



# Regional Development Plan

for Rural Northern Savo 2023–2027



Elinkeino-, liikenne- ja  
ympäristökeskus



Euroopan unionin  
osarahoittama

# Increasing opportunities in the countryside

## Regional Development Plan for Rural Northern Savo 2023–2027

Regional Development Plan for Rural Northern Savo 2023–2027 “**Increasing opportunities in the countryside**” is based on Finland’s national CAP plan\* as well as regional strengths and development needs.

The aim of the CAP plan is to enable active and sustainable food production and a vibrant countryside in Finland. The plan emphasises climate and environmental goals in particular. The implementation of the regional development plan is the responsibility of the ELY Centre of Northern Savo.

The implementation of the plan is partly financed by the EU’s European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and national funding, which includes state and municipal funds. The operators’ own funding is also involved.

\* CAP stands for Common Agricultural Policy, the EU’s agricultural policy.

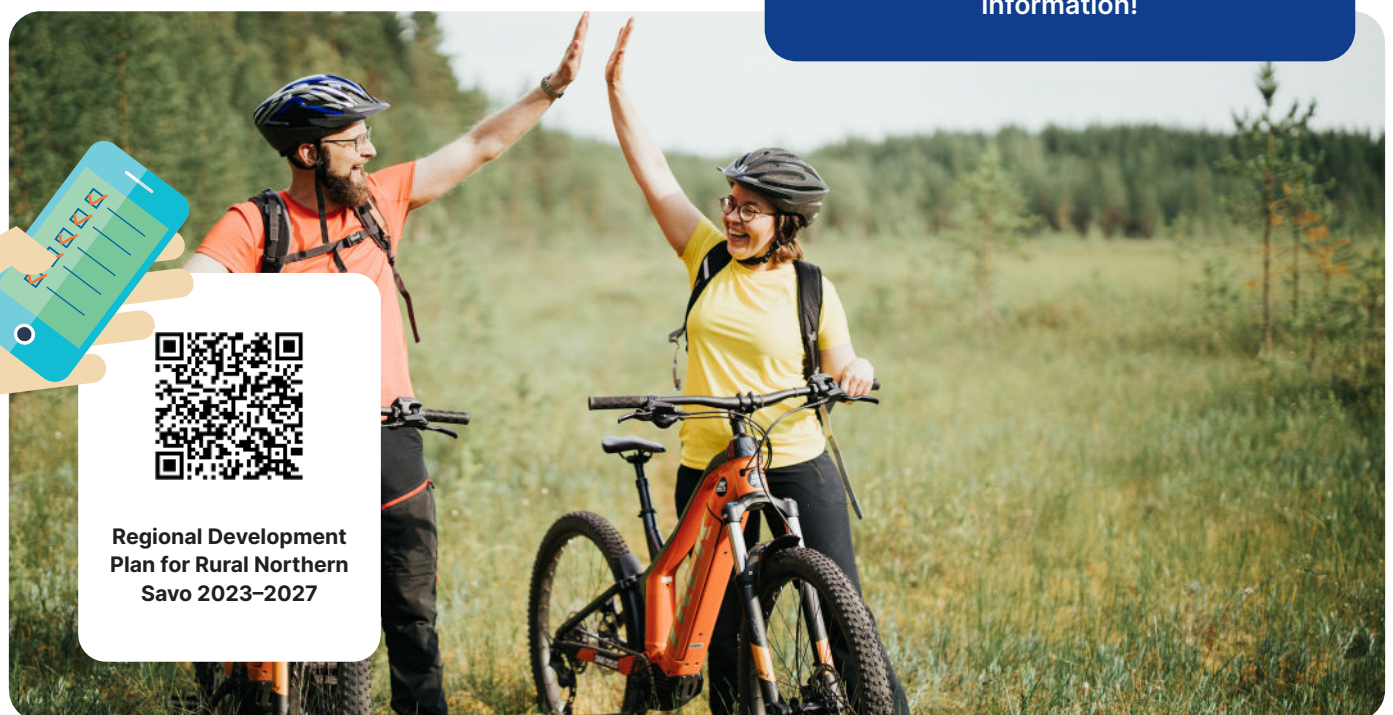
In North Savo, the Leader groups also finance local projects and corporate development. The Leader groups select the actions to be funded according to the priorities of the local development strategies. There are four different local action groups operating in Northern Savo:

- Local Action Group Kalakukko ry,
- Local Action Group Mansikka ry,
- Local Action Group Ylä-savon Veturi ry and
- SavonLuotsi Leader ry.

