



European Union
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**REGIONAL
OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES
IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

**GOOD PRACTICE
EXAMPLES**





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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR PRAGUE

Splendid, nonchalant, magical and beautiful – the metropolis in the very heart of Europe boast all these attributes. Yes, we are talking about Prague – an amazing and entertaining city that (not unlike New York) never sleeps.

Like many other major cities of worldwide significance, Prague offers a variety of leisure opportunities to enjoy with your family and friends. It is really up to you whether you head out and discover the beauty of its architectural gems, visit its theatres that will leave you breathless, or pay a visit to the romantic corners of old Prague, absorbing the charm of times long gone. But we have much more to offer!

Big cities are often said to be “Concrete Kingdoms”, i.e. a large number of buildings concentrating an even larger number of people. While this may often be the case, Prague is nothing like that at all.

Have you visited one of Prague’s parks and gardens? No? Well, it is high time you did something about that – it is almost unbelievable how much green space can be found in the Czech capital. So, if a quiet summer Sunday afternoon is what you long for, choose from a wide range of Prague’s gardens, parks and woods.

Whether you are a cycling enthusiast, in-line skater or just prefer classic walks, Prague will cater to all your needs. Ladronka, the Dubeč nature park, the Kinský garden, the Havlíčkovy sady park, the Malešice park – these are but a few of the possibilities if you want to enjoy a few moments in the fresh air.



Interestingly, all these green areas were created with significant support by the European Union, namely thanks to the **Operational Programme Prague – Competitiveness** that supports (besides other activities) creating these places.

Nothing is more pleasant than topping off your Sunday afternoon with a delicious coffee and some sweet cake. Prague offers numerous cafés and sweet shops, but then again, why not try something unconventional?

In Prague, there are establishments that help integrate various ‘disadvantaged’ groups of citizens. These also include the above cafés and sweet shops that provide employment opportunities for persons with mental disabilities. So, visit the Vesmírna sweet shop or the NaVšechnoČas café and see for yourselves.

This is a visit we can highly recommend – you will admire the sincere effort these disadvantaged people make in order to learn, work and actively participate in normal human life as well as their openness and kindness.

The establishment of this type of businesses is supported by another operational programme for Prague, namely the **Operational Programme Prague – Adaptability** that focuses on non-investment projects.



ROP CENTRAL BOHEMIA REGION – THE HEART OF EUROPE

The Central Bohemia Region is a captivatingly beautiful piece of Europe that is full of natural beauty, rare sights and important trade routes. It surrounds the capital city of Prague on all sides. For many years, it has been a growing trend to settle down, start a family or spend old age in this important area. This, of course, has been associated with an increased need for quality infrastructure – transport, education, health care and social services.

There are many subsidy applications and it is not possible to fully satisfy all applicants. The Office of the Regional Council has an effective tool through which it regulates projects' spending. The aim is to achieve maximum efficiency of resources spent. It applies **project efficiency evaluation**. During project quality evaluation, applicants can receive 55 points out of a total of 200 for efficient project solutions and compliance with the prices of construction works and products. Costs that exceed the average construction work price are not acceptable and the concept of the construction portion of the project must be implemented in the usual standard. The price is compared with comparable constructed buildings from the "Czech building standard" database and special software. Since the introduction of the system in 2009, a total of EUR 20 080 000 has been saved on approved projects (worth approximately EUR 200 803 000) through verifying the usual prices.

Until recently, many children attended kindergartens that no longer met current parameters and capacity requirements. This year alone, 22 restored and brand new schools and kindergartens opened their doors at the beginning of the school year. Of course, this was made possible thanks to subsidies from the Regional Operational Programme – in an amount of EUR 9 237 000. Since 2007, approximately 100 **educational facilities** have received subsidies totalling approximately EUR 64 000 000. In Central Bohemia, the Regional Operational Programme carefully examines the catchment area and the accessibility of each educational project – given the large number of competing applicants, these factors enter into project selection.

Each project that is implemented with support from the ROP Central Bohemia is **officially completed with a ceremony**, taking into account the characteristics of the location and the type of the project. In addition to the representatives of the beneficiary and the ROP, the completion ceremony is also attended by the press and the residents of the surrounding area as the future users of the project. As demonstrated by a recent survey, the perception of European subsidies as a positive contemporary phenomenon has increased among the local population, not in the least thanks to the practice of holding official completion ceremonies.



