the Regional Competitiveness Council (KRK), which serves as the steering and strategic advisory body for innovation and subsidy directions (Ústecký kraj, 2024).

A.3 Existing platforms and support structures

The Ústí Region is systematically building an open ecosystem connected to international structures to compensate for its historical deficit in regional research.

- Regional innovation platforms and Cluster tools: ICUK is a fully certified member of the highly respected European Business Network (EBN). The region and its institutions are also involved in the ERRIN (European Regions Research and Innovation Network) and the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN). Strategically vital is its membership in the Smart Specialisation Platform (S3), Innovation Valleys, the Just Transition Platform, and the Hydrogen Valley (Ústecký kraj, 2024).
- Partner search: Besides EEN, there is a new platform Saxon-Czech PartnerNet. It is a free bilingual entry tool for cross-border partner search, helping SMEs and institutions present offers, identify suppliers and find business, R&D and innovation partners in the Czech-Saxon border area. Linked to B2GreenHub, it can serve as the first discovery layer, while B2GreenHub supports follow-up matchmaking, project guidance, skills development and low-risk pilot cooperation (ČNOPK, 2025).
- Funding portals: At the local level, ICUK manages the Regional Innovation Vouchers tool. The main financial injection for industrial transformation comes from the Just Transition Fund (OP ST), specifically allocated for coal regions. Companies also heavily utilize resources from OP TAK and the National Recovery Plan (Ústecký kraj, 2024).
- Testing environments / demo infrastructures (Testbeds/Sandboxes): The regional strategy purposely supports the creation of transformation labs and regulatory sandboxes. A functioning example of top-tier testing infrastructure is the Ringen center for geothermal energy research. UJEP operates the Green Energy Technologies Centre (GETC) for applying green innovations (Ústecký kraj, 2024). Furthermore, revitalized brown coal mines act as giant "natural laboratories" for testing energy and environmental innovations under the New European Bauhaus concept (Hruška et al., 2026; Ústecký kraj, 2024).
- Training ecosystems: The heavily industrialized region suffers from a critical shortage of qualified talent (the lowest share of university graduates in Czechia) and brain drain to Prague and abroad (Koutský, 2011; Ústecký kraj, 2024). Therefore, the training ecosystem focuses not only on formal education (UJEP) but also massively on non-



formal and lifelong learning (fab-labs, technical clubs, reskilling assistance). Preparation for Industry 4.0 is essential; merely operating machines is no longer sufficient, as systematic development of cognitive adaptability, problem-solving, and social skills among staff is required (Alhloul & Kiss, 2022; Mařík et al., 2024; Ústecký kraj, 2024).

The primary focal point for integrating the international B2GreenHub program into the Ústí Region is ICUK and its moderated EDP working groups, specifically those targeting digitalization, Industry 4.0, and hydrogen technologies (Ústecký kraj, 2024). ICUK facilitates this through deep-rooted trust with regional enterprises and a detailed map of their technological requirements. In general, connecting this framework to the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) represents an absolutely ideal connection for long-term sustainability and the creation of synergies, with the core value added being the support provided in preparing cases for inter-regional cooperation. This ecosystem is further strengthened by UJEP's research facilities, which serve as essential validators and testing "pilots" for the green technologies introduced through the hub (Ústecký kraj, 2024).

Structurally affected regions, such as the Ústí area, exhibit significant internal resistance to radical changes and tend to repeat old manufacturing patterns, resulting in institutional and cognitive lock-in (Hruška et al., 2026; Koutský, 2011). B2GreenHub can break this barrier by supplying highly specialized, external know-how. Because the regional innovation strategy explicitly relies on "open innovations" and two-way international learning, B2GreenHub experts can directly assist specific regional SMEs in conducting energy audits, implementing circular economy elements, and integrating AI and IoT to optimize processes and reduce emissions—tasks for which internal staff often lack knowledge capacity (Plawgo & Ertman, 2021; Ústecký kraj, 2024).

