



Smart Rural 27

Taskforce Action Plan – Hungary

Version 1 (14/09/23)

Table of contents

1. CONTEXT	1
2. THE PURPOSE OF THE TASKFORCE	1
3. LINKS TO EXISTING SMART VILLAGE EXCHANGES	2
4. MEMBERSHIP	2
5. PLANNED ACTIONS	3



1. Context

Smart Villages has been programmed in the Hungarian CAP Strategic Plan and support is foreseen through a dedicated intervention: 'RD56: Rural development cooperation to support the digital transition of small settlements [smart village]'. Furthermore, intervention RD43: Rural infrastructure development in small settlements will also support/ complement Smart Villages developments.

Although Smart Villages is not directly supported under LEADER (intervention RD57: Preparation and implementation of LEADER strategies), the intervention is still relevant in the context of Smart Villages. One of the key roles of future LEADER LAGs is to “facilitate the preparation of smart village strategies” (HU CAP SP, p.1250)

Finally, capacity-building actions for Smart Villages are expected through intervention RD58: Training and demonstration programmes. This intervention concerns compulsory training for certain CAP Strategic Plan interventions, including RD56 on Smart Villages.

The above CAP SP interventions is the core of the Hungarian Smart Villages support framework.

There are also other national initiatives that are supporting Smart Village-type initiatives, in particular the Hungarian Village Programme¹ that supports the development of small towns and villages with population of no more than 5000 people in the field of rural services and infrastructure, support for rural civilian communities, improvement of housing conditions for people living in small settlements, development of inferior road network from domestic sources, and support for rural micro-enterprises from EU sources.

More specifically, the Digital Village Programme (DFP) was launched in 2021 to effectively support the improvement of the attractiveness and liveability of small villages through digital and smart solutions. The stated aim of the Digital Village Programme is to ensure the successful implementation of the tasks and indicators included in the objectives of the CAP Strategy, including the smart village initiative – although this programme is not directly referenced in the CAP SP.

Hungarian authorities – representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Managing Authority of the CAP SP - have been actively engaged in the European Commission’s initiatives on Smart Villages. Among others, they closely followed the work of the Smart Rural 21 project and participated in several Smart Rural 21 events. There has been great interest on behalf of the MA to engage in Smart Rural 27 activities. Discussions have started among the MA representatives and the SR27 Team on how the planning of Smart Villages could be supported through the project, and about the setting up of a Hungarian Taskforce.

2. The purpose of the taskforce

Main objectives of the taskforce:

- ✓ Supporting the detailed design of SV intervention (if there is interest/ need from MA)
- ✓ Raise awareness and build capacity among relevant stakeholders: especially MA, LAGs and rural communities for the effective implementation of Smart Villages

The main purpose of the taskforce is **to support the preparation and implementation of the Smart Villages interventions** in the CAP SP:

¹ The programme has been mostly supported from national resources. In 2021 the new component of Hungarian Village Startup Programme started to support micro-enterprises, which is supported from EU funding, namely by GINOP Plus (the Economic Development and Innovation Operational Programme)

- **RD56:** The implementation of this intervention has not yet started. The Smart Rural 27 project could potentially support the preparation of the intervention through advising on the (selection) criteria, especially with regard to the scope of smart village strategies, in particular through sharing information from other countries. If there is need, and agreed with the MA, a dedicated awareness-raising session for rural municipalities could be organised in order to share the experience of the Smart Rural 21 project.
- **RD57:** Supporting the implementation of Smart Villages (SV) through LEADER has been the initially defined focus and purpose of the taskforce activity in Hungary. LEADER LAGs are currently preparing their Local Development Strategies (LDSs) that are expected to be selected by November 2023. The aim was to raise awareness about the European experience of Smart Villages and to support LAGs to include Smart Villages into their LDSs.
- **RD43:** No specific activities have been foreseen in the context of this intervention, however, there is scope for the Smart Rural 27 project to share available experience in terms of relevant SV infrastructural developments and on how to create linkages with RD56, based on the Smart Rural 21 and Smart Rural 27 experience.
- **RD58:** It is suggested that in the capacity-building and training activities, the lessons learned and material developed through the Smart Rural 21 project is transposed into the Hungarian context. Further details are still to be discussed with taskforce members.

3. Links to existing Smart Village exchanges

No other Smart Villages exchanges have been identified, and therefore, the taskforce is not linking to existing SV platforms. The links to the Digital Village Programme need to be further explored in discussion with MA representatives.

4. Membership

The taskforce guidance to Smart Rural 27 national experts highlighted that *“Taskforce members are normally stakeholders who:*

- *Has an interest in the SV theme*
- *Has an influence in the context of the policy / intervention that the Taskforce aims to influence*
- *Has an interest in working on the topic and exchange with other stakeholders within the Smart Rural 27 project Taskforce.”*

This is realised in the context of the Hungarian taskforce as follows:

- As specified above, taskforce discussions primarily started with representatives of the **CAP MA** that has both influence and interest in the Smart Villages theme.
- During the first phase of the taskforce activities, the focus has been on engaging **LAGs that have an interest in Smart Villages** through awareness raising & capacity-building on Smart Villages. The Hungarian LEADER Association also has an interest in the theme.
- Representatives of **the CAP Network** have also been informed and engaged in the activities. In the future, the taskforce could support the planning of CAP Network Smart Villages support activities, if there is interest.

