



FLAG Factsheet: Åland

Leader Åland

Country: Finland

Region: Åland

Area: Mariehamn, Jomala, Finström, Eckerö, Sund, Saltvik, Geta, Lemland, Lumparland, Hammarland, Vårdö, Föglö, Sottunga, Kökar, Kumlinge, Brändö

Code: FI210

Operational: 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 programming periods

AREA

Description of the area and its main challenges

The Åland Islands is an autonomous Swedish-speaking region of Finland which forms an archipelago in the Baltic Sea at the mouth of the Gulf of Bothnia between eastern Sweden and south western Finland. There are over 6 500 skerries and islands which make up the Åland Islands. Commercial fishery targets freshwater species with gillnet and fish trap in the brackish waters, in particular Perch-pike, European whitefish, Perch, Pike, sold primarily in mainland Finland.

The main challenge faced by Åland Islands is the **profitability of the fisheries sector**, linked to cost of logistics, price competition from other countries, export embargos and large ferries destroying fishing areas.

Population: 28 983

Population Density [Inhabitants/ km²]: 19/km²

Surface area [km²]: 13 325 km²

Protected areas: Åland has 87 Natura 2000 areas (57 already set, 30 in progress), 3 472 ha land and 35 000 ha water (2% of land area).

Total employment in fisheries: 399

1. **Fishing:** 272
2. **Aquaculture:** approx. 65
3. **Processing:** 62

Women employment in fisheries: 23

STRATEGY

Short summary of the FLAG strategy

The FLAG strategy is set to increase the attractiveness of the area to encourage more people to come, live and settle in Åland by improving the aquatic environment in the Baltic Sea, expanding cooperation between all stakeholders and supporting entrepreneurship in fishing tourism.

Called "Sustainable Fishing Åland", the 2014-2020 FLAG strategy is three-pronged:

- Environment: measures that have a direct bearing on fish and water environment, and measures to improve the management of fish stocks, such as restoration and refurbishment of spawning and nursery areas;
- Knowledge: education, cooperation, raising the level of knowledge regarding fisheries, the marine environment or cultural heritage;
- Experience: improve the experience of fish and marine environment for local inhabitants and tourists, development of new activities, new services and new leisure and cultural activities.

Importance of the following objectives for the FLAG strategy

Objective	Priority (1 is low, 5 is very high)	% of the budget allocated to them in the strategy
Adding value, creating jobs, and promoting innovation along the fisheries chain	2	
Supporting diversification	2	
Enhancing and capitalising on the environmental assets	5	42%
Promoting social wellbeing and cultural heritage	4	25%
Strengthening the role of fisheries communities in local development	3	18%

Budget information

Total public budget allocated to the FLAG for 2014-2020: 600 000 €

EMFF: 219 600 €

Member State co-financing: 380 400 €

Source of co-financing: regional

Multi-funding: No

Project examples and ideas

- Training overseers and organize supervision to help monitor poaching/illegal fishing
- Restoration of a spawning area

Calls for projects

Project applications can be submitted on an on-going basis. Selection takes place twice a year: in April and September.

Website: www.leader.ax

Thematic expertise and cooperation

The FLAG is involved in transnational cooperation on seal and cormorant issues with FLAGs from Estonia, Finland and Sweden.

PARTNERSHIP

Lead partner or Responsible Legal Entity

Leader LAG Åland

FLAG members

The FLAG brings together representatives of the archipelago municipalities, fisheries sector and environment protection associations.

Number of individuals on main decision-making body/ board: 12

% of public actors (on the decision-making body): 25 %

Number of individuals/organisations in partnership/ general assembly: 12

% of fisheries actors (in the partnership): 42 %

% of environmental actors (in the partnership): 16 %

% of other private / NGO sector actors (in the partnership): 16 %

Number of contracted staff in FLAG [FTE]: 0.15

Links with LEADER or other CLLD groups:

The FLAG covers the same area as the LAG, with which it has a common local development strategy, shares its legal structure and offices and exchanges information daily.

Contact information

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Language information

Native language: Finnish

Language	Basic level	Intermediate level	Good level
English		x	
Swedish			x