**Press Release**

**RAISING Survey Report: Who should shape the future of coal regions? Residents of small mining communities want jobs and real impact on decisions**

Ostrava, 13.10.2026. Coal regions in Poland, Czechia and Germany are at different stages of leaving coal behind, but the people who live there want much the same things: good jobs, local benefits they can actually see, transparent spending of public money and a real say in decisions. They also do not want the transition to wipe out the mining identity of their regions.

A report by VSB – Technical University of Ostrava (VSB-TUO) presents the results of an international survey of residents and stakeholders in small mining and post-mining communities in Poland, Czechia and Germany. The online questionnaire ran from 2 July to 11 August 2026 and collected 301 complete responses: 124 from Poland, 96 from Germany and 81 from Czechia. Participation was voluntary, so the results describe the people who took part rather than whole regional populations. The survey was carried out within the RAISING project (Raising Awareness of Small Local Communities in the Coal Mining Transition Process).

**Jobs first: 68% point to new, high-quality jobs**

New, high-quality jobs were the most frequently chosen priority for the transition, selected by 68.1% of respondents. Jobs are not the whole picture, though. Respondents also want a cleaner environment, support for local businesses, new investment, affordable housing, retraining and better infrastructure. Most believe their region can have a good future after mining, but many doubt that the money spent on the transition will reach local people. The concerns mentioned most often were corruption and wasteful use of public funds (55.8%), job losses and unemployment (55.1%), and the risk that large companies will benefit while residents are left behind (32.6%).

**Poles worry most about jobs, Czechs about corruption**

Some views are shared across all three countries. Respondents support new jobs, reuse of brownfield sites and projects with visible local benefits. 79.4% would combine large strategic investments with smaller local projects, and 88.3% see mining and industrial history as an important part of their region's identity. The differences show up in what people fear and where they see the future:

- In Poland, employment and economic security come first. 68.5% of Polish respondents fear job losses, compared with 44.4% in Czechia and 46.9% in Germany. Most of them (83.1%) have a current or former family connection to mining, and 81.3% want projects to go first to the municipalities most affected by mining.
- Czech respondents are most concerned about corruption and ineffective use of public funds (66.7%) and place strong emphasis on modernisation, brownfield regeneration and a new image for their regions.

- German respondents, mostly from the Ruhr region, look towards a knowledge-based economy: 62.5% see research, science and universities as a promising direction, compared with 25.0% in Poland.

*"People in mining communities recognise that their regions are undergoing major changes. What matters to them is whether these changes bring tangible benefits to local communities and whether residents have a real opportunity to influence decisions. More than three-quarters of our respondents expressed a willingness to become personally involved in shaping their region's future,"* says Jindřich Šancer of VSB – Technical University of Ostrava.

**Residents want a real say in decisions**

75.8% of respondents think residents have too little influence on decisions about their region, yet 77.7% say they are willing to get involved personally. In Poland both figures are higher still (81.5% and 83.9%). The authors recommend tying investments to measurable benefits for residents and adapting support to how far each region has moved away from coal. They also call for putting brownfield regeneration first, mixing strategic and local projects, and involving residents when priorities are set, not after projects are ready. Information about the transition should also reach people outside the circle of those who already follow the topic.

**About the RAISING project**

The report "Questionnaire survey report" (Deliverable 3.1) was developed as part of the RAISING project ("Raising awareness of small local communities in the process of coal mining transition"), funded by the Research Fund for Coal and Steel. It was prepared by a VSB-TUO team led by Jindřich Šancer.

The RAISING project aims to raise awareness among small local communities and support them through the mining transition process. The project is led by the Central Mining Institute – National Research Institute (GIG-PIB), with partners including the Instrat Foundation, Germany's DMT-THGA (DMT-Gesellschaft für Lehre und Bildung mbH), and VSB - Technical University of Ostrava (Czechia). GA no: 101216335.

**About VSB-TUO**

VSB – Technical University of Ostrava (VSB-TUO) is a Czech public university with a long tradition in mining, energy and technical sciences, located in the Moravian-Silesian coal region.

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The full report is available for download on the RAISING project website: https://raising.gig.eu/publications