In Joroinen, which is part of Northern Savo, Leader funding is granted by SavonLuotsi Leader ry. The Regional Development Plan for Rural Northern Savo 2023–2027 is available for review and download on the ELY Centre website.

[ely-keskus.fi](http://ely-keskus.fi) ► Pohjois-Savo ► Elinkeinot ► Maaseutuelinkeinot ► Maaseudun kehittäminen

Be sure to select Northern Savo (Pohjois-Savo) from the drop-down menu on the page to see regional information!



Regional Development  
Plan for Rural Northern  
Savo 2023–2027



## The objectives of the Northern Savo Development Plan are as follows:

- strengthening profitable, sustainable and developing agriculture and the food system,
- increasing competence,
- promoting entrepreneurship and
- developing the operating environment

## The development plan focuses on:

1. a sustainable and evolving food system
2. environment and climate
3. a vibrant countryside

As cross-cutting themes, the measures take into account the promotion of competence, digitalisation and innovations in the strategic priorities of the region.

The Regional Development Plan for Rural Northern Savo has been prepared in cooperation with local operators, taking into account the focuses and objectives of the regional programme, structural fund programme and Leader groups' local development strategies.



## Northern Savo Vision 2027

Northern Savo is an attractive, internationally known food region built on regional production. Relevant climate and environmental goals have been incorporated into the development of industries, taking economic and social sustainability into account. Resilient and innovative rural entrepreneurship and a developing bioeconomy are a key part of a vibrant countryside. Research and training competence strengthens vitality.

# Focus 1:

## A sustainable and evolving food system

Profitable, sustainable and developing agriculture and the food system are strengthened.

Sustainable and developing agriculture and food production ensure security of supply even in the face of various crises.

The turnover of the food industry has been growing, and there is a demand for high-quality, locally produced foods. The food export markets have changed significantly in the last few years, which has led to things such as restrictions on milk and meat production which has, in turn, reduced the profitability of farms. A prerequisite for the development of the food system and sustainable production is an improvement in profitability in primary production, so that there will be profitable farms in the future.

### Objectives and effectiveness


The aim is to:

- Improve the business profitability of primary production and ensure that primary production has permanence. A prerequisite for permanence is that production is sustainable and evolving
- farmers' competence is enhanced to meet the development challenges and production targets of the sector
- competence and professionalism in the food industry increase and business development opportunities improve
- cooperation between different actors of the food system deepens
- the availability of new information, product development expertise and technology, as well as the overall product development processes, improve
- products from Northern Savo are successfully placed on domestic and international markets



Northern Savo is a nationally significant dairy, meat and berry production region, and the entire food chain is an important employer in the region.





The measures of the Climate and Environment Programme for Rural Finnish Lake District, which was prepared for the area, are used to promote the achievement of the targets of the climate and environment focus point.

## Focus 2: Environment and climate

A low-carbon economy is supported and climate change is mitigated. A sustainable and profitable forest chain, environmental management, bio-circular economy solutions and adaptation to climate change are supported.

Responsible and profitable business operations in agriculture, forestry and other business activities promote a low-carbon economy and climate change mitigation. Agriculture and forestry produce bioeconomy solutions to the challenges of climate change. The sustainable use of forests not only promotes carbon sequestration, but also helps store carbon long-term in, for example, wooden structures. The diverse utilisation of forests also offers opportunities for nature tourism and recreational use.

By developing cultivation methods and increasing competence, it is possible to improve nutrient recycling and carbon sequestration in arable land, increase biodiversity and improve yields. Linking crop rotations to the bioeconomy more extensively provides opportunities for decentralised energy production, energy self-sufficiency and increasing biodiversity.

