Interreg Baltic Sea Region
Second call for project platform applications
as operations of strategic importance

Announcement Note
Call duration: 21 May 2025 – 20 November 2025

1. Context of the call

Interreg Baltic Sea Region (the Programme) is a source of EU funding for public and private actors who want to shape the Baltic Sea region to become more innovative, water-smart and climate-neutral. It creates an environment for cooperation across borders to develop, test and put into practice smart solutions for the benefit of people around the Baltic Sea. Its added value is the transnational dimension of the supported actions. The Programme exploits opportunities and addresses issues which cannot sufficiently be dealt with by single countries, but require a joint response by partners from several countries in the Baltic Sea region.

The Programme area covers nine countries. It comprises eight EU Member States (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, parts of Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden) and one third country (parts of Norway). The detailed geographical coverage of the Programme is defined in the Programme Document published on the Programme portal at https://interreg-baltic.eu/about/.

The Programme is designed under the territorial cooperation goal of the Cohesion Policy of the European Union.

2. Focus of the call

The Programme is launching **the second call for project platforms**, under Priority 4 'Cooperation governance', Programme objective 4.1 'Project platforms'.

Project platforms are a capitalisation tool of the Programme, enabling project partners to consolidate outcomes of Interreg Baltic Sea Region projects, and integrate them with results from projects of other funding programmes. Project platforms support public authorities and relevant organisations in utilising consolidated project results in their work, thereby enhancing their capacity to govern and manage their areas more effectively. This, in turn, allows to tackle territorial challenges and influence policy improvements with greater impact.

Project platforms support the Programme's overarching goal of promoting the **transition towards greener and more resilient societies and economies** through transnational cooperation.

In the second call, **EUR 5 million EU funding** is available for project platform applications. Further, a limited amount of Norwegian funding is available for partners from Norway.

Eight project platforms were selected in the first call for applications. Further information is available on the Programme website at https://interreg-baltic.eu/top-news/operations-of-strategic-importance-selected/.

3. Operation of strategic importance

Project platforms are considered operations of strategic importance in the Programme. They provide a significant contribution to the achievement of the Programme objectives under Priority 1 Innovative societies, Priority 2 Water-smart societies, and Priority 3 Climate-neutral societies.

The Monitoring Committee of the Programme shall examine the progress in implementing operations of strategic importance[1].

Furthermore, operations of strategic importance shall be subject to special communication measures[2]. Further details are provided under point 8. Communication and engagement strategy.

4. Key features of project platforms

Project platforms are set up as projects. They involve **project partners of ongoing or completed projects** of Interreg Baltic Sea Region and other funding programmes, alongside **relevant organisations** such as policy area coordinators of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and pan-Baltic organisations.

Project platforms **consolidate outcomes of projects** in selected thematic fields, in line with one of the Programme objectives. They **transfer this consolidated knowledge** to selected target groups and integrate project results into policy and governance structure development.

The **consolidation of project results** in this context means gathering, analysing, and synthesising projects' results within a specific thematic field into a structured framework to enhance their impact and usability. This involves interpreting and integrating the results to generate new insights and added value. By presenting a cohesive understanding, the synthesis of results enhances their accessibility and practical relevance. This enables stakeholders to better apply findings and support informed decision-making.

Project platforms **primarily target public authorities**, including municipalities, regional councils, ministries, and governmental agencies at various levels. Additionally, they involve knowledge multipliers (EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region policy area coordinators, pan-Baltic organisations, other international organisations, networks of cities and regions), sector organisations (sectoral agencies,

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[1] Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, Article 40(1).
[2] Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, Article 50(1).

advisory centres, business support organisations, training centres and professional associations), and citizens through associations, interest groups, or NGOs. Understanding the needs of these groups targeted by project platforms, such as access to knowledge, capacity building, cooperation opportunities, practical tools, and institutional support, is crucial for ensuring the relevance of consolidated project results.

As a result, project platforms shall aim to enhance the day-to-day operations of public authorities and other relevant target groups, bolstering their capacity to manage their fields of responsibility and address challenges outlined by the Programme thematic objectives. Project platforms also contribute to policy shaping at national, pan-Baltic, or EU levels and may foster regional collaboration by establishing or strengthening structures with relevant authorities and transnational expert networks.