ROP SOUTH-WEST SUMMER CAMPAIGN – TIPS FOR TRIPS AROUND SOUTHWEST BOHEMIA



In summer, a publicity campaign ran in a newspaper (MF DNES) and on a news server (iDNES). A total of 16 articles were published focusing on intriguing tourism-related projects in the South Bohemian and the Plzeň Regions. The campaign ran in parallel with a contest that enjoyed great interest and was evaluated in September. About 500 contestants participated. The main prize was a weekend stay at a hotel by the Lipno Reservoir and also 10 annual subscriptions to MF DNES.

WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF THE CAMPAIGN?

Raising public awareness of the benefits of the ROP South-West and the Structural Funds in general, in particular through completed projects that directly affect citizens.

WHAT MEDIA WERE INVOLVED?

- Press – Mladá fronta DNES
- The www.iDNES.cz news portal (regions)
- The ROP South-West website at www.rr-jihozapad.cz

WHAT MADE THE CAMPAIGN UNIQUE AND SUCCESSFUL?

The success of the campaign lay mainly in the use of multiple communication media and their effective interconnection. The articles first appeared in the newspaper (every Friday) and then, on Monday, on the iDNES regional news server and also on our website in the news section. Throughout the campaign we had a banner on the front page of iDNES linking to our website and, in addition, a new section entitled “Tips for Trips” was set up within the main menu. Using the same graphic style, the entire event had a uniform touch and feel.

In order to establish effective co-operation we formed a media partnership with MF DNES. Laying down the foundation stone for future collaboration, the partnership also allowed us to keep the costs of the campaign down.

WHAT DID THE ARTICLES LOOK LIKE?

With focus on a single district, each issue introduced 2 to 3 projects, especially in tourism. Also, many articles were related to various events that were taking place in and around the given places. We strived to write the articles in an attractive way – primarily describing those places and their attractions. However, each article mentioned financing by the ROP South-West or by the European Union funds. As part of the contest, we published a question at the end of every issue and readers could find the correct answer in the article.

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS OF THE CAMPAIGN?

Simple answer – the results were very good. While we do not know how many people read the newspaper, the Internet is a measurable medium and we found out that traffic at our website increased considerably in the summer months. In August we had up to 1 500 more visitors compared to June. Interestingly, the summer trends tend to be the exact opposite – traffic on our website usually decreases due to the holiday season. At the same time, the number of registered visitors coming from a linking web rather than directly (through entering the web address) also increased. We found out that the most common linking websites were budějovice.idnes.cz and plzen.idnes.cz. During the two months of the campaign, these sites were visited 2.5 million times. The banner on the servers’ front page received 2 700 clicks.

APART FROM THE RESULTS, WHAT MADE US HAPPY?

In addition to the answers we received several positive responses. The following response was provided by Mrs. Anna Krýslová.

“Last week, my grandchildren and their parents went to the Fairy Tale House and the Plzeň ZOO. They were all very excited. My grandson Matýšek even refused to wash, because his face was beautifully painted. We have already taken most of the Tips for Trips around our southwest – Techmania, the Plasy monastery, Mariánská Týnice, the Kladruby monastery, the House of Ghosts, the Plzeň underground. We’ve been to Bolevák – the Town of Games etc. In short, it’s all very cool here. There are lots of places to go and things to do in any weather. Thanks for the tips and ideas.”

The example of a newspaper advertisement:

TIPY NA VÝLETY PO JIHOZÁPADĚ ČECH



V průběhu července a srpna Vám MF Dnes přinese 8-dílnou sérii letních tipů na výlety po jihu a západě Čech po projektech, které byly podpořeny z Regionálního operačního programu Jihozápad. V každém článku naleznete soutěžní otázku. Cestujte, zodpovídejte otázky a odpovědi nám zašlete na adresu soutez@rr-jihozapad.cz, zařadíte se tak do soutěže o 10 ročních předplatných MF Dnes a o víkendový pobyt pro dvě osoby v Garni hotelu Albatros na Lipně. Všechny tipy na výlety, soutěžní otázky a podmínky soutěže naleznete na www.rr-jihozapad.cz.

Areál zázitkové a poznávací turistiky Střední Podbrdsko Strašice

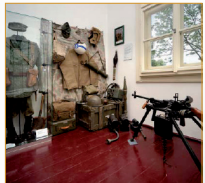
Víte kde leží Brdy? Bez diskuze o umístění amerického radaru by možná mnozí při takové otázce váhali. Asi 40 kilometrů od Plzně, na rozhraní Středočeského a Plzeňského kraje, tvoří Brdy zajímavou a turisticky zatím neobjevenou oblast. Nemalou roli v tom hraje fakt, že od 20. do 90. let 20. století bylo celé Střední Podbrdsko intenzivně využíváno armádou. Výletem pro celou rodinu, při kterém objevíte mnoho zajímavého se tak může stát Muzeum Středních Brd v Areálu zázitkové a poznávací turistiky Střední Podbrdsko ve Strašicích.



