

Project idea form - small projects

Version 2.1

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

Project Idea Form

Date of submission 05/06/2025

1. Project idea identification

Project idea name	Making the bicycle a meaningful mode of rural transport and tourism attraction
Short name of the project	(max. 20 characters incl. spaces)
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
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4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Vaasan kaupunki
Name of the organisation (English)	City of Vaasa
Website	https://www.vaasa.fi/en/
Country	FI



Type of Partner	Local public authority
	municipality, 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.

City of Vaasa is a partner in the Interreg Aurora project but hasn't been part in a project within the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme.

Partners: Korsholm municipality, Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, Finnish Center for Cycling Tourism, University of Vaasa

Landkreis Ostprignitz-Ruppin has been identified as a potential partner from Germany. Also organizations from the High Coast in Sweden are viewed as potential partners.

5.1 Specific challenge to be addressed

The challenge this project is intended to tackle is improving connectivity in rural areas in sustainable ways. The project has two focal points: improving the attractiveness of cycling as a transport for the local residents, and increasing the proportion of visitors who use sustainable transport.

The project examines how improving the conditions, communication, and marketing of cycling, walking, electric moped and other light motor vehicles can enhance the vitality and resilience of rural areas.

The primary target area is the unique Kvarken Archipelago. The entire archipelago, including its villages, is a UNESCO World Heritage natural site. Kvarken Archipelago provides the best place in the world to experience and understand the land uplift caused by the last ice age. The rural archipelago is home to a significant number of residents, and efforts are being made to increase its significance as a tourism destination.

This project aims to map residents' views on promoting sustainable tourism and examines how bicycle tourism in the area could be supported and increased. As part of the work, opportunities to develop a cycling connection from Vaasa to the Kvarken Archipelago in Raippaluoto are explored. Developing cycling opportunities and other means of transportation used by youth also supports equal mobility opportunities for local residents.

The results obtained from the rural areas of the Kvarken Archipelago are compared with those from other rural areas. Tentatively, the benchmarks planned for comparison are the Kyrönjoki River and Söderfjärden meteorite impact areas and their surroundings.

5.2 Focus of the call

The project examines how improving the conditions, communication, and marketing of cycling, walking, and other sustainable transport can enhance the vitality and resilience of rural areas.

This project would research residents' views on promoting sustainable tourism. The research would examine how bicycle tourism in the area could be best supported and how its proportion can be increased.

The other main aspect of the project is to explore options to develop a cycling connection from Vaasa to the Kvarken Archipelago in Raippaluoto. This would include drafting a preliminary plan for an alternative route which would run closer to the shore away from the busy roads. This route would increase the attractiveness of cycling as a mode of transport compared to cars or mopeds for both everyday journeys and for tourists.

An improved cycling connection would especially benefit youth and other residents who don't have car by offering more equal mobility opportunities, and increasing their ability to attend studies, work or social activities.

The survey results obtained from the rural areas of the Kvarken Archipelago are compared with those from other rural areas. Tentatively, the benchmarks planned for comparison are the Kyrönjoki River area in Finland and the surroundings of Pärnu in Estonia.

6. Transnational relevance

In the Baltic Sea region, the significance of cycling as a rural means of transport and as a form of tourism has been very little examined. With the increasing prevalence of electric bicycles, longer distances are easier to cover by bike both in everyday life and when traveling or touring by bicycle.

The Kvarken Archipelago and the High Coast in Sweden form a World Heritage Site shared by two countries (High Coast/Kvarken Archipelago). In such a location which is dependent on actions of two countries, transnational cooperation of work is vital. The Archipelago is a UNESCO heritage site, and thus protecting its fragile nature should be considered a globally relevant question.

Protecting fragile environments from visitors is a question in which learnings from other area can be applied, which encourages transnational cooperation.

The joint World Heritage site consists of areas both in Swedish municipalities of Kramfors and Örnsköldsvik and the Finnish municipalities of Korsholm, Korsnäs, Malax, Vörå and the city of Vaasa. The Parks and Wildlife Finland, Metsähallitus is in charge of the coordination and administration of the Kvarken Archipelago. The Kvarken Archipelago World Heritage Site Association provides customer service related to the World Heritage. In addition, tourist information is provided at the World Heritage Gateway next to the Raippaluoto bridge.

The Kvarken Archipelago has about 350,000 visitors yearly.

7. Specific aims to be addressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives

The work involves various types of collaboration, which could lead to further cooperation initiatives. We will provide more details later once the project's work program and partners are confirmed.

Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR

The work involves various types of collaboration, which could initiate and keep networks that are important



for BSR. We will provide more details later once the project's work program and partners are confirmed.

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens

The work involves various types of collaboration, which could bring the Programme closer to the citizens. We will provide more details later once the project's work program and partners are confirmed.

Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges

N/A

8. Target groups

*The target group includes residents of the target areas, particularly young people. An important target group also includes cycling tourists and tour cyclists.
In Finland target areas are: Raippaluoto (Korsholm municipality), Vähäkyrö (City of Vaasa) and Malax*



(Malax municipality). Raippaluoto Island (c. 1500 residents), is located approximately 20 kms away from the nearest city Vaasa and is connected to mainland Finland via Raippaluoto bridge. Raippaluoto island has two primary schools, but no secondary or other schools. Most of the commercial and public services are located in Vaasa and most of the residents also work on the mainland. There is very limited bus service connecting the archipelago to mainland.

In Sweden, the target areas are located in the High Coast and its surrounding regions. The third target area The Kvarken Archipelago has about 350,000 visitors yearly.

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.	<i>(max. 200 characters incl. spaces)</i>	<i>(max. 200 characters incl. spaces)</i>

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

City of Vaasa is a lead partner.

Partners in Finland: Korsholm municipality, Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, Finnish Center for Cycling Tourism. We will also ask Finnish Forest Administration, Isokyrö municipality and local associations to take part in this project.

For partners in other countries, we are still in discussions.

11. Workplan

1. Interactive planning for the promotion of sustainable mobility and cycling tourism
 1a. Resident survey 1b. Survey for cycling tourists and tour cyclists 1c. interactive planning with young people 1d. idea workshop to increase cycling tourism 1e. A general plan/preliminary plan for an alternative routes from Vaasa to Raippaluoto island, which would run close to the shore, along a busy road or through some villages in the country side. This could increase the attractiveness of cycling as a mode of transport compared to cars or mopeds. 2. Transnational actions: 2.1 Exchange of information and joint planning of actions 2.2. Virtual Workshop 2.3. A literature review of best practices in promoting cycling tourism, recreational cycling, and everyday cycling in rural areas. 2.4 Co-operation with Bothnian Coastal Road project

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
 (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>