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ACTION PLAN FOR THE SAVONLINNNA REGION AND LAKE SAIMAA AREA



Savonlinnan
HANKEKEHITYS OY



**Local
Flavours**
Interreg Europe

Part I – General Information

Interreg Europe Framework

Project: Local Flavours

Partner organisation(s) concerned: Savonlinna Development Services Ltd.

Country: Finland

NUTS2 region: FI1D

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Part II – Policy Context

The Action Plan aims to impact:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
	<input type="checkbox"/>	European Territorial Cooperation programme
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument(s) addressed: The new ESIF programme Growth and Jobs 2021-2027, sub-programme for Eastern Finland.

Wider policy context

The current programme instrument is exploited for the implementation of regional and some inter-regional strategies in Eastern Finland and ENI CBC programmes for South-East Finland and Karelia. We have also recognized during the Status Quo Analysis that EU policy instruments such as Horizon and Creative Europe are underutilised in the region.

South Savo regional strategy and Lake Saimaa tourism strategy

South Savo (Etelä-Savo, NUTS3 FI1D1) region is managing its own sub-programme of the ESIF policy instrument. The region has its own regional strategy where the focus areas are 1) rich, clean and abundant water resources, 2) wood and forests as an asset for industry as well as recreation, and 3) clean and high quality specialized food production. Tourism and visitor economy in the regional strategy are a cross-cutting theme seen as an opportunity for different industries and the service economy. Tourism as a thematic field is further outlined in a separate tourism strategy that is a component of the strategic leadership implemented by the regional council. Since the main tourism asset i.e. Lake Saimaa spans two regions, main principles of the tourism strategy have been jointly formulated with South Karelia (Etelä-Karjala, NUTS3 FI1C5) as Lake Saimaa tourism strategy.

The PA is coordinating the implementation with the help of an expert group i.e. 'tourism team' consisting of experts from regional development agencies, destination management organizations, programme authority and educational institutions.

Part III – The Project's Background

Saimaa Phenomenon and substitute measures to develop the CCIs

Since four regions in Eastern Finland are tackling with similar economic and demographic challenges, they pooled forces together for the bid for the European Capital of Culture 2026 („Saimaa Phenomenon”) with the city of Savonlinna as the hub for an extensive programme aimed for boosting cultural and creative industries (CCIs) in the area in order to attract tourists, create conditions for the growth of jobs and economic activity in creative industries and for supporting and valorizing the rich cultural heritage in the border area next to Russia. The bid for the ECoC was not successful, but during the process new networks were created and actors in the CCIs gained confidence in the potential of the sector to develop.

The Local Flavours status quo analysis for Savonlinna was developed and compiled in collaboration with the Saimaa Phenomenon ECoC bid to reflect the needs and challenges of the region participating in the ECoC bid. The status quo analysis indicated shortcomings and challenges that need to be addressed

- Demonstrating the strengths and attraction value of the region
- Exploiting the skills and creative potential of St. Petersburg across border
- The challenges focus on how to engage younger people within the area, potential returning migrants and totally new persons and communicate the richness of the area's cultural and natural assets and the opportunities it offers on the personal level.
- Supporting the CCIs distribution, marketing and expanding their revenue model through building closer links with the tourism industry
- Overcoming fragmentation in isolations of actors in the CCIs through the promotion of „ecosystem” i.e. networking platforms (such as Creative Savonlinna).

Proposals for the substitution of the ECoC as a policy instrument are being formulated (as of August 2021). The „Plan B” for Saimaa Phenomenon is to select the projects ready for implementation and coordinate the preparation of project proposals to be submitted for funding with consideration of the wider policy framework including not just structural funds instruments but also more local instruments such as Rural Finland, LEADER, and EU level policy instruments such as Creative Europe, Horizon and ENI CBC.

The role of Local Flavours project

Whereas the emphasis of the Saimaa Phenomenon 2026 programmes weighted on the side of promoting cultural production, Local Flavours project has communicated with stakeholders in the cultural heritage sector in the preparation of the current action plan. Local Flavours team in Savonlinna has participated in the work of the regional expert group (tourism team) in policy formulation and worked closely together with the stakeholders to process the needs and

opportunities perceived by actors in the field and transferred good practices through interregional learning as well as from a review of good practices on the Interreg Europe knowledge sharing and policy learning platform.

The focus of Savonlinna in the project has been in (in addition to the Saimaa Phenomenon ECoC bid) the promotion of Lake Saimaa for UNESCO world heritage site, after it was placed on the national tentative list in 2021. A significant way of grass-roots mobilization have been the development of cultural routes – including some routes for the Council of Europe’s European cultural routes as well Saimaa UNESCO Geopark.

In addition to larger macro level projects, Local Flavours has through interregional exchange of good practices provided new perspectives and concepts for valorizing cultural heritage on the local level of smaller projects. Perspectives benefitting the development of project proposals have included the introduction of heritage interpretation methodologies, digital methods and distribution channels. Through Local Flavours experience we have highlighted the importance of communication and marketing as well as utilization of media for telling stories and supporting promotion.

