

SMART MOUNTAINS

XII European
Mountain
Convention

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How to make our territories attractive and
future-oriented?

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SMART VILLAGES IN MOUNTAIN AREAS

Experiences from the Interreg Alpine
Space project «Smart Villages» (2018-
2021)



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● Poliedra

SMART VILLAGES IS A SMART CONCEPT!

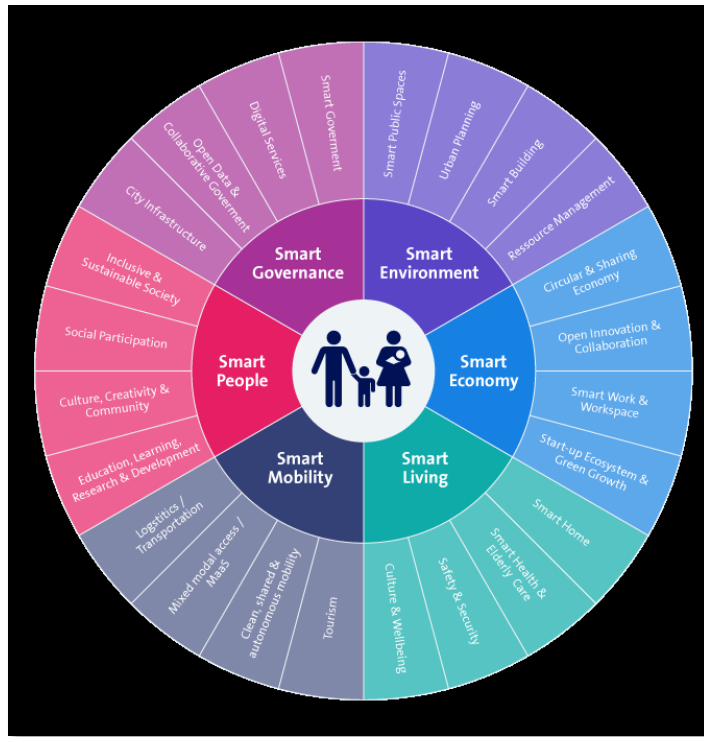


- **13** partners from **6** Alpine countries
- **11+** Test Areas
- A **common methodological framework** for the involvement of stakeholders and the assessment of smartness
- **Recommendations** for policy makers



WHAT DO WE MEAN WITH «SMARTNESS»? CAN WE AGREE ON A WAY TO QUANTIFY IT?

The literature defines **indicators** and **methodologies** for Smart Cities. Can we work with the same framework for sparsely populated areas too? Well, **yes and no**.



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Interreg Alpine Space SMARTVillages

