



Smart Villages in CAP Strategic plan Italy

Factsheet

The Smart Rural 27 project (2nd Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas in the 21st Century, 2021-24) aims at improving the Smart Villages support framework at both the local (rural communities) and regional/ national (policymaking) contexts.



Smart Villages in the CAP Strategic plan Italy

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Smart Villages in the CAP Strategic plan In Italy



DEFINITION OF SMART VILLAGES

No formal definition of Smart Villages.



Dedicated Smart Villages interventions

✓ Cooperation for rural, local and smart villages (SRG07, COOP)

Other relevant interventions

✓ LEADER – Implementation of local development strategies (SRG06, COOP)

Mostly contributes to...

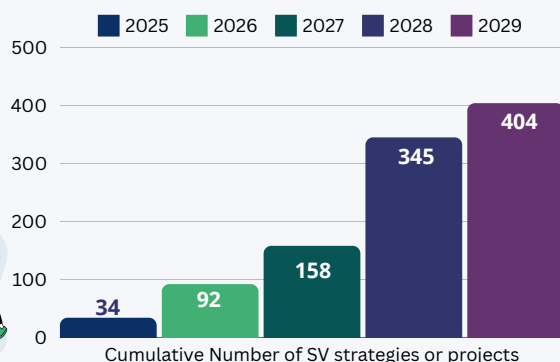
SO8: Promoting employment, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusions and local development in rural areas.

Technical Support

The CAP Network envisages the implementation of specific actions related to smart village strategies. The process of support has already started. [More information](#)



R.40: SV strategies - Target



Direct financing:

Cooperation for rural, local and smart villages (SRG07)

- Total amount (2023-2029): € 64.526.985,70
- Out of which EU contribution: € 27.924.400,36
- The unit amounts range from €26,000.00 (for small projects) to €2.800.000 (big project) depending on regions.
- The average maximum unit amounts range from €40,000.00 to €3.000.000 depending on regions.



Other relevant programmes:

National Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI) (Cohesion Policy): The SNAI envisages the selection of the areas to be targeted and the preparation of a specific strategy.



SMART VILLAGES IN THE CAP STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic statement

There is a direct reference to Smart Villages (SV) in the CAP SP Strategic Statement, in relation to “diversity and attractiveness of rural areas” where it is stated that “[i]n addition to LEADER, the Plan offers the territories various intervention tools which, through cooperation, can favor the development of the territories (food districts, bio-districts, smart villages, river contracts) and integration with the equally relevant Strategy for Inner Areas” (IT CAP SP, p.57).

Assessments of needs and intervention strategy

There is no reference to Smart Villages in this section of the CAP SP. However, relevant needs are indicated under the direct SV intervention (see below).

Specific Objectives

SO8: Promote employment, growth, gender equality

Smart village strategies directly contribute to the achievement of SO8. Smart village strategies are considered as innovative integrated planning tools, which will allow to “experiment and start development paths by leveraging and promoting local food policies, collective goods and services and inclusive spaces, ecosystem services and cultural and tourist systems” (IT CAP SP, p. 190). It is stated that **smart village strategies are an important tool to boost co-planning and public/private management by increasing the capacities of local communities**. SO8 highlights the importance of smart village strategies to create and exploit synergies with other interventions, in particular LEADER, other national strategies and EU and national programmes. The direct link with the National Strategy for Inner areas (SNAI) is highlighted, which will also be fostered by the supporting activities undertaken by the CAP Network. Other important synergies will be with the measures planned in the National Recovery Plan (PNRR), in particular measures aiming to improve infrastructure accessibility (roads in remote areas and broadband). (IT CAP SP, p.77) Under the CAP SP, small interventions will be supported through LEADER, Smart Villages and other territorial cooperation, which are classified as “last mile” projects. Potential synergies might emerge with the PNRR (National Recovery Plan) measure about the renovation of rural villages.

Target plans

Contribution to R.40 comes from **the intervention SRG07**: 'Cooperation for rural, local and smart villages development'. The first results are expected in 2025, with 34 strategies implemented, while the overall target value expected by 2029 is **404 smart villages strategies and/or projects** supported (see breakdown of yearly figures above).

Consistency of the Strategy and complementarities

The linkages between CAP SP and Cohesion Policy are highlighted through **the integration of SO8 and the policy objective "A Europe closer to citizens"**. In this context, it is stated that *"urban and rural relationships will be strengthened, promoting the recognition of ecosystem services, accessibility to services, and infrastructural improvement. The **ERDF and ESF Plus can contribute** to local development strategies specific to the Common Agricultural Policy (LEADER, **SMART VILLAGES**), as well as to territorial cooperation and integrated territorial projects"* (IT CAP SP, p.438).

It is also mentioned that the **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF2 Digital)** - which aims to improve the European digital connectivity infrastructure and contribute to Europe's digital transformation - will *"contribute to increasing the capacity and resilience of the digital backbone infrastructure in all EU territories, especially in ultraperipheral regions"* with one of the main actions of *"development of high-capacity networks, including 5G networks, in areas where major socioeconomic factors are located (see **5G connectivity for "smart communities"**)"* (IT CAP SP, p. 440).

Concerning the contribution of EAFRD to National Strategy for Inner Areas (NSAI), it is mentioned that it can be done *"through the 'Cooperation for rural, local, and smart village development (SRG07)' intervention **to incentivize innovation and territorial cooperation** in selected areas, focusing primarily on agriculture and agri-food, with the aim of supporting a small-scale agriculture and livestock model and contributing to the strengthening of agri-food, forestry, and non-food supply chains to retain added value on the territory and improve the position of primary producers within individual chains"* (IT CAP SP, p. 441).