Connecting local manufacturing and chemical enterprises to a European platform like B2GreenHub is existentially important. The Czech economy is at a crossroads, threatened by the "middle-income trap," as the previous business model based on relatively cheap labor and "subcontracting" is failing in Europe (Mařík et al., 2024). Through B2GreenHub, businesses in the Ústí Region can accelerate their upgrading within the production chain—moving from simple assembly plants to producers of sustainable end products. For local SMEs, this will not only ensure the maintenance of global competitiveness in an era of tightening European norms (ESG reporting, decarbonization) but also help make the regional labor market much more attractive to the talented and creative individuals who are currently leaving the region (Koutský, 2011; Ústecký kraj, 2024).

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B.KEY REGIONAL NEEDS AND BARRIERS

Based on stakeholder discussions (regional focus group, 20 February 2026) *and previous survey findings (A4.1 Survey)*, the following priority needs were identified in the region:

B.1 Priority needs

Select and describe the most relevant needs:

- ✓ Access to finance
- ☐ Digital maturity and data readiness
- ☐ Green business model transformation
- ✓ Skills gaps
- ✓ Partner search difficulties
- ☐ Access to testing/piloting
- ☐ Regulatory complexity
- ✓ Ecosystem fragmentation

Stakeholders in the regional focus group (20 February 2026) repeatedly described the main need as reducing “implementation friction” for SMEs—too many unconnected offers, unclear entry points, and limited capacity inside firms to translate ambitions into investable projects. They stressed the importance of practical, step-by-step guidance (from diagnosis to roadmap), hands-on support to prepare feasible pilots and business cases, and trusted experts who can work with management teams beyond one-off training. Participants also asked for concrete examples and simple ways to track progress once implementation starts.

The A4.1 Survey (Greene 4.0, 2025) supports this picture: financing and external expert support emerge as the most frequently emphasised enablers, while matchmaking is consistently rated as the most valuable platform service. Respondents also point to skills gaps (especially Industry 4.0 and data/AI) and the difficulty of navigating a fragmented ecosystem with overlapping initiatives. A smaller but important strand highlights missing evidence from pilots and limited data/indicators that would help SMEs compare options and prioritise investments.

Prioritised needs for the RAP are therefore: (1) improved access to finance and investment de-risking for green/digital upgrades; (2) closing critical skills gaps (management and technical, incl. data/AI and Industry 4.0) to increase absorptive capacity; (3) shortening partner search through structured matchmaking and value-chain cooperation; and (4) improving ecosystem coordination and clarity of support pathways (a “single front door” and better signposting). Coordination is understood primarily as clear entry points, signposting, and trusted facilitation, not the creation of another standalone structure. Other needs—such as access to testing/piloting facilities, regulatory complexity, and green business model redesign—remain relevant but are treated as secondary priorities, to be addressed where they directly reinforce these four areas.



B.2 Main barriers

- ✓ High investment costs
- ✓ Lack of knowledge about available solutions
- ✓ Long partner search processes
- ☐ Limited cross-border contacts
- ☐ Low digital readiness
- ✓ Administrative/legal differences
- ☐ Language/cultural barriers

In the regional focus group, barriers were framed as accumulated transaction costs that slow or stop implementation: perceived investment risk, limited time and internal capacity to scan options, and uncertainty about who to trust (providers, advisors, standards). Participants also mentioned bureaucracy and complex procedures around support instruments as ‘hidden costs’ that discourage smaller firms. Cross-border cooperation is attractive, but often fails at the ‘first mile’—finding the right counterpart, clarifying expectations, and aligning standards.

The A4.1 Survey (Greene 4.0, 2025) aligns: high investment costs are the strongest barrier, followed by lack of knowledge about available solutions/support and long partner search processes; administrative/legal differences across borders are also consistently rated as a significant constraint. In practice, respondents associate these differences with additional documentation, differing requirements and timelines, and uncertainty around compliance and procurement. They also note that limited skilled workforce amplifies the problem: even when opportunities exist, organisations lack capacity to evaluate them quickly and to manage implementation. By contrast, language/cultural barriers tend to be manageable once concrete partners and projects are identified. Low digital readiness remains relevant for part of the SME base, but is better treated as an underlying condition addressed via skills and advisory support rather than the primary bottleneck.