Our approach to the regional action plan is to promote the development of a livable and competitive city and region fully capable of utilizing its potential. This means consideration of work and housing opportunities and conditions for learning, communication, consumption and recreation. Equally, social cohesion plays a big role in the regional competitiveness. In the sparsely populated Eastern Finland, larger regions often have to take up the task of fulfilling inhabitants’ needs instead of smaller urban centers which in some cases lack the critical mass for providing comprehensive services. In the status quo analysis we adopted the KRAFT creative city/region methodology for assessing the role of cultural and creative industries for regional competitiveness and potential. Consequently, our regional action is built upon the assumption that harnessing the potential of creativity, culture and cultural heritage will enhance the wellbeing and satisfaction in life for inhabitants. Promoting creative networks and cultural production will create new jobs based on the economic potential of culture. Simultaneously, this development will increase the diversity and overall attractiveness of the region.

The regional action plan was prepared as a result of intensive stakeholder cooperation involving stakeholders from Savonlinna and the wider Lake Saimaa area as well as national stakeholders from Visit Finland (Business Finland) and National Museum of Finland. Ideas and initiatives for valorizing the cultural heritage in the area were collected in two workshops the results of which were summarized in the the cultural heritage programme of Lake Saimaa. In the situation of negative outcome for the Saimaa Phenomenon ECoC bid, it is still open (in 2021) to what extent the cultural heritage programme objectives can be promoted in the wider area without the catalyzing effect of the ECoC programme.

Some Saimaa Phenomenon ECoC bid stakeholders are in favor of an extension project for 2022-2026 to promote and facilitate interregional cooperation projects and the „dream years of culture” 2022-2026 to be organized in the participating cities – culminating in Savonlinna in 2026. Preparation for the extension project is ongoing as during the latter part of 2021. Part of the Saimaa Phenomenon Programme 2022-2026 is also the Lake Saimaa Cultural Heritage day proposed and promoted by the Local Flavours local stakeholder group in the cultural heritage programme for Lake Saimaa (included in this action plan).

Creative Savonlinna Concept

Background

During 2020-2021 through stakeholder networking of the Local Flavours Savonlinna team and the preparation workshops of the project, we were able to connect to and identify stakeholders in Savonlinna and the wider Lake Saimaa region, who were interested in and willing to promote goal-oriented cooperation. This coalition of forces in the CCIs was created in coordination with Saimaa Phenomenon ECoC preparation project. Good practices from Local Flavours have been shared and discussed on a regular basis with the key stakeholders and presented in stakeholder meetings. This has contributed significantly in the formation of a shared conviction that there exists human and economic capacity to promote cultural heritage and creative industries jointly in order to catalyse economic development and employment in the sector and for the support of tourism. The stakeholder network in formation includes actors in music and other performing arts, crafts and design, graphic design, museums and heritage industry operators and in education.

Inspiration has been drawn from the discussion of Local Flavours' good practices with the stakeholders and collection of ideas from them. This has included CCIs small and microenterprises, some larger enterprises and events producers, tourism enterprises and institutions capable of supporting the action through education and development projects.

The strengths of Savonlinna in the CCIs are museums, education, support institutions, music and events scene, strong place brand and cultural hub and tourist destination with some major tourist attractions capable of sustaining creative industries. The strong sectors of cultural industries in Savonlinna i.e. cultural heritage management and performing arts sector provide the context for other creative industries involved in design, visual production, media and arts and crafts.

Concept formation

The goal of Creative Savonlinna is to commit stakeholders to work together to develop an 'business ecosystem' for CCIs actors. With ecosystem we mean a rooted and sustainable network where b2b services, training, business support services, funding and creative networking opportunities create synergies for existing businesses. The ecosystem is capable of attracting new business and organizing activities engaging new audiences and professional actors for realizing their ideas in Savonlinna and Lake Saimaa region. It is our vision to develop Savonlinna into a hub and platform of new type of cultural tourism promoting and facilitating creative encounters between people taking different roles in the production and consumption of cultural value.

Consortium

Creative Savonlinna consortium is under formation during 2021. The consortium is designed to consist of vocational education institutions, museums, event organizers, liberal adult education institutions, CCIs SMEs, local NGOs and associations and foundations.

The coordination group of the consortium consisting of institutional actors is due to start working in 2021. The task of the coordination group is to formulate a common vision for Creative Savonlinna and coordinate joint implementation of:

- support actions for small and microenterprises and self-employed persons in creative industries
- networking actions locally, nationally and internationally
- communicate the concept to the stakeholders and potential new stakeholders
- organize transfer of knowledge and capacity building on the basis skills and knowledge gaps identified.

The implementation of the concept will be based on own funding by the consortium participants for sustained actions and coordination activities and leveraging of starting phase actions in 2021-2022 with the help of new funding programmes and policy instruments described above.

Summary Matrix of the Actions

#	Name of the Action	Timeframe		Coordinator	Stakeholders	Cost	Result indicator(s)
		Start date	End date				
1.	<p>Vibrancy in Finnish Lakeland with the Saimaa Phenomenon – Savonlinna's bid for the European Capital of Culture 2026. Project code A76397. Reported as policy change in LF.</p> <p>Saimaa Phenomenon extension project 2022</p>	1.8.2020	31.12.2021	<p>City of Savonlinna</p> <p>Coordinator for possible extension is open.</p>	<p>Cultural institutions in participating municipalities, universities and educational institutions</p>	<p>1 350 000 €</p> <p>Extension estimated 400 000 € in 2022-</p>	<p>Preparation of ECoC 2026 bid and cultural programme 2022-2026 for Savonlinna and participating municipalities, networking in CCI in Lake Saimaa area.</p> <p>Savonlinna cultural strategy formulation.</p> <p>Facilitating the development of project proposal to compensate for lack of ECoC funds.</p> <p>Creating positive energies and new</p>

							operational permanent cooperation networks in Lake Saimaa area.
2.	Events and meetings as drivers of tourism growth in Savonlinna Project code A77763. To be reported as policy change in Phase 1.	1.5.2021	31.12.2022	Savonlinna Development Services Ltd.	Events producers and tourism enterprises	266 737 €	New sustainable business in the events and meetings sector. Increase in the number of visitors in Savonlinna all year round.
3.	Savonlinna market square revitalization project. To be reported as policy change in Phase 1.	16.8.2021	16.9.2022	Sakke ry – Savonlinna city centre development association	City of Savonlinna, entrepreneurs	105 760 €	Revitalization, concept development with benchmarking of international concepts and promotion of market place as event venue and place to buy local products.

