

# The Smart Rural 27 project

## Main outcomes & some lessons



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11 March 2024

Supported by the



# Purpose of the meeting

The purpose of the meeting is

- ✓ to **present** the Smart Rural 27 project and outcomes
- ✓ **discuss** synergies with activities of other organisations
- ✓ **present** the structure of the Final Conference

# Objective of Smart Rural 21

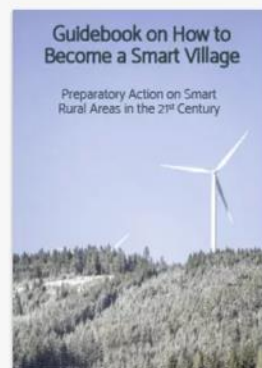
To support rural communities in developing Smart Village Strategies and implement smart actions (including renewable energy, digital services, local entrepreneurship, rural mobility, etc.).



# Guidebook (Final Draft)

- English guide (EN)
- Bulgarian Guide (BG)
- Czech Guide (CZ)
- German guide (DE)
- Danish guide (DK)
- Estonian guide (EE)
- Greek guide (EL)
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## English guide (EN)



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## Estonian guide (EE)



# The Smart Rural 21 Guidebook



## Guidebook on How to Become a Smart Village

Smart Rural 21: First Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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## FOREWORD

If you are a rural community that aspires to become 'smarter', or if you are supporting rural communities to become 'smarter', this guidebook is for you. This guidebook is also for you if you just want to understand a bit more about what the **Smart Villages concept** is: what is meant by 'smart' and what is meant by 'village'. The guidebook is the result of two years of intensive work with rural communities across Europe in the framework of the First Preparatory Action for Smart Rural Areas in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century project, known as Smart Rural 21.<sup>1</sup> The project provided support for rural communities across Europe to develop and implement their smart village strategies in an experimental way, and draw conclusions and recommendations from the process. **Twenty-one rural communities** – with diverse characteristics – were selected to receive support for their strategy development and implementation through the Smart Rural 21 project. Due to rural communities' strong interest in taking part, the project also engaged more than 100 other rural communities (called Come Along! villages) through various village-to-village exchanges and capacity-building actions.

The project and this guidebook share the same guiding principle: **they are for rural communities**. **Smart Rural 21** worked with communities from the start, focusing on their needs, from strategy development to the implementation of smart solutions. This publication builds on the experience of working with those communities, showcasing their feedback, challenges and achievements along the way. This guidebook is a way for us to share the experience accumulated through the project and make it accessible - and beneficial - to a wide, interested audience.

This guide does not aim to provide a fully comprehensive toolkit for embarking on the journey of becoming a 'smart village'. It rather aims to provide a framework, highlight the main lessons, and pinpoint the right sources and resources for interested communities. If you would like to start your own Smart Villages Journey, you will need to dig deeper into the available resources and adapt the Smart Villages toolkit to your own needs. We hope this guide provides the first stepping stones on your journey!

**Edina Ocsko (Project Coordinator) on behalf of the Smart Rural 21 Team**

<sup>1</sup> A 2.5-year project funded by the European Commission (DG AGRI) and led by E4O Group

