



## 1<sup>st</sup> Smart Villages Taskforce Meeting – [Finland]

### Purpose of the meeting

Planning the Taskforce activities

### Date of the meeting

[03/02/2022]

### Location

On-line, Zoom

### Participation

In the first Taskforce meeting all invited (13 people) were present, one of them through a substitute. The participants represented both the private and the public sector, from individuals to the Ministry of Agriculture.

### Main outcomes & lessons learnt (including deviations from initial plan)

- The participants felt that the national level taskforce is needed for:
  - strengthening the smart village networks and making the initiative more concrete
  - building the link to the EU level smart village planning and implementation (the Smart Village Observatory)
  - improving the information flow and knowledge exchange
  - reaching more thematic focus (e.g. digitalization, fast internet, green deal)
  - identification and sharing good practices and examples of smart solutions between villages and municipalities
  - improving the rural youth participation in the smart village strategy planning and implementation
  - learning from other countries and international examples, such as these in Sweden: [www.digiby.se](http://www.digiby.se), [www.smartabyar.se](http://www.smartabyar.se), [www.ungasmartabyar.se](http://www.ungasmartabyar.se)
- The NRN is investing in new web-based information platform, which works like social media and could assist in info spreading.
- The Finnish CAP strategy has a specific measure for smart villages, enabling them to cooperate with other villages, municipalities, education institutions, urban neighborhood associations etc. – both Leader LAGs and ELY centers may support smart village projects that can be also about animation and info spreading on sub-regional, regional and national scale
- In order to mobilise the concept on the village level, the task force could aim to integrate “smart village plan” in existing/ future village development plans, which almost all 4000 Finnish villages have in some format
  - Smart villages also need smart support / funding schemes ( e.g LEADER)

- LAGs have launched a series of small-scale municipal funding initiatives, such as Youth Leader, Start Up Leader, Pandemic Leader etc. The task force could find more examples of those, also internationally, and promote and disseminate.
- Villages may often think that they are not “smart enough” for these type of development activities. The task force should make the threshold lower for the villages to participate. One example could be “How to become a Smart Village?” training program that e.g. the Irish have already implemented.

### Next steps

The next meeting is planned before summer.

### Supporting documents

