



Smart Villages in CAP Strategic plan Slovenia

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 Slovenia

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Smart Villages in the CAP Strategic plan in Slovenia



DEFINITION OF SMART VILLAGES

"The term "smart village" is defined as a rural community that uses innovative solutions and digital technologies to improve economic, social or environmental challenges."

Definition of Smart Villages, Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food [website](#)

Is there a focus on digital innovation? There is relatively strong focus on 'digitalisation' in the definition provided on the ministry's website, as well as under Specific Objective 8, where opportunities for "digital technologies, digital platforms providing key services such as e-learning, e-government" are highlighted. (SI CAP SP, p.263)



Dedicated Smart Villages interventions

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

Other relevant interventions

LEADER (IRP26)

Mostly contributes to...

S08: 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.

Other relevant programmes:

Cohesion Policy (ERDF): The implementation of the development of areas under the Smart Villages concept and the restoration of cultural heritage in rural areas will be complementarily supported by both the EAFRD and the ERDF.



SMART VILLAGES IN THE CAP STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic statement

In the 'Strategic Statement' section of the CAP SP, Smart Villages is directly referenced as a base for further support of local initiatives and community-led local development, development based on the concept of Smart Villages, with the aim to raise the quality of life, strengthen economic activity in rural areas, and contribute to stable farm income in Slovenian villages: *"We will continue to support the activities of local initiatives or community-led local development (LEADER/CLLD approach), in particular with a view to promoting employment in rural areas, greater social inclusion of the population, preservation of rural heritage, sustainable forms of tourism, promotion of intergenerational cooperation and various social and "smart" services based on the concept of Smart Villages."* (SI CAP SP, p.45)

Assessments of needs and intervention strategy

Smart Villages is mentioned under the need P27: **'Improvement of quality of life and development of services and infrastructure in rural areas'** in relation to the provision of basic services and infrastructure. It is stated that: *"It is necessary to improve living conditions in rural communities in order to contribute to the attractiveness of the village environment as a living space also for young people and the potential to develop other economic activities, thus reducing the gap between regions and cities and rural areas. In order to maintain the vitality of rural areas, it is necessary to facilitate the development of cultural, leisure and other activities. In doing so, promote the implementation of the Smart Village concept."* (SI CAP SP, p.67) It is connected with the need P28: **'Strengthen social inclusion, cooperation and integration of rural residents'**. Certain vulnerable groups and interregional differences still remain in rural areas. The heterogeneous structure of the population and the vitality of settlements must be preserved and it is important to develop tolerance towards social and cultural differences. It is necessary to recognise and activate the productive capacity of vulnerable groups in rural areas and socialise them properly. It is necessary to introduce innovative social services and forms of mobility to ensure accessibility to services and maintaining inclusion in society. (SI CAP SP, p.67)

Specific Objectives

SO8: 'Promote employment, growth, gender equality' is referencing Smart Villages as follows: *"In order to maintain the vitality of rural areas, it is necessary to facilitate the development of cultural, leisure and other activities. In doing so, promote the implementation of the Smart Village concept."* (SI CAP SP, p.270)

In the SWOT analysis, the Smart Villages concept represents an opportunity. In rural areas, not everyone has access to ICT. Implementing the Smart Village concept and providing access to ICT give an opportunity to preserve rural population and entrepreneurship, change negative demographic trends, and prevent daily migration. By preserving and promoting local entrepreneurship it is possible to create new jobs in rural areas and make better use of social capital: *"[T]he development of rural areas in line with the concept of Smart Villages and the circular economy (digital technologies, digital platforms providing key services such as e-learning, e-government, transport, social services, rural tourism, short value chains, cascading use of raw materials, social innovation in rural services and entrepreneurship) enables rural population to be preserved and allows rural entrepreneurship development."* (SI CAP SP, p.264)

Target plans

R40 is not programmed under the LEADER intervention or elsewhere. However, according to the CAP SP, **Smart Villages will be supported through LEADER and R.40 will be defined once the LAG Local Development Strategies are approved.** *"Under the IRP26 LEADER intervention, the values for indicators R.37, R.39, R.40, R.41 and R.42 will be known for the validation of LAG local development strategies."* (SI CAP SP, p.276).