Elements common to several interventions

...including the CAP Network

The CAP Network envisages the implementation of specific actions related to smart village strategies. The CAP Network will make available different types of support, ranging from: preparation of guidelines to support the MAs and project beneficiaries; support to set up and improve regional and local governance processes, to improve administrative action; support to co-decision and co-planning for local actors proposing SV strategies and projects (through scouting activities, training, good practices exchanges, etc.); accompanying actions in the implementation phase (thematic or territorial meetings), in collaboration with the national and regional organisations involved in the implementation of SV (for example Anci – National Association of Municipalities, UNCEM, trade/sector associations, regional development agencies, research institutions) to strengthen aggregation processes and ensure that partnership working on SV can continue to be active over time. (IT CSP, p. 434, see also dedicated page within the LEADER section of the NRN website <https://www.reterurale.it/SmartRuralHub>).

Smart Villages interventions

DEDICATED INTERVENTION

Cooperation for rural, local and smart villages (SRG07, COOP)

The intervention can be implemented through (i) the **publication of calls at regional level** and (ii) **within the SRG06 intervention 'LEADER** - Support for the implementation of local development strategies', therefore, it can be implemented by the LAGs. **10 regions have chosen to implement the intervention** with regional calls, that is Basilicata, Campania, Liguria, Lombardia, Marche, Piemonte, Sicilia, Toscana, Umbria, Veneto. Other regions are expected to implement Smart Villages (SV) through LEADER.

The SV intervention primarily contributes to SO8, and addresses a range of needs:

- Create and support employment and inclusion social in rural areas (E3.3);
- Promote innovation for the sustainable and circular bioeconomy Increase attractiveness of rural territories (E3.4);
- Enhance quality of life in rural areas (E3.6);
- Support integrated planning in rural areas (E3.7); and
- Improve the capacity of planning and participation of local actors (E3.8).

The intervention **contributes to R.40** (see above). The aim is to **support the preparation and implementation of integrated projects and smart village strategies** intended as cooperation projects articulated in one or more operations, shared by groups of public and/or private beneficiaries, relating to specific sectors/areas to encourage in all rural areas the **use of innovative solutions**, also implementing any possible solutions offered by digital technologies and agricultural and forestry multifunctionality.

Beneficiaries of the intervention can be:

- newly established public and/or private partnerships, which must identify a lead partner;
- already established public and/or private partnerships with a recognised legal form, which must identify a leader or a legal representative.

The **unit amount** of support changes depending on regions, on the project dimension and the type of action implemented: (i) food systems, supply chains and local markets; (ii) rural tourism; (iii) social and economic inclusion; (iv) environmental sustainability). The unit amount is changing accordingly (see above).

OTHER RELEVANT INTERVENTIONS

LEADER – Implementation of local development strategies (SRG06, COOP)

The LEADER intervention is mainly aimed at **promoting the introduction of innovations in local contexts including Smart Villages**, in certain areas of the Local Strategies, to encourage the development of public-private co-planning/management and create collective goods and services, also implementing possible solutions offered by digital technologies.

The provisions of the LEADER intervention on SV will ensure the possibility to **implement smart village strategies also in those regions where the specific SV intervention (SRG07) has not been activated by the regional authorities**. Furthermore, the presence of the LAG with its experience in terms of implementation of participatory approaches and management of public-private partnership might be an important added value for those actors who would like to engage in developing a smart village strategy. In the regions where both interventions, LEADER and SV, are implemented, LAGs might have the possibility to be partners of the SV strategies, even though the final decision about that will depend on the decisions of the regional MA prior of the preparation and publication of the calls for applications.

Modernisation: AKIS and digitalisation

Smart village strategies are mentioned as one of the key actions that are planned to increase the attractiveness of rural areas under '8.5.1.2 Promoting digitalisation in rural areas'.

There is also reference to Smart Villages (SV) under the strategy for digitalisation as follows: *"The Leader approach plays a strategic role in fostering the vitality of rural areas and combating depopulation, poverty and environmental degradation. [...] This approach will also be adopted for the implementation of "smart village" strategies in certain areas of the Local Development Strategies, in order to promote the development of co-design/public-private management and the provision of collective goods and services, implementing solutions offered by digital technologies (SRG06-Leader-Implementation local development strategies). In addition to the LEADER approach, in support of smart villages, specific cooperation measures are envisaged to foster in rural communities the use of innovative solutions to improve their resilience, economic, social and/or environmental conditions, implementing possible solutions offered by digital technologies (e.g. mobility, work and services for businesses, vocational education and training, socio-health care, cultural and leisure and tourism activities, environmental care, local governance, relations and exchanges with urban areas, etc.)."* (IT CAP SP, p. 3615)

Smart Villages in other EU funds and programmes

National Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI) (Cohesion Policy):

The SNAI provides targeted measures for isolated areas. In the 2014-2020 programming period, it was decided to prepare a specific strategy for inner areas, due to their specific needs compared to other rural areas. The SNAI envisages the selection of the areas to be tackled and the preparation of a specific strategy. The rationale behind the implementation of the SNAI is similar to the concept of Smart Villages.

Ex-ante Evaluation

There is no specific reference to Smart Villages in this section of the CAP SP.

*The overall analysis and the references are based on the original **Italian CAP SP version 1.1 approved on 2/12/2022**. The Factsheet is produced under Contract No AGRI-2020-0332 with the Union and the opinions expressed are those of the contractor only and do not represent the contracting authority's official position.*