To effect these changes, project platforms produce **outputs** such as syntheses of solutions and other projects' results (in a form of a database of solutions, a resource hub, a manual, guidelines etc.), policy recommendations, roadmap agreed upon with relevant organisations, an action plan for sustaining and developing newly established or reinforced structures within the thematic area.

Activities in a project platform are structured in a **work plan**, with up to three work packages.

For further details on project platforms, please refer to the Programme Manual (chapter F) available on the Programme portal at https://interreg-baltic.eu/toolkit/programme-manual-2021-2027/.

5. Thematic focus of project platforms

Project platforms should contribute to one of the topics outlined below:

- **Resilient and smart territories**: to support urban and/or rural areas and their communities in applying consolidated solutions to make them more **liveable, smart, and resilient** environments responsive to the needs of both citizens and businesses. It could engage citizens and businesses in shaping communities through participation, inclusive decision-making, and sustainable development initiatives. It should contribute to Programme Objective **1.1 Resilient economies and communities or 1.2 Responsive public services**.

- **Social innovation for sustainable transformation**: to support the systematic use of **social innovation solutions** for local and regional development. With human interaction at the core, social innovation could help drive a sustainable and fair transformation of cities and regions. It should contribute to Programme Objective **1.1 Resilient economies and communities**.

- **Closing water and nutrient loop**: to support public authorities and further relevant organisations in the consistent uptake of solutions addressing various aspects of **sustainable water and nutrient management**, e.g. decreasing nutrient pollution, recycling nutrients, increasing water reuse, and applying nature-based solutions in nutrient management. It should contribute to Programme Objective **2.1 Sustainable waters**.

- **Safe navigation at sea**: to support maritime authorities and the maritime sector in adopting solutions that **enhance safety, efficiency, and sustainability in Baltic Sea navigation**. It could help improve decision-making, strengthen accident prevention, and facilitate better coordination through data sharing, risk management, and aligned safety standards. A project platform should contribute to Programme Objective **2.2 Blue economy**.

- **Circular food systems**: to support public authorities, businesses, and civil society in adopting solutions to strengthen the **resilience and circularity of food systems** tailored to regional contexts. It could foster collaboration between food producers, consumers, and adjacent industries such as packaging, ensuring a comprehensive approach to sustainability. It could help transform business models and enhance public procurement practices. A project platform should contribute to Programme Objective **3.1 Circular economy**.

- **Uptake of alternative fuels**: to support public authorities and industries in **adopting and scaling alternative fuels**, particularly hydrogen, across multiple sectors. It could address the entire supply chain, from production and storage to transportation and use, ensuring a seamless transition to cleaner energy. It should contribute to Programme Objective **3.2 Energy transition**.

6. EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and other relevant strategies

Project platforms should consider how they can contribute to the objectives of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the implementation of other strategies, action plans and visions relevant to the Baltic Sea region and aligned with their thematic focus.

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)

Applicants developing project platforms are strongly encouraged to establish collaboration with the relevant coordinators of the policy areas of the EUSBSR. They should explore ways to link project platform activities and outcomes to policy processes in the region in the framework of the Strategy. The policy area coordinators are invited to participate in project platform applications as partners to fully leverage the benefits of this initiative. For more information on the Strategy, please go to: https://www.eusbsr.eu/.

Other strategies and visions

Applicants are encouraged to consider how their project platforms can contribute to the implementation of the strategies developed by relevant pan-Baltic organisations. These include the Union of Baltic Cities Strategy 2022-2030, Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC) Vision 2030, Council of the Baltic Sea States long-term priorities, VASAB Vision for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region in 2040, HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, Nordic Council of Ministers Vision 2030, and Northern Dimension Partnerships' strategies and visions. Project platform applicants are encouraged to engage with the

Secretariats of these pan-Baltic organisations to explore opportunities for collaboration and maximise the outreach to organisations in the Baltic Sea region.

7. Partnership of project platforms

The partnership of a project platform should be strategically crafted, involving project partners with comprehensive knowledge of their projects' outcomes. It should be based on partners from ongoing or recently completed Interreg Baltic Sea Region projects, and involve partners from projects of other funding programmes. Projects can be from the current (2021-2027) or previous (2014-2020) funding periods as long as they provide useful results for capitalisation.

Each partner of a project platform should either represent a project with relevant outcomes or act as a representative of a knowledge multiplier, like EUSBSR policy area coordinators, pan-Baltic organisations, other international organisations, and networks of cities and regions.

