Smart Villages: Revitalising rural areas through social and digital innovation

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SMART VILLAGES - A COMMON PERSPECTIVE THROUGH DIFFERENT VISIONS
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Smart Villages Video
https://youtu.be/ckB71hb0kx0
Smart Villages

- Jobs
- Digital
- Challenges
- Villages
- People
- Basic services
- Social
- Opportunities
- Cooperation and partnerships
- Future vision
There is no one model for Smart Villages.

It is a community process, all villages can be Smart.
PILOT PROJECT
SMART ECO-SOCIAL VILLAGES

23 May 2019, Courmayeur
#EU #SmartVillages
The Smart Village Initiative

- A new concept
- Part of the future policy (result indicator in CAP strategic plans).
- EU provides a framework, Member States decide how to implement
- Many other actions at EU level (ENRD Thematic Group, SMARTA Pilot Project etc.)

The Pilot Project is one building block of the Smart Village initiative
What is the Pilot Project?

Initiated and financed by the EP, implemented by the EC.

From January 2018 to April 2019.

Study carried out by Ecorys, R.E.D, ODT and experts.

Main objective: explore characteristics, drivers and factors of success of smart villages.
Three specific objectives

1. To map the current challenges and potential to boost development in EU rural areas

2. To develop a definition of Smart Villages

3. To identify practical solutions to overcome challenges and to improve the situation in villages
The Pilot Project in numbers

- 2 on-line consultations
- 30 interviews
- 10 workshops in 7 countries
- 19 villages in 13 countries
What is our Smart Village definition?

Smart Villages are communities in rural areas that use innovative solutions to improve their resilience, building on local strengths & opportunities.

They rely on a participatory approach to develop and implement their strategy to improve their economic, social and/or environmental conditions, in particular by mobilising solutions offered by digital technologies.
What is our Smart Village definition?

benefit from cooperation and alliances with other communities and actors in rural and urban areas.

The initiation and the implementation of Smart Village strategies may build on existing initiatives and can be funded by a variety of public and private sources.
A participatory approach means an active participation of the local community in the drawing-up and decision-making regarding the Smart Village strategy.

During the implementation phase, the participatory approach will ensure that the needs for capacity building and for training of people are properly addressed.
Key concepts

**Digital technologies** include, for example, information and communication technologies, the exploitation of big data or innovations related to the use of the Internet of Things (IoT). They act as a lever that enables Smart Villages to become more agile, make better use of their resources and improve the attractiveness of rural areas and the quality of life of rural residents.

The use of digital technologies is not a precondition for becoming a Smart Village. Where possible, high-speed broadband will facilitate the deployment of the digital solutions.
Sogn og Fjordane County Municipality (Norway)
from Lars Hustveit, Coordinator Economic Development
Smart organisation to reach critical mass

Case Nordfjordeid:

• The municipality is the coordinator
• Local enthusiasm & top expertise
• Proven to be an economic success
• Use thermic energy from the fjord for heating and cooling
• Renewable energy that is easily accessible
• **To be competitive**: many actors must decide to go for it at the same time
The Nordfjorodeid example illustrates:

- Organisation is necessary to have critical mass in rural areas
- Villages enhances efficiency by coordinating services
- Combine bottom-up with expertise from outside
- The public sector is relatively more important in rural areas

and…

Renewable energy as good topics for smart eco-social villages
Alsómocsolád
Alsómocsolád (Hungary)
The community has come together to reverse the negative trend

- Development of community services
- Tourist attractions, services and accommodation
- Innovative elderly care
- "Future Weaving Workshop" - Settlement support
- Regional cooperation and development of human capacity
- Creation of a smart village/area to improve the quality of life
Lessons learnt
Enabling a transition

Flexible tools to enable rural communities to make the transition

**Departure**
- Declining jobs
- Inadequate Services
- Digital divide
- Depopulation

**Arrival**
- Digital transformation
- Low carbon, circular economy
- service innovation
- New value chains
- Rural–urban cooperation
Digitisation and Smart Villages

Gaps
1. Connectivity – infrastructure
2. Applications – uptake
3. Skills

Connectivity gap
Digital applications gap
Skills gap
Demand / awareness gap
European toolkit to support Smart Villages

- No new policy or funding instrument is envisaged
- They are parts of an integrated toolkit in which each instrument can play different but complementary roles in diverse circumstances
- Flexibility to adapt a wide range of existing tools in ways that create the enabling framework for Smart Villages.
- Ensure that the right policy tools are made available in the right place at the right time
- Tools should be made available to local communities
  - in a form that is easy to use
  - flexible and modular so that they can be adapted to different and evolving circumstances
European toolkit to support Smart Villages

There are a wide range of EU tools:

- EAFRD
- ESIF (ERDF, ESF, EMFF)
- ITIs
- Smart Specialisation Strategies (RIS3)
- INTERREG
- Horizon 2020
- Financial Instruments
- Others ...
Synergy – link to other ESI Funds and private finance

Role of proofing?
Regional Development Tools

Integrated Strategies

Objective 5 of Cohesion policy
• ITIs
• CLLD- rural-urban links

Smart Specialisation Strategy

ESF+ (innovative actions. art 13)
• Social inclusion
• Social innovation
• CLLD

https://bit.ly/2ElwaRx
It is time for you to engage in the design of the right policy framework with your public authorities
Sources of information

SMART VILLAGES PORTAL
Follow our news & events on the online portal. Explore the latest policy developments, research, projects and initiatives.


SMART VILLAGES COMMUNITY
Join us on Facebook and share your experience and thoughts on Smart Villages with a growing online community.

https://bit.ly/2VG1UXo

SMART VILLAGES PUBLICATIONS
No.26 – Smart Villages: Revitalising Rural Services
Digital and Social Innovation in Rural Services

https://bit.ly/2ODP1Kq
Orientations for using all policy tools available to help Smart Villages to emerge – now and in future:

- How to support Smart Villages strategies which effectively empower rural communities?
- How can LEADER/CLLD support Smart Villages?
- Using non-LEADER/CLLD cooperation to support Smart Villages
- How to ensure that digital strategies benefit rural communities?
Thank you very much!

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