V rozsáhlém areálu bývalých kasáren ve Strašicích dnes naleznete dvě expozice. První vám představí historii vojenské činnosti v Brdech. Přístupné jsou i prostory protiletadlového krytu z 2. světové války či valetická pracovna s řadou autentických exponátů.

Druhá část areálu představuje život regionu Podbrdsko, který byl kromě armády spojen s těžbou uhlí a železné rudy.

Zájemci mohou ve Strašicích i přenocovat – jedno podlaží kasárna je upraveno na způsob vojenské nocleži z období první republiky, kde skáňní příznivci mohou vyfasovat i originální kopřivkové deky, které praporečnická armáda používala.



Vojenský dril naživo i v karikaturách. To je zázitková turistika pod Brdy. Další tip na výlet s možností výhry.

2.

Špejchar ve Spáleném Poříčí

Dalším místem, které se věnuje tématu Brd, je muzeum kresleného humoru s expozicí historie Brd a galerii pro místní výtvarníky ve Spáleném Poříčí. Muzeum sídlí v bývalé budově špýcharu, která byla zrekonstruována díky dotaci z Regionálního operačního programu Jihozápad. Naleznete zde stovky exponátů z historie Brd, mezi nimiž jsou stará Femešla, ale také místnosti starých chalup a dílen i rekonstruovaná brdská náves se sta-



robou dřevěnou pumpou. „Jde o naučnou stezku s informačními tabulemi, kde jsou informace o flóře, fauně, historii, architektuře, zaniklých vesnicích i femeslech,“ uvedl starosta města Pavel Čížek. Další část galerie tvoří ojedinelá výstava kresleného humoru Jiřího Winternera Negračky. Jeho laskavý humor znají děti i dospělí z řady pohádek a knih – mezi nejznámější patří asi ilustrace Černých baronů nebo Neuvěřitelných příhod Žáků Kopyta a Mňouka.

Soutěžní otázka:

Díla kterého známého českého ilustrátora jsou k vidění v Muzeu kresleného humoru ve Spáleném Poříčí?

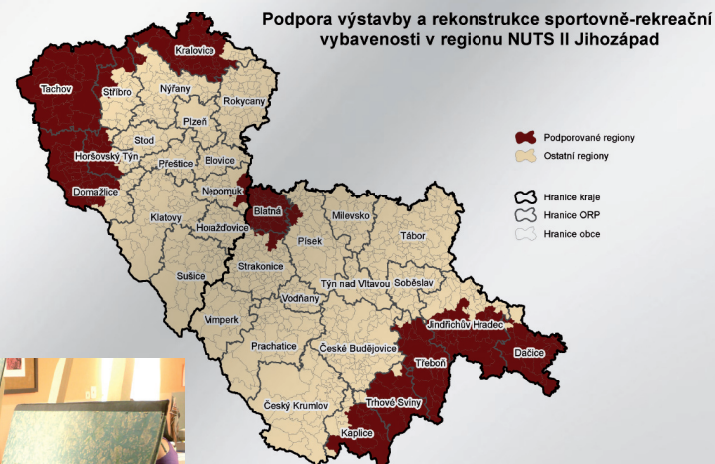
Tipy na výlety po Jihozápadě Čech Vám přináší Regionální operační program Jihozápad a MF Dnes



OTHER SUCCESSFUL ROP SOUTH-WEST EVENTS:

The ROP South-West Art Competition

More than 30 schools that received a subsidy from the ROP South-West had the opportunity to participate in an art competition that was organized on the occasion of Europe Day on 9 May 2011. Children up to the age of fifteen drew and painted pictures on the topic “What would you buy for your neighbourhood if you received a subsidy from the EU”. We received nearly 100 artful entries. After difficult deliberation we chose the winner – the Kaplice secondary school, secondary school of economics and vocational school. As the main prize, the winner can choose various materials for fine arts classes. We were intrigued by both the imagination and awareness of some children. The most common themes included aquaparks and playgrounds, and also proposals for new kindergartens and a home for the homeless.



