

## Abstract

Project RIS3 of spa-industry in Ústí region after analytical evaluation formulates two basic strategic innovation visions.

**Vision 1** Innovative development of traditional spa treatment technologies that use natural healing resources and primarily knowledge of evidence based medicine. The main strategic objective is to defend the role of Czech spas as an important element of the effectiveness of primary preventive care and rehabilitation.

**Vision 2** Use of professional and scientific capacity of the Czech spa-industry to participate in a totally new program aiming to provide medical and preventive care in the field of Ageing, especially for maintaining the working ability of people aged 50+. The concept of the program Horizon 2014 - 2020, which contain societal challenge of Health, demographic change and wellbeing will be the design and implementation of appropriately targeted social innovation.

Project RIS3 of spas in Ústí region is focused on solutions of:

- Situation in the Czech spas countrywide, where impact of the emergency austerity measures of the Ministry of Health led to restrictions of spa treatment. These measures are applied regardless of the actual and objectified effectiveness of health technologies. In the majority of Czech spas the numbers of medical, physiotherapy and other spa staff is being reduced. There is a threat of losing professional capacities, based on traditional practices of natural healing resources and a proven educational system in Balneology and Balneo-technique, which will be difficult to recover. Situation of spa operators in the Usti region is similar.

- Critical situation characterized by fact that the Ústí Region makes one third of the national number of jobseekers aged 50+. The number is approx. 48 thousand persons from a country total of 150 thousand aged 50+. But serious situation like this in the Usti region presents also motivating opportunity to become domiciled department with national scope for social innovations in the domain of disadvantaged group aged 50+. So far, nobody is addressing this solution in the Czech Republic. According to pilot reports prepared by VUB (Research Institute of Balneology), both research and implementation capacities are available in the Usti Region.

Both the above mentioned shortages should be used to initiate innovative strategic solutions of essential innovative domain of the Ústí Region, namely social innovation targeting group aged 50+. On the one hand, the gradual release of technical and scientific capacities in the spas of Ústí Region that occurs anyway, could be used to deal with implementation of the project step-by-step. On the other hand, it is necessary to create the organizational conditions of work center for social innovation, focusing on the maintenance and development of physical and mental fitness of 50+ with the working title “**Social Innovation Park**”.

VUB (Research Institute of Balneology) is the only scientific- research institute in the Ústí nad Labem region, which participates actively in the work of the Council for Ageing and Age Management under the auspices of the MLSA. VUB is the main initiator to realize the inclusion of this issue in the framework of social innovation. VUB is engaged in looking for solutions of this issue as part of preparations of the above mentioned program Horizon 2014 - 2020 and intends to join the Europe-wide trend in Ageing. Although the existence of VUB lasts only a few years, it became part of the scientific community in the Usti region. The present challenges arising from Vision 1 and Vision 2, should be solved not only based on Ústí region' capacities, but also with engagement of the Czech and international capacities as commonly used in the EU framework programs.