

Notification of decision EU-support

The Managing Authority has on the 2024-06-18 made a formal decision to allocate 229 678 EUR from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to the project. The support from ERDF is 65,00% of eligible costs.

Project name	Oummu pàjjel raaj (People cross the borders)
Reference number	20366500
Priority	Education, culture and sustainable tourism
Specific objective	Culture and sustainable tourism
Type of project	Regular project
Sub-area	Sápmi
Lead Partner EU	Inarin kunta
Lead Partner Norway	SØR-VARANGER KOMMUNE
Project partners Norway	STIFTELSEN DEANU JA VÀRJJAT MUSEASIIDA/ TANA OG VARANGER MUSEUMSSIIDA
Project start date	2024-09-01
Project end date	2026-08-31

Justification for decision

The Steering Committee of sub-area Sápmi has on 2024-06-12 selected the project to be financed by Interreg Aurora.

The project meets the requirements set by the programme regarding cross-border cooperation, specific objective, sustainable development, partnership, logical, value for money and relevance for target group.

Project summary

The Oummu pàjjel raaj (English: People cross the borders) project overall objective is to strengthen the Skolt Sámi language and culture environment across the border and establish common language use arena for Skolt Sámi living in Norway and Finland.

The project develops a sustainable operating model for the preservation, support, promotion and development of Skolt Sámi language and culture environment, serving the entire Skolt Sámi area and community across the border and providing accessible and low-threshold cultural activities and learning opportunities on the regular basis. An action plan for the cross-border Skolt Sámi language and culture centre will be developed during the project.

The project builds an vibrant cross-border language and culture Skolt Sámi community, contributing to wellbeing, social cohesion in the region and making it more connected

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on many different levels. The project will sustain and develop Sámi knowledge, skills and competences in early, school, higher and life-long education, capacities of all parties involved to work cross-border, digital and distant learning education opportunities.

The project activities will involve Skolt Sámi people of all age groups, all genders, with different learning needs, both professional and individual, living in and outside the region, providing nets of support for the entire language environment. The quality change that project aims at is shifting to a positive attitude towards Skolt Sámi language and culture, and enabling language learning support and motivation at different levels. In addition, the project will increase visibility of Skolt Sámi language and culture on a larger scale, inviting wider audiences to introduce with it.

Activities

Workpackages / Activities	Start date – End date	Cost
<p>WP 1. Cooperation and knowledge exchange between the institutions for cross-border Skolt Sámi language and culture revitalisation work</p>	<p>2024-09-01 – 2026-08-30</p>	<p>155 300</p>
<p>The aim of this work package is to increase collaboration between regular partners and associated partners, representing municipal authorities, Sámi culture organisations, Sámi educational and research institutions, and Sámi governmental bodies, and Skolt Sámi community organisations to develop joint solutions and enhance joint knowledge production. The work package include kick-off and concluding project seminars, mapping Skolt Sámi language and cultural professionals to cooperate in the project, thus developing wider professional network and partnerships, and setting a working group for development structure and strategies for the future Skolt Sámi cross-border language and culture network.</p> <p>Communication activities for the WP 1: The project will make a poster about the project with indication of its financiers to the premises of the partner institutions, update the project information at the Interreg Aurora portal, participate in the events organised by the Interreg Aurora and project experience exchange related events. The project will systematically inform the financing body about project developments, participation in the events, etc. The communication strategy for the project will be developed. The project will have a webpage and a FB page, where the information about the project news, events, project materials and products will be published. Responsible partner: Inari municipality.</p>		
<p>1.1- Kick-off seminar & launching event</p>	<p>2024-09-01 – 2026-08-30</p>	<p>5 000</p>
<p>The project kick-off seminar will be organised at the beginning of the project with participation of the regular and associated partners and the Steering group. The following matters will be covered: project administration, finances, reporting, partners responsibilities, project activities and schedule, internal and external communication. During the kick-off seminar, the exit strategy for the project will be covered as well and monitoring and adjusting measures and strategies will be discussed. The project launch will be in conjunction with Skolt Sámi language week in October 2024 and will organise a project presentation part, cultural part and community event to inform the main stakeholders and target group about the project and invite them to close cooperation and participation in the project. The project FB page will be launched. Responsible partners: Inari municipality, Sør-Varanger municipality, Ä'vv Skolt Sámi Museum. Start date - End date: 1.09.2024-30.10.2024</p>		

