



LEADER & Smart Villages

Latvian LEADER LAGs LDSs analysis preliminary results

Katrina Idu, 29 February 2024

Supported by the



Smart Villages & LEADER in Latvia



→ In CAP SP – Smart Villages programmed under LEADER, with some specifications, but no R.40 programmed

→ 33 LAGs with LDSs approved in late 2022, some of them published in early 2023

→ The analysis is being carried out using a keyword search section by section (**smart villages, smart, communities..**)

- Smart Village is “*a community in rural area implementing local initiatives to find practical solutions to improve economic, social and environmental conditions of the village, making the most of new opportunities and digital technologies*”. (Regulation Nr.580 of Cabinet of Ministers, 10.10.2023)
- The understanding of Smart Villages is very social – mainly linked with **social innovation**
 - Smart Villages are frequently mentioned in the SWOT analysis as an opportunity and a tool to address the need to activate society
 - in some cases linked to the « Population Council » and the need to face the centralisation of governance
- Still, some LDSs include references to other smart solutions – energy communities, service innovation, green solutions...

Diverse level of advancing

→ Intervention with mention of Smart Villages in the intervention title

- support intensity 70 or 80 % with the possibility of 90 % if other criteria

Ex. Intervention «**Strengthening local communities for smart territorial development**»

(LAG «Darīsim paši!»)

- Supporting communities becoming Smart Villages, funding initiatives included in 3year strategy (social, environmental and economic solutions)

- Max 25 000 eur

- 80% support intensity, can be increased to 90 %, if includes vulnerable groups

- SWOT analysis of Alsunga Smart Village included

→ Intervention with clear mention of Smart Villages in the description

- support intensity 70%, possibility of 90% if Smart Village initiative or part of Smart Village strategy

Ex. Intervention «**Support local communities initiatives**» (LAG «Lauku partnerība Ziemeļgauja»)

- lifelong learning, sports, culture, education, youth initiatives....and also SV initiatives

- result indicator: supported SV strategies, incl. Initiatives (2023- 0, 2025-1, 2027-3

- max 25 000 eur, increased intensity for SV initiatives.

→ Vague mention of SV, smart communities (rather self-organised communities), but with possible increase of support intensity for SV

→ **Joint projects of public benefit** and strategic actions – e.g. elaborated project between 3 LAGs
“Smart Villages. Smart Land”

→ **Transnational cooperation** projects in needs assessment

Assessment of SV

- Number of Activated/active communities
- Smart Village initiatives
- Smart Village strategies (3–year strategies)
- Some do not assess, indicator is active NGOs in territory

→ Linkages with Latvian Rural Forum recognition sign « Smart Village » and « On the way of being Smart Village » – used as criteria

- Even if in general the National vision of the Smart Villages is very social innovation/community capacity building-oriented, it is an important stage for getting further to strategies and diversification of smart solutions
- Some of the LDSs include already next steps the necessity of looking for **complementary national and European funding** to Implement diverse Smart Villages initiatives → it may be linked with a change of perspective on the role of LAGs
- The risk is that the linkage with public infrastructure projects and type of beneficiaries – the project evaluation criteria is important there
- References to different criteria and sources – still a need for stakeholders to come together, and a need for capacity building to LAGs to make the most out of the concept.
- Need for support to communities in writing the strategies