4.	<p>Preparation of Creative Savonlinna project proposal To be reported as policy change after funding decision 2022.</p>	1.9.2021	31.5.2022	SAMledu	Pääkonttori ry Savonlinna vocational education institute Samiedu Savonlinna Senior Secondary School of Arts and Music	15 000 € (600 000 €)	Project proposal for the Design and launching of operational concept of Creative Savonlinna, committing 300 stakeholders to the network. Communicating the concept to the stakeholders.
5.	<p>Lake Saimaa Heritage Day To be reported as policy change after funding decision 2022.</p>	1.1.2022	launching phase 2022 ongoing	Maa- ja kotitalousnaiset ry (Rural Women's industries consultancy association)	Network of cities and municipalities in the region. Museums and cultural heritage attractions, associations, SMEs in the cultural heritage sector.	100 000 € launching phase	Knowledge transfer mechanism and networked events concept sustaining the transfer of good practices and presenting cultural heritage to the public.
6.	<p>Punkaharju didactic park</p>	2022	2022	National Forest Museum Lusto	Local tourism enterprises, LUKE natural	150 000 €	Digital and physical learning environment and

	To be reported as policy change in 2022.				resources institute of Finland, schools, educational institutions	900 000 € optional /Horizon	learning materials for different types of learning in order to increase year-round visits to the site and promote the forest museum. Creation of digital learning platform with the help of Horizon funding.
7.	Monitoring of the policy changes reported in Phase 1	1.2.2022	31.12.2022	Savonlinna Development Services Ltd.	City of Savonlinna (Saimaa Phenomenon project team)	Included in lump sum for Phase 2 of the LF project	A monitoring report showcasing, if funding has been granted for new projects deriving from the reported policy changes.

Part IV – Details of the Actions Envisaged

ACTION 1

Vibrancy in Finnish Lakeland with the Saimaa Phenomenon – Savonlinna's bid for the European Capital of Culture 2026 (project code A76397) and Saimaa Phenomenon extension project The Art of Living in Lakeland (proposed)

1. Relevance to the project

The potential of CCIs and cultural heritage as boosters of economic growth and well-being is being underutilized in our region. Notable international programmes, such as European Capital of Culture, are a good way to bring vitality to an area through culture and cultural heritage. Such an extensive funding helps to enhance also indirectly the economy of the awarded area.

To coordinate the development of a bid for the European Capital of Culture 2026 (“Saimaa Phenomenon”) and to create a cultural network in the Lake Saimaa area, a preparation project for the ECoC bid, i.e. the action in question, was formulated by Savonlinna Development Services Ltd. jointly with the City of Savonlinna’s cultural services department. Local Flavours Savonlinna team supported the preparation of the action and the project proposal by coordinating transfer of good practice and experiences between Local Flavours’ lead partner iASK and the Hungarian city of Veszprém.

Based on the Hungarian good practice, consultations were organized with the City of Savonlinna and the University of Eastern Finland in spring 2020. The action was planned to be led by the City of Savonlinna and implemented together with the University of Eastern Finland. The involvement in and expertise of iASK, who is the lead partner of the Local Flavours project, with Veszprém’s ECoC 2023 proposal was directly utilized for outlining the proposal preparation process and designing the preparation project. iASK provided us documents concerning the bid preparations of Veszprém’s ECoC team, including their bid-book and other background documents, such as information about the preparation materials. They were taken into account when designing the measures of the new action.

The concept of Veszprém’s ECoC bid includes not only the city itself, but the surrounding Lake Balaton area, which was deemed inspiring for Savonlinna’s ECoC bid: the actual implementation area of the Saimaa Phenomenon and thus the action in question does not concentrate only in the City of Savonlinna, but the area of whole Lake Saimaa.

The KRAFT methodology, introduced by the Lead Partner of the Local Flavours project, was communicated further to the representant of the University of Eastern Finland, which is the project partner in the Saimaa Phenomenon project. Because research and evaluation form an integral part of the proposal, advice could be taken from Veszprém’s proposal in that aspect as well. The university decided to adopt it in essential parts for the ECoC preparation project. In addition to the important evaluation aspect of the bid-book preparation, a crucial evaluation factor in the ECoC application process is the European dimension. The connections created through Local Flavours between Veszprém/Hungary and Savonlinna contributed to the European dimension. In this aspect Local

Flavours project helps Savonlinna's ECoC team as our stakeholders to build new European contacts, which was emphasised in the project application too.

The support received for the aspects of research and evaluation and the European dimension through Local Flavours contributed to the success and credibility of the preparation project application. The project application was approved by the South Savo Regional Council in September 2020. This project was reported as a policy change in the Local Flavours project in the 3rd reporting period.