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1.2- Mapping the Skolt Sámi language and culture professionals across the border and reaching out to the Skolt Sami community at wider scale	2024-09-01 – 2026-08-30	25 000
<p>In order to increase the project and partner institutions capacities and unite the resources available, the project will engage with Skolt Sámi professionals living and working in Finland and Norway and invite them to close cooperation in the project as experts for the project activities. Another important task in the very beginning of the project is to reach out to those who would like to receive basic education in Skolt Sámi language and culture on the Norwegian side, because their engagement is needed when preparing and tailoring the hybrid online/offline pilot course in Skolt Sámi language and culture that will be developed by Sámi Educational Institute in WP 2. On the base of pre-project work, it is expected that 10-20 people will be ready to start learning the language on the Norwegian side.</p> <p>The mapping will be implemented via surveys and focus groups. This will be the starting activity of the project, and the mapping process will be launched after the kick-off meeting, where the main directions, target institutions and tools for the mapping will be agreed with the partners. The mapping will be organised jointly by LP Finland and LP Norway, with participation of all partners (communication channels, reaching out to key persons, etc.). The outputs of this activity will be up-to-date Skolt Sámi language and cultural professionals database for cooperation activities in the project that can be internally disseminated to the partner institutions with the persons' consent; a database of those who would like to start learning Skolt Sámi language in pilot course in Norway in spring 2025.</p> <p>Communication activities for this activity 1.2. will include internal partner meetings, defining reaching out channels such as media, social media, newsletters of partners, etc., as well on-site surveys dissemination at partner institutions. Responsible partners: Inari Municipality, Ä'vv Skolt Sámi Museum.</p> <p>Start date - End date: 1.10.2024-1.02.2025</p>		
1.3- Developing a road map for cross-border Skolt Sami language centre and culture network - background research, structure development, strategy development	2024-09-01 – 2026-08-30	120 000
<p>The aim of the activity is to deepen the collaboration and common understanding on the future of Skolt Sámi language and culture revitalisation. The project will establish a working group consisting of project staff of LP Finland and LP Norway, Ä'vv Skolt Sámi Museum, project associated partners, Sámi Parliaments of Norway and Finland, Ministry of Culture of Finland and Culture Department of Norway, and experts from Giellagas Institute of Oulu University, Sámi Allaskuvla and Troms University, experts from Sámi Giellagaldu to develop the road map for establishing cross-border Skolt Sámi language centre and culture network. During 2025-2026, the working group will systematically work on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - background investigation for the establishment of the cross-border Skolt Sami language centre and culture network - mapping out the cross-border Skolt Sámi language planning measures together with the language experts - investments and funding needed to establish a permanent language centre - concluding an action plan for the centre, with structure of the centre, strategy, role 		

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and areas of responsibility and activities mapped out
- in addition, testing new formats of cross-border cultural community activities will be implemented in the WP 3

The output of the activity 1.2. will be an action plan for establishing cross-border Skolt Sámi language centre and culture network. The project will apply for the continuation funding in spring 2026 for opening the centre shortly after the project completion.

Communication activities: 6 internal meetings of the working group, communicating on the work progress on the project channels and on the inter-institutional level. The action plan will be published online on the partner institutions channels, disseminated to expert/stakeholder networks, and presented during the final seminar. Responsible partners: Inari Municipality, Ä'vv Skolt Sámi Museum, Sør-Varanger municipality

Start date - End date: 1.01.2025-31.05.2026

1.4- Organising a concluding seminar	2024-09-01 – 2026-08-30	5 300
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At the concluding seminar, the project partners will present the outcomes and outputs of the project and plans for the future. Also the internal session for the project reporting matters will be organised for the regular partners. The seminar will be open for the stakeholders as municipality workers, Sámi organisations, educational institutions, Skolt Sámi community, and wider audience interested in the project. The information about the final seminar will be published on the partners websites and social media. The seminar will include the feedback session with the Skolt Sámi community to plan the future steps, and cultural programme in Skolt Sámi.

