

Project idea

Version date 2013/08/19

The City of Oulu, Finland, is looking for partners for an application to be submitted to the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility (<http://seed.eusbsr.eu/>). The preferred partners can be e.g. airports, airport operators, transport authorities, cities and regions interested in developing rail-based connections to airports.

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Project name | Planning and decision-making model for connecting airports to rail networks |
| Project acronym | AirRail |

Relation to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Priority Area / EUSBSR: | Transport / Improving internal and external transport links |
|-------------------------|---|

Issue addressed and contribution to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and EU 2020 Strategy:

The AirRail project focuses on improving co-modal connections in Baltic Sea Region cities and regions by facilitating the set-up of rail-based passenger transport connections to airports.

The project contributes to the “Priority Area Transport – Improving internal and external transport links” of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region by improving the functioning and efficiency of the passenger transport system at peripheral areas and mid-sized cities/airports, thus promoting the regions’ competitiveness, accessibility and attractiveness for entrepreneurial activities. Joint planning and problem solving will be a key approach in the project. By promoting rail-based transport modes, the projects also contributes to minimizing the environmental impacts of transport and promotes environmental considerations in transport infrastructure development. Furthermore, the project will instantly improve the cost- and time-efficiencies of the planning processes in the participating cities and regions, as it provides planners cross-border cooperation and mutual learning opportunities.

The project addresses the Europe 2020’s Strategy’s Priority “Sustainable growth: Sustainable growth - for a resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy”. The priority’s key issues “building a low-carbon economy and reducing emissions”; “harnessing EU-scale networks to give businesses an additional competitive advantage” and “improving the business environment” are at the core of developing smoother, co-modal connections to airports. Furthermore, under the “Sustainable growth” priority there are two flagship initiatives, “Resource-efficient Europe” and “Industrial policy for the globalisation era”. AirRail will contribute to them by developing the accessibility of Baltic Sea surrounding airports by more ecological

passenger transport modes and by enabling improved access to European and global transport and business networks; thus promoting business development and entrepreneurship.

Short description of the main project (including need for the project and the expected outcome):

In the accelerating global competition for investments and new and/or sustained entrepreneurial activities, mobility issues are becoming an all the time more crucial competitive advantage for regions. Smooth, reliable and fast passenger transport connections to airports contribute to the vitality of both central and peripheral areas, being one of the key factors of companies' location decisions, and influencing citizens' residence preferences.

However, in several regions and cities with mid-sized airports (500.000-1.500.000 passengers / year) around the Baltic Sea, the environmentally-friendly rail-based airport connections are still missing. One of the key hindrances to the development is that creating the connections is expensive, but also a very complicated process: it starts from drafting the first land-use plans, involves several stakeholders and decision-making phases, and ends even a decade or two later in the actual infrastructure project implementation.

The AirRail Main Project will create a planning and decision-making model for developing airport – railway network connections. The model and the related identified and developed methods will cover the four main fields of planning involved in these types of initiatives: land-use planning, transport and logistics planning, financing plans and network/stakeholder cooperation plans. There is a heavy need for the model, as currently no such exist. The project will instantly improve the cost- and time-efficiencies of the process of developing rail connections to airports in the participating cities and regions. The model will be applicable to countries outside the project and to development initiatives of different scales.

When creating the model, the project consortium will actively seek for methods and best practices from cities, where such connection development processes have been successfully implemented. In addition, the project will work on setting up a network of cities that are currently planning or realizing airport – railway connections. Regions, transport operators and other stakeholders can also join the network.

One of the innovative features in the Main Project is, that in order to maximise the benefits of the international cooperation and accelerate knowledge transfer, it will organise Working Weeks, when the consortium will convene in one partner city to work on that particular city's/region's individual questions and challenges. External experts will be invited to the working week meetings to provide special knowledge and also citizens will be provided a possibility to express their views at a public session.

The main outcome of the project is the internationally applicable planning and decision-making model for developing airport – railway network connections. The other important outcome is the Baltic network of airport connection developers and stakeholders, which will continue joint learning and problem-solving activities after the Main Project, all through the actual infrastructure creation phase.

Coordinator organisation's contact details

Name of the organization
in original language

Oulun kaupunki / yhdyskunta- ja ympäristöpalvelut

Name of the organization
in English language

City of Oulu / Urban and environmental services

City

Oulu

Country

Finland

Website

<http://www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/housing-and-construction>

Contact person

Name

Kaija Puhakka

Phone

+358 44 7032301

E-mail

kaija.puhakka@ouka.fi