Prioritised barriers to address are: (1) high investment costs and risk exposure (incl. uncertainty of payback); (2) information asymmetry about solutions, standards and support options; (3) long partner search processes and weak cross-border contact networks; and (4) administrative/legal differences that increase effort for cross-border pilots and procurement. Other barriers in the list are considered secondary, but remain relevant in specific cases or sectors.

Sources:

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C.PRIORITY INTERVENTION AREAS

Selected 2 strategic objectives are aligned with the Transnational Strategy and were validated in the regional focus group:

- ✓ Strategic Objective 1 – Knowledge & Competence Uplift
- ✓ Strategic Objective 2 – Transnational Ecosystem Connectivity
- Strategic Objective 3 – Platform Synergies & Reach
- Strategic Objective 4 – Education–Industry–Research Linkages

Strategic Objective 1 - Knowledge & Competence Uplift

Why is this priority relevant for the region? The key barrier is not only a shortage of skills, but also weak practical links between firms, schools, universities and support actors. Stakeholders emphasised the need for better school-company matching, stronger visibility of existing opportunities, use of voucher-based tools, informal networking and simpler navigation across the support ecosystem.

Which target groups are addressed? Manufacturing SMEs, educational organisations, UJEP, students, public actors and intermediary organisations.

What change is expected? A more practical and accessible competence development system linked to real business needs, with clearer entry points to partnerships, training and applied cooperation.

Strategic Objective 2 - Transnational Ecosystem Connectivity

Why is this priority relevant for the region? Cross-border cooperation is strategically attractive, but still operationally difficult for many firms and support actors. Stakeholders highlighted limited familiarity with foreign partners and procedural/administrative differences, and the need for gradual, trust-based internationalisation, where the knowledge of languages might help.

Which target groups are addressed? SMEs, UJEP, ICUK, intermediary organisations and public actors engaged in regional innovation support.

What change is expected? A more stable and community-based model of cross-border connectivity built on practical matchmaking, shared leadership, existing cooperation networks and direct contact with firms.



D.REGIONAL MEASURES

Each RAP must include concrete, implementable measures. The following three measures are aligned with the selected strategic objectives and the regional focus group outcomes.

Measure 1

1. Title of the Measure

B2GreenHub Navigator for school-company matching and transformation support orientation

2. Strategic Objective and Priority Area

Strategic Objective (SO): Knowledge & Competence Uplift

Priority Area:

- ✓ Training / Skills
- ☐ Technology adoption
- ☐ Testing & piloting
- ✓ Matchmaking & networking
- ☐ Policy support / governance

3. Problem or Need Addressed

Firms and other ecosystem actors struggle to navigate dispersed support instruments, identify the right partner, and find suitable funding or training pathways. Stakeholders also asked for a simpler, Czech-language entry logic and better school-company matching.

4. Target Groups

- ✓ Manufacturing SMEs
- ☐ Technology providers
- ✓ Research / education organisations
- ✓ Public authorities
- ✓ Intermediaries / clusters
- ✓ Other (specify): students

5. Description of the Measure

The measure will create a regionally curated navigation layer linked to B2GreenHub, not a separate platform. It will provide a simple entry point in Czech, user-oriented filtering by immediate need, school-company matching, curated signposting to relevant services and, if feasible, a pilot AI-assisted navigation feature. ICUK and partners will regularly update the content so the tool remains practical and operational.

6. Connection to the Transnational Ecosystem



The measure connects regional users to B2GreenHub mainly through Matchmaking & Value-Chain Building, Funding & Project Guidance and Green Path Academy. Where relevant, users can also be directed to the Technology Portfolio. It therefore acts as a regional uptake mechanism for the transnational platform.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Lead organisation(s): ICUK

Supporting actors (regional / transnational): UJEP, chambers of commerce, Ústí Region, selected secondary schools, CzechInvest/EEN, municipal actors and other ecosystem intermediaries as appropriate.

8. Expected Outputs and Results

A functioning regional navigation layer linked to B2GreenHub, a pilot school-company matching workflow, a curated set of regional contacts and improved usability of platform services for Czech stakeholders.