Start date - end date: 31.05.-31.08.2026

WP 2. Developing new cross-border learning opportunities and competences in Skolt Sámi language and culture	2024-09-30 – 2026-01-31	185 000
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Lack of learning and teaching materials, and learning capacities were one of the main discussion topics during the pre-project. There is critical shortage of learning and teaching materials in Skolt Sámi and lack of innovative materials (e.g. especially suitable for young peoples use). Moreover, there are no teaching materials for the Norwegian use at all. On the Norwegian side, it is important to do preliminary work at the project beginning to better understand what learning and teaching materials are needed in the first place, because the human resources to do this work are limited. This work will be done in cooperation with Sámi Parliament in Finland, Giellagas Institute of Oulu University and preliminary consultations with the specialists have been made. The aim is to produce materials and learning formats that will be used after the project completion.

There has been a great interest and direct request from the community to organise a pilot basic course in Skolt Sami language and culture from the Skolt Sámi living in Norway. Preparatory discussions about it were held from 2021 in the framework of Torkel Rasmussens research with Sámi Education Institute staff and again during the IA pre-project in 2023. This project suggests launch of the pilot course in the study year 2025. This measure is supposed to become a game-changer in Skolt Sámi language and culture situation in Norway.

An important part of this work package is also organising continuous exchange of the

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expertise of Inari municipality to Sør-Varanger municipality in order to examine, how the incorporation of Skolt Sámi knowledge and culture can be started. The communication for WP 2.1. include internal communication and meetings and the post/press-releases of the meetings for the partners websites. For the info packages, marketing and dissemination measures will be organised. Responsible partner: Á'vv Skolt Sámi Museum

2.1 Translation and adjustment of the existing Finnish teaching materials for the Norwegian use

2024-09-30
– 2026-01-31

25 000

On the Finnish side, there are learning and teaching materials in Skolt Sámi for the beginners and intermediate levels produced by the Finnish Skolt Sámi specialists and published by Sámi Parliament of Finland. There is a need to make a selection of the materials (Tiõrv textbook is one of the main candidates), and to translate them from Finnish into Norwegian, re-write and adjust the textbook for the Norwegian speakers. The project has preliminary approval for getting the original source data materials from the Sámi Parliament of Finland for that. The preliminary selection of the main materials has also been done. The costs for the adaptation work include the purchase of the authors rights, rework or adaptation of pictures for the Norwegian use, fees of the specialist for translation work and adaptation work. The project will launch the process of adaptation of learning materials in the beginning of the project, so they can be already in use by the students of the pilot course of Skolt Sámi language organised by Sámi Educational Institute for Norwegian side.

Products of this activity will be the Norwegian teaching materials in Skolt Sámi language in digital format, available for downloading for free. Communication activities for the 2.1. will include internal communication between the project coordinators with the materials author, person responsible in the Sámi Parliament of Finland, and the person(s) who will adapt and translate the materials. Promotion measures will include announcements and links on the social media and websites of the partners, newsletter of the partners, and learning materials presentation for all interested in Skolt Sámi language. The co-financing of this activity in the project is agreed with Norwegian Sámi Parliament. Responsible partner: Inari municipality.

Start date - End date: 1.10.2024-1.03.2025

2.2- Piloting of the Skolt Sámi language and culture basic study course for the Norwegian side

2024-09-30
– 2026-01-31

100 000

The aim is to increase the number of Skolt Sámi speakers and users of the language in Norway. In respond to that need, the Sámi Education Institute will develop a basic course in Skolt Sámi language and culture for the Norwegian Skolt Sámi who are ready to start learning the language.

