

SMART ALPS - Network of Alpine Smart Villages and Regions

Smart Villages and Smart Regions

The Network of Alpine Smart Villages and Regions is an initiative of the Macroregional strategy for the Alpine area EUSALP. It is composed of mountain and rural municipalities, regions, and areas, which are not considered 'urban areas' according to respective national definitions and which try to unleash the potential of digitalization in their respective territories through a participatory approach, involving local population and all relevant stakeholders. In this respect, a purely technological solution is not considered as a smart approach per se, but as a tool towards the goal of a smart transition of mountain and rural areas.

In this initial starting phase, the Network is not expected to have legal status. The transformation into an Association is an option for a later stage, when the Network is well established and foresees further activities and expansion.

Aims

The network aims to

- disseminate the Smart Villages approach and foster the Smart Villages transformation in the mountain and rural areas in the Alpine arc,
- encourage the exchange of information and experiences among Smart Villages and Smart Regions within the Alpine area,
- transmit a modern image of mountain and rural areas,
- foster contacts with similar networks and initiatives for mountain and rural areas all over Europe.

Activities

To achieve the aforementioned aims, the network foresees the following activities:

- Scheduling of regular meetings of all members with at least one meeting per year, ideally combined with a major event of EUSALP.
- Encouraging the collection, presentation and exchange of good practices, initiatives and activities.
- Using and promoting the Digital Exchange Platform DEP (developed in the scope of the Alpine Space Program project SmartVillages, and including the smartness assessment process) as a market place for good practices and for the development of further transferable tools.
- Evaluating the case for a label for Alpine Smart Villages and Regions, and possible adoption of it and its specification rules, to be commonly managed and promoted.
- Organizing exchange meetings, training sessions and focus groups on specific topics, also in the form of Webinars or other smart ways of communication in order to increase capacity building.
- Establishing contacts with experts and researchers in the fields of smart transitions, Smart Villages, Smart Regions.

- Fostering communication amongst the members of the network and outside of it.
- Advocating for the Smart villages / Smart regions approach with public authorities and the general public.

All actual activities will be agreed upon by the members of the Network on a yearly basis through the production and dissemination of a working program.

Membership

Membership in the Network is to be open to all Smart Villages and Regions, which share the aim of a smart transition of their own territory according correspond to the definition as given in the first paragraph. Membership is open for already established Smart Villages and Smart Regions as well as for municipalities and regions which are in an initial phase of the process. For processes lead by public authorities, a formal decision to start the process is required at minimum. The same holds true for private or semi-private initiatives. In case of doubt, the Steering Board will ultimately decide on the admission based on a set of criteria which will be elaborated by the Steering Board.

Chair and Steering Board

A Steering Board composed of one representative from a Smart Region / Smart Village from each Alpine Country will be formed. The regions and villages from each country will decide freely on the person they delegate to the Steering Board. The Steering Board elects a president amongst its members. The members of the Steering Board and the president are acting for two years and can be re-elected.

Secretariat

The secretariat of the Network is assured by the Lead-partners of Action Group 5 of EUSALP (at least as long as their activities are financed within the scope of EUSALP).

Financial aspects

In the starting phase, the finances for the administration of the Network are assured by the Lead-partners of Action Group 5 of EUSALP. This starting phase is assured until at least June 2022. Staff costs and travel expenses of the members of the Network have to be carried by themselves. For special activities, which may require a more intense workload, a special budget will have to be elaborated. Depending on the further development of the Network, membership fees can be introduced.

Working language

Working language of the Network is English. Documents and meetings are normally not translated in other languages.

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