# Overall objective of Smart Rural 27

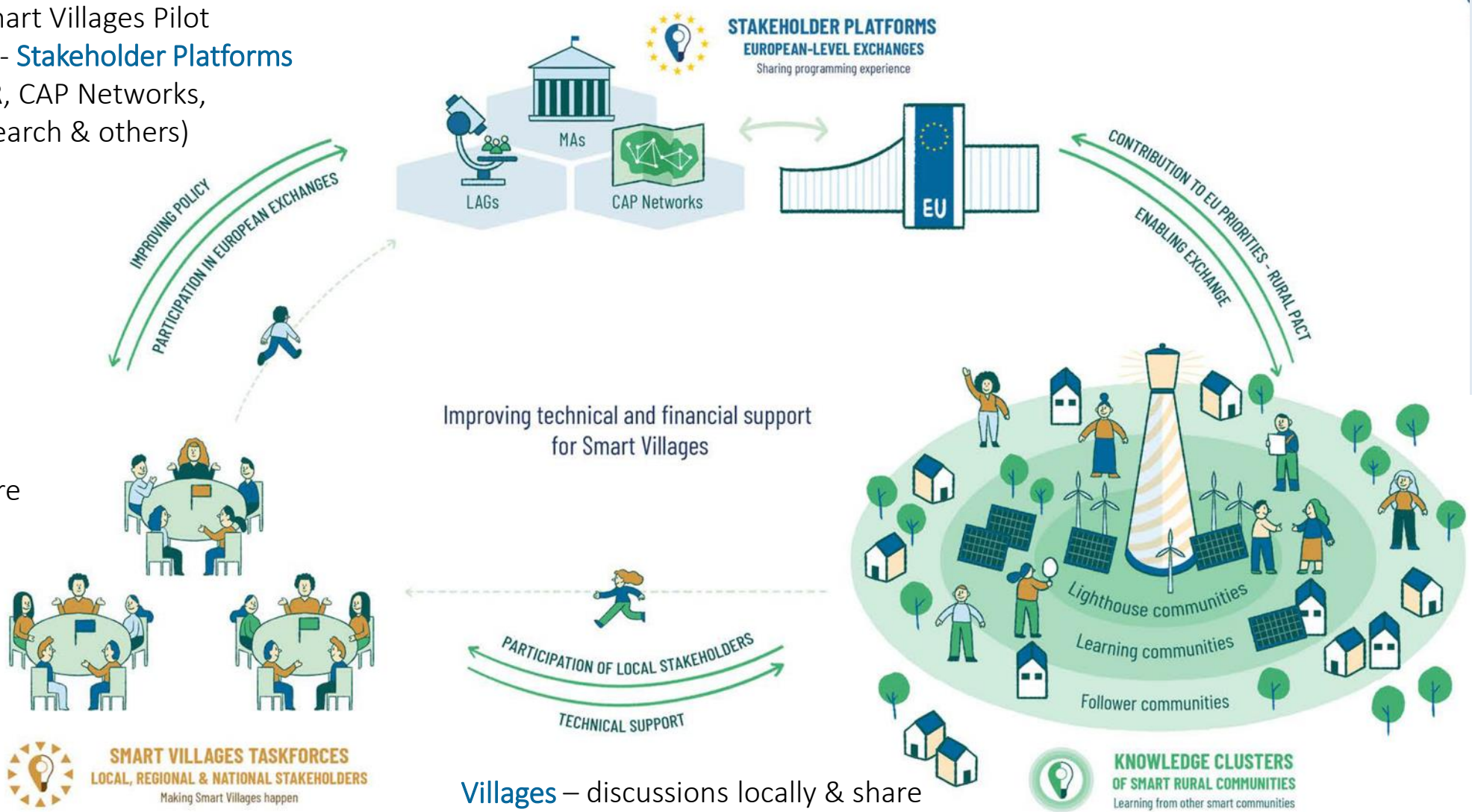
To prepare Member States and rural communities for the implementation of the CAP post-2020 as well as other policies and initiatives which could potentially support the emergence of Smart Villages across the EU.



# The European Smart Villages Observatory

European Smart Villages Pilot  
 Observatory - Stakeholder Platforms  
 (MA, LEADER, CAP Networks,  
 Villages, Research & others)

National  
 taskforces –  
 discussions  
 locally & share  
 emerging  
 knowledge  
 across  
 countries



Villages – discussions locally & share  
 emerging knowledge across countries



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[Knowledge Clusters of Smart Rural Communities](#)