Consistency of the Strategy and complementarities

It is stated in this section that developing rural areas under the Smart Village concept will be supported by EAFRD and ERDF by recognising the needs of local areas and development strategies. In this way, it will contribute to needs P27 and P28 by improving the quality of life, developing services and infrastructure, and enhancing social inclusion in rural areas. More specifically, it is stated that: *"The implementation of the development of areas under the Smart Villages concept and the restoration of cultural heritage in rural areas will be complementarily supported by both the EAFRD and the ERDF in the whole of Slovenia, in the context of the recognised needs of local development strategies."* (SI CAP SP, p.434)

Elements common to several interventions ...including the CAP Network

No specific support actions for Smart Villages have been identified in the CAP SP.

Smart Villages interventions

DEDICATED INTERVENTION

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

OTHER RELEVANT INTERVENTIONS

LEADER (IRP26)

There is direct reference to Smart Villages under LEADER intervention. It is stated that *“the purpose of the intervention is to achieve this goal through the implementation of cooperation operations and operations between different LAGs addressing needs and challenges in rural areas, such as [...] development of smaller infrastructure in rural areas, development of the concept of Smart Villages, [...], etc.”* (SI CAP SP, p. 1203) It is also stated that the *“operations under the [LEADER] intervention shall contribute to the following themes: social inclusion of all rural residents, promotion of employment and entrepreneurship in rural areas, development of basic services, raising quality of life, development of smaller infrastructure in rural areas, development of the concept of Smart Villages, environmental and climate solutions in rural areas, incentives for organic farming, etc.”* (SI CAP SP, p. 1205).

“The Smart Villages concept in the context of the [LEADER] intervention refers in particular to improving economic, social or environmental challenges through the use of innovative solutions and digital technologies. The purpose of the Smart Villages concept is to contribute to the development of basic services and to raising the quality of life in rural areas.” (SI CAP SP, p. 1203)

It is foreseen that through the implementation of the operations *“LAGs can contribute to the horizontal goal [such as the] transfer of knowledge and information, and the digitalisation and connectivity of rural areas through the concept of Smart Villages”* (SI CAP SP, p. 1206).

Modernisation: AKIS and digitalisation

Knowledge exchange and innovation information will be promoted and organised by AKIS, EIP Operational Groups, LAGs, and other similar groups and projects.

Various measures and support mechanisms will improve digitalisation by promoting it across all the regions through various projects like developing apps, real-time data collection and visualisation, modern solutions and technics, and others.

Opportunity **to develop rural areas in line with the Smart Village concept** is recognised. Through this concept, it is planned to exchange knowledge and improve digitalisation, which will enable entrepreneurship and preservation of population. It is stated that *"[a] special opportunity is rural development in line with the concept of Smart Villages and the circular economy (digital technologies, digital platforms providing services such as e-learning, e-government, transport, social services, rural tourism, short value chains, cascading use of raw materials for social innovation in rural services and entrepreneurship), which enables the preservation of rural population and rural entrepreneurship."* (SI CAP SP, p.1338)

Smart Villages in other EU funds and programmes

Cohesion Policy (ERDF): *"The ERDF resources for the sustainable development of local areas, based on the draft ECP Programme 2021-2027 (priority 9 and specific objective 9.2.), will be dedicated to building an inclusive society and further integrated socio-economic development in urban and rural areas, with particular attention to reducing disparities between socio-economically disadvantaged people and areas. [...] [T]he implementation of the development of areas under the Smart Villages concept and the restoration of cultural heritage in rural areas will be complementarily supported by both the EAFRD and the ERDF in the whole of Slovenia, in the context of the recognised needs of local development strategies."* (SI CAP SP, p.434)

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 **Slovenian CAP SP version 1.1 approved on 28/10/2022**. 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.*