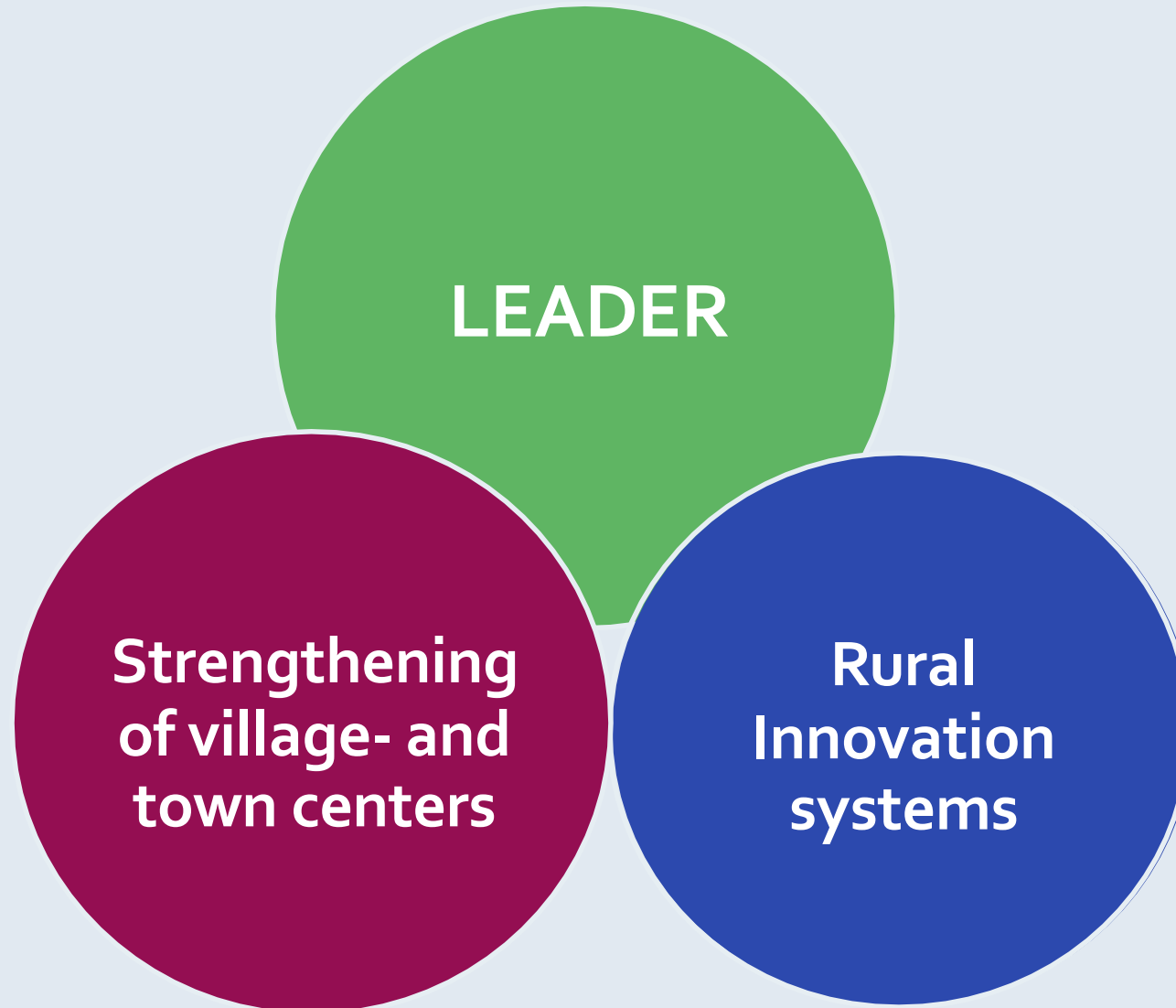




Smart Villages in the context of LEADER in Austria

Michael Fischer, SR27 national expert

3 strands for implementing Smart Villages in the CAP strategic plan



Smart Village – a synthesis and interpretation of EU definitions

Innovation and digitization as a means and not as an end in themselves. The result is concretely applicable solutions. All types of innovation are covered, but social innovation is of particular importance.

Participation both in the definition of vision and measures but also in their implementation.