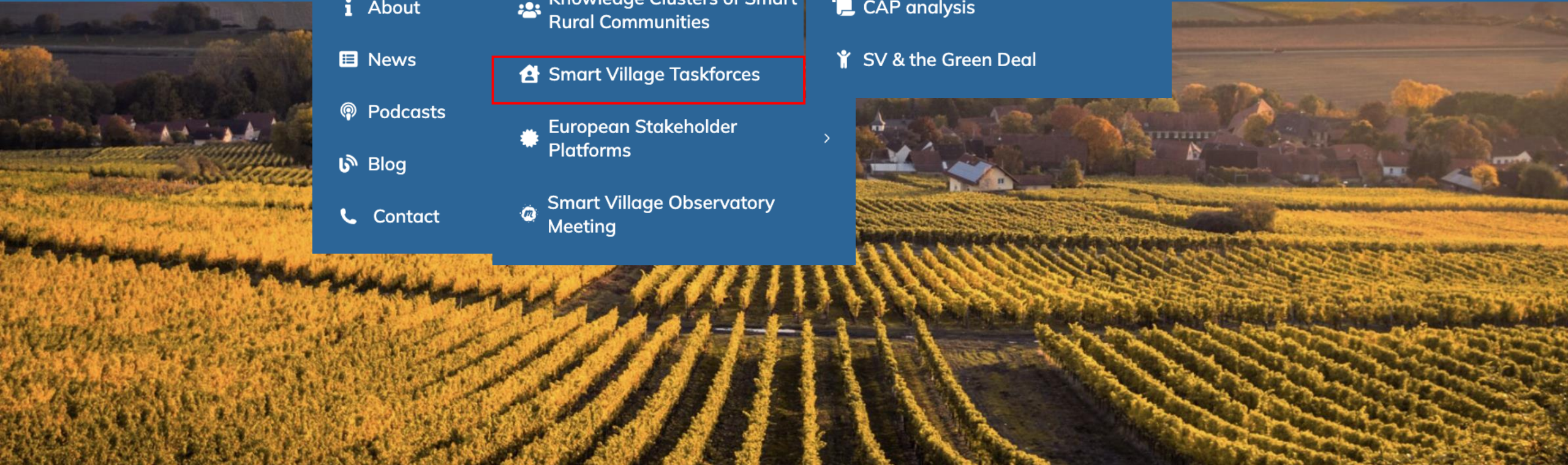
[Smart Village Taskforces](#)

[European Stakeholder Platforms](#)

[Smart Village Observatory Meeting](#)

[CAP analysis](#)

[SV & the Green Deal](#)



## The Smart Rural 27 Project

The 2nd Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas in the 21st Century (shortly called Smart Rural 27 project) was launched by the European Commission in December 2020 with the aim to “prepare Member States and rural communities for the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) post-2020 as well



# EU Definition

Smart Villages are **communities in rural areas** that develop **smart solutions** to deal with challenges in their local context. They build on existing local strengths and opportunities to engage in a process of sustainable development of their territories. They rely on a **participatory approach** to develop and implement their **strategies** to improve their economic, social and environmental conditions, *in particular* by promoting innovation and mobilising solutions offered by **digital technologies**.

(Pilot Project on Smart Eco-Social Villages, 2019)

# Key features of Smart Villages

- **Smart:** Hardest to “pin down” - making the most of modern technology, knowledge & innovation (but not only technological digital) with a social impact
- **Village:** Local rural community level – no sharp limit in population (consider also DEBURGA)
- **Strategic approach:** holistic/ integrated approach –(format is flexible) – Addressing contemporary challenges (climate, social...): Vision for the future
- **Participatory approach:** Engagement of community in planning & implementation (consider what it means in lagging behind communities) – local ownership / community-level impact

1

# INFORMATION ON GOOD PRACTICES

SMART PROJECTS

SMART RURAL COMMUNITIES

# The Geomapping Tool



The Smart Rural 27 Geomapping Tool aims to present smart rural communities in the Member States of the European Union. Smart rural communities included in the database are those that have (smart) village strategies and at least one smart solution (e.g. project or initiative).