Project platform partners must represent at least two different projects from Interreg Baltic Sea Region and at least one project from another funding programme. It is encouraged to adopt a broader approach by involving partners from multiple projects across various funding programmes. This approach enriches the outcomes of a project platform, enhances its value for public authorities and other relevant organisations, and aligns with the strategic importance of project platforms.

Geographical composition

The project platform partnership must include at least three project partners from three different countries of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme area: a lead partner and at least two project partners. At least two of the project partners have to be located in the territory of two different EU Member States in the Programme area. Given the strategic relevance of project platforms, applicants are encouraged to build partnerships that ensure a good outreach to relevant organisations in the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme area.

As a general rule, organisations located in the regions belonging to the Programme area can become project partners. In exceptional cases, organisations from outside the Programme area can also apply as project partners.

Lead partner of a project platform

The partnership builds on the lead partner principle, requiring each project platform to designate a lead partner responsible for preparing and submitting the application. The lead partner should be a partner organisation from an Interreg Baltic Sea Region project or an EUSBSR policy area coordinator. Lead partners must fall into the legal status category "public" defined in the Programme Manual (chapter C.2.1).

The lead partner bears legal responsibility for the whole partnership. The lead partner is also the link between the project platform partners and the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat of the Programme.

Project partners from other funding programmes

When involving project partners from other funding programmes, project platforms are encouraged to consider the following programmes: various Interreg programmes (inter alia, Central Baltic, South Baltic, Germany-Denmark, Aurora, Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak, Estonia-Latvia, Latvia-Lithuania, Lithuania-Poland, Sweden-Norway, Northern Periphery and Arctic, North Sea Region, Central Europe, Interreg Europe), as well as other EU funding programmes like Horizon Europe, LIFE, national and regional programmes under the ESF+ and ERDF, and instruments run by regional organisations such as the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Swedish Institute.

Associated organisations

Additionally, project platforms are encouraged to involve other important stakeholders as associated organisations.

For further details on the eligibility of partner organisations, requirements to the partnership as well as the legal status of the partners on project platforms, please refer to the Programme Manual (chapters C and F) available on the Programme portal at https://interreg-baltic.eu/toolkit/programme-manual-2021-2027/.

8. Communication and engagement strategy

A robust **communication and engagement strategy** stands as a cornerstone for project platforms, to ensure seamless interaction and collaboration with all target groups involved, boost the visibility of EU funds and increase awareness about the benefits of the EU to people's lives. As operations of strategic importance, project platforms are subject to special communication measures: each project platform is required to organise **a communication event** that will involve the European Commission and the Programme Managing Authority. The Programme will also ensure a solid visibility of the project platforms as operations of strategic importance in the Programme communication.

To fortify strategic management, project platforms should establish a **steering or reference group**, and engage relevant organisations from the partnership and beyond, for example, EUSBSR policy area coordinators, representatives of pan-Baltic organisations, other international organisations, and national networks of cities and regions. This is especially relevant for reaching out to public authorities who are not directly involved as partners in project platforms. Additionally, project platforms may offer the opportunity for the members of the Programme Monitoring Committee to join a steering or reference group as observers, which would further bolster oversight and collaboration.

9. Budget and duration of project platforms

The **total budget** of a project platform must not exceed EUR 1,000,000. No preparatory costs can be covered for project platforms. Project platform partners from EU Member States and Norway are entitled

to receive up to 80% co-financing from Programme funding. Partners have to provide their own financial contribution to receive Programme funding.

The **duration** of a project platform consists of three phases: a contracting phase which usually lasts three months, the implementation phase which may last up to 28 months, and the closure phase lasting three months.

10.   Application procedure and deadlines

Lead applicants **must complete a project platform idea form (PIF) and submit it to the MA/JS**. The PIF should provide a brief overview of the projects to be included in the project platform, and the project platform's scope, partnership, planned outcomes, and budget. The completed PIF must be sent to the MA/JS any time after the call opens but **no later than 30 September 2025**. The MA/JS will support the development of project platforms by providing feedback in individual consultations on project platform ideas and organising a project platform development workshop. **All applicants are required to consult their project platform ideas with the MA/JS.**

Whenever possible, the applicant should involve the relevant EUSBSR policy area coordinators in developing the project platform idea. With applicants' consent, PIFs will be shared with the relevant EUSBSR policy area coordinators (PACs) for feedback from PACs. When feasible, the MA/JS will engage the PACs in consultations with applicants.