9. Indicative Timeline

- ✓ Short-term (within 12 months)
- ☐ Medium-term (12-36 months)
- ☐ Long-term (beyond 36 months)

10. Resource Level (Indicative)

- ☐ Low
- ✓ Medium
- ☐ High

11. Monitoring Indicators (KPIs)

number of users onboarded to platform; number of school-company matches initiated; number of SMEs supported through navigation/guidance.

Measure 2

1. Title of the Measure

School-company micro-pilots using existing vouchers and incentive-based support

2. Strategic Objective and Priority Area

Strategic Objective (SO): Knowledge & Competence Uplift

Priority Area:

- ✓ Training / Skills
- ☐ Technology adoption
- ✓ Testing & piloting
- ☐ Matchmaking & networking



- ✓ Policy support / governance

3. Problem or Need Addressed

The region needs more practical cooperation between firms and educational actors, but not through another heavy programme. Existing voucher-type instruments are not sufficiently aligned (open to) with school-company cooperation, competence development or low-risk experimentation.

4. Target Groups

- ✓ Manufacturing SMEs
- ☐ Technology providers
- ✓ Research / education organisations
- ✓ Public authorities
- ☐ Intermediaries / clusters
- ✓ Other (specify): students, secondary schools

5. Description of the Measure

The measure will introduce a light mechanism of micro-pilots for school-company cooperation based primarily on smarter use of existing support tools. It will support student projects, internships, final theses, or short applied assignments, small pilots focused, for example, on digitization or ESG improvements. Existing innovation/business vouchers can be used or modified for implementation, and the ESG voucher format and non-financial incentives for participating companies can be tested.

6. Connection to the Transnational Ecosystem

The measure connects to B2GreenHub mainly through Testing & Piloting, Green Path Academy and Funding & Project Guidance. Successful micro-pilots can later be linked to broader piloting, project development or cross-border cooperation pathways within the GREENE 4.0 ecosystem.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Lead organisation(s): UJEP + ICUK

Supporting actors (regional / transnational): Ústí Region, selected secondary schools, municipalities, participating firms and organisations administering or linking voucher-based support.

8. Expected Outputs and Results

A pilot portfolio of school-company micro-pilots, a practical workflow for linking firms to students and education actors, and a tested approach for using existing voucher-based tools more effectively.

9. Indicative Timeline

- ☐ Short-term (within 12 months)
- ✓ Medium-term (12-36 months)



- ☐ Long-term (beyond 36 months)

10. Resource Level (Indicative)

- ☐ Low
- ✓ Medium
- ☐ High

11. Monitoring Indicators (KPIs)

number of pilot or testing engagements; number of SMEs supported; number of students or educational projects linked to firms.

Measure 3

1. Title of the Measure

Community-based cross-border matchmaking and company roadshow model

2. Strategic Objective and Priority Area

Strategic Objective (SO): Transnational Ecosystem Connectivity

Priority Area:

- ☐ Training / Skills
- ☐ Technology adoption
- ☐ Testing & piloting
- ✓ Matchmaking & networking
- ✓ Policy support / governance

3. Problem or Need Addressed

Cross-border cooperation is attractive for the region, but many firms and support actors still perceive it as difficult and operationally demanding. Stakeholders highlighted lack of trusted contacts, limited partner familiarity, and procedural/administrative differences, weak continuity between initiatives and the need to begin with practical, manageable formats.

4. Target Groups

- ✓ Manufacturing SMEs
- ☐ Technology providers
- ✓ Research / education organisations
- ✓ Public authorities
- ✓ Intermediaries / clusters
- ☐ Other (specify):

5. Description of the Measure



The measure will establish a graduated cross-border activation model built on trust, repeated contact and lightweight facilitation. It will include informal networking sessions with trusted partners, thematic company visits and roadshows, sharing of good practices, gradual involvement of firms, use of existing cooperation structures, running projects (e.g. TCUK, NET4DIGI) and rotating hosting among participating organisations.