### Objectives and effectiveness

The aim is to:

- Increase carbon sequestration in agriculture by storing carbon in the long term in timber construction, for example
- increase the soil mulch and reduce the erosion of arable land
- reduce emissions from agriculture and forestry into waterways
- preserve traditional biotopes and cultural landscapes that are valuable for biodiversity
- relevant climate and environmental goals have been incorporated into the development of industries, taking economic and social sustainability into account

## Focus 3:

### A vibrant countryside

The vitality and accessibility of the countryside is improved and rural entrepreneurship is supported.

A prerequisite for the vitality of the countryside is a regenerating and attractive operating environment, where entrepreneurship, multi-location and leisure activities are supported and services are accessible.

It is natural to develop bioeconomy business operations in rural areas where bioeconomy raw materials, ecosystems and competence are close by. Cross-industry cooperation makes it possible to identify new types of products, services and markets.

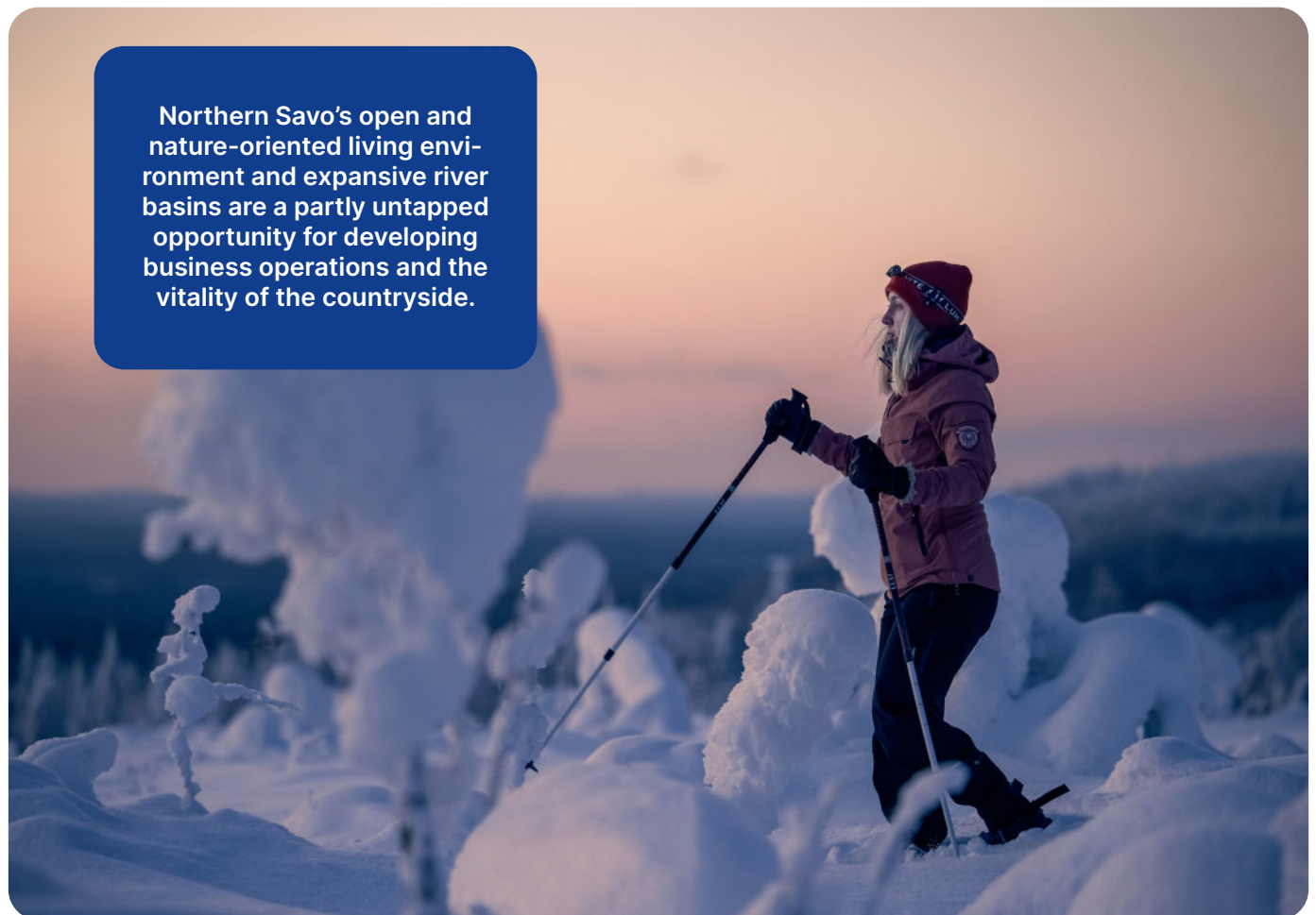
High-speed telecommunication connections can be used to create opportunities for success in rural areas and prerequisites for business operations. Improving broadband connections can contribute to job development in rural areas.