Despite the focus on the "local", Smart Villages benefit from cooperation. Thus, locality and supra-local cooperation are not contradictory

Smart Villages are communities in rural areas that use innovative solutions to improve their resilience and address challenges in the local context. This is based on local strengths and development 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. Smart Villages benefit from collaborations and alliances with other communities and stakeholders in rural and urban areas. The initiation and implementation of smart village strategies can build on existing initiatives and be funded from various public and private sources¹.

The local reference framework can help to address other funding schemes as well

The aim is to achieve a certain sovereignty in the face of major social challenges; they gain the role as a "designer"

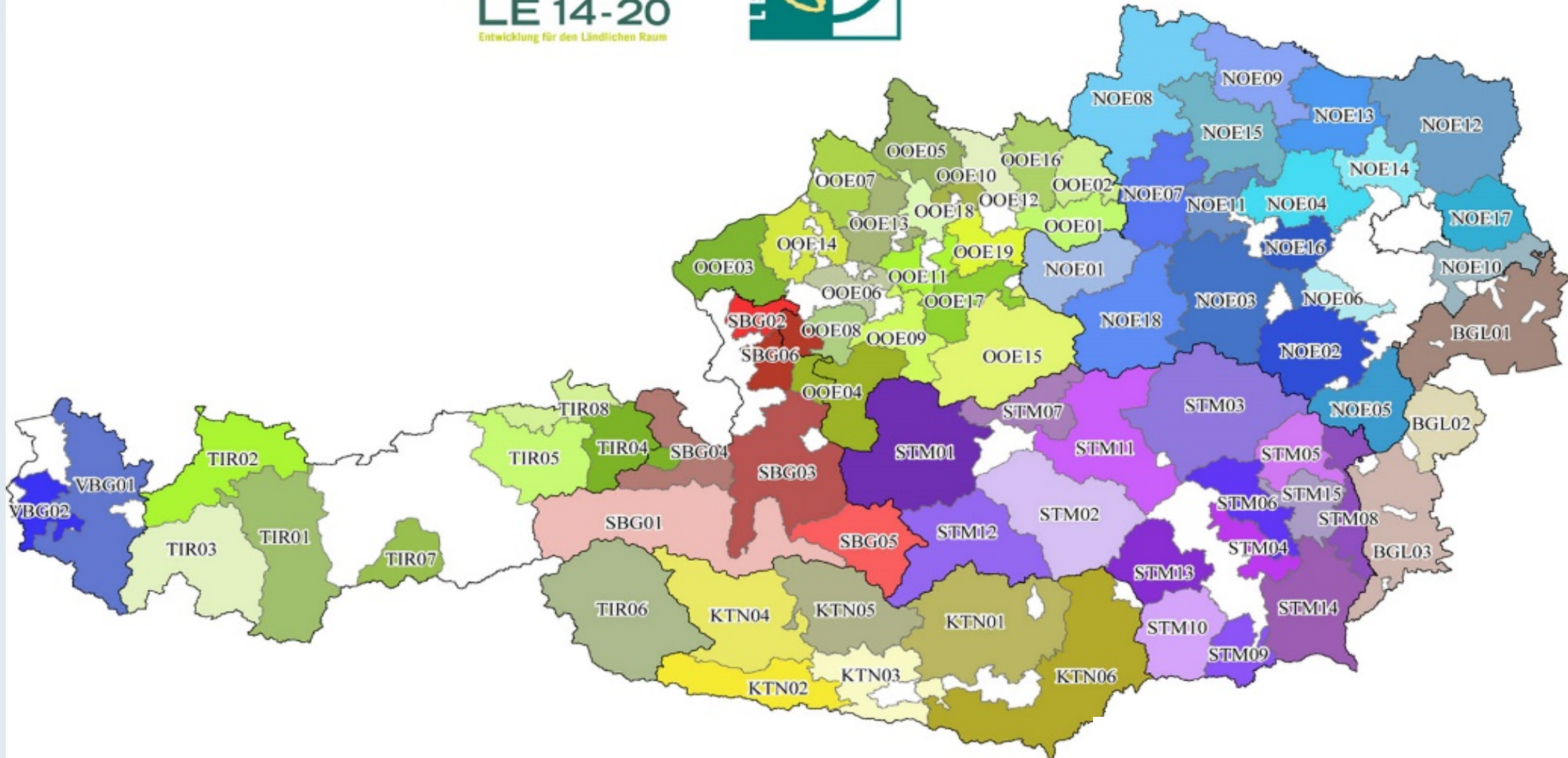
"Place-based approach": Adapted solutions that are effective in the local context and use local specifics as a means in a targeted manner

