



Smart Villages in CAP Strategic plan Latvia

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 Latvia

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

What are the basic SV components?



DEFINITION OF SMART VILLAGES

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)

Is there a focus on digital innovation? There is no exclusive focus on digitalisation in the programming of Smart Villages in the Latvian CAP SP – different aspects of innovation are linked to Smart Villages, including social, product, process, and service innovations. At the same time, digital innovation is explicitly promoted under the section 'Modernisation: AKIS and digitalisation' where it is stated that *"digital technologies have the capacity to radically transform the disadvantages of remote rural areas with low population density by providing immediate virtual communication and access to e-services. Support to “smart villages” initiatives, where the benefits of digital technologies can be harnessed, will also contribute to this.”* (LV CAP SP, p. 940)

Is rural area / village defined? The rural area is defined as *“the entire territory of Latvia, except for the territorial units of national towns and municipalities – towns with a population of over 5000”* (LV CAP SP, p. 267).

Is there a reference to smart village strategies? There is no reference to smart village strategies, but there is a direct reference to smart villages' initiatives, that are smart village projects supported through the LEADER intervention.

Smart Villages in the CAP Strategic plan - Latvia

Dedicated Smart Villages interventions

There is no dedicated Smart Villages intervention in the CAP Strategic Plan.

Other relevant interventions

Implementation of operations under the local development strategy, including cooperation activities and their preparation (LA 19, COOP)



Mostly contributes to...

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



R.40: SV strategies - Target

R40 is not programmed.

Technical Support

There is a direct reference to Smart Villages stating that *“the CAP network [...] cooperation and networking with LEADER LAGs will continue in the creation and development of Smart Villages Initiatives”* (LV CAP SP, p.238).



SMART VILLAGES IN THE CAP STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic statement

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

Assessments of needs and intervention strategy

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

Specific Objectives

Smart Villages are directly mentioned under **SO 8: 'Promoting employment, growth, gender equality, including women's engagement in agriculture, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including circular bioeconomy and sustainable forestry'** in the SWOT analysis related to the LEADER intervention that can make *"full use of the potential and capacity of LAGs by ensuring the development of rural areas based on local needs, community activation, cooperation, smart village, development of remote co-working spaces and traditions"* (LV CAP SP, p. 131). It is also mentioned in the intervention logic as a tool for place and community building *"preserving and creating a quality living environment: ensuring the accessibility, quality and accessibility of public services, diversification of public activities, labour market participation of people at risk of social exclusion, strengthening the identity of the territory and supporting community-building and place-building initiatives, including smart village initiatives, as well as trans-national and inter-territorial cooperation on local development issues as well as trans-national and inter-territorial cooperation on local development issues, addressing accordingly the **needs SM8 V3 "Complex challenges for rural areas to maintain a quality living environment", SM8 V5 "Identity of the territory (including territorial brands)", SM8 V6 "Quality education and knowledge – accessibility, both upskilling and reskilling"** identified in the context of the analysis of the situation."* (LV CAP SP, p. 134)

Target plans

Indicator 'R.40 Smart transition of the rural economy: Number of supported smart-village strategies' is not programmed in the Latvian CAP SP. However, **LEADER Local Action Groups can choose to use the indicator R.40** in their Local Development Strategies.

Consistency of the Strategy and complementarities

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

Elements common to several interventions

...including the CAP Network

There is a direct reference to Smart Villages stating that *“the CAP network [...] cooperation and networking with LEADER LAGs will **continue in the creation and development of Smart Villages Initiatives**”* (LV CAP SP, p.238). As with other thematic activities, support is to include *“engaging [LEADER LAGs] in the search for cooperation partners, in particular transnational cooperation, maintaining publicity on its website on the LEADER approach and LAGs’ activities, providing methodological support for professional development in the area of LAGs’ competences, as well as providing up-to-date and good practice examples of the European CAP network and other countries”* (LV CAP SP, p.238).

Smart Villages interventions

DEDICATED INTERVENTION

There is no dedicated Smart Villages intervention in the CAP SP.

OTHER RELEVANT INTERVENTIONS

Implementation of operations under the local development strategy, including cooperation activities and their preparation (LA 19)

Smart Villages are directly mentioned in the description of the intervention: **'Implementation of operations under the local development strategy, including cooperation activities and their preparation' (LA 19)** under activities supported as initiatives for strengthening the community and promoting place *“with the aim of **supporting public benefit projects** to preserve and create a high-quality living environment [...], ensuring the accessibility, quality and accessibility of services, diversifying public activities [...], strengthening the identity of the territory and the sustainable use of local development potential (**including smart village initiatives**) [...]*” (LV CAP SP, p.814).

There are no specific targets concerning SV strategies or projects, but **LAGs can choose to include result indicator R40**: ‘Smart transition of the rural economy: Number of supported smart-village strategies’ in their Local Development Strategies (LDS).

It is stated that **the aid intensity can be increased** based on criteria defined in LDS such as “such as bio-economy, innovation, energy efficiency, collaboration, social entrepreneurship, smart village initiatives, etc.” (LV CAP SP, p.814).

Joint projects of public benefit and strategic actions are enabled “to address the identified needs in a complex way, with a set of complementary projects, including smart village initiatives, promote synergies between sectors and economic/environmental and social objectives, as well as the deployment of innovative and digital solutions, promotion of employment in rural areas” (LV CAP SP, p.818).

Innovation is defined as a key element of LEADER approach: “In order to promote local innovation, local action groups will have to include in their local development strategies a description of the innovative solutions and take this into account in the selection of local development strategies (a selection criterion) [...]. Innovations include product, service innovation (creating a new, unprecedented product, service), process innovation (new, significantly different technological process or method of manufacturing or creating a service), resource innovations (operations fundamentally change the way resources are used), as well as social innovations (new forms of collaboration, new approaches or solutions to an existing social challenge), where **initiatives in smart villages also play an important role, in particular by creating new forms of relationships and collaborations, including through digital solutions, thereby benefiting society and fostering its ability to act.**” (LV CAP SP, p.820)

It is also stated that “LAGs should pay particular attention to **community activation and capacity building** in order to facilitate [...] the involvement of the local community and cooperation on issues relevant to local development processes” (LV CAP SP, p.814).

Modernisation: AKIS and digitalisation

There is a direct reference to Smart villages in the sub-section 8.5. ‘Digital Strategy’ stating that: “Intervention LA 19 ‘Implementation of actions under the local development strategy, including cooperative activities and their preparation’ also includes support for the creation of new products and services and the development of existing products and services for investment in the acquisition and installation of new equipment, machinery, equipment, information technology and software, thereby facilitating the uptake of innovative, digital solutions for more efficient production and marketing of products, as well as the provision and accessibility of services, as well as the visibility of products and services. **Digital technologies have the capacity to radically transform the disadvantages of remote rural areas with low population density by providing immediate virtual communication and access to e-services.** Support for “**smart villages**” initiatives, where the benefits of digital technologies can be harnessed, will also contribute to this.” (LV CAP SP, p. 940)

Smart Villages in other EU funds and programmes

No other programmes with reference to Smart Villages have been identified.

Ex-ante Evaluation

it is stated that the identity of the territory *"will be promoted by supporting "smart villages" initiatives, LAG trans-national and inter-territorial cooperation projects, as well as actions to revitalise the LAG area"* (LV CAP SP, p.999).

*The overall analysis and the references are based on the original **Latvian CAP SP version 1.1 approved on 11/11/2022**. 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.*