If you are a representative of a rural community and would like to be included in the database, you can complete the [Geomapping Tool questionnaire](#) with the relevant data and/or contact us at [smart-geomap@e40.eu](mailto:smart-geomap@e40.eu) directly with any questions on the tool.

× Clear all filters

Search by village name

Filter villages by country

Filter by types of area

Filter by ruralness

Filter by strategic priorities

Show villages with:

- Smart village strategy
- Local development plan
- Village development concept
- Village vision document
- No village strategy



## Raudanmaa



Raudanmaa is a rural area with some 600 inhabitants, which consists of several small hamlets and houses surrounded by beautiful lakeside nature, woods, and fields. People live very close to nature which is a great asset that our village can offer both to new residents and visitors. Our main aspiration is to be a service-oriented, innovative village where daily life runs smoothly. We want to bring new, innovative enablers in order to boost the village economy and living conditions. We are proud of our local community which is very active and supportive of new initiatives. We have several associations organising activities and enabling dynamic communal lifestyle enjoyed by the villagers. We organise

## Rural communities

- Smart Villages & villages in transition
- Strategy (or plan/concept)
- At least 1 smart solution
- Rural community / village

# Lighthouse sites



## Factsheets

Lighthouse examples are inspiring rural communities that have developed a smart strategic approach and implemented a series of smart initiatives over the past years and decades. The lighthouse factsheets describe the smart approach of these communities and show their journey (including information on the smart initiatives and budget), flagship initiatives and the local governance structure (cooperation of public-private-research-civil society).



Stanz



Tomaszyn



Samsø



Raudanmaa



Ostana



Athineou



Lormes



Häradsbäck



Ovenhausen

# Factsheets, documentaries, podcasts

- Community profile
- Why it's inspiring/ smart
- Journey (with funding!)
- Thematic focus/ innovative action
- Community engagement (quadruple helix model)

2

# CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES



**25 Apr 2023**  
2nd online meeting

**11-12 May 2023**  
Field visit to Stanz

**10:00 am (CET) 12 Sep 2023**  
Smart Village Café



**Presentation of Søren Hermansen on energy actions initiated with the local community in Samsø.**



The 2nd online meeting of the energy cluster was opened up to a wider interested audience and invitations were sent out to more than 250 rural communities. During the session [Søren Hermansen \(Samsø Energy Academy in Denmark\)](#) shared his experience in initiating various innovative and sustainable energy actions with the local community in Samsø.

**1st Pilot Observatory Meeting and field visit to Stanz (Austria)**



The [1st Pilot European Smart Villages Observatory meeting](#) – with a focus on renewable energy – was held face-to-face in Graz (Austria) with a field visit to Stanz. Participants included European, national and regional level stakeholders and rural communities. 13 energy cluster members participated in the 2-day event. You can read the report of the 1st Pilot Observatory meeting [here](#).

**Smart Village Café session on REC Legal Frameworks in Europe**



During the 3rd (open) session of the Smart Rural 27 Renewable Energy Knowledge Cluster Andreas Türk, Senior Researcher at Joanneum Research / Wegener Center for Climate and Global Change, University of Graz is to provide valuable insights into the progress of European countries implementing the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) II, with a particular focus on legal possibilities for establishing renewable energy communities (REC). You can register for the event [here](#).

# Knowledge Clusters Webpages: Timeline & outcomes



# Hands-on exchanges

- Smart Village (morning) Cafés
  - ✓ Large interest
  - ✓ Very informal
  - ✓ Practical
- Cross-visits:
  - ✓ Trips to other inspiring villages both in SR21 & SR27
  - ✓ Sometimes part of larger events (fieldvisits)