6. Connection to the Transnational Ecosystem

The measure will use B2GreenHub as the transnational backbone for Matchmaking & Value-Chain Building and Funding & Project Guidance, and as a pathway towards later participation in cross-border piloting or consortium building once trust and basic routines are established.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Lead organisation(s): ICUK + UJEP

Supporting actors (regional / transnational): CzechInvest/EEN, DCUK, relevant municipal actors, selected public-sector partners and other cooperation-ready organisations linked to cross-border ecosystem development.

8. Expected Outputs and Results

A pilot format of repeated cross-border meetings and company visits, a first set of trusted cooperation-ready contacts and themes, and a community-based operating model for sustained cross-border facilitation.

9. Indicative Timeline

- ✓ Short-term (within 12 months)
- ☐ Medium-term (12-36 months)
- ☐ Long-term (beyond 36 months)

10. Resource Level (Indicative)

- ☐ Low
- ✓ Medium
- ☐ High

11. Monitoring Indicators (KPIs)

number of cross-border meetings or company visits organised; number of cooperation links established; number of firms engaged in a first cross-border follow-up action.

E. TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION MEASURES

E.1 Regional actors ready for cross-border cooperation

The regional actors currently best positioned for cross-border cooperation include ICUK, UJEP, CzechInvest / EEN, and other intermediary and innovation-support organisations with direct



links to firms and project development. These actors should form the first operational layer for internationalisation because they already combine outreach capacity, facilitation, project experience and links to SMEs. Selected municipalities, secondary schools and cooperation-ready firms can be involved gradually where there is a clear thematic fit and sufficient motivation for follow-up action.

E.2 Forms of cooperation

- ✓ Joint participation in EU/national projects
- ✓ Cross-border piloting
- ☐ Shared testing facilities
- ✓ Consortium building
- ✓ Skills exchange
- ☐ Cross-border value chain development

The preferred forms of cooperation should be those that allow gradual activation, repeated contact and low initial risk. For the Ústí Region, the most suitable starting forms are consortium building, joint project preparation, skills exchange and small-scale cross-border piloting. Shared testing facilities and broader cross-border value chain development should be treated as a second-step ambition, once trusted partners, practical themes and first cooperation routines are already in place.

E.3 Use of B2GreenHub tools for internationalisation

B2GreenHub should be used as the region's practical internationalisation enabler, not merely as an information repository. Its main value for cross-border cooperation lies in reducing friction in partner search, funding orientation and access to manageable first cooperation opportunities. The most relevant platform modules here are Funding & Project Guidance, Matchmaking & Value-Chain Building, Testing & Piloting Across Borders, and Green Path Academy.

Operationally, the platform should support a stepwise pathway: identify relevant partners and themes through matchmaking, orient users in suitable project or funding options, enable low-risk first cooperation through pilot exchanges, company visits or small testing actions, and only then move toward broader consortium building, piloting or value-chain cooperation. This is especially relevant in a region where the main challenge is not a lack of initiatives, but a lack of an accessible and confidence-building bridge between regional actors and transnational opportunities.



F. INTEGRATION OF B2GREENHUB INTO REGIONAL WORKFLOWS

SME **onboarding** should start through ICUK and partner organisations that already work directly with firms. The first contact should use a simple needs-based entry logic - find a partner, find funding, improve skills, or test an idea - with escalation to B2GreenHub modules only after basic orientation.

Promotion should combine direct outreach to firms, EDP working groups, informal ecosystem meetings, school-company matching events, ICUK advisory activities, UJEP communication channels, municipalities, and relevant networks such as CzechInvest/EEN. Short Czech-language user guidance and practical examples should accompany promotion.

Platform use should be **embedded** into existing advisory and matching workflows rather than treated as a separate project activity. Relevant entry points include ICUK services, UJEP cooperation formats, voucher-based support, EDP discussions, selected municipal or intermediary programmes, and potential connection to EEN.

The **most demanded services** are expected to be partner search, funding and project guidance, school-company matching, training and competence development, and low-risk pilot support. Technology portfolio functions should be used mainly where firms already have a defined transformation need.

