



Project idea form - small projects

Version 2.1

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

Project Idea Form

Date of submission *dd/mm/yyyy*

1. Project idea identification

Project idea name	Tour Rural Baltic
Short name of the project	TourRBaltic
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

1.1. Resilient economies and communities
--

4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Turun ammattikorkeakoulu Oy
Name of the organisation (English)	Turku university of applied sciences Ltd
Website	www.turkuamk.fi
Country	FI



Type of Partner	Higher education and research institution
-----------------	---

Contact person 1

Name	Heidi Heikkilä
Email	heidi.heikkila@turkuamk.fi
Phone	0505946508

Contact person 2

Name	<i>(max. 100 characters incl. spaces)</i>
Email	<i>(max. 100 characters incl. spaces)</i>
Phone	<i>(max. 100 characters incl. spaces)</i>

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 don't have these partners yet. However, we plan to have a smaller SME or NGO on board from each partner country.

5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

The economic sector in the Baltic countries has been significantly affected by the ongoing war in Russia. In particular, tourism has not rebounded in the countries bordering Russia as effectively as in Western Europe. Yet, tourism remains a vital source of income, employment, and community engagement for local residents especially in the rural areas, which have less business opportunities.

Trend analyses in the tourism sector indicate a growing interest in less-populated areas, milder climates, active holidays, and sustainable travel. The Baltic Sea region can meet these demands, offering natural beauty and cultural heritage. However, underdeveloped tourism infrastructure, lesser-known destinations, and geopolitical challenges have reduced the region's appeal for international traveler.

The TourRBaltic project aims to change this by creating transnational loops for active tourists that connect the Eastern Baltic countries via ferry routes. These loops will demonstrate how tourists can combine visits to multiple countries as part of a more sustainable holiday, combining active modes of tourism, such as cycling and hiking. The routes can align with and highlight sections of the EuroVelo 10,

13 and national routes, providing comprehensive route descriptions to assist travelers in planning and discovering lesser-known destinations. The project also combines local routes and tourism services on the loops to highlight the possibilities of multimodal travel.

Rural entrepreneurs and service providers are not always equipped to accommodate a wide variety of tourists. TourRBaltic will build the capacity of rural SMEs and other local stakeholders to offer more inclusive and cyclist-friendly services. The project will engage local communities in co-development activities such as joint events and ideathons to generate ideas for tourism initiatives and enhance regional offerings. Strengthening tourism services to meet the needs of tourists will also improve their quality and accessibility for residents.

Each Baltic country faces unique challenges in developing active rural tourism. Addressing these challenges requires cross-sectoral and cross-border collaboration. The project will leverage insights from previous projects, such as BAB and BBU and other projects, to facilitate international exchange of expertise to foster more strategic and coordinated development of active tourism at the national and regional levels.

5.2 Focus of the call

Active tourism focuses mainly on the rural areas, thus the project would focus especially on the rural areas, which have tourism potential or exiting infrastructure for tourism. Each partner would choose the specific form(s) of active tourism their country/area needs to focus on. E.g. combining mountain biking and ski resorts or focus on hiking and cycling networks. The aim is to help the rural tourism destinations to become more stable source of income and work places for the rural population by expanding the offerings and to help them to mitigate but also profit from the impacts of climate change.

6. Transnational relevance

Cooperating transnationally in the TourRBaltic project is essential in order to make Baltic destinations more known and accessible for tourists. The area shares :

1. **Shared Challenges:** Rural areas across the Eastern Baltic countries face similar obstacles: limited infrastructure, declining population, and underutilized tourism potential. However, each country has different levels of development, resources, and experiences. Transnational cooperation allows partners to learn from one another's successes and avoid repeating mistakes.
2. **Cross-Border Travel Requires Coordination:** Developing coherent, user-friendly transnational routes and itineraries requires coordination on infrastructure, services, and promotion across countries.
3. **Pooling Resources and Expertise:** Rural regions often lack the capacity and resources to carry out service and infrastructure improvements and marketing campaigns alone. By working together, partners can share tools, training programs and marketing efforts to maximize impact cost-effectively.
4. **Stronger Position in International Tourism:** Individually, small rural destinations may struggle to attract international visitors. But by joining forces, Baltic countries can market the region as a unique, diverse, and accessible destination by strengthening visibility and competitiveness on the European



tourism map.