The preliminary plan of the course is ready. It includes 8 credits, about 100 hours of online lessons and 100 hours of independent work. The linguistic goal of the training for the student is to know the basic structures, core grammar and basic vocabulary of Skolt Sámi. The student will be able to communicate in situations related to daily life, to tell about self and surroundings, read easy texts and discuss easy topics, as well as write short essays. In the Skolt Sámi culture course part, the student learns basic information about the Skolt Sámi culture. The course will initially introduce to the Sámi historical area, the Sámi people, the Sámi languages and the Sámi culture in general. In the course, the student will learn more about the key events and turning points in the

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history of the Skolt Sámi, as well as the main social and cultural elements. In addition, the offer includes the creation of a learning platform and the recording of lectures for later viewing. Language of instruction can be English or Norwegian.

The outputs of the activity will be a hybrid course in Skolt Sámi for Norwegians, and there will be about 10-20 new Norwegian Skolt Sámi speakers at the end of the pilot course.

The communication will include internal arrangements upon the preparation of the course between the project staff and Sámi Education Institute, course promotion and open call. During the study year, there will be interviews organised with the Norwegian students (in a form of a videodiary/series of publications, the invitation to cooperate will be sent to YLE and NRK at the beginning of the project). Responsible partner: Inari municipality.

Start date - End date: 1.10.2024-31.12.2025

2.3- Developing cooperation in early childhood education and school education in Skolt Sámi language between Inari and Sør-Varanger municipalities	2024-09-30 – 2026-01-31	60 000
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The aim is to develop cooperation between Inari and Sør-Varanger municipalities on the matters of Skolt Sámi language and culture early education. The aim is to mitigate the influence of the border, and legal obstacles such as differences in legislation and official status of the Skolt Sámi in Finland and Norway.

The project aims to share the experience of Inari municipality in early childhood education in Skolt Sámi (language nests in kindergarten and school). On the Norwegian side, there is a need to thoroughly investigate the possibility of establishing a language nest in Sør-Varanger municipality in the future. There has been also a request to organise simpler language learning activities in kindergardens and schools in Sør-Varanger municipality.

The work will be organised as a series of meetings and workshops with municipal workers in Inari and Sør-Varanger municipalities, which include meetings with kindergarten and school staff, education department executives, and the parents of the children attending language nests. The project will consult and take advantage of Deanuleagis sámástit-language centre experience in the Tana river region, where the cross-border cooperation between kindergartens and schools in Finnish Utsjoki and Norwegian Sirma municipalities has been developed.

As a result of this activity 2.3., infopackages about Skolt Sámi language and culture will be developed for the Pasvik Folkehøgskole and other schools, as well as simple and low-threshold introductory materials and offers (basic words, tours to Á'vv Skolt Sámi Museum for pupils, nature trips and exploring Skolt Saami nature knowledge, etc.). These infopackages can be used after the project completion. The competences on Skolt Sámi language and culture matters of the municipal workers in Inari and Sør-Varanger municipalities will increase and the sustainable cooperation developed.

