

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	Mobility and Access in the Baltic Region - Practical tools for reducing transport poverty across rural and suburban areas
Short name of the project	MOBALT
Previous calls	yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> no <input type="radio"/>
Short name of the previous project	HyTruck
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)	Reiner Lemoine Institut
Name of the organisation (English)	Reiner Lemoine Insitute
Website	https://reiner-lemoine-institut.de/



Country DE

Type of Partner Higher education and research institution

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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.

We participated in the Interreg BSR project HyTruck, but were not in the lead.

5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

In the Baltic Sea Region, rural and suburban populations are increasingly affected by transport poverty, a multidimensional form of social exclusion caused by limited access to affordable, reliable, and inclusive mobility services. This challenge disproportionately impacts low-income households, elderly residents, persons with disabilities, and young people without access to private vehicles. The issue is particularly critical in structurally weak and depopulated areas, where maintaining public transport is economically challenging and local authorities face huge difficulties in adapting services to real needs. Despite ongoing urbanisation, many regions outside major cities suffer from shrinking public transport networks, low service frequencies, and a lack of responsive planning tools that capture spatial-social inequalities. Public service models often fail to systematically include social vulnerability criteria in transport provision. As a result, affected groups struggle to access education, employment, healthcare, and social participation.

To address this, the project proposes a practice-oriented, transnational approach that empowers



public authorities to detect and tackle transport poverty more effectively. Key components include:

- Development of a regional Transport Poverty Index, combining spatial accessibility data (e.g. to public transport, services, amenities) with socio-economic indicators (e.g. income, age, gender, car ownership).
- QGIS/Python-based accessibility analyses for selected pilot regions across the Baltic Sea Region.
- Workshops and interviews with target groups and local stakeholders to include user perspectives and daily mobility barriers.
- Policy and strategy analysis to identify institutional gaps and best practices in existing frameworks.
- Toolbox for responsive mobility planning, including guidelines and use cases for local governments.

By creating a comparative and practical instrument to assess transport poverty, the project will enable municipalities and regions to prioritise interventions, improve service equity, and better respond to demographic and economic shifts. The approach will also support mutual learning between countries facing similar structural challenges in peripheral and sub-urban areas.

5.2 Focus of the call

The project directly supports the cohesive development of rural and structurally disadvantaged areas across the Baltic Sea Region by tackling transport poverty. These areas often face shrinking populations, limited fiscal capacity, and car dependency, which together erode access to basic services, education, jobs, and participation in public life.

By developing a data-driven Transport Poverty Index and practical needs-based planning tools, the project enables public authorities to systematically identify underserved communities and make informed, targeted decisions. These decisions aim to improve accessibility and people's access to essential services such as education and healthcare by addressing mobility-related barriers.

In addition, the project reduces costs and bureaucracy by piloting integrated, cross-sectoral, and digital approaches to planning. It fosters efficiency through interoperable data tools and common standards. Through cross-border learning, pilot activities, and co-creation with vulnerable user groups, the project supports more responsive and inclusive public services that reflect local needs and territorial specificities.

The project strengthens territorial cohesion by empowering small municipalities and rural actors to address mobility gaps systematically and actively. It contributes to enabling public administrations to respond more effectively to structural change and enhancing the quality of life in areas at risk of being left behind.

6. Transnational relevance

Transport poverty and spatial exclusion are shared challenges across the Baltic Sea Region, particularly in rural and suburban areas. Although national contexts differ, municipalities in Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Germany, and other countries face similar structural problems: ageing populations, service withdrawal, lack of accessible mobility options, and institutional gaps in addressing social inequality in transport.



The project's transnational relevance lies in the joint development of a transferable Transport Poverty Index, co-designed by and for public authorities. By comparing spatial-social data and governance practices across countries, the project will generate mutual learning, identify shared patterns, and allow partners to co-create responsive public service tools.

No single country can solve the issue alone. A transnational approach enables the exchange of policy innovations, the adaptation of successful models to new contexts, and the development of joint solutions that strengthen cohesion and innovation across borders.