5. Planned actions

Informal discussions with representatives of the Managing Authority

Although no formal taskforce meetings have been organised, informal discussions took place between the Managing Authority / Ministry of Agriculture representatives and the SR27 Team (in January, March, May 2023 at the Observatory meeting, and June/July in preparation for the LEADER training). During these discussions the scope of the first activity has been agreed. On 24 May 2023, the Smart Rural 27 Team made a presentation at the event of the Hungarian LEADER Association (LESZ), where the MA also participated, and among others highlighted the upcoming Smart Rural 27 LEADER capacity-building event and other possible synergies with the Smart Rural 27 project work.

LEADER capacity-building session: 11 July 2023

Based on initial/ informal discussions with the representatives of the Managing Authority, it had been decided to organise a dedicated taskforce meeting for LEADER LAGs, to raise awareness about the potential of Smart Villages and generate discussion on how Smart Villages could be better integrated into and supported by the LEADER LDSs.

This event was held on 11/07/2023 (see meeting report).

Planning meeting with taskforce members (Sept-Oct 2023 – tbc)

A meeting is planned in Sept/ Oct 2023 with taskforce members, to take account of the lessons learned through the LEADER capacity-building session and discuss next steps and activities in the Smart Villages planning. This opportunity will also be used to get an update on the planned timing and preparatory steps of the implementation of the Smart Villages interventions, and the identification of further possible support actions.

The discussion will be carried out with the MA representatives, with possible participation of other taskforce members, especially representatives of the CAP Network and the Hungarian LEADER Association.

Planned timing of activities

Planned timing	Focus of meeting or activity	Main outcomes
Jan – June 23	Informal planning meetings with the MA	Agreement on planning SV support activities / review of CAP SP interventions & provisions
11/07/2023	1 st Capacity-building Event for LEADER LAGs	Information shared about Smart Villages concept and how it could be integrated within the LDSs
Sept – Oct 23	Follow-up discussion with the MA (and with CAP Network/ LEADER Association – if there is interest)	Agreement on the action plan, scope and timing of taskforce work
Feb – Mar 2024	Conclusion of work / feedback	



Annex I: List of members Membership of the Taskforce

Name of member	Name of organisation of member	Type of organisation	Short description of role of organisation in the taskforce	Participated in 1 st meeting?
CAP MA/ MINISTRY				
Attila Nagy	Ministry of Agriculture	Managing Authority	The Ministry has a key role in designing and managing the CAP SP, including the design and implementation of the Smart Villages interventions (in particular that of RD56) as well as provide support for LEADER and LEADER LAGs.	Yes
Miklós Maác				Yes
CAP NETWORK				
Rita Székely	Hungarian National Rural Network	CAP Network	The CAP Network has as its key task to improve the implementation of the CAP SP, including Smart Villages. According to the Hungarian CAP SP: “The CAP network is planned to provide support units in three complex and priority areas, covering knowledge and innovation development and digital competence development, rural and regional development (including: Leader, smart village strategies, generational renewal) and promote compliance with climate and environmental requirements.”	Yes
Anna Bíró				Yes
Csaba Fieszl				Yes
Zsuzsanna Emese Őri				Yes
LEADER LAG PARTICIPANTS				
Orsolya Bayer	Csele-Borza Valley Association	LAG	LEADER LAGs are crucial for the successful implementation of SV at the local level. They can contribute through animation and capacity building at the local/ municipal level. As well as	Yes
László Falatek	Abaúj Leader Association	LAG		Yes
Zoltán Horváth	Hévíz-Balaton-Zala Hill LEADER Association	LAG		Yes



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Judit Hutvágnerné Kasper	"For Bakony" Rural Development Action Group Association	LAG	through integrating SV into their Local Development Strategies (LDSs) and through suprtng SV projects.	Yes
Éva Kecskés	Mecsek Valley Hills Association	LAG		Yes
Gáborné Kiss	Bihar-Sárrét Rural Development Association	LAG		Yes
Viktória Lengyelne Bencze	Borsod-Torna-Gömör Association	LAG		Yes
Tamás Németh	Pannonia Treasure LEADER Association	LAG		Yes
Zoltán Ogár	Zemplén Regions Rural Development Association	LAG		Yes
Flóra Palotás	Homokhát Municipalities Regional Development Public Benefit Association	LAG		Yes
Anikó Patakiné Balázs	North Borsod LEADER Union Association	LAG		Yes
Lenke Péterfy	'Valley Region' Community	LAG		Yes
Judit Rácz	Upper Homokhát Rural Development Association	LAG		Yes
Vera Susovits	Szigetköz - Moson Plain LEADER Association	LAG		Yes
István Szabó	Lower Tisza Region Development Leader Association	LAG		Yes
Noémi Szalay Bakáts	Bihar-Sárrét Rural Development Association	LAG		Yes
László Szöllősy	Upper Tisza Valley Rural Development Association	LAG		Yes
Csaba Tardi	Hungarian National Rural Network	LAG		Yes
Ernő Tarjányi	'Kiskunokért' Association	LAG		Yes
Gabriella Titonelliné Nemzetes	Velencei-tó Region Development Public Benefit Association	LAG	Yes	
Valentin Vanó	Galga-mente and Region Leader Association	LAG	Yes	