IUDP WITHIN THE REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME NORTH-WEST

As part of using the resources of the European Regional Development Fund, the Czech Republic subscribed to the principle of integrated support. Within the North-West region (the Ústí nad Labem and the Karlovy Vary Regions), this method of support is applied through thematic and zoned integrated urban development plans (IUDP). In applying integrated approaches, it is important to concentrate resources on comprehensively addressing the pivotal issues in a particular location. The integrated method of using subsidy resources has many advantages. First of all, it corresponds very well with the region's settlement characteristics, especially in the heavily urbanized Ústí nad Labem Region. Its development can thus be stimulated through supporting the 'development poles' of the region, i.e. large cities. Another advantage of integrated plans lies in the fact that this method of using subsidy resources teaches cities to approach their development (including the related priorities) strategically. Last but not least, a significant advantage consists in strengthening the involvement of the public,

the non-profit sector and entrepreneurs in determining the development priorities, namely through public discussions on integrated development plans and the related public debate. Within the North-West region, IUDP focusing on the territory are implemented – with support by the Regional Operational Programme North-West – in Ústí nad Labem, Chomutov, Děčín and Karlovy Vary. Thematic IUDP aimed at modernizing public transport are implemented in Most and Ústí nad Labem. The sub-projects that are implemented within the zoned IUDP in the different cities are diverse – from completing the Home for Senior Citizens in Ústí nad Labem to revitalizing the premises of the former barracks and building a cultural centre in this location in Chomutov, and from constructing a modern municipal library in Děčín to revitalizing the Rolava sports complex in Karlovy Vary. The common denominator of all these projects lies in improving the quality of life of the region's residents and creating the conditions for its continued all-round development.



ROP NORTH-EAST – THE PROJECT FOR STRENGTHENING THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND ABSORPTION CAPACITIES (SAAC)

One of the global objectives of ROP NUTS II North-East is to strengthen the absorption capacity of the area, thus improving the beneficiaries' ability to prepare, successfully implement and render accounts of projects that are co-financed by the Structural Funds through the ROP SE.

Within our operational programme, this objective is promoted through a separate project entitled Strengthening the administrative and absorption capacities (SAAC). It aims to assist in preparing and implementing as many good-quality projects as possible, thus allowing for the utilisation of all of the programme's resources. A good-quality project – this is above all a good idea that meets the conditions of the programme to the largest extent possible. Yet it can only become successful if it also has a good-quality applicant with a qualified and dedicated team. Such a team requires knowledge, skills and the ability to share the experience of others. Through its 'pilot' projects, this is exactly what the SAAC project facilitates.

A pilot project is a real project plan. It serves as a model project that is intended to motivate potential applicants and beneficiaries, and the general public. Pilot projects receive free assistance, namely in two phases – in project preparation and in project

implementation and administration. Thanks to partnerships established with other entities, the bearer of the SAAC project can assist pilot projects throughout our region. More than forty pilot projects currently participate in the SAAC project. These pilot projects are good practice examples that, in turn, pass on the experience of assisted guidance to other applicants and beneficiaries. Pilot projects are selected so that their focus covers the widest possible range of activities within the ROP North-East, thus providing inspiration and a model to all applicants and beneficiaries. These include towns and municipalities, non-profit and allowance organisations, and entrepreneurs.

In addition to providing assistance, SAAC publishes promotional materials and organizes training seminars and workshops in which applicants and beneficiaries can become familiar (through practical demonstrations and exercises) with specific tasks that are associated with preparing and implementing projects. The SAAC project runs throughout the programming period.



MORAVIAN SILESIA RELIES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN AREAS AND A NEW INSTRUMENT CALLED JESSICA

Moravian Silesia bets on new forms of using money from the European funds. As the first region in the Czech Republic it is introducing the instrument called JESSICA. The new financial instrument represents a simpler and less administratively demanding investment of European resources that is returnable to the region, and thus more beneficial. JESSICA allows for the development of urban areas.

In February 2010, the introduction of the JESSICA instrument was confirmed through signing the holding fund financing agreement that was concluded between the Regional Council Moravian-Silesia and the European Investment Bank. Its launch was facilitated by a contribution of EUR 20 million from the Regional Operational Programme Moravian Silesia that was subsequently transferred to the holding fund. Originally intended for regenerating brownfield sites, the subsidy resources can serve their original purpose and – in their new form – they also allow for further developing unused sites.

JESSICA encourages the cooperation of the private and the public sectors. It is based on financing projects with the potential to generate future revenue and income.

Its key advantage is the returnability of investments and their long-term nature, while beneficiaries profit from the custom-tailored repayment scheme and low interest rates. Once the invested resources are repaid, the funds remain in the region and are available to other similar projects.

