



# 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	Engaging Part-Time Locals in Rural Futures
Short name of the project	eLocals
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
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### 3. Programme objective

1.1. Resilient economies and communities
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### 4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Turun ammattikorkeakoulu Oy
Name of the organisation (English)	Turku University of Applied Sciences
Website	www.turkuamk.fi
Country	FI



Type of Partner	Higher education and research institution
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#### Contact person 1

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#### Contact person 2

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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.

*(max. 500 characters incl. spaces)*

### 5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

Multilocal living and increased use of second homes have become more common over time, remote rural areas, particularly in the Baltic Sea region continue to face population decline and increasing depopulation. This depopulation is reflected in a decline in services and economic activity, which undermines local resilience and overall security. This underlines the need to develop new policies that reduce the dependence of the Baltic Sea remote area on global supply chains and strengthen regional self-sufficiency and the ability to produce and access critical commodities locally.

Another key challenge relates to the lack of social and economic engagement among secondary residents. According to the The Finnish Free-Time Residence Barometer (2025), secondary residents in Finland tend to participate passively in local communities, which decrease the potential of multilocal living to strengthen regional vitality. Information about local services, opportunities for participation, and co-development initiatives is often fragmented or difficult to access. At the same time, population aging and digitalization create pressure to develop new ways to engage younger generations in local activities and communities. Furthermore, the seasonal nature of demand for leisure housing frequently fails to generate permanent jobs or ensure the continuity of services.

These challenges particularly affect second home dwellers in the Baltic Sea region, local communities, cottage communities, municipalities, as well as private and public service providers and their stakeholders, who play a key role in maintaining and developing the social and economic fabric of the regions.

Although multilocal living has the potential to support regional vitality, its benefits often remain unrealized. There is a need to apply the principles of smart specialization and to strengthen social and digital connections to deepen the interaction between multilocal and permanent residents, thereby enabling more efficient use of regional resources.

To address these challenges, comprehensive approaches and practical tools are needed to strengthen social cohesion, enhance regional economic activities, improve risk management across sectors, and integrate multilocal living into sustainable regional development. The goal is to increase the engagement of multilocal residents in everyday local life and services, and to create new business opportunities and jobs that benefit the entire region.

## 5.2 Focus of the call

The project develops a mobile application that connects second home dwellers, local businesses, and municipalities through a digital information exchange platform. This platform fosters community interaction, enabling users to share information about services, events, and opportunities, and to discover local products and actors.

The goal is to strengthen the vitality of small towns and rural areas in the Baltic Sea region, particularly those facing social and economic vulnerability. By engaging secondary residents, especially cottage owners, the app supports local economies, social cohesion, and adaptability to sudden changes. The project leverages local strengths, promotes innovative participation, and reinforces regional identity and resilience. It aims to bridge the gap between urban centers and remote areas, enhance off-season living, and maintain local services.

The app encourages sustainable consumption, increases the visibility of local offerings, and supports the integration of secondary residents into communities. Overall, the project improves resilience and safety of the rural areas, fosters year-round activity, and offers a scalable model for addressing regional development challenges.

## 6. Transnational relevance

International cooperation enables the comparison of multilocal living phenomena, challenges, and solutions across different countries. This provides a foundation for developing new recommendations, incentives, and operational models. The development of the mobile application serves as a basis for a new concept through which municipalities and other stakeholders can build strong cross-regional networks and support the recovery of local economies. The operational model built around the application will bring together best practices identified in the Baltic Sea region and offer a concrete framework for developing activities and fostering collaboration. This strengthens local social and

economic capacity and supports sustainable growth throughout the Baltic Sea area.

Through cross-border cooperation, partners can jointly develop and transfer smart solutions that have proven effective in one country to different regional contexts. These validated solutions can be scaled up and adapted across the Baltic Sea region, strengthening a shared regional identity.

A scalable digital application network connects different parts of the Baltic Sea region and can later support, for example, sustainable tourism by providing information about local “hidden gems.” At the same time, it enhances the visibility of these regions and supports the emergence of new initiatives and forms of cooperation. The mobile application developed by the project will improve stakeholder awareness and mobility within the Baltic Sea Region.

