

Project idea form - small projects

Version 2.1

Registration no. (filled in by MA/JS only) _____

Project Idea Form

Date of submission 04/06/2025

1. Project idea identification

Project idea name	Relational welfare, fostering community capacity and responsive public services that creates robust, collaborative networks with the local residents.
Short name of the project	Welfare capacity
Previous calls	yes <input type="radio"/> no <input checked="" type="radio"/>
Seed money support	yes <input type="radio"/> no <input checked="" type="radio"/>

2. Programme priority

1. Innovative societies

3. Programme objective

1.2. Responsive public services

4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Göteborgs stad, Socialförvaltningen Nordost
Name of the organisation (English)	the City of Gothenburg, Social Services Administration North-east
Website	https://goteborg.se/wps/portal/start/kommun-och-politik/kommunens-organisation/forvaltningar-och-namnder/socialforvaltningen-nordost
Country	SE



Type of Partner	Local public authority
	municipality, etc.

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Which organisation(s) in the planned partnership take part in a project within the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme for the first time? Please list the respective partners.

- * Social Services Administration North-east, City of Gothenburg. We have only been a so called twin in an Interreg Baltic Sea-project (Liveability) but never a partner.
- * Social Services Administration Nørrebro-Bispebjerg, City of Copenhagen

5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

The project proposes a transnational learning initiative to transform public services. Our main objective is to shift from reactive interventions towards proactive, preventive, and trust-based approaches. Drawing inspiration from the principles of relational welfare and relational capacity and moving beyond a purely transactional model.

This essential capacity needs to be built both within organizational structures and directly among the staff who work with citizens. To succeed, we understand the need for cross-professional and cross-sector collaboration to establish robust local support systems.

Social services often become involved only when problems have escalated, leading to high costs and reduced opportunities for early prevention. Traditional organizational structures frequently result in siloed service delivery, making it difficult for citizens to navigate and for professionals to collaborate effectively across departments. As a result there is a lack of trust for public institutions, hindering engagement and self-efficacy. Services often perceive citizens as passive recipients rather than active partners capable of contributing to their own solutions and community well-being.

It is also particularly challenging to reach individuals who are not already "in the system," highlighting the necessity for close cooperation with partners such as housing companies, who possess a different

reach into communities. Also associations and organisations are vital for a better reach and bridging gaps of trust.

This transition emphasizes the role of human connection and co-production in fostering well-being. Working in a more relational way has proven more efficient, as it builds resilience, reduces long-term dependency on social services, and leads to more sustainable, tailored solutions. While frontline social workers represent a key target group for this initiative, the ultimate beneficiaries are, of course, the citizens themselves—in particular children, young people, and their parents in this project—who are directly confronting the challenges posed by a malfunctioning welfare system.

5.2 Focus of the call

Our social welfare systems are struggling to keep up with today's changing world, often relying on outdated solutions. This problem is especially clear in areas facing social and economic challenges – areas that exist in many cities across the Baltic Sea Region. It's urgent to change this trend and this project directly supports the cohesive development of these local communities. It fosters responsive and accessible public services and by empowering the citizens it will contribute to the goal of increased prosperity where an effective and inclusive welfare system is fundamental.

Our aim is to help unlock the potential of these areas, transforming them into attractive places to live and work. To empower the residents, rebuild trust to service providers we need to ensure development is guided by the needs and aspirations of the service users. The solutions will be relevant for the service users and preventive work will minimize escalated problems leading to high costs.

The project will also approach problematic bureaucracy due to silo organisations since the core of the method itself is cross-professional and cross-sectoral teamwork.

We aim to do this by transforming public services from being reactive to proactive, preventive, and trust-based, inspired by principles of relational welfare. This means building new capacities within both the organizations and the staff who work directly with citizens. To succeed, we need to work across different professions and sectors.

6. Transnational relevance

The challenges connected to areas experiencing social exclusion are not unique, even though local specifics exist. It's also clearer than ever that events far away can impact our own neighbourhoods. Therefore, cooperating across borders is not just about gaining access to more expertise; it's also a vital way to increase cohesion. This challenge, in particular, is highly suited for transnational cooperation because partners within the social policy and public sectors within this partnership, often look to each other for solutions.