### Objectives and effectiveness

The aim is to:

- ensure that new companies and business operations are established in the area and that the operating conditions of existing companies are improved
- make rural entrepreneurship diverse and regenerating
- ensure that companies make extensive use of the region's research and training competence
- ensure that companies and entrepreneurs have successors
- have extensive broadband connections in the rural areas of Northern Savo
- utilise digitality in service production

Northern Savo's open and nature-oriented living environment and expansive river basins are a partly untapped opportunity for developing business operations and the vitality of the countryside.





## Support for rural development

The ELY Centre of Northern Savo supports the investments and development of farms, rural companies and small-scale enterprises carrying out the first-stage processing of agricultural products. We also grant support to projects that develop livelihoods and increase the vitality of the countryside. Northern Savo is, in its entirety, the implementation area of the EU's rural funding, with the exception of the city centre area of Kuopio in the context of business subsidies for rural companies.

## Support for farms

The ELY Centre grants subsidies for the investments and operational development of farms.

- The aim of investment subsidies is to develop and support the structure and competitiveness of farms.
- Setting-up aid for young farmers is used to finance farms when they change owners, either through acquisitions or due to the next generation taking over.
- The reimbursement of non-productive investment can be sought for the establishment of wetlands and the initial clearing and fencing of traditional biotopes and natural pastures.
- Neuvo is a guidance system for farms, and its counselling services are intended for all farmers.
- Support is also available for farms that diversify their operations by engaging in business activities outside the agricultural and forestry industries.





## Business subsidies

Subsidies for rural businesses can be granted for developing and starting a company's business operations, the related investments and investigating the prerequisites for the investments. Subsidies are granted to micro and small-scale enterprises and, in the case of processing undertakings of agricultural products, medium-sized enterprises. Subsidies can be granted to both companies that are just starting their operations and companies that are expanding their existing operations.

### Development support

- For a starting or already operating company (not agriculture and forestry)
- For developing business operations (e.g. product, technology, ICT, marketing, export and competence development)
- Emphasis on the acquisition of external competence (consultancy)
- Support 50%, for costs between EUR 5,000 and EUR 100,000.

### Start-up support

- For starting up non-agricultural and non-forestry business activities carried out on a farm
- Aim for annual turnover is at least EUR 15,000
- The business activities together with agriculture and forestry are the entrepreneur's main source of income
- Support for costs of EUR 10,000.

### Investment support

- Investments in micro, small-scale and farm-linked enterprises
- For starting and expanding companies
- The level of support depends on factors such as the size of the company, the type of countryside and the sector of activity of the project
- The support is divided into three groups:
  - *Investments related to renewable energy and biofuels*
  - *Investments related to the processing and trading of agricultural and natural products*
  - *Investments of micro and small-scale enterprises and multidisciplinary farms*
- Investments in fixed assets (machines, equipment and buildings including construction)
- Intangible investments such as the procurement of software, patents and manufacturing rights.
- Levels of support differentiated by type of countryside and support zone 20–50%
- Also for investment feasibility surveys (aid 50%, EUR 3,000–50,000)

The investment must be essential for the establishment, growth or development of the company. Rural business support can also be applied for from a Leader group. Leader groups mainly finance the starting and development of companies operating in the local markets and their investments.