Sustainable uptake requires regular content curation, clear ownership of onboarding, visible follow-up after first contact, simple user guidance, and continued use of lightweight interaction formats that connect online tools with real actors and practical cases.



G. IMPLEMENTATION AND GOVERNANCE

G.1 Implementation phases

- **Phase 1 - Alignment & Preparation**

Validate priority actors and service pathways, align ICUK and UJEP roles, prepare the navigator logic, identify initial school-company matches, and select trusted cross-border partners for first cooperation activities.

- **Phase 2 - Service Uptake & Experimentation**

Launch the navigator and first micro-pilots, start repeated informal meetings and company visits, onboard the first firms, and connect selected users to B2GreenHub modules and voucher-based instruments.

- **Phase 3 - Scaling & Capitalisation**

Stabilise successful formats, expand school-company and cross-border participation, align the model with regional instruments and RIS3 priorities, and prepare continuation through existing ecosystem structures.

G.2 Governance structure

A light **regional coordination model** should be used, with ICUK and UJEP as the core coordination pair and additional actors involved according to topic. Coordination should rely on regular operational check-ins, shared curation of opportunities, and rotating hosting for selected ecosystem meetings.

Regarding **roles of project partners**, ICUK should lead firm outreach, onboarding and ecosystem facilitation and UJEP should lead competence-related content, educational linkage and translation of business needs into learning or pilot formats. Other actors should contribute targeted outreach, thematic expertise, facilities or follow-up opportunities.

Operational **decisions** should be taken jointly by the core coordination pair, while larger adjustments to measure design or partner involvement should be discussed with relevant regional stakeholders. For cross-border and community formats, shared facilitation and rotating leadership are recommended to strengthen ownership and sustainability.



H.MONITORING AND KPI FRAMEWORK

The monitoring framework should combine overall RAP indicators with measure-level KPIs so that regional progress can be tracked in a consistent but practical way.

- Number of SMEs onboarded to B2GreenHub, including mediated onboarding through regional actors
- Number of matchmaking connections initiated, including school-company matching
- Number of cross-border cooperation links established
- Number of technologies adopted or scoped for adoption
- Number of training completions or competence-development engagements
- Number of pilot or test engagements



I. SUSTAINABILITY AND CAPITALISATION

Sustainability will be achieved by embedding selected formats and B2GreenHub services into existing regional routines and support instruments, in line with the GREENE 4.0 Capitalisation Plan, rather than maintaining a project-only structure.

The RAP will therefore remain anchored in regional transformation priorities already reflected in the **RIS3 strategy**—decarbonisation, digital transition, human capital development and stronger cooperation among firms, education providers and innovation-support actors—while using B2GreenHub as a cross-cutting ecosystem that consolidates knowledge, advisory workflows, matchmaking and pilot cooperation.

At the same time, the **long-term governance model** will remain light, flexible and community-oriented. ICUK and UJEP will continue to serve as the core regional coordination pair, working closely with CzechInvest/EEN and other business-support organisations as multipliers and trusted intermediaries, and linking regional uptake to the broader B2GreenHub ecosystem governance as it evolves.

Continuation beyond the project lifetime will build primarily on existing business support services, UJEP cooperation formats, voucher-based instruments and low-cost ecosystem meetings. Where additional capacity is required, partners will explore gradual cost-recovery mechanisms (e.g., organisational subscriptions for facilitators/regional hubs and optional paid expert support) while keeping entry barriers low for SMEs and prioritising formats that generate practical demand from firms and schools.

Post-project implementation is expected to follow a phased pathway—consolidation (0–12 months), expansion (12–36 months) and maturity (36+ months)—focused on onboarding early adopters, maintaining curated content and trusted expert networks, and progressively opening participation to **additional firms, municipalities, sectoral communities and partner regions** where there is a clear thematic fit and a capable intermediary structure.

In this respect, the combination of a light navigation layer, school–company micro-pilots and community-based cross-border activation offers strong **replication potential** for other transition regions facing fragmentation, partner-search bottlenecks and weak links between innovation support and competence development, while remaining compatible with the wider B2GreenHub capitalisation and business model framework.