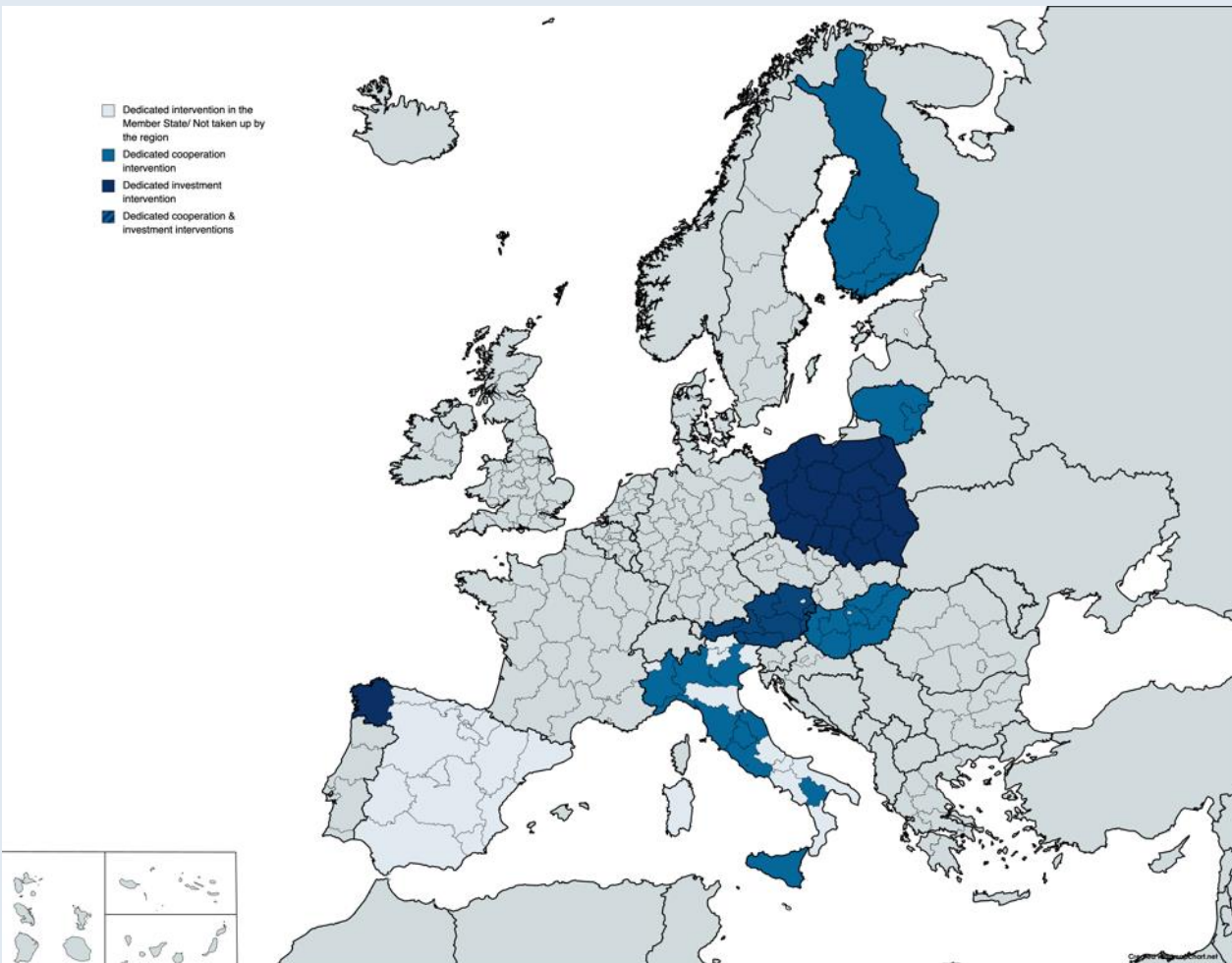


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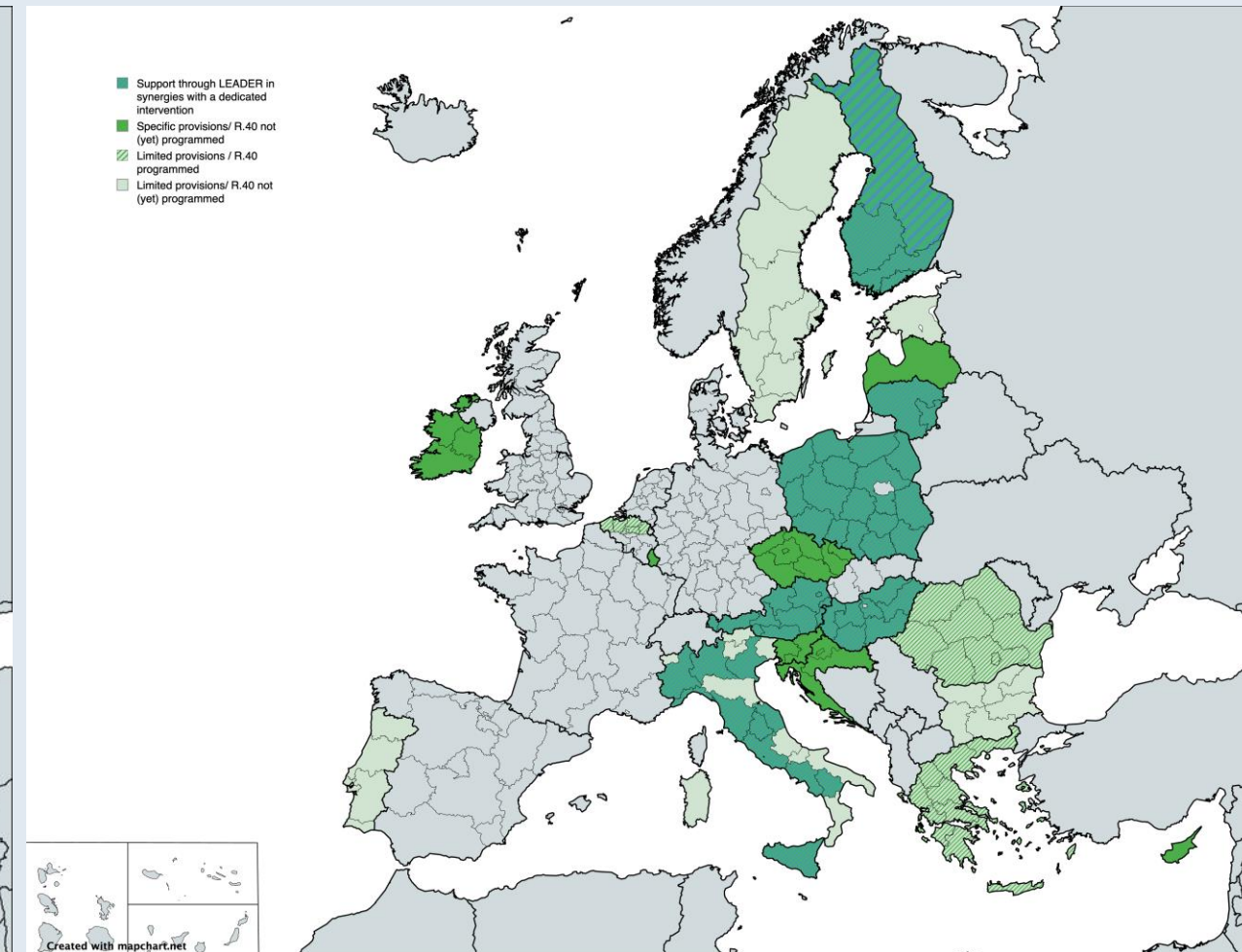
# IMPROVING CSP IMPLEMENTATION

# CAP Analysis

- Dedicated interventions



- LEADER interventions



# FINAL CONFERENCE OF THE SMART RURAL 27 PROJECT

18-19 March 2024, in Brussels (Atelier des Tanneurs)

- Purpose
- Event venue & livestreaming
- **Agenda - Day 1**
- Agenda - Day 2
- Accommodation



The project is funded by the European Commission. The opinions expressed in this presentations are that of the Contractor only and do not reflect the official position of the European Commission.



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