2. Nature of the action

The action consists of the preparation project, funded from the original policy instrument i.e. Sustainable growth and jobs 2014-2020. "Vibrancy in Finnish Lakeland with the Saimaa Phenomenon – Savonlinna's bid for the European Capital of Culture 2026" is a preparation project for the ECoC bid-book preparation. It was reported as a policy change in Phase 1 of the Local Flavours project. "The Art of Living in Lakeland" is a planned extension project for it, which will be proposed for the Managing Authority after the finalisation of this Action Plan. The extension project will possibly be funded from the new ESIF instrument 2021-2027 Innovation and Skills in Finland.

The measures included in the Saimaa Phenomenon preparation project part of the action are 1) developing the content and concept of Saimaa Phenomenon for the bid, 2) developing and launching a cultural strategy for city of Savonlinna, 3) communication and promotion of Saimaa Phenomenon and Lake Saimaa culture, 4) developing organization structure and facilities for Saimaa Phenomenon and 5) conduction of research and evaluation of the effects of Saimaa Phenomenon.

The outcome of the ECoC bid was announced on 2 June 2021 and unfortunately the Saimaa Phenomenon was not awarded with the title. After the negative outcome of the ECoC bid the preparation project re-oriented in order to find complementary ways to promote the goals of the project. The original goal of developing cultural networks, initiatives and cultural content for 2022-2026 were retained and the project aims now to mobilize and empower stakeholders to implement actions proposed in the bid-book. The project discovered that EU funding programmes are relatively unknown sources of funding for actors in the cultural industry. Therefore, the Saimaa Phenomenon shifted focus on facilitating collaboration with the stakeholders in order to prepare project proposals for EU programmes.

The project consortium has proposed an extension project for the Saimaa Phenomenon starting on 1 January 2022 ("The Art of Living in Lakeland"). Currently the status of the preparation of the project proposal is open. If launched, during Local Flavours' monitoring phase, the extension project will conceptualize a cooperation platform for actors in CCIs in Eastern Finland/Saimaa area, develop a concept for "Skill Share Lab" and promote "Saimaa Phenomenon" collaboration projects. The outcome of the preparation for the extension project will be reported in phase 2 of Local Flavours project. The extension project will improve the ESIF policy instrument Innovation and Skills in Finland 2021-2027 by strengthening the inclusion of cultural heritage themes and facilitating the development of new spin-off projects for the policy instrument.

3. Players / stakeholders involved

The action is realized with the cooperation, support and funding of cities of Savonlinna, Mikkeli, Lappeenranta and Joensuu and the regional councils of North Karelia, North Savo, South Karelia and South Savo. The project team for action was organized in five cities with a regional coordinator in each: Joensuu, Mikkeli, Kuopio, Lappeenranta and Savonlinna where the abovementioned stakeholders provided support for the coordinator for communicating and reaching out for the local stakeholders. Consortium for the collaboration project in 2022 is open (Oct. 2021).

4. Timeframe

The duration of the Saimaa Phenomenon preparation project is 01.08.2020–31.12.2021. Decision concerning the ECoC bid was negative and was announced on 02.06.2021. Thereafter the Saimaa Phenomenon project started the negotiations and preparation of compensating measures with the stakeholders and programme authorities in the four regions committed to the bid. Extension project will be launched 01.01.2022, if funding is expected to be allocated from the new ESIF instrument.

5. Costs

Total approved budget for the Saimaa Phenomenon preparation project is 1,35 million euros. Budget for the extension has not been specified.

6. Indicative funding sources

The Saimaa Phenomenon preparation project is financed 80 % from Growth and Jobs programme (1 080 000 euros), with match funding of 255 000 euros from municipalities and 15 000 euros other public funding. Match funding for the extension project will be collected from the project consortium and financing will come from regional development funds ESIF instrument.

ACTION 2

Events and meetings as drivers of tourism growth in Savonlinna (project code A77763)

1. Relevance to the project

As the examples provided by Local Flavours' project partners have shown, events are an efficient way to lengthen the stay of visitors, lengthen the tourism season and attract new target groups. The need for intensified co-operation between the events and tourism industries as well as the need for skills improvement have become evident in Savonlinna. To tackle these challenges and improve the facilities for events production a project called "Events and meetings as drivers of tourism growth in Savonlinna" was formulated. The project application was submitted on 15.06.2021 and the project was reported in the Local Flavours project in the 4th reporting period as an additional change regarding the policy instrument Sustainable growth and jobs 2014-2020 programme. GPs related to events development and event management have supported the design of the project proposal and are guiding project implementation. Covid-19 measures of the Local Flavours project partners have

also been benchmarked and evaluated. The preparation of the project proposal benefited significantly from analysis of the following GPs:

