

Smart Villages Support Portugal



How is the concept of Smart Villages defined?



No formal definition of 'Smart Villages' in Portugal.

Is digital innovation a key feature?

Digital is a key feature of Smart Villages.

Digital is often seen as key aspect of Smart Villages, including projects with a focus on digital entrepreneurship, creation of co-working spaces and development of incubators and technology clusters. Improvement of digital skills is important, also in relation to social innovation.

Is social innovation a key feature?

Social innovation is understood as a key feature of the 'Smart Villages' definition.

It is based on the principles of the participatory approach, with particular focus on new, innovative ways of engaging local people. Participatory processes must be understood as a tool for the development and implementation of Smart Village strategies.

How is Smart Villages supported by the CAP?



CAP 2014-2022

No dedicated support for Smart Villages.

CAP 2023-2027

Indirectly, no specific Smart Village interventions identified at the moment.

The CAP Strategic Plan (approved on 31 August 2022) includes a reference to support the digital transition in agriculture.

- **LEADER/CLLD**

The EAFRD will support Smart Villages within the scope of the LEADER approach (and the rural component of CLLD).

However, the target value of indicator R.40 “Smart transition of the rural economy: Number of supported Smart Village strategies” is zero. At the same time, it is mentioned that, as the 2023-2027 Local Development Strategies have not yet been developed, it is not possible to identify the interventions that will be mobilised by LEADER for this result indicator.

National Rural Network/ CAP Network support for Smart Villages

No specific network activities on Smart Villages have been identified.

Contact - CAP:

Office of Planning, Policies and General Administration

W: <https://www.gpp.pt/index.php/>

Contact the Network:

**Direção Geral de Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural
(Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development)**

W: <http://www.rederural.gov.pt>

How is Smart Villages supported by other policies?

Other policies support Smart Villages in Portugal.

Cohesion Funds (ERDF and ESF+)

The final version of the Portugal 2030 Partnership Agreement mentions European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) support for broadband networks in low-density areas, depending on mapping in compliance with the conditions set out in the European Commission’s Guidelines.

The Regional Operational Programmes (final versions not yet approved) refer to support within the scope of Smart Villages, but no concrete interventions are yet known.

Examples of three regional programmes (Norte, Centro and Algarve)

Region Norte (Northern Region)

The Regional Programme of Norte 2021-2027 contains different elements on the potential support for Smart Villages in each of its sub-regions.

Sub-region Tâmega e Sousa: development of a study to support the preparation of a strategic plan and respective governance model to implement the integrated territorial approach "Smart Villages of Tâmega e Sousa – Pact for Cohesion 2030".

This territorial approach is intended to achieve a global and integrated vision of village development, which is, on one hand, able to retain current residents and attract new ones and, on the other hand, to improve conditions for the emergence of new business and entrepreneurship initiatives.

Sub-region Alto Minho: one of its strategic lines is the development of predominantly rural territories and low-density areas, involving support for the urban and functional enhancement of villages (including accessibility, infrastructure, cultural and recreational facilities, Smart Villages, etc.).

Sub-region Terras de Trás-os-Montes: implementation of the "Villages of Trás-os-Montes" programme that encompasses a set of dimensions such as attracting new agricultural operators, support for (re-)parceling of agricultural land, support for the rehabilitation of buildings, digital accessibility and the creation of a portal for information and exchange of land and houses for lease or sale.

Region Centro (Central Region)

Globally, the strategy of the Regional Programme Centro 2021-2027 aims to contribute to the creation of smart territories (including Smart Villages), with support directed at ICT and digital services centered on people. Services need to be interoperable in the sense of improving: efficiency in the management of infrastructure; involvement of local populations in public governance; availability of goods and services (public and private); leveraging the territorial productive structure; and diversifying the economic base. The Operational Programme (OP) provides for this type of support within the scope of the existing territorial Strategies for the Economic Enhancement of Endogenous Resources (Schist Villages Network; Historic Villages of Portugal).

The OP also foresees support for two thematic or functional approaches with intervention focused on a defined theme/territory, giving sub-regional or inter-regional

or inter-regional scale to investments that respond directly to the challenges of the theme/territory in question. The Integrated Intervention of Territorial Base for Pinhal Interior (covering 24 municipalities and approved in September 2021) is worth noting. This integrated intervention foresees support for 'transforming projects' aimed at the revitalisation of the Pinhal Interior territory. Within this framework, the 'Villages' pilot project does theming and promotion of local and regional brand images in 24 villages in the region through the Smart Villages approach.

Given the nature of the Centro Region territory, its challenges and the defined strategy, support from the 2021-2027 Regional Programme (ERDF and ESF+) will be complemented with support from the EAFRD and the Recovery and Resilience Plan.

Region Algarve

The Regional Programme of Algarve 2021-2027 provides for the creation of integrated intervention programmes in villages, with support for innovative initiatives. These should use new technologies (Smart Villages network); enhance surrounding cultural and natural assets; raise awareness of the preservation of ecosystems; provide resilience to climate change and risk management (rural fires) with the aim of attracting new residents and creating green jobs.

Further information: **Regional Programme of Norte 2021-2027**

E: norte2020@ccdr-n.pt; gmc@ccdr-n.pt

Regional Programme of Centro 2021-2027

E: geral@ccdr.pt

Integrated Intervention of Territorial Base for Pinhal Interior

E: pinhal.interior@cim-regiaodecoimbra.pt

Regional Programme of Algarve 2021-2027

E: geral@ccdr-alg.pt

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/portugal/>

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