Smart communities have strategic capability – they focus on (a few) specific challenges and are able to deal with them in an integrated manner.

seeing SMARTNESS as a chance for development and exploring the „continuum of ambition“



LEADER 14-20: 77 LAGs



Implementation via LEADER (1/2)

- as a tool for the LAG to address local challenges
- digital technologies should play a role in the implementation of Smart Village → distinction to “classic” LEADER projects
- BUT: digital technologies are not understood as an end in itself, but rather as a "means to an end"
- no thematic restrictions– the smart village approach can be applied in all 4 fields of action

Competitive economy

Nature/biodiversity and
cultural heritage

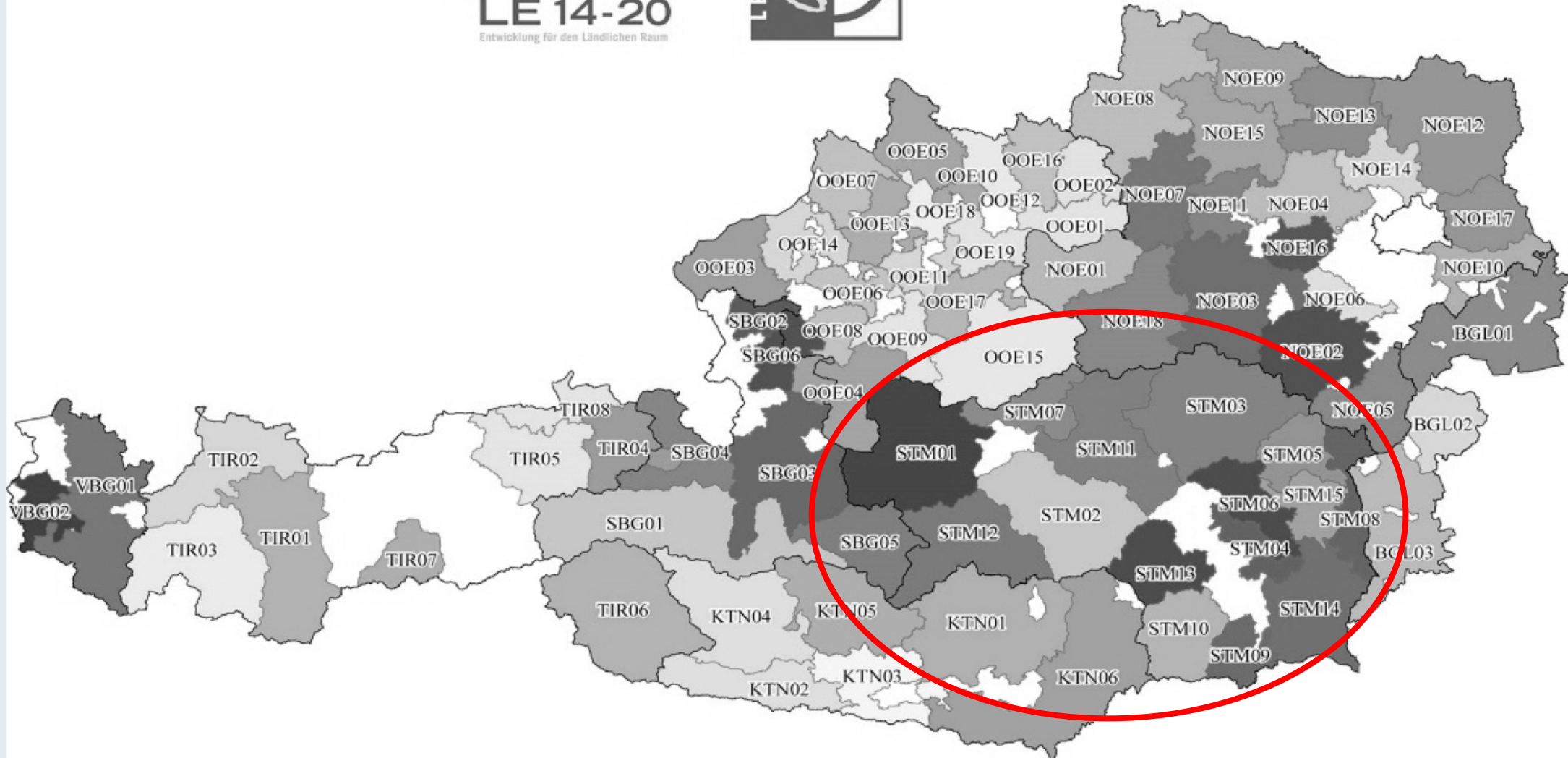
Common goods/ public welfare

Climate change/ climate change
mitigation

Implementation via LEADER (2/2)