- Local event to enliven town environment: *The Book of Vinesprouts of Kőszeg (since 1740) and St. George's Day celebrations* (LP, HU) (discussed in the project 20.10.2020, shared by the partner in September 2020)
- City revitalization by means of cultural heritage: *Improving continental tourism through tourism valorization of the historical and cultural heritage of the City of Ludbreg* (PP8, HR) (discussed in the project 20.9.2020)
- Lengthening duration of tourism offers: *Day by day summer programme in Kőszeg and its neighbourhood* (LP, HU) (discussed in the project 17.11.2020)
- Easy-going, affordable and innovative event venue solution: *Science in the Pub community program in Kőszeg* (LP, HU) (discussed in the project 8.12.2020, shared by the partner in November 2020)
- Local event to enliven town environment based on local heritage and to promote local products: *Fair of Saint Ursula's Days for traditional cultural handcraft in Kőszeg* (LP, HU) (discussed in the project 17.11.2020)
- Adaptation of a destination to covid-19 situation: *The Online Monuments Day* (PP3, NL) (discussed in the project 5.10.2020 and in the thematic summit 8.4.2021, shared by the partner in September 2020)
- Networking and voluntary based event offer: *Pop-up tourism and pampering days for tourism agencies and guides organized by Mrs. Wolf husky park* (PP7, LV) (shared by the partner in December 2020)
- Adaptation of a destination to covid-19 situation and post-covid-19 environment: *The Den Bosch Summer Programme* (PP3, NL) (shared by the partner in September 2020)

2. Nature of the action

This action is new a project which is funded from our original policy instrument i.e. Sustainable growth and jobs 2014-2020 programme. The project improves the policy instrument by strengthening the inclusion of local cultural heritage and cultural industries actors in the policy implementation and increasing the participation CCI SMEs as beneficiaries of the policy instrument.

The project aims to strengthen and facilitate networking between event producers with other enterprises and tourism industry in order to generate business opportunities based on meetings and events in Savonlinna. In order to achieve this, capacity building in the form of enhancing business skills is necessary. The project also aims to initiate collaborative innovations processes with the purpose of creating profitable new meetings and events business concepts to increase number of visitors and tourism income in Savonlinna.

The measures of the action are: A) Strengthening of networking and joint learning processed in the form of networking events and workshops where good practices and useful tools are identified and evaluated. Participants of the project further familiarize themselves with good practices on a benchmarking trip to a destination with advanced events industry. B) Support for sales and marketing through developing products and packages, inventory of facilities and services related to the products and compilation and distribution of marketing materials. The project will also define

target groups outside Savonlinna for marketing events and start contacting sales targets with the help of the marketing material developed. C) The project will develop collaborative innovation process for the creation of new events. On the basis of the innovation process two events will be piloted in collaboration of participating enterprises. To facilitate innovation, planning, packaging and cross-selling and marketing, a digital infrastructure will be created - utilizing existing platforms, tools and distribution channels. D) The project will develop a tool for data collection, analysis and reporting of event data to enable monitoring and impact assessment of events industry in Savonlinna. The project will help the meetings and events industry in Savonlinna to grow.

3. Players / stakeholders involved

Savonlinna Development Services Ltd., City of Savonlinna, Savonlinna Travel Ltd., tourism enterprises, commercial events producers.

4. Timeframe

1.5.2021–31.12.2022

5. Costs

Approved budget for the project is 266 737 euros.

6. Indicative funding sources

ERDF Growth and Jobs, Finland 212 329 euros, match funding of Savonlinna Development Services Ltd. 51 348 euros, private funding 3 000 euros.

ACTION 3

Savonlinna market square revitalization (Kauppatorin kehittämishanke)

1. Relevance to the project

Savonlinna had been investigating the potential and different approaches to city market square revitalization. The good practice "Improving continental tourism through tourism valorization of the historical and cultural heritage of the City of Ludbreg" (PP8, HR) presented the idea of valorizing cultural heritage and presenting it in the city space i.e. market square (GP discussed in the project 29.9.2020). The idea of developing an event space and Craft Square in order to use space for authentic local products and enriching the regional event portfolio with the help of low-threshold event space, was adapted as a starting point for the preparation of a project proposal in Savonlinna. Also, the revitalization of old town of Čakovec (PP8, HR, shared by the partner in December 2020) has been used as an encouraging example of revitalizing city space presenting tradition and cultural heritage to visitors and inhabitants.

2. Nature of the action

This action is new a project which is funded from MOKRA – maakuntien omaehtoisen kehittämisen rahoitus ('Finnish national funding for regional councils for self-defined regional development action'). The new policy instrument is addressed, because its funding is suitable especially for small assessment, piloting and design projects which advance directly or indirectly the operational preconditions of the economic life. The managing authority of both MOKRA and Growth and Jobs is the Regional Council of South Savo, in terms of the timeframe (closure of Growth and Jobs PI) and suitability of the policy instrument for pilot action, the managing authority proposed MOKRA as suitable policy instrument.

The measures of the action are:

- Benchmarking of novel concepts and revitalization projects in Finland and Europe (already started with the help of Local Flavours)
- Participatory planning process engaging stakeholders and users to find out about their expectations
- Scouting for new merchants and events organizers
- Creation of new sustainable management and revenue model including digitalization of processes
- Cooperation with city infrastructure and environment authority in order to develop new charter and rule book and defining investment needs and priorities
- Implementation and piloting of developed plans during the project in cooperation with the stakeholders

3. Players / stakeholders involved

City Centre Development Association of Savonlinna (Sakke ry), City of Savonlinna, local entrepreneurs, event producers, actors in craft and design field around the country.

4. Timeframe

16.8.2021–16.09.2022

5. Costs

Approved budget for the project is 105 760 euros.

6. Indicative funding sources

MOKRA – maakuntien omaehtoisen kehittämisen rahoitus (Finnish national funding for regional councils for self-defined regional development action) 84 608 euros, match funding Sakke ry 10 576 euros, match funding from the city of Savonlinna 10 576 euros.