Start date - End date: 1.02.2025-1.02.2026

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<p>WP 3. Enhancing culture: measures for continuation of Skolt Skolt Sámi traditions and rediscovering Skolt Skolt Sámi culture and identity</p>	<p>2024-10-31 – 2026-08-30</p>	<p>203 000</p>
<p>Skolt Skolt Sámi living Finland and Norway are one people, and building relations and strengthening community ties is one of the main aims of this project. The project suggest a large variety of people-to-people actions, aiming to build mutual trust, develop family and intergenerational relations, strengthening own identity and increasing capacities to act and influence the things related to Skolt Sámi matters as one people. The task of the project is also to increase the use of the Skolt Sámi language in Inari and Sør-Varanger municipality and to bring Skolt Sámi people living on both sides of the border together more.</p> <p>The cultural activities suggested in this WP will be considered as pilot activities for the future Skolt Sámi language and culture centre. The aim is to test new formats, assess the demand and interest to the activities in terms of suggested content.</p> <p>Communication activities WP 3: The project will disseminate invitations to participate in project activities through the partner institutions, including early and school education, through e-mailing list, FB-events and groups, direct invitations. The project will gather feedback from the participants of the courses/events, make events-related surveys to analyse the success and needs for improvement. The project will utilise the thematic and topics of the activities WP 3 to tell the general audience of the project social media channel about the Skolt Sámi culture and language, making Skolt Sámi knowledge and cultural heritage more visible and present in the region. Responsible partners: all project partners.</p>		
<p>3.1- Skolt Sámi language and culture camps</p>	<p>2024-10-31 – 2026-08-30</p>	<p>80 000</p>
<p>The aim of the Skolt Sámi culture camps is to provide low-threshold opportunities to meet, regular cross-border people-to-people contacts for the participants of all ages, learning traditional natural Skolt Sámi environment, and to explore living like a Skolt Sámi and together as a community.</p> <p>In the lifespan of the project, 2 summer and 1 winter camps will be organised in different places of the traditional Skolt Sámi settling area in Finland and Norway.</p> <p>This will be a project implication to another way of learning (e.g. not only language teaching), encouraging to be in own language and culture, in safe space and friendly environment. The camps will allow to get a scent of the culture, rebuild connections across the border, to sing, dance, tell stories, get to know families, cook traditional food, pick herbs, etc. The thematic of the camps is inspired by the traditional year cycle of the Skolt Sámi.</p> <p>The first camp will be organised in cooperation with Pasvik Folkehøgskole at their premises in summer 2025 for the participants from Finland and Norway. There will be different kinds of courses on handicrafts from beads to traditional wood work, and basic language courses in between. Skolt Sámi language masters as teachers and story tellers will be invited. In the end of the week, there could be a public event with old photos history, etc. On the base of the feedback of the first summer camp participants, two other summer camps will be planned.</p> <p>The activities 3.1. will make a great input to continuation and development of Skolt</p>		

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Sámi traditions and customs, form intergenerational and inter-family cross-border connections, will contribute to cohesion and well-being of Skolt Sámi people across the border. The communication activities will aim at reaching out widely to Skolt Sámi community in and outside IA region to participate in the culture camps. The master-classes on handicrafts will be recorded and published on the project website and channels.

3.2- Genealogy circles and history courses with researchers support for the project

2024-10-31
– 2026-08-30

20 000

The knowledge of own identity, culture, family history and roots is lacking in many Skolt Sámi people. Self-identification of Skolt Sámi people in Norway is even on the lower level. Thus building family trees, learning about the relatives on both sides of the border, studying old photos and identifying the people depicted on them, studying place names is important for self-determination of Skolt Sámi people. The project will organise cross-border genealogy, history, and archaeology circles that will be led by the specialists from the Finnish and Norwegian side.

The courses will be supported with theoretic information on language revitalisation in form of lectures, community based conversations and discussions. This is important in terms of supporting the Skolt Sámi people who are eager to take the language back, as it may increase the confidence of new speakers to learn the language. This work may include making of linguistic biographies, when the researcher conveys a dialogue with a person about their personal history experience how the language has been lost, and about the motivation behind taking language back.

Outputs of the activity 3.2. will be strengthening of cultural heritage and identity of Skolt Sami people, and making more data and knowledge available for the use of researchers, history and language experts. Communication activities will include invitation of participants via project partners websites and social media and peer support group for the participants.