Working together on common challenges across borders builds networks, increases mutual understanding, and fosters a sense of community and collective responsibility within the Baltic Sea Region.

A transnational exchange can create a common basis for action. Different countries and regions have developed unique methods for similar problems, and through this exchange, we can learn from



successful models. This reduces the risk of "reinventing the wheel," which in turn accelerates the development of effective working methods.

Working transnational will give us a larger spectrum of indicators and a deeper understanding of what truly makes welfare effective. Transnational exchange isn't about simple copying, but about adapting solutions to local conditions. By understanding how models function in different cultural and administrative environments, our local projects can develop a more resilient and replicable model that can be scaled up.

7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

We apply for a small project with the intention to learn more about the program and hopefully be able to level up with a core project in the future.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

Since the project is inspired by relational welfare and relational capacity, which is an ongoing movement, we have the ambition to tap in to that movement. And rather than creating a new network we will contribute to an existing and possibly become a voice for BSR.

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

The project is based on an operational part taking place in the local context and co-creating with the persons living in that specific area. We also plan job shadowing between the partners.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

n/a

8. Target groups

The key target group is social workers and more specific people working directly with the citizens with a focus on children, young people and their parents. On a daily basis they face the challenge of lacking methods, structure and mandate to work in a way that contributes to long term impact on individuals and the society. So it is crucial to involve this group and increase their opportunities to develop new, more preventive and relational working methods. They are directly interested in improving their working situation, streamlining their efforts, and achieving better results for residents, which are the



direct outputs of the project. The project aims to increase their capacity to handle complex social challenges by providing new methods and approaches.

Other important actors within social work are the municipality owned housing companies. They have knowledge and important access points to residents, as well as resources that can contribute to creating safer and more sustainable areas. Outputs that they have a direct interest in are for example safer living environments and reduced social problems. The collaboration increases their capacity to work with social issues and contribute to holistic solutions.

Another important target group is the civil society. They are often rooted and trusted within the local society in an entirely different way than public institutions. The project will seek collaboration with civil society to be able to reach out to all residents in the community, and also to be able to create a network for a more holistic support system.

But the most important target group is the citizens who are the once most affected by how public services function. So everything that we come up with in the project must correspond to their needs and aspirations. This calls for a participatory approach with dialogues, reference groups and essential is the feedback and hands on proof of that their voices have an impact of the output.

Please use the drop-down list to define up to five target groups that you will involve through your project's activities.	Please define a field of responsibility or an economic sector of the selected target group	Specify the countries and regions that the representatives of this target group come from.
1. Local public authority	Social services administration. Municipality owned housing company.	Sweden, the City of Gothenburg, north-east district. Denmark, Copenhagen
2. NGO	Associations and other non profit organisations that take an active part in the community.	Sweden, the City of Gothenburg, north-east district. Denmark, Copenhagen.

9. Contribution to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Please indicate if your project idea has the potential to contribute to the implementation of the Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (<https://eusbsr.eu/implementation/>).

yes ☒ no ☐

Please select which policy area(s) of the EUSBSR your project idea contributes to most.



PA Education

PA Health

PA Innovation

The MA/JS may share your project idea form with the respective policy area coordinator(s) of the EUSBSR. You can find contacts of PACs at the EUSBSR website (<https://eusbsr.eu/contact-us/>).

☐ If you disagree, please tick here.

10. Partnership

Due to Sweden's upcoming new social services act, the Social Services Administration North-east in Gothenburg is accelerating efforts to find new ways of serving citizens. The project aims to form a three-partner team to test relational welfare approaches in local areas. Participants in the project will be from existing units, and include both frontline staff and management, dedicating part-time hours.

We seek diverse partners, selected for their motivation, interest in this transformational journey, and ability to implement project outcomes. The partner search focused on organizations facing similar challenges in socio-economically vulnerable areas, particularly those inspired by relational welfare. Gothenburg has long sought to learn more about these principles, noting the advanced experience of Nordic neighbours. For this small project, a shared foundational understanding among partners is beneficiary for effective transfer and adaptation of solutions.

