

Summary of the project including objectives, main activities and achievements of the project. The summary will be published by the Managing Authority.

Race4Scale project - Development of the Multidisciplinary Educational, Business and RDI Opportunities for the Finnish-Russian Automotive and Motorsport Industry Ecosystem. The project was launched in May 2020 and continue until December 2022.

The basics of the project were as follows. Kouvola region had profiled itself as a Finnish motorsport center of expertise. Taitaja education centre trained mechanics for rally and formula teams and collaborated with major motorsport organizations. A new motor sports circuit meeting international standards had been opened in the municipality of Iitti, near Kouvola. On the other hand, there was a significant car industry in the St. Petersburg region. Many well-known western companies had car assembly plants in the region. In addition, there were companies serving this industry in the region, such as Nokian renkaat Oy, whose production was more than 80 percent from a factory in Russia.

The automotive industry is currently changing faster than ever in its history. This is particularly emphasized in the development and introduction of new car engine and fuel systems. The most significant driver here is climate change and the stricter emission requirements for traffic. A rapidly changing industry requires new skills, this also involves vehicle maintenance and repair. Education plays an important role in this. Educational institutions must be able to meet the needs of the automotive industry, even to be able to anticipate these needs.

Unfortunately, all the starting points presented in the first paragraph turned out to be useless during the project. The project was planned and approved at the end of 2019, when the Covid-19 virus and above all the worldwide lockdown caused by it was not yet known. The lockdowns ended during 2022, but in March 2022, sanctions on Russian organizations due to the war in Ukraine came into force, after which Russian project partners could no longer participate in project activities. Due to these reasons, the entire project was implemented as a remote project. For example, the project partners have never physically met with each other.

Three of the project partners were from Kouvola and three from St. Petersburg. The project included six Work Packages (WP), under which there were different Tasks. One or alternatively several organizations were responsible for the implementation of the WPs. The WPs included tailor-made workshops for students, Industry Day events for the project staff, days for the teaching staff, and several studies based on these. Regardless of the external factors mentioned above, all the work packages of the project could be implemented, although in different ways than what was mentioned in the project plan. The change to be mentioned was also a significant undershoot of the project's budget implementation. Travel and outsourcing services were not implemented much in the project.

Since the entire Race4Scale project was implemented as a remote project, it taught new operating methods to the project staff. The use of Teams and Zoom became familiar. In addition, we learned how to organize various events remotely, where e.g. the key-note speakers of the events were present. This helped to make it easier for them to be speakers at events when there was no need to travel to the location. The external communication of the project has been managed with the help of the Race4Scale web-pages produced by the project partners. Xamk's Race4Scale project pages have comprehensively presented the events implemented in the project, see: Race4Scale – Development of Automotive and Motorsport Ecosystems - Xamk