ACTION 4

Development of Creative Savonlinna project proposal

1. Relevance to the project

The KRAFT methodology in Local Flavours project provided a macro-level perspective to look at the role and significance of CCIs in regional development. Through the analysis of several good practices and presentation of the good practices for the stakeholders in stakeholder workshops we came up with several ideas, how we can develop Savonlinna as a cultural tourism destination. Stakeholder networking of Saimaa Phenomenon (Action 1) has already uncovered substantial underutilized creative talent in the city. The good practices transferred through Local Flavours demonstrate, how creative talent can be utilized for the valorizing of cultural heritage and new job opportunities thus created.

The main inspiration for the project was the good practice reported by Cult-CreaTE project "Loulé Criativo". The idea was further developed on the basis of the good practice "MateraHUB" ("Matera – the compound effect of EU-funded projects, local grassroots initiatives, and European Cultural Capital Award") presented by Vittorio Veneto (PP6) for empowering CCIs (GP shared by the partner in September 2020). The LF Savonlinna team bundles these and other inspiring good practices of Local Flavours into a comprehensive strategic approach for Creative Savonlinna. The good practices with special relevance and inspiration for Creative Savonlinna are: Participatory planning approach (Sporzone, PP3, NL, shared by the partner in September 2020, discussed in the project 8.12.2020), making arts visible in the city space (Murals for Communities, PP4, IE, discussed in the project 17.11.2020), urban regeneration (Belluno Caserna Piave, PP6, IT, shared by the partner October 2020, discussed in the project 25.3.2021), valorizing cultural heritage and utilizing its business potential (Old town of Čakovec, PP8, HR, shared by the partner in December 2020). It has been demonstrated, how these practices have created job opportunities for people in CCIs and helped develop sites as touristic attractions.

Creative Savonlinna means opportunity to create for the new ESIF funding period a cluster of creative industries in Savonlinna/South Savo region for developing project proposals for the new ESIF instrument on the basis of the regional strategy for smart specialization. It will therefore significantly contribute for the improvement of the new policy instrument.

2. Nature of the action

This action is a new project proposal which would be funded from the new ESIF instrument Innovation and Skills in Finland 2021-2027. Its preparation actions will be funded by SamiEdu Vocational College and SDS and the City of Savonlinna (Savonlinna Senior Secondary School of Arts and Music) and Pääkonttori ry. The new policy instrument will be addressed, because the old programme period is closed.

Creative Savonlinna involves cooperation between main stakeholders in Savonlinna in the creation of a platform for actors in the CCIs and students in educational programmes related to the creative industries. As of October 2021, the project is under formation. Possible actions are:

- organizing co-creation workshops for actors of CCIs

- promoting experimentation by providing access to new technologies such as 3d printing, media technologies by creating testbed environments
- organizing promotion events and online distribution channels for creative talent in Savonlinna
- implementing communications and visibility actions, branding Savonlinna as a platform for CCI
- committing key players to long-term cooperation and development of Creative Savonlinna platform.

3. Players / stakeholders involved

SamiEduAMledu Vocational College, South East Finland University of Applied Sciences, Savonlinna Senior Secondary School of Arts and Music, Savonlinna Development Services Ltd., Pääkonttori ry (Creative Industries Association)

4. Timeframe

2022–2023

5. Costs

Preparatory action: 15 000 euros (2021–2022) own financing by stakeholders.
Estimated project budget will be 600 000 euros for the period 2022–2023

6. Indicative funding sources

Estimated ERDF (ESIF) funding 420 000 euros, estimated match funding 180 000 euros.

ACTION 5

Lake Saimaa Cultural Heritage Day

1. Relevance to the project

In the framework of the Status Quo Analysis stakeholders were strongly involved in the development of the action plan. Based on the identified needs and bottlenecks in the field of cultural heritage, the action in question was formulated. Lake Saimaa Cultural Heritage Day is a cooperation mechanism, which helps to increase networking, marketing, knowledge sharing and valorisation of cultural heritage and to build stronger links between the cultural heritage operators and tourism industry. For the action the following good practices have been analysed, implemented and adapted as a part of Lake Saimaa day cooperation event and platform.

- Local event to enliven town environment based on local heritage and to promote local products: *Fair of Saint Ursula's Days for traditional cultural handcraft in Kőszeg* (LP, HU) (discussed in the project 17.11.2020)

