



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	Social Acceptance of the Sustainable Energy Transition
Short name of the project	SASET
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

3. Climate-neutral societies

3. Programme objective

3.2. Energy transition

4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Keski-Suomen liitto
Name of the organisation (English)	Regional Council of Central Finland
Website	www.keskisuomi.fi
Country	FI



Type of Partner	Regional public authority
	regional council, etc.

Contact person 1

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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.

There is a new organization City of Jämsä that has never participated in the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme before. Additionally, this is the first time for Region of Central Finland to be as a lead partner. This will be a valuable opportunity to learn more about Interreg, and it will increase the knowledge and capacity to apply for different EU funding in the future.

5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

A green transition is essential for achieving the European Union's climate neutrality objectives. In this project, we focus on two key investment areas regarding green energy transition: onshore wind power and hydrogen. Investments in wind power and, in the near future, in hydrogen are important for achieving climate goals. However, these investments must be made in a way that ensures social acceptability of the projects.

Although green transition investments bring substantial local benefits—such as community payments, tax revenues and new jobs—they can also encounter resistance stemming from concerns about potential environmental and landscape impacts, uncertainties around the underlying technologies, and limited public understanding of how these projects will affect everyday life, the local economy, or long term regional development.

The EU's revised Renewable energy directive has put forward several initiatives for improving the planning processes, including the designation of acceleration areas and a focus on energy communities. Due to the local variability of factors to be considered in decision-making, successful

implementation of the new regulation requires new approaches to multi-level governance and experience exchange.

Local authorities need guidance and practical tools to support their efforts in strengthening the social acceptance of the green transition. It is important that authorities understand how to build trust with residents and second-homeowners, and how to increase awareness of the impacts of green transition projects.

Issues of social acceptance cannot be solved with a top-down approach; instead, they must be addressed in cooperation with the authorities, investors, local people and communities.

New energy investments are often located in rural areas, which is why issues of social acceptance are particularly emphasized there. There is also a strong perception of rural areas as untouched nature, and investments linked to the green transition can alter these landscapes.

5.2 Focus of the call

In this call the Programme specifically seeks projects that foster cohesive development in small towns, rural districts, and other areas whose social and economic fabric faces significant challenges within the Baltic Sea region. Because many green transition investments are sited in the countryside, they represent an important opportunity to narrow long-standing regional disparities.

Regional polarization is a significant societal challenge that, at worst, can lead to feelings of exclusion and even social radicalization. Investment projects related to the green transition, often located in rural areas, can help reduce economic disparities between regions. However, if these projects do not sufficiently consider social acceptance, they may unintentionally deepen the social divide between rapidly developing and smaller regions. To ensure development that is socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable, rural areas require support in fostering the social acceptance of such investments.

6. Transnational relevance

The green energy transition and its social acceptance are key issues in all member countries of the programme. EU regulations aim to accelerate green transition investments, and in the coming years, this will bring the questions of social acceptance into an even more central role across all programme countries.

Although the energy transition affects all partner countries, the green transition is progressing at slightly different speeds. Therefore, it is valuable to include an exchange of good practices in the project. During the baseline review, the best practices from the project areas will be identified—practices that other participants could benefit from and that can be further developed during the project.

The project involves strong stakeholder cooperation, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that



representatives from key stakeholder groups come together during interregional seminars and workshops. These interactions are expected to foster new connections across the Baltic Sea Region, potentially leading to future collaborative initiatives that promote the sustainability transition in the area. The project also serves as a testing ground for learning how to work within the Interreg framework.

7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

In the following years the green energy transition is a key issue in all member countries of the programme. A joint project between four partners from four different countries strengthens the capacity of these organizations and their stakeholders to collaborate in the future.

The project involves strong collaboration with stakeholders because social acceptance requires a multi-actor approach. At the same time, active stakeholder participation in the project's activities enables stakeholders from different countries to get to know each other and build trust, which can lead to new cooperation initiatives.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

N/A

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

The project involves strong collaboration with stakeholders, including residents and second-homeowners, because social acceptance requires a multi-actor approach. As a result, the programme will be brought closer to the citizens through the project's activities.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

N/A

8. Target groups

The primary target group of the project is municipalities, which need guidance to support their efforts in strengthening social acceptance of the green transition. Municipalities often hold the final authority over land use decisions, making them key actors in determining whether investment projects move forward. The toolbox developed in the project will equip municipal decision-makers and officials to better incorporate social acceptance into the planning and implementation of investment projects.



