

# Smart Villages Support Belgium - Flanders



## How is the concept of Smart Villages defined?



No formal definition of Smart Villages in Flanders has been identified.

### Is digital innovation a key feature?

No specific information available on this aspect.

### Is social innovation a key feature?

No specific information available on this aspect.

## How is Smart Villages supported by the CAP?



### **CAP 2014-2022**

Only indirectly, no dedicated interventions identified on Smart Villages:

LEADER/ CLLD: 12 LEADER Local Action Groups in Flanders decided to focus on the theme of resilient villages. The largest part of the budget goes to investment projects aimed at improving the social cohesion of inhabitants.

### **CAP 2023-2027**

Indirectly, no dedicated interventions identified on Smart Villages.

- LEADER/ CLLD
- 'Platteland Plus' (Countryside Plus) funding:  
Beneficiaries are municipal authorities, non-profit associations, inter-municipal cooperatives, foundations, public legal entities. (Smart Villages focus is to be confirmed)

## **National Rural Network/ CAP Network support for Smart Villages**

Some network activities on Smart Villages:

### **Information provision & communication**

The Network Support Unit is sharing information on Smart Villages.

## How is Smart Villages supported by other policies?

Various initiatives support the Smart Villages concept.

**Buurten op den Buiten ('External Neighbourhoods')**: Through the annual call the King Baudouin Foundation and the Flemish Land Agency supports residents who want to realise a concrete project for their neighbourhood or village with a rural character.

**Klimaatprojecten (Climate Projects)**: Each province in Flanders, in partnership with the Bond Beter Leefmilieu (Union Better Environment), publishes an annual call for climate projects targeted at municipalities.

**Projectoproep Lokale Klimaatacties (Call for Local Climate Actions)**: The purpose of this call is to detect, select and scale up projects through financial support. Supported projects are expected to have a demonstrable contribution to CO2 reduction and/or offer solutions for a changing climate (climate adaptation). These projects can be extended to surrounding municipalities ('scalable').

**Proeftuin Ontharding (Experimental Garden Softening)**: 'Proeftuin ontharding' is an initiative of the Flemish Environment Department focused on local authorities, associations, organisations, companies and schools; with the aim to increase the quality of the living environment (for example green village centres).

**Prijzen voor Dorpskracht (Village Power Prize)**: In 2018, the Flemish Land Agency organised the 'Dorpskracht' competition, targeted at associations, local governments or residents' groups who started a successful project to improve the living environment and conditions of their village over the past five years.

**Dorpsateliers (Village Workshops)**: The socio-cultural association 'Landelijke Gilden' (Rural Guilds) offered local resident groups from all over Flanders the opportunity to organise village workshops.

**Goe bezig Prijs (Well Done Prize)**: The 'Goe bezig' (Well Done) prize is an initiative of the organisation 'Dorpsbelangen' (village interests), financially supported by the Flemish Land Society. It rewards resident groups as well as municipalities that have an exemplary method concerning participatory processes in villages.

**Smart Village Lab initiative**: Incorporated into the Green Energy Park project in the Zellik Research Park near the Brussels Ring, Smart Village Lab – that started November 2021 - is a living university lab to jointly test the energy use of the future with the industry. It is led by VUB (together with other collaborators) and among others receives ERDF and Interreg support.

**'Platteland Plus' (Countryside Plus) funding**: Beneficiaries are municipal authorities, non-profit associations, inter-municipal cooperatives, foundations, public legal entities. (Smart Villages focus is to be confirmed)

## Contact - CAP:

### VLM (Vlaamse Landmaatschappij) – Flemish Land Agency

W: <https://www.vlm.be/nl>

### Flemish Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

W: <https://lv.vlaanderen.be/nl>

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## Contact the Network:

### Vlaams Ruraal Netwerk

W: <https://ruraalnetwerk.be/>

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## Where to find more information?



For **more detailed information** (including other funding sources and contacts) please visit the 'What's happening in my country' pages of the Smart Rural 21 project: <https://www.smartrural21.eu/countries/belgium-flanders/>

For information on **smart villages and 'villages-in-transition'** in the country: <https://www.smartrural27.eu/smart-communities/>

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