## 7. Specific aims to be addressed

### Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

The project's approach is concrete and relevant to everyday life. The project has developed an application that serves a wide range of users, including leisure residents, teleworkers, and tourists. The application will strengthen local identity and a sense of belonging, particularly through social innovation. By bringing businesses, municipalities, and individuals together on the same digital platform, interaction is fostered, the flow of information is increased, and inclusive development is enabled. These interactions build trust between different stakeholders and create the conditions for new cooperative initiatives.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

The project establishes and maintains local networks. It highlights local services and expertise, strengthens interaction and information exchange between regions, and promotes resilience and long-term cooperation across national borders.

### Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

The project's practical approach and the mobile app's ease of use make its content and benefits accessible to a wide range of users. Citizens can actively participate in developing their area, access local services, and influence their community's future. This brings the program's objectives closer to the citizens of the Baltic Sea Region.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

The application's real-time, two-way communication structure supports community safety and enables a rapid response to local changes and crises, including those involving public authorities. It provides municipalities and service providers with a tool to flexibly allocate resources as demand and needs change.

## 8. Target groups



Municipalities (e.g. Mäntyharju FI), Local rural area small sized enterprises (e.g. tourism related services), Local tourism authorities, Associations (e.g. Finnish Village Movement Association), Local communities (e.g. villages), second home dwellers, tourists

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. Infrastructure and public service provider	Municipal services	Finland, Estonia, Poland, Sweden
2. EGTC	Association	Finland
3. Small and medium enterprise	Local rural area businesses	Finland, Estonia, Poland, Sweden
4. Local public authority	Municipality	Finland, Estonia, Poland, Sweden
5. Infrastructure and public service provider	Tourism development	Finland, Estonia, Poland, Sweden

## 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 Secure

PA Tourism

PA Spatial Planning

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

The project consortium will include our partner organizations from Turku UAS, the Estonian University of Life Sciences, and Sweden and Poland (to be named later). We have planned Mäntymäki municipality as the Finnish target area and plan to include the Finnish Village Movement Association, an expert organization.

## 11. Workplan

The aim of this project is to develop a web and mobile application to serve cottagers, second home owners and tourists in a selected sparsely populated rural area. The app will act as a local community platform, providing up-to-date information on public and private services in the area, events and the possibility for interaction between users. The long-term goal is to increase user engagement with the area and lower the threshold to visit and participate. The project will also produce a description of the app deployment process, which will serve as a roadmap for municipalities or regions wishing to deploy the app.

The development work will start with a pre-appraisal phase in all partner countries (selected target communities) to define the objectives and target groups of the application. These will be holidaymakers, tourists, local entrepreneurs and municipal authorities. Needs are identified through surveys, interviews and workshops. At the same time, existing services in the area are identified: public services, businesses, events and associations. These collected views and findings will be brought together. This will form the basis for the content of the application.

The next step is to focus on stakeholder engagement. The municipality, possibly village associations, tourism organisations and local businesses will be invited to participate. This will create a multidisciplinary network of developers. A development group or “user panel” with representatives from different target groups will help to make the application truly user centred.

In the design phase, the key functionalities of the application are defined and prioritised according to the MVP (Minimum Viable Product) model. This includes, for example, a service directory, events calendar, bulletin board and news or notification feed. The user interface and data structures are carefully designed and the technical developer is selected through a competitive tender.

This will be followed by development and piloting. First, a prototype is built and tested in each partner country with a small number of users. Feedback will be used to finalise the first version of the application. At the same time, content will be produced and added: services, events and notifications. The maintenance and moderation of the mobile app will be agreed upon in detail with the responsible party, the municipality.

In the release phase, the application will be launched in a visible way through local marketing. Municipal newsletters, the web, village events and tourism channels will be involved. User activation will be supported by guidance and campaigns.



Finally, there will be an ongoing maintenance and development phase. Based on user feedback and analytics, further development and new functions are planned to keep the application up-to-date and useful.

## 12. Planned budget

ERDF budget (planned expenditure of partners from the EU)	EUR 375,000.00
Norwegian budget (planned expenditure of partners from Norway)	EUR XXX
<b>Total budget (including preparatory costs)</b>	<b>EUR 375,000.00</b>

## 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	<p>We would like to hear your opinion on this project concept. For example are there issues related to target groups or other aspects of the project content that could be refined or highlighted?</p> <p>The call emphasises resilience in remote areas. Do you think that public authorities should be more involved in the project?</p>
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Questions related to budgeting and expenditure	<i>(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)</i>
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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>