Start date - End date 1.03.2025-31.05.2026

3.3- Organising new cross-border Skolt Sámi language activities for people of all ages on a regular basis

2024-10-31
– 2026-08-30

103 000

The aim is to diversify the supply of cultural activities in Skolt Sámi and multiply arenas for using the language. The project will organise a wide variety of cross-border events to introduce with Skolt Sámi culture, and present new formats of cross-border events for all ages. The examples of the events will include:

- Introductory joint trips to Inari for Norwegians and Finns, where one can get to know Siida Museum, the Gramota treasure of the Skolt Sámi in the Sámi archive, YLE Sápmi and SAKK's activities regarding Skolt Sámi, as well as to the activities of Sámi Parliaments, etc. In Siida, it is possible to order a comprehensive guided tour, also to the storerooms. Such an excursion would strengthen the self-esteem, cohesion and sense of belonging of the Skolt Sámi participants, and thus contribute to the strengthening of the culture and interest in learning the language. This would be particularly important for Norwegians, but also for Finnish Skolt Sámi. 10 trips will be organised, 20 participants each

- Organising forest trips and hiking for Skolt Sámi youth (as an example, from Nellim

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to Norway and from Norway to Nellim), campfire circles and launching a dedicated social media channel/group for it. The trips will be organised in cooperation with NIBIO.

- Organising a cross-border Skolt Sámi language cafe for adults, once a month, live and remotely

- Collaboration with Pikene på Broen, joint artistic research/production related to Skolt Sámi history, states border anniversary in 2026, and the thematic of home, influenced by the others. The art project will be presented at the festival 2026, contributing to more visibility of Skolt Sámi complicated history and culture.

Outputs of the activities: Diversifying cross-border accessible low-threshold activities and solutions, continuation of Skolt Sámi traditions and customs. Another output will be making traditional Skolt Sámi cultural heritage more visible in the programme region.

Contributions to the output indicators

Output indicators	Target value
Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	1
Organisations cooperating across borders	6

Contributions to the result indicators

Result indicators	Target value
Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	1
Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	3

Budget EU

Cost categories	Inarin kunta	Total
Staff cost	252 393	252 393
Other costs 40%	100 957	100 957
Sum total costs	353 350	353 350

Financier	Inarin kunta	Total
Inari kommun	37 102	37 102
Lapplands förbund	86 570	86 570
EU-support	229 678	229 678
Total financing	353 350	353 350

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Appeal

This decision can not be appealed.

Decision-making officer

Tina Nilsson has made the decision after a presentation by Veronica Estling.

Reporting and payment applications

The payment application regarding the EU-funding is submitted in Min Ansökan by the Lead Partner EU with a joint progress/final report for the whole project. For instructions on how to report, please see

www.interregaurora.eu

Period	Start date	End date	Date for submission
1	2024-09-01	2024-12-31	2025-02-28
2	2025-01-01	2025-04-30	2025-06-30
3	2025-05-01	2025-08-31	2025-10-31
4	2025-09-01	2025-12-31	2026-02-28
5	2026-01-01	2026-04-30	2026-06-30
6	2026-05-01	2026-08-31	2026-10-31

Questions

For questions regarding this decision, please contact Anders Linga.

Lead partner EU is responsible for distributing this notification to all project partners.

ANNEX:

General conditions – support from Interreg Aurora (EU - ERDF)

All partners shall make sure the project is implemented in accordance with the regulations of the European Union, the national laws, any other provisions and documents applicable to the EU support, as well as the programme manual for Interreg Aurora and in particular:

- keep separate accounts for the project (not applicable to flat-rates)
- pay the expenditures of the project within deadlines for reporting
- follow the regulations regarding public procurement
- keep all project documents and accounts available for a period of seven years following the end of the calendar year when the project was formally closed by the Managing Authority, or longer if it is stipulated in other rules applicable to the project partner
- repay to the Lead Partner any amounts unduly paid
- highlight the support from EU, and upon request, make communication and visibility material available for use by Union institutions, bodies, offices or agencies.

The Lead partner shall, in particular:

- conclude a partnership agreement with all partners of the project,
- ensure implementation of the project within the project period,
- ensure that the expenditure presented by all partners has been paid in implementing the project and corresponds to the activities in the decision of EU-support to the project,
- deliver progress- and final reports regarding the implementation of the project
- make payment applications regarding the EU-support for the project
- ensure that the other partners receive their part of the EU-support
- as soon as known, inform about any changes regarding the implementation of the project
- repay to the Managing Authority any amounts unduly paid.