5. Encouraging Policy Development: Transnational cooperation encourages harmonization, joint advocacy, and institutional development to promote cycling tourism as a serious part of rural economic growth.

7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

TourRBaltic aims to strenghten the organizational capacity in the parner coutries to join networks for developing active tourism. E.g. good practices and exchange of expertise initiated in BAB project will continue in this project to promote National EuroVelo coordination centers. Other networks will be studied too.

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

(max. 1.000 characters incl. spaces)

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

The tourism sector on the countries bordering Russia has suffered from the geopolitical situation. This creates challenges to the tourism industry as well as the livelihoods for the people and companies who serve tourists. However, by activities such as widening the scope of the companies and making the destinations more attractive to larger customer base including local population, the companies become more resilient and stable sources of income and services for the entire region.

8. Target groups

The target groups are either represented by the partners or Associated Organizations of 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. NGO	3rd sector actors who work with tourism promotion in rural areas, active tourism or rural service providers (also outside hospitality sector)	Finland, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania
2. Small and medium enterprise	SME's working with services that active tourist need	Finland, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania
3. Regional public authority	Regional public authorities responsible of tourism promotion and route development work	Finland, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania
4. Local public authority	Local public authorities responsible of tourism promotion and route development work	Finland, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania

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 Tourism
PA Innovation
PA Culture



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

Finland:

- Turku University of Applied Sciences – Lead Partner (tentative)
- Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (possible lead partner/partner)

Sweden:

- Cykelfrämjandet (Swedish Cycling Advocacy Organisation) (partner)

Latvia:

- Celotjat (Baltic country tourism) (SME, partner)
- Latvian Rural Tourism Organization (NGO, partner)

Lithuania:

- Klaipeda Region (Regional authority, partner)

The planned partnership reflects the diversity of the project's target groups, ensuring comprehensive representation from various types of organizations. This structure enables the project to strengthen rural tourism through the transnational exchange of knowledge and best practices across different stakeholder groups. In addition, the consortium aims to engage service providers—particularly SMEs and NGOs—from selected destinations as active project partners. Their inclusion will support meaningful involvement in development activities and foster long-term commitment to regional ideathons, helping to ensure the sustainability of outcomes beyond the project's lifetime. As these organizations will be new to the Interreg BSR programme, collaboration with experienced national partners will be essential to support their participation and integration.

11. Workplan

Work Package 1: Development of Sustainable and Inclusive Cycling Tourism

GoA 1.1: Green Loops Around the Baltic

This activity focuses on assessing and describing uncharted sections of the EuroVelo 10 and EuroVelo 13 routes, particularly where previous assessments have not been conducted. In addition, multimodal transport connections—ferries, buses, and trains—will be studied to enhance seamless travel across borders. Communication materials will be developed, and a targeted dissemination and marketing plan will be designed to promote the new cycling loops.

Note: As substantial route assessment and description work has already been carried out in previous projects (e.g., BAB and BBU), this activity will primarily concentrate on developing loop connections, multimodal travel options, and marketing efforts.

GoA 1.2: Engaging Local Communities and Enhancing Rural Services

This activity aims to engage selected rural communities in cycling and active mobility initiatives. One suggested method is organizing ideathons where local residents, including youth and underrepresented groups, compete by submitting ideas for events or services. Winning ideas will receive financial and/or expert support for implementation.

Cycling-friendly service schemes will be promoted to improve rural tourism readiness, and locals will be encouraged to participate in route assessments using tools developed in earlier projects such as BAB and KAPU.

GoA 1.3: Implementing Rural Activities and Baltic-Wide Events

This activity focuses on putting the outcomes of local ideathons into action through event organization, communication campaigns, and promotional activities. In addition, the project may organize a Baltic-wide competition or challenge for long-distance cyclists to pilot and promote the newly developed cycling loops.

GoA 1.4: Strategic Development of Cycling Tourism

This activity supports knowledge exchange and capacity building among partner countries. The focus will be on establishing National EuroVelo Coordination Centres (NECCs) in countries that currently lack them (only Finland has one at present) and on the development of national or regional cycling tourism strategies. Cross-border collaboration and sharing of best practices will be central to this effort.

12. Planned budget

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

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 Is it possible to organize ideathons as a part of the project, where the project partners commit to support the winner of the ideathon in organizing and event/activity they have planned with e.g. 2000e? Are there limitations to this, e.g. if the winner is a private person or should they be a company?

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>