- implementation not mandatory, but incentives when selecting Local Action Groups (integration of Smart Village approach is a factor for scoring in the application process)
- clear recommendation from the MA to take up the concept
- if integrated in the LDS, then commitment in local development strategy → indicator
- beneficiaries: all possible beneficiaries in LEADER
- Fact Sheet for LAG: <https://www.zukunftsraumland.at/seiten/215>

Pilot analysis of 16 local development strategies (LDS) in Styria

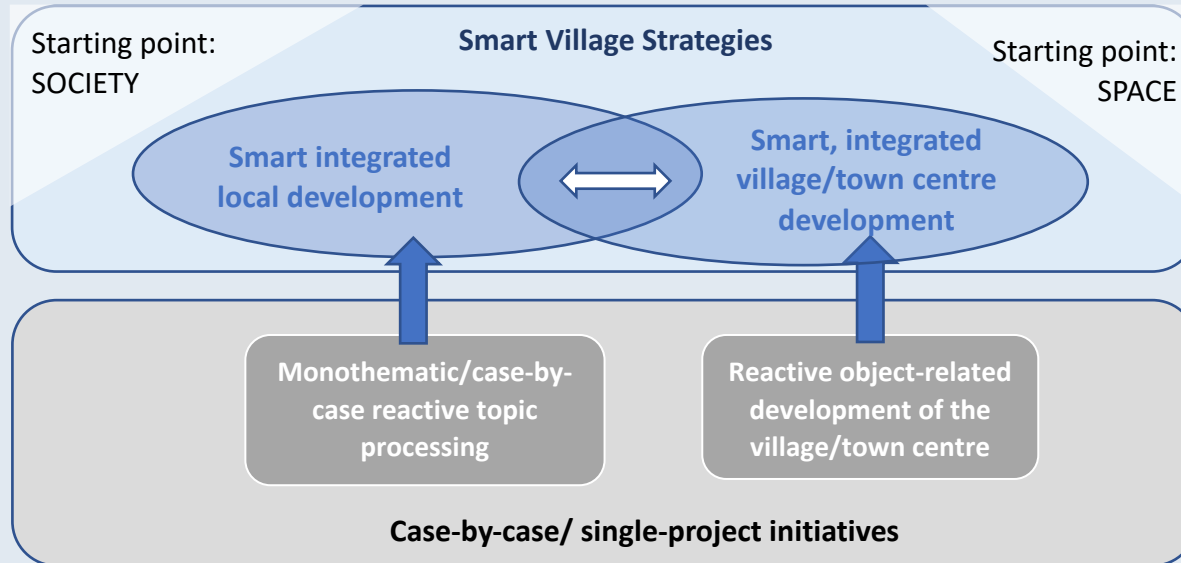


Pilot analysis of 16 LDS in Styria - findings

- In 13 of 16 LDS 1-3 Smart Village Strategies (R.40) are foreseen
- In 10 out of 16 LDS more than one village/municipality is involved in one SV strategy
- TOP topics:
 1. village and town center development
 2. enhancing quality of living
 3. climate protection/ climate change mitigation
 4. preservation of valuable building fabric
 5. reduce vacancies in buildings
- 14 out of 16 mention citizen participation as important part of their SV-approach
- 12 out of 16 describe how they are planning to use digitalisation

Example: smart village and town center development in Styria

From single object focussed initiatives to integrated spatial development



Example: SPACE/BUILT ENVIRONMENT as a starting point

The centre of the municipality of X has a number of adjoining properties with vacancies. Due to the migration of owner-managed trading companies to the outskirts, the frequency of use has decreased. A smart village process was started and new possibilities of use were explored with the participation of the local population. The idea of realizing childcare in the vacant properties has met with widespread interest. Due to the new dynamics to be expected here (parents bringing their children over, employees, ...), it should also be possible to strengthen the local supplier in the center. The catering for the children is to be taken over by the neighbouring gastronomy, which will thus receive additional occupancy during the week....