PIFs submitted to the MA/JS will be made available to the Monitoring Committee of the Programme. The Monitoring Committee members may contact lead applicants to offer guidance on further developing project platform ideas. The MA/JS will not receive information about the guidance provided by the Monitoring Committee members. It is up to the project platform partnership to consider how to incorporate the advice received.

Information provided in the project platform idea form, including feedback from the MA/JS during the consultation, will not influence the quality assessment of the submitted applications. The MA/JS will conduct the quality assessment solely based on the information from the submitted applications.

To further support applicants, the MA/JS will organise a **development workshop for project platforms** as a physical event targeting lead applicants, core partners, and PACs. To participate in the event, a potential project platform lead applicant needs to submit a PIF.

To fill in **a project platform application form** and work with **further documents and forms** (partner declarations, contact information, bank information), lead applicants, after having submitted a PIF, must apply for **access** to the electronic data exchange system **BAMOS+** (https://baplus.bamos.eu/). **Requests for access to BAMOS+ must be submitted by 30 September 2025 at the latest.**

The fully developed project application and all further documents and forms must be completed and submitted via BAMOS+ by the deadline of 20 November 2025 16:00 CET.

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The table below summarises the process of the application procedure. **All documents and forms are submitted in the digital format only.**

What?	How?	When?
Project platform idea form (PIF)	A lead applicant submits a completed PIF **via e-mail**: **platform@interreg-baltic.eu.** With the PIF, the lead applicant requests a consultation with the MA/JS on the project platform idea. **The template of PIF is available at** https://interreg-baltic.eu/gateway/consultations/.	No later than **30 September 2025**
Request for an account in BAMOS+	After submission of the PIF, a lead applicant requests a login to BAMOS+ **via e-mail**: **account@bamos.eu.** **The template of a request for an account in BAMOS+ (log-in to BAMOS+) is available at** https://interreg-baltic.eu/gateway/bamos-account/.	No later than **30 September 2025**
Project platform application	A lead applicant submits the completed application form **in BAMOS+.**	No later than **20 November 2025 16:00 CET**
Partner declarations, signed by each project platform partner, including a lead applicant	After submission of the completed application form, a lead applicant uploads to the Document Centre in BAMOS + the signed partner declarations, either with advanced or qualified electronic signatures or scanned copies with handwritten signatures. **The template of the partner declaration is available at** interreg-baltic.eu/gateway/calls/.	No later than **20 November 2025 16:00 CET**
Contact information for each project platform partner, including a lead applicant, and each associated organisation **Bank information** of the lead applicant's bank account	After submission of the completed application form, the Contact & Bank information section in BAMOS+ becomes available. The section must be completed and submitted by the lead applicant.	

After receiving applications:

- The MA/JS checks the completeness and correctness of all submitted documents and forms. This step is called an admissibility check. Applicants can find the admissibility check criteria in the Programme Manual (chapter F.2.2).
- The MA/JS conducts the quality assessment of the applications based on the assessment criteria. Applicants can find the assessment criteria in the Programme Manual (chapter F.2.3).

The Monitoring Committee of the Programme is responsible for the final selection of applications. The selection is planned to take place in March 2026.

The Monitoring Committee reserves the right not to select all applications demonstrating sufficient quality. Throughout the selection process, in addition to the quality criteria, the Monitoring Committee may consider various additional factors, such as the achievement of the Programme's strategic objectives, the thematic and geographical coverage of the submitted applications, and available Programme funding.

11.   Further information and assistance

The official language of the Programme is English. Therefore, all communication between applicants and the MA/JS is held in English. Information in project platform idea forms, application forms and official correspondence must be in English.

The official Programme documents are available on the Programme portal at **interreg-baltic.eu** and include:

- Programme Document;
- Programme Manual;
- Application package.

The MA/JS offers the following assistance to applicants:

- Gateway for applicants at **interreg-baltic.eu/gateway/**
- Matchmaking platform at **matchmaking.interreg-baltic.eu**
- A project platform development workshop
- Individual consultations (after submission of PIF)
- BAMOS+ helpdesk at **helpdesk@bamos.eu**
- General advice at **platform@interreg-baltic.eu**