It is also essential to include local residents in this dialogue. The conditions and mechanisms for social acceptance cannot be determined through a top-down approach; instead, a strong bottom-up perspective and multi-actor work is required. Local residents and representatives of civil society organizations will be invited to participate in the project's events, contributing valuable insights on how to enhance the social acceptance of green transition investment projects.

Investment projects are ultimately carried out by companies, whose practices play a central role in ensuring social acceptance. While the toolbox will be specifically designed for municipalities, the project will also address the role of business actors in promoting social acceptance. As such, companies also form an important target group for the project.

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	Land use planning	From the all countries participating in the project, i.e., Finland, Germany, Sweden and Latvia
2. Interest group	Bringing forward citizens' views and concerns	From the all countries participating in the project, i.e., Finland, Germany, Sweden and Latvia
3. Small and medium enterprise	Investments in the sustainable energy transition	From the all countries participating in the project, i.e., Finland, Germany, Sweden and Latvia
4. Large enterprise	Investments in the sustainable energy transition	From the all countries participating in the project, i.e., Finland, Germany, Sweden and Latvia

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 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 Regional Council of Central Finland will act as the lead partner of the project. As a lead partner, it will be responsible for coordinating the project and managing its overall administration. In terms of content, the Regional Council of Central Finland will focus particularly on examining the social acceptance of the green energy transition from the perspective of hydrogen. The region has prepared a regional land use plan for wind power, during which the issue of social acceptance of wind energy was also explored—providing valuable background knowledge for the project and a good practice for other partners to learn from.

City of Jämsä, Finland. There are a lot of potential opportunities for sustainable energy transition. City of Jämsä has noticed that to achieve the sustainable energy transition social acceptance plays a huge role what comes to implement the plans into action.

Vidzeme Planning Region (VPR) in Latvia is a regional planning authority representing 11 municipalities. VPR will focus on the spatial planning of wind energy and grid infrastructure, including energy storage. Its goal is to develop a toolkit for municipal experts to support and accelerate decision-making, aligning national and regional energy policy objectives with local development and citizen participation. VPR has recently developed a strategic framework for energy and climate action, emphasizing the need for innovative planning approaches and informed public dialogue on renewable energy.

Sustainable Business Hub in Sweden is providing a neutral platform that brings together businesses, municipalities, and academic institutions to accelerate green innovation. In this project, Sustainable Business Hub brings an important business and industry perspective to the table.

Ministry of Economics, Infrastructure, Tourism and Labour of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania in Germany is particularly interested in the social acceptance of wind power and green energy

investments.

11. Workplan

The project implementation period is 24 months.

In the first phase, the project team will conduct an assessment of the current state of the green transition in the project areas and identify the key local stakeholders involved in the social acceptance of green energy investment projects. As part of this broader baseline review, the project will also analyze relevant laws and regulations – both to identify elements that may support social acceptance and to understand how legal frameworks must be taken into account when developing measures to improve social acceptance. The output will be a status quo assessment from each country participating in the project.

Since the green transition progresses at different paces across partner countries, the project will include an exchange of good practices. During the baseline review, the best practices from the project areas will be identified—practices that other participants could benefit from and that can be further developed during the project.

Approximately six months after the project starts, an interregional seminar will be held to review the current status of the green transition in the regions and identify the main challenges related to social acceptance. The seminar will feature presentations by researchers specializing in social acceptance topics. The main target group of the seminar is municipalities but to ensure a diverse range of perspectives, representatives from NGOs and businesses will also be invited to participate.

The project will feature 6–8 local workshops and 3–4 interregional workshops as a core activity, dedicated to developing solutions for the social acceptance challenges identified. Participants will include municipal officials and decision-makers, representatives of local civil society organizations, green transition business representatives, and social acceptance researchers. The input gathered in these workshops will feed into the development of the project’s main output—the toolbox.

The project will deliver a toolbox designed for municipal officials and decision-makers, outlining key methods to strengthen social acceptance of green transition investment projects. Before publishing the toolbox, the project team will seek feedback from key stakeholders on its usability and incorporate their suggestions into the final version.

At the conclusion of the project, a second interregional seminar will be organized to launch the toolbox and discuss the main solutions for enhancing social acceptance of green transition investment projects. This event will be open to all interested parties.

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	Is the JS aware of any projects that should be taken into account when writing the final application?
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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	From the perspective of JS, is the project partnership sufficiently comprehensive and well-justified?
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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>