## Company and farmer group projects

- For a group of companies or farmers consisting of 3–10 companies or farmers
- The group develops its activities together and company-specifically
- The goal may be, for example, the development of production cooperation, marketing and sales cooperation, or product family planning.
- The project can be managed by, for example, an advisory organisation or a development company
- 75% support

## Project support

Development projects can be used to implement ideas that improve rural livelihoods, services and quality of life. The results of the project will benefit agricultural and forestry entrepreneurs and other rural entrepreneurs, communities and residents. Public or private bodies may apply for project support. Support may be granted for things such as salary costs, expert fees, the purchase of outsourced services, travel costs and other project costs.

**The development project may be:**

### Training and/or communications (training project or communications project)

The measures may include, for example, vocational group training for entrepreneurs on business development, communications for entrepreneurs and residents about new service methods or increasing energy and environmental awareness.

Support level 70–100%, depending on content.



### Cooperation to develop livelihoods (cooperation project)

Through authentic cooperation between its parties, the project can develop things such as new bioeconomy products and methods or methods improving the saving of energy and the state of the environment, or micro enterprises can develop the profitability of their industry.

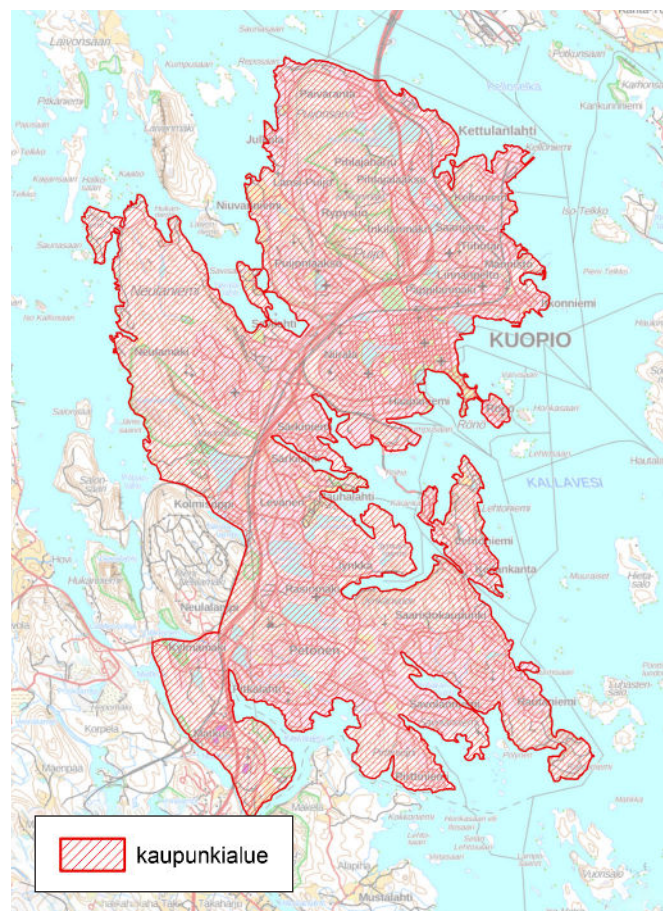
Support level 60–100%, depending on content.

### Development or investments of rural services and villages (non-profit development or investment project)

The project can, for example, develop new ways of producing rural services, increase the well-being and activities of rural residents, improve the living environment, the safety of common spaces or overall energy efficiency.

We also support the construction of village networks, investments of public utility that promote water supply, water management, biodiversity and the sustainable management of natural resources.

Support level 65–100%, depending on content.



Outlining the urban-rural area in Northern Savo 2023–2027

# Apply for funding

Contact an expert at the Northern Savo ELY Centre and present your ideas. Experts can help you with submitting your application.

Submit the application electronically in the Hyrrä service at [hyrra.ruokavirasto.fi](http://hyrra.ruokavirasto.fi).