- Networking of cultural offers: *Day by Day Summer Program in Kőszeg and in its surroundings* (LP, HU) (discussed in the project 17.11.2020)
- Participatory approach to valorizing cultural heritage and co-creation: *Talking houses project* (LP, HU) (discussed in the project 9.12.2020, shared by the partner in November 2020)
- Promotion and presentation of folk costumes as living tradition: *Events related to the protection of traditional folk costumes: The Day of the Thousand Szekler Girls; “Csúrdöngölő” Children Folk Festival; The Day of the Szekler Costume.* (PP2, RO) (discussed in the project 8.12.2020, shared by the partner in September 2020)
- Improving accessibility of events and cultural heritage: *The Den Bosch COVID19 Summer Programme* (PP3, NL) (shared by the partner in September 2020)
- Improving accessibility of cultural heritage: *The Online Monuments Day* (PP3, NL) (discussed in the project 5.10.2020 and in the thematic summit 8.4.2021, shared by the partner in September 2020)
- Participatory approach to the valorization of cultural heritage: *Participatory approach Spoorzone* (PP3, NL) (discussed in the project 8.12.2020, shared by the partner in September 2020)
- Promoting visits to peripheral sites and dispersing visitor flow to larger areas: *Creation of a Visitor Experience Development Plan and an APP to encourage visitor dispersion* (PP4, IE) (shared by the partner in September 2020)
- City networking as enabler for tourism: *International city-to-city networks as a base for EU projects. Slow tourism and slow food: the case of Bra* (PP6, IT) (discussed in the project 17.11.2020, shared by the partner in September 2020)
- Participatory approach and voluntary based cultural heritage offer: *Society “Friends club of Banitis” organisation* (PP7, LV) (discussed in the project 10.6.2021, shared by the partner in November 2020)
- Participatory approach and voluntary based event offer: *Pop-up tourism and pampering days for tourism agencies and guides organized by Mrs. Wolf husky park* (PP7, LV) (discussed in the project 10.6.2021, shared by the partner in December 2020)
- Developing the visibility of immaterial cultural heritage: *Cultural Route of Becharac and Ganga* (PP8, HR) (discussed in the project 29.9.2020)
- Presentation of intangible heritage: *Reconstruction and Revitalization of Fortification of the Old Town of Čakovec into the Museum of Intangible Heritage, Čakovec* (PP8, HR) (GP shared by the partner in December 2020)

2. Nature of the action

This action is a new project proposal which would be funded from Rural Finland Programme. The proposed project aims at launching and developing the Lake Saimaa Day concept. A new policy instrument is addressed, because based on the preliminary discussions with the Regional Councils in the Lake Saimaa area they would not be willing to fund the project. For the ESIF instrument there is not in place a clear mechanism for implementing interregional projects and the new ESIF instrument had not yet been launched. Therefore, the only opportunity to move forward was through Rural Finland funding.

Lake Saimaa Day is a series of networked visibility events. The objective of Lake Saimaa Day is to join together often isolated actors in the cultural heritage scene e.g. keepers of tangible cultural heritage

and actors involved in living and intangible cultural heritage. To gain momentum to the idea a timeframe of a day (or a weekend) will be selected. The day will involve developing both physical and online access to cultural heritage sites, providing cultural heritage interpretation, opportunities to participate in events (both online and on site) featuring intangible and living cultural heritage.

Actions include:

- contacting and engaging cultural heritage sector stakeholders: amateurs, museums, professional, semi-professional people acting as keepers of cultural heritage sites, establishing regular communication with stakeholders
- promoting and catalysing participation of stakeholders in dissemination during Saimaa Day and for employing methods of heritage interpretation introduced during Saimaa Day on their site or tradition
- building communication channels and cooperation with media in order to enhance the visibility of cultural heritage and heritage events with the help of an “umbrella” brand
- establishing a multi-stakeholder model and organization for streaming content from the sites and events and building a committed subscription-based core audience for the content
- strengthening and building cooperation with tourism industry to increase the utilization of heritage interpretation in business opportunities

3. Players / stakeholders involved

Maa- ja kotitalousnaiset ry (Rural Women’s industries consultancy association), ProAgria rural consultancy organization. Network of cities and municipalities in the region. Museums and cultural heritage attractions, associations, SMEs in the cultural heritage sector.

4. Timeframe

2022–2023 launching and developing phase project. Pilot action and the launching of the event will take place in 2022.

5. Costs

Estimated project for the launching phase for the building of the platform: 100 000 euros in 2020.

6. Indicative funding sources

Rural Finland Programme 80 000 euros, estimated match funding 20 000 euros.

ACTION 6

Punkaharju Didactic Park – feasibility study

1. Relevance to the project

This action is directly derived from the good practice reported by Vittorio Veneto (PP 6) “The Area Brand of the Thematic Didactic Parks of the Alta Marca Trevigiana” (GP discussed in the project 29.9.2020). It aims to reach new target groups and that way reduce the seasonality of tourism.

2. Nature of the action

This action is a new project proposal for a feasibility study which would be funded from the new ESIF instrument 2021–2027. The new policy instrument will be addressed, because the old programme period is ending.

The objective of Punkaharju Didactic Park is to utilize extensive work already done in cultural heritage interpretation and the stakeholder network in Punkaharju (Savonlinna) to target and attract new visitor segments to Punkaharju and expand the reach and service of National Forest Museum Lusto (located in Punkaharju). Punkaharju is the famous national landscape of Finland which is already attracting a large number of visitors. Needs for the project relate to engaging visitors in learning activity, reducing the seasonality of tourism and targeting new customer segments for the forest museum and tourism enterprises networked with the museum. Also, an important stakeholder on the site is LUKE Natural Resources Institute of Finland operating a research forest and research activities. On potential target group with measurable business potential are school camps.

The aim of the project is to build a partnership to develop didactic content, identify targeted user segments, develop new online learning experience for the target groups and implement hybrid learning environment consisting of on-site and on-line features and providing a holistic user experience with the help to novel technology. The project would also develop cooperation between natural resources-oriented museums in Eastern Finland according to idea presented in Saimaa Phenomenon bid book (action 1).

In the first phase (2022), concept development, a feasibility study and consortium building will take place. Also a roadmap for further development and project portfolio will be developed. The implementation will be carried out as a three-year launching programme with a project portfolio consisting of ERDF, Rural Finland and Horizon funding.

3. Players / stakeholders involved

National Forest Museum Lusto Foundation, LUKE natural resources institute of Finland, Metsähallitus Parks and Wildlife Finland, local tourism entrepreneurs, Retretti Art Center (specializing in digital experiences).