This approach aligns with key EU goals and objectives. By addressing mobility-related social exclusion, the project contributes directly to the EU's Cohesion Policy goal of reducing territorial disparities and improving access to essential services. Although the project does not build infrastructure, it supports the TEN-T framework indirectly by helping authorities close accessibility gaps through better planning, data, and decision-making. By acting transnationally, the project contributes to harmonising planning standards, strengthening institutional capacity, and reducing administrative burdens.

7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

The project fosters trust through joint development of planning tools, co-creation workshops, and exchange formats between public authorities, researchers, and civil society across the Baltic Sea Region. By working together on shared challenges such as transport poverty and social exclusion, partners build mutual understanding and long-term cooperation structures. The transparent process and focus on local applicability create a strong basis for future joint actions, e.g. follow-up pilots, scaling tools, or policy alignment.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

The project directly involves citizens affected by transport poverty through interviews, participatory workshops, and local pilot actions. Their everyday experiences and needs shape the development of the Transport Poverty Index and planning tools. By engaging vulnerable groups - such as elderly people, youth, and low-income households - the project makes EU cooperation tangible and relevant at the local level. This participatory approach raises awareness and builds public trust in transnational solutions.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

The project equips public authorities with data-based tools to quickly identify areas and groups at risk of social and transport exclusion, especially in times of crisis (e.g. rising fuel prices, demographic shifts, service cuts). The Mobility Poverty Index and GIS-based analyses enable rapid, targeted responses to emerging inequalities in access. This strengthens local capacity to maintain inclusive services and react



flexibly to shocks affecting mobility and participation. A robust data foundation enables municipalities to respond quick and actively to local developments, such as the closure of essential services like pharmacies, before they result in critical gaps in accessibility and service provision.

8. Target groups

The project targets local and regional public authorities responsible for mobility, spatial planning, and social services in rural and suburban areas. These stakeholders are directly confronted with the effects of transport poverty and are key to implementing responsive and inclusive mobility strategies.

Additionally, NGOs or other community-based facilities working with elderly people, youth, persons with disabilities, and low-income households will be actively involved to represent the needs of vulnerable populations.

The target groups will participate in co-creation workshops, accessibility assessments, and pilot activities, and will be supported in applying the project's tools and findings in their territories. Their expertise and experience will help ensure that the project's outputs are practical, relevant, and replicable across the Baltic Sea Region.

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. Regional public authority	Regional transport planning, infrastructure funding, and social service coordination in rural and peripheral areas.	Such as Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania or Vidzeme Planning Region
2. Local public authority	Municipalities with responsibilities for local mobility, spatial planning, and citizen participation in small towns and rural areas.	Such as Uckermark (Germany)
3. NGO	Organisations advocating for vulnerable groups (e.g. elderly, youth, people with disabilities, and low-income households) and inclusive mobility access.	tbd

4. National public authority	Ministries on the national level	Such as the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania
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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

PA Transport

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 partnership is currently in development.

Initial ideas are involving regional and local public authorities responsible for transport, spatial planning, and social services and NGOs representing vulnerable groups. These partners would contribute practical knowledge of local needs, apply the project's tools in pilot settings, and support outreach and co-creation activities. National-level authorities may also be involved to ensure policy relevance and support transferability. The aim is to build a balanced and complementary partnership covering different governance levels and regional contexts within the Baltic Sea Region.

The project team will provide the methodology to identify underserved areas (e.g. the Transport Poverty Index and GIS-based analysis).

11. Workplan

The project will develop a methodology to systematically identify transport poverty and underserved areas using a data-driven Transport Poverty Index and GIS-based accessibility analysis. Main activities



include literature and policy review, spatial-socioeconomic data analysis, and the co-development of planning tools. Pilot activities will test the applicability of this methodology in selected regions by involving local and regional public authorities and NGOs working with vulnerable groups.

The final outputs, which are methodological guidelines, an interactive planning tool, and practical recommendations, will be designed for direct use by public authorities at different governance levels across the Baltic Sea Region.

12. Planned budget

ERDF budget (planned expenditure of partners from the EU)	EUR 487,500.00
Norwegian budget (planned expenditure of partners from Norway)	EUR XXX
Total budget (including preparatory costs)	EUR 487,500.00

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 *(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)*

Questions related to budgeting and expenditure *(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)*

Any other questions *(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)*

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>