In order to log in to Hyrrä, you need to authenticate yourself through the Suomi.fi service, available at [suomi.fi](http://suomi.fi).



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The contact detail of the experts at the ELY Centre of Northern Savo are available on the ELY Centre website and at [maaseutu.fi/pohjois-savo](http://maaseutu.fi/pohjois-savo).



## LEADER



You can apply for funding from Leader groups for local development. Contact the Leader group in your area:

### Local Action Group Kalakukko ry

[www.kalakukkory.fi](http://www.kalakukkory.fi)

Rural areas of Kuopio, Kaavi,  
Rautavaara, Siilinjärvi, Tuusniemi

### Local Action Group Mansikka ry

[www.mansikkary.fi](http://www.mansikkary.fi)

Leppävirta, Rautalampi, Suonenjoki,  
Tervo, Varkaus, Vesanto

### Local Action Group Ylä-Savon Veturi ry

[www.ylasavonveturi.fi](http://www.ylasavonveturi.fi)

Iisalmi, Keitele, Kiuruvesi, Lapinlahti,  
Pielavesi, Sonkajärvi, Vieremä

### Local Action Group SavonLuotsi ry

[www.savonluotsi.fi](http://www.savonluotsi.fi)

Joroinen



# Processing, decision-making and payment of applications

The application process for subsidies is continuous, but applications are processed at the ELY Centre by selection period. The selection periods are available on the ELY Centre website at [www.ely-keskus.fi](http://www.ely-keskus.fi) ► Pohjois-Savo ► elinkeinot ► maaseutuelinkeinot ► Maaseudun kehittäminen.

When selecting projects to be supported, the ELY Centre uses national selection criteria. The purpose of the selection criteria is to ensure equal treatment of applicants, to improve the use of funds and target the support according to the objectives of the measures, taking into account the priorities of the CAP plan and the regional development plan.

## These selection criteria emphasise things such as the following:

### Development projects:

- Contributes to the objectives of the CAP plan and the regional rural development plan
- Cost-efficiency
- Impact
- Contributes to the goals of sustainable development
- Quality

### Business subsidies:

- Execution location
- Suitability
- Feasibility
- Business
- Employment impact
- Overall sustainability

You can find out more about the selection criteria for the different forms of support at [maaseutu.fi](http://maaseutu.fi).

In addition, decision-making is guided by EU-level and national regulations.

Payments of subsidies can only be applied for electronically in the Hyrrä service. The payment of the support can only be applied for after the measure has been launched. However, the measures to be supported must not be launched before the application for support has been submitted via Hyrrä. The payment of the subsidy is subject to the condition that the beneficiary has implemented the measures approved by the subsidy decision and complied with the terms and conditions of the subsidy. The conditions for the payment of the subsidy vary by subsidy type, so it is good to read the subsidy decision and its terms carefully. All the attachments required as a condition for the payment of the subsidy must be submitted as appendices to the payment application, in order to ensure the smooth payment of the subsidy.

## Explore these as well

### [www.ely-keskus.fi/maaseudunkehittäminen](http://www.ely-keskus.fi/maaseudunkehittäminen)

Compilation of regional information. Remember to select your region's ELY Centre from the drop-down menu on the page.

### [www.maaseutu.fi](http://www.maaseutu.fi)

The site compiles information related to the EU's rural policy.

### [www.maaseutu.fi/Pohjois-Savo](http://www.maaseutu.fi/Pohjois-Savo)

Information about the EU's agricultural and rural funding, contact details of the Northern Savo rural network, the Northern Savo rural development plan, news from the countryside and project stories from past years.

### [www.maaseutuverkosto.fi](http://www.maaseutuverkosto.fi)

Common network of driving forces of rural development. Join the Northern Savo discussion group *Mahdollisuudet kasvavat maaseudulla* ("Increasing opportunities in the countryside")

### [www.agrihub.fi](http://www.agrihub.fi)

Agricultural competence network, to support agricultural and horticultural entrepreneurs.



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