Beneficiaries receive European money (potentially supplemented by private sources) through urban development funds. Currently, two urban development funds are being prepared in Moravian Silesia – the agreements establishing these funds are expected to be signed in the last quarter of 2011. Subsequently, specific investment plans will be supported. The interest and the possibilities of potential investors used to be identified by a feasibility study prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Among other things, the region is characterized by a high number of brownfield sites, with urban areas playing the key role. More than 60% of the population lives in towns and cities with over 20 thousand inhabitants; towns and cities are the engine of further economic development. JESSICA's role is to rev the engine up and keep it running.



INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN CENTRAL MORAVIA

Investments that are concentrated in areas with high potential for tourism development – this is the basic idea behind the application of integrated territorial development plans in the Olomouc and the Zlín Regions. Within the Olomouc Region, financial resources have been concentrated in the Jesenice, Šumperk and Olomouc areas; in the Zlín Region in the Rožnov, Luhačovice and Horní Vsacko areas.

Even today, measurable results can already be observed in tourism promotion in the Horní Vsacko area. Situated in a mountainous region in the Beskydy and Javorníky Mountains, the area is special thanks to well-preserved Moravian Wallachian folklore that remains a vital part of the life in local communities. Many towns and villages have a deep-rooted crafts tradition and products of folk artists can be found at many markets. This is therefore a rural area in a mountain valley with a small population. Thanks to integrated support by the Regional Operational Programme Central Moravia, there has been a concentration of investments by both the public sector (CZK 637 million) and the private sector (CZK 688 million). Through accelerating the socio-economic development of the selected area, new jobs have been created (for example, one of the entrepreneurs created 56 jobs in 2006 and increased the number to 162 jobs

in 2011), the attractiveness of the areas for further development has improved, real estate prices have increased significantly, and favourable conditions for further economic growth have been created in the area.

Main experience in managing integrated territorial development plans:

- Territorial approach
- Qualified setting of objectives
- Concentration of financial resource in the territory
- Establishing criteria for impacts and benefits associated with economic growth and employment
- Generating private investments in connection with public investments

THE MEASURABLE ADDED VALUE OF THE COHESION POLICY IN THE GIVEN AREA AS A RESULT OF AN EXEMPLARY MODEL OF THE FUNCTIONING OF EUROPEAN FUNDS ON THE BASIS OF A TERRITORIAL APPROACH.

Projects established thanks to the integrated territorial development plan in the area Horní Vsacko:



THE REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME SOUTH-EAST

We create a communicative and friendly environment, and provide timely, easily accessible and understandable information for preparing and implementing projects.

COOPERATION WITH THE APPLICANT AND THE BENEFICIARY

THE ROP SOUTH-EAST NEWSLETTER

We regularly bring the latest information about the ROP South-East, present successful projects, prepare special editions on important topics with examples of good practice and the most common problems (e.g. public contracts) as well as tips for trips to interesting projects – this is the content of the information magazine for nearly 4 000 users.



CONSULTATIONS ABOUT PROJECTS IN PREPARATION

We meet future beneficiaries very often. They always find a professional expert that provides advice and points them in the right direction. You can reach us in person, by phone and e-mail.



SEMINARS

Prior to announcing a call, we provide potential applicants for support with information. As soon as the subsidy is approved, we welcome the beneficiary at the seminar and also at our subsequent seminars focusing on the latest information and developments, changes and other advice and recommendations. Practical examples and advice help beneficiaries smoothly overcome any obstacles that may be encountered in implementing their projects.



EXPERT SUPPORT

We visit the applicant, going all the way to where their dream is materializing. Trained staff help fill in the forms, adding some valuable extra advice. Matters that cannot be delayed are addressed directly on-site. Expert support is professional help that is available to beneficiaries free of charge.



COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATION

We are with the beneficiaries at the project's official opening or commencement of operation. We provide the necessary media support, inform the press and help with project publicity. For selected projects, we organize public events at which we inform – in a friendly manner – about the European funds and their use on specific projects.



FEEDBACK

We are interested to know what our clients think about our work, which is why we set out and visit the region to ask. We send out questionnaires, carry out surveys and answer questions. We are an open office that is not afraid of feedback, on the contrary, we welcome feedback as part of our effort to improve the services we provide.



FAST PAYMENT FOR MAJOR PROJECTS – THIS IS WHAT MODIFIED PAYMENT MEANS

The beneficiary submits unpaid invoices for the review of the work that has been carried out, which is completed within 30 working days. Once the review is complete, the beneficiary receives the resources in their account without having to pay the invoices with their own resources. Beneficiaries now require much less own funding while also saving on interest on bank loans. This is a quick, cheap and easy solution.





The information brochure „Regional Operational Programmes in the Czech Republic - good practice examples“ was published by the Regional Council South-East in October 2011.

The brochure is supported by the European Union – the European Regional Development Fund