The current partnership shares significant common challenges. These include difficulty reaching vulnerable families and building trust, a critical need for proactive and early intervention, and addressing siloed service delivery through cross-sectoral work. Empowering citizens, especially parents, to actively participate and contribute to solutions is also a key shared interest.

Leading partner is the Social Services Administration North-east (City of Gothenburg, Sweden) in collaboration with the municipal housing company Framtiden AB. Gothenburg will initiate the "Grannskapsteamet" (Neighbourhood Team) pilot in Hjällbo and Hammarkullen summer 2025. This team aims to shift from merely intervening when problems escalate to proactively strengthening communities and enabling better living conditions in cooperation with residents, preventing issues from becoming official cases.

From Denmark, we have Copenhagen's "Gadepulsen" (Street Pulse). Part of the Department of Social Services/Child Welfare, Gadepulsen has a long history of crime prevention through outreach, 1:1 mentoring, and their "Active Boys" program. They have an holistic approach when supporting vulnerable boys and their families dealing with complex social challenges.

We are actively seeking a third partner within the Baltic Sea Region with similar preconditions and challenges as for the described local areas in Gothenburg and Copenhagen.

11. Workplan

We will use ongoing pilots and/or activities, working according to or inspired by the principles of relational welfare, as our testbeds to evaluate and continuously improve our work.

To make the input and the knowledge exchange as fruitful as possible, we plan to have activities such as workshops (in person and online) and job shadowing. When it comes to job shadowing it includes direct engagement with social services personnel and, where appropriate, with housing companies and local associations in each partner's context.

The project team will gain confidence and competence to spread relational welfare to the key target group of social workers. Both as a way of learning colleague to colleague and also in more formal settings such as facilitate workshops. The main output is an increased and robust capacity to work relational within social service delivery.

The project will also focus on pinpointing indicators that will show that the method is having a positive impact and also if it is not – what you could change and/or try to make it work. As we have existing connections within the partnership with universities our aim is to have them as associated partners to get support with this activity. We will have collaborative sessions to define, refine, and test common indicators for measuring the impact and progress of relational welfare (e.g., indicators for trust, accessibility, citizen empowerment, cross-sectoral collaboration, early intervention rates).

The output will be useful for implementation and upscaling to other social service providers. But also for management to see cause and effect from working relational.

Co-designing with citizens

Citizen engagement and participatory work is an important output of this project. Example of activities are:

- Mapping and cooperate with already existing forums where possible.
- Dialogues and joint problem-solving sessions where for example professionals, housing company representatives, and citizens work collaboratively to devise and implement solutions.
- Evaluations with citizens and their lived experiences and perspectives will be central to assessing the success of the relational approach, contributing to the development of meaningful indicators.
- Specific workshops and job shadowing opportunities to share different national/local approaches to citizen engagement.

These activities collectively ensure that citizen engagement is not merely an aspiration but a tangible, integrated part of the project's methodology, leading directly to outputs that reflect and promote genuine participatory work.

The final outcomes will be useful for, apart from social services institutions, housing companies and local organizations/associations involved in public service delivery.

The Indicators for relational welfare will be a practical and durable output used by public sector organizations and policymakers across the region to monitor, evaluate, and benchmark the effectiveness of their relational approaches.

12. Planned budget

ERDF budget (planned expenditure of partners from the EU)	EUR 500,000.00
Norwegian budget (planned expenditure of partners from Norway)	EUR XXX
Total budget (including preparatory costs)	EUR 500,000.00

13. Project consultation

Please indicate if you wish to have a consultation (online meeting) with the MA/JS to discuss your project idea

yes ☒ no ☐

14. Questions to the MA/JS

Questions related to the content of the planned project	Delivery/result of the project, we are thinking indicators but should it be more tangible like for example a method guide? The citizens, the service users, are an important target group, can they be a target group or should they only be a secondary tg?
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Questions related to budgeting and expenditure	Can an external part, for example an expert, take part of the budget?
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Any other questions	<i>(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)</i>
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15. Additional information

(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)

Your account in BAMOS+

Please remember that to officially submit your application you need to access our electronic data exchange system BAMOS+. More information about the process of applying for your account in BAMOS+ you will find here:

<https://interreg-baltic.eu/gateway/bamos-account>