4. Timeframe

1.1.2022 – 31.12.2022 preparation project.

5. Costs

Estimated project for the launching phase in 2022 is 150 000 euros.

6. Indicative funding sources

ERDF Innovation and Skills in Finland 120 000 euros, estimated match funding 30 000 euros.

ACTION 7

Monitoring of the policy changes reported in Phase 1

1. Nature of the action

Through this action the policy changes reported in Phase 1 of the Local Flavours project will be monitored.

A policy change concerning the policy instrument Sustainable growth and jobs 2014-2020 programme was reported in Phase 1 of the Local Flavours project.

The policy change in question was the new project “Vibrancy in Finnish Lakeland with the Saimaa Phenomenon – Savonlinna’s bid for the European Capital of Culture 2026” which aimed at developing the bid-book for the ECoC 2026 bid and creating networks in the Lake Saimaa area. This change is included in Action 1 of this Action Plan.

The defined result indicators for Action 1 are:

- number of new project proposals developed for new ESIF policy instrument 2021-2027
- number of new project proposals developed for other funding instruments (Creative Europe, Horizon, LEADER, Rural Finland...)
- number of stakeholders involved in action

Another policy change concerning the LEADER programme financing was already reported too. It will be monitored in Phase 2, if there will be an extension project to it. Depending on the realisation of the extension project the number of stakeholders involved in action will be monitored as well.

The monitoring data will be collected by SDS Local Flavours team during Phase 2 of the Local Flavours project.

2. Players / stakeholders involved

Savonlinna Development Services Ltd., City of Savonlinna (Saimaa Phenomenon project team)

3. Timeframe

1.1.2022 – 31.12.2022

4. Indicative funding sources

Local Flavours Phase 2 (monitoring phase).

Result Indicators

Name of the Indicator	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3	Action 4	Action 5	Action 6	Action 7
Number of new project proposals developed for new ESIF policy instrument 2021-2027	X					X	
Number of new project proposals developed for other funding instruments (Creative Europe, Horizon, LEADER, Rural Finland...)	X			X		X	
Number of stakeholders involved in action	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Risk Assessment

#	Risk Classification	Risk Description	Impact Severity (1-5)	Risk Probability (1-5)	Risk Score (Impact x Probability)	Contingency Plan	Responsible
1	External Risk	Changing demand structure of visitor economy sector in post-covid-19 situation	3	2	6	Monitor market signals and research. Exploit methods of user profiling to target right user segments.	SDS & stakeholders
2	Project Execution Risk	Interruption in funding with regard to launching of new ESIF instrument. Delay in funding decisions	5	4	20	Develop flexible roadmap for launching and implementation of projects. Monitor alternative funding opportunities.	SDS and project consortia.
3	Stakeholder Risk	Fragmentation of stakeholder networks and low level of commitment.	5	3	15	Focus in preparation activities on engagement of stakeholders and building of consortia. Creating commitment delegation of responsibility and building sense of ownership. Constant monitoring of the level of commitment.	Saimaa Phenomenon (Action 1) SDS (actions 2-6).
4	Stakeholder Risk	Failure of Saimaa Phenomenon to build consortium for extension project.	3	5	15	Focus on building of project consortia to promote Saimaa Phenomenon proposals.	Saimaa Phenomenon (Action 1)
5	Regulatory Risk	Non-inclusion of the sustainable use of cultural heritage tourism and the promotion of CClIs in strategic documents.	3	3	9	Engage stakeholders in the formulation of strategy in 2021.	SDS South Savo tourism team (stakeholder platform).

Impacts

#	Name of the Action	Policy Instrument	Self-defined performace (result) indicator	Impact (on society and/or policy)
1	Vibrancy in Finnish Lakeland with the Saimaa Phenomenon – Savonlinna's bid for the European Capital of Culture 2026	ERDF Growth and Jobs (Finland), new ESIF instrument for 2021-2027.	Number of project proposals generated on the basis of Saimaa Phenomenon bid book and support action.	Increased level of activity and engagement of stakeholders for cultural heritage attractions, events and cultural production. Inclusion of CCIs in regional strategy implementation.
2	Events and meetings as drivers of tourism growth in Savonlinna	ERDF Growth and Jobs	Number of piloted event actions.	Increased revenue for events and meetings sector in Savonlinna.
3	Savonlinna market square revitalization	MOKRA national regional development funding for regional councils	One new operational concept for the market place.	Increased revenue for CCIs and commercial operators on the market place.
4	Development of Creative Savonlinna Project proposal	Own funding by SamiEdu and SDS New ESIF instrument 2021-2027	1 new project proposal 1 funding decision	Creation of framework and facilitation of strategic partnership for the development of CCIs.
5	Lake Saimaa Cultural Heritage Day	Rural Finland	1 new piloted concept for cultural valorization	The action will facilitate development processes and cooperation empowering actors on the grass roots level.
6	Punkaharju Didactic Park – feasibility study	New ESIF instrument 2021-2027	1 new project proposal	Building a new consortium in cultural heritage sector: generating year-round revenue for museums and tourism industry.

7	Monitoring of the policy changes reported in Phase 1	Project funding for Local Flavours Phase 2	1 monitoring report	The action discovers, if funding has been granted for new projects deriving from the reported policy changes.
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Date: _____

Signature: _____

Stamp of the organisation (if available): _____