Assess the smartness degree of your village

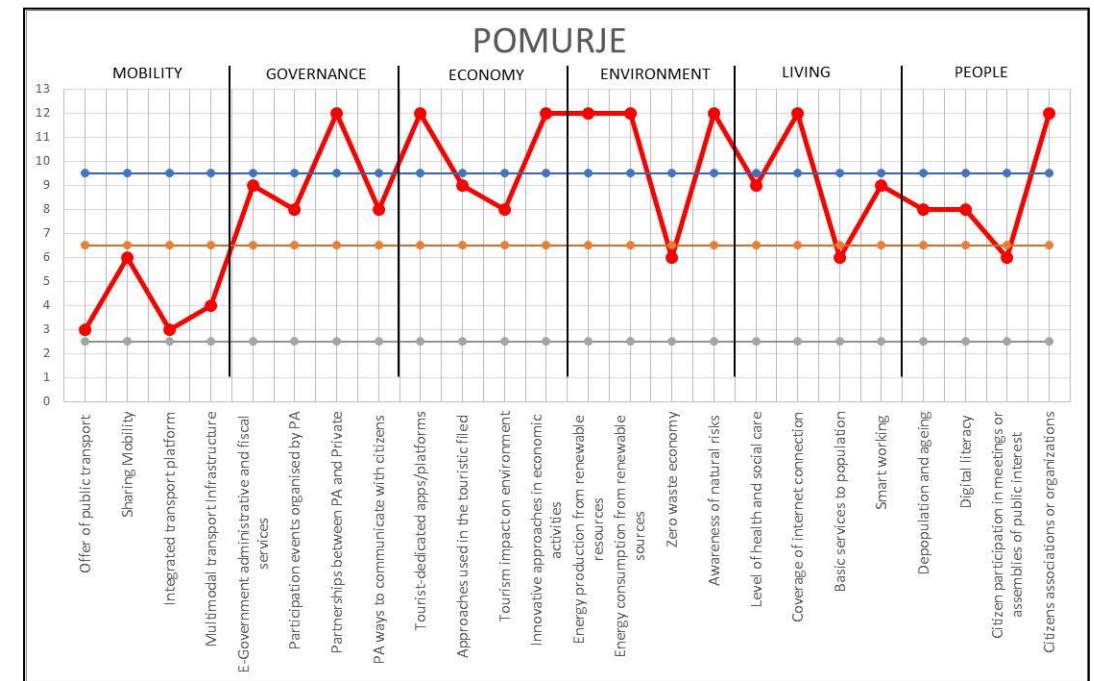
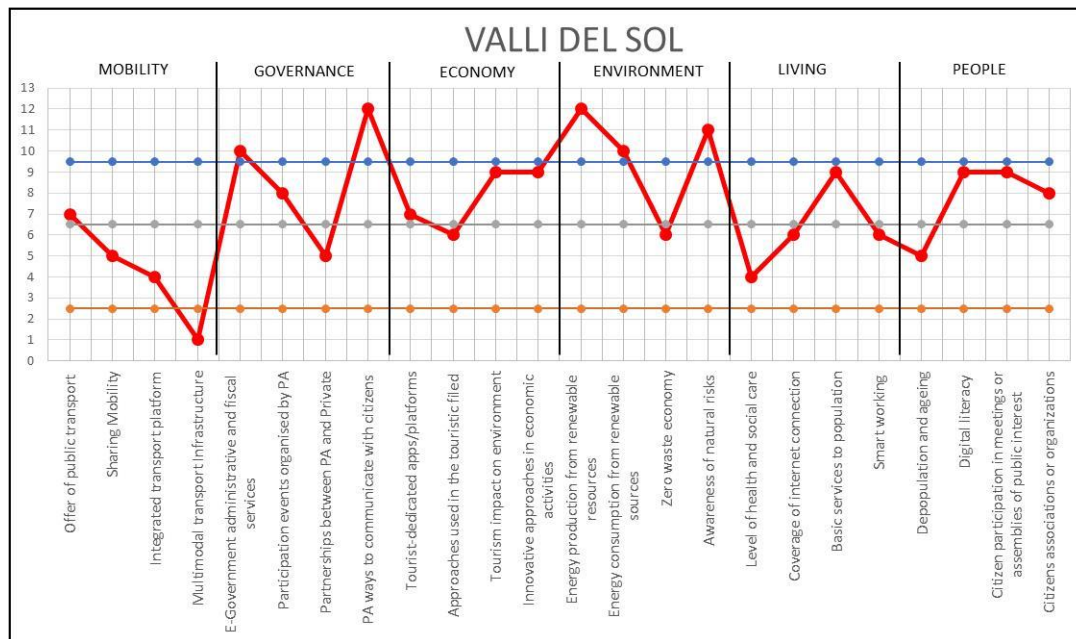
You can fulfill the test to know the degree of smartness of your village:

<p>1. Would you say that your TA is subject to depopulation and ageing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Yes, the TA is only inhabited and 'lived' by elderly people <input type="radio"/> Yes, young people (under 30) come back occasionally (for holidays and occasional work) <input type="radio"/> Yes, young people (under 30) study and work away but still live here (e.g. daily commuters) <input type="radio"/> No, young people (under 30) are staying in the area <p>Comment: <input type="text"/></p>	<p>2. What is the level of digital literacy of the people living in your Test Area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Low, and educational activities to foster digital literacy are not planned <input type="radio"/> Low, but educational activities to foster digital literacy are in place or planned <input type="radio"/> Medium-to-high, but not for all the age groups <input type="radio"/> High, all people can be defined as digital literates <p>Comment: <input type="text"/></p>	<p>3. Do citizens in your TA participate in meetings or assemblies of public interest?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> No, there is not much interest in participating in decision making <input type="radio"/> Yes, there are some opportunities but only a low percentage of people participate. Indicate an approximate percentage <input type="text"/> <input type="radio"/> Yes, there are some opportunities and a medium-to-high percentage of people participate. Indicate an approximate percentage <input type="text"/> <input type="radio"/> Yes, there are some opportunities and a very high percentage of people participate. Indicate an approximate percentage <input type="text"/> 	<p>4. Are there active citizens associations and organisations in your TA?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> No, or there were but they are not active any more <input type="radio"/> No, but there are plans for some new associations/organisations to form <input type="radio"/> Yes, but they are not focused on innovation. Indicate an approximate number <input type="text"/> <input type="radio"/> Yes, and they are focused on innovation. Indicate an approximate number <input type="text"/> <p>Comment: <input type="text"/></p>
<p>1. Are there e-government administrative and fiscal services, organised and managed by Public Authorities?</p>	<p>2. Do Public Authorities involve citizens in decision making? (top-down approach to participation)</p>	<p>3. Do Public Authorities facilitate partnerships with private enterprises?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> No 	<p>4. Do Public Authorities communicate (news, decisions, information) in smart ways to the citizens or visitors?</p>

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ASSESSING SMARTNESS, SETTING PRIORITIES, KICKSTARTING ACTIONS

An **ad-hoc methodology** was **co-designed with all partners** and applied to **all Test Areas** with local stakeholders: this is key for an effective work, and for ushering a transformation that is effectively **owned by local people**.



SOME SMART VILLAGES ACTIONS KICKSTARTED BY THE PROJECT. GO SMALL, CONCRETE AND FEASIBLE



- **Electric 'valley' car-sharing**, matching the demand for transport of an Alpine valley with the need to commute, reduce congestion and reduce environmental impact (Austria)
- **Public transport on demand**, matching the need to counter the lack of transport services with the opportunities that IT and smartphones allow (Italy)
- **Creation of digital labs and hubs**, areas of innovation and services to the population, from the most basic services (transport) to the most innovative ones (3D printers, robotics) (France)
- **Smart and sustainable agriculture**, strengthening networks between producers and customers, creating digital shops, innovating towards blockchain (Slovenia)

**SUCH ACTIONS INCREASED THE RESILIENCE OF THE AREAS DURING
THE PANDEMIC AND THE LOCKDOWNS**

HOW CAN WE DESCRIBE SMART VILLAGES IN A FEW WORDS?

SMART VILLAGES CAN BE:

- **'Equalisers'**, or areas aiming to offer opportunities akin to those offered by urban areas
- **'Linkers'**, or hubs for the aggregation of services to the population.
- **'Partners'**, or areas supporting urban areas in the provision of services and/or economic opportunities.

In any case, the smart villages are **'Players'**, active in all respects in shaping their future, to keep rural and mountain areas attractive, liveable and lived in

- **R1:** Consider the smart transformation of mountain, rural and peripheral villages as a strategic priority
- **R2:** Embed Smart villages in existing and future strategies and policies
- **R3:** Allocate funds to integrative approaches such as the Smart villages
- **R4:** Allow room for innovation and experimentation
- **R5:** Encourage networking and the exchange of experiences around the Smart village approach within rural and mountain areas and with urban areas
- **R6:** Use the potential of the Smart villages approach to communicate the innovation potential and attractiveness of mountain and rural areas and to link urban and rural areas
- **R7:** Develop digital infrastructures and skills according to the needs and to the technological possibilities

WHAT THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE HOLD



- Smart Villages policies HAVE entered the new CAP, Pillar II
- Smart Villages are one of the cross-sectorial strategies in EUSALP AG5
- Smart Villages can be expanded to the concept of **Green Communities**
- Smart Villages are entering, more and more, in the **regional programming logic**, namely **ERDF, EAFRD**, other **Local Development Strategies**
- The **pandemic** has made it clear that livable, attractive mountain (and rural) areas are not only an opportunity, but a **necessity** for all countries.

USEFUL WEBSITES:



- Website: <https://www.alpine-space.eu/projects/smartvillages/en/home>
- Smart Villages Platform – smartness assessment: <https://smart-villages.eu/language/en/smartness/>
- Smart Villages Platform – good practices: <https://smart-villages.eu/language/en/good-practices-submission/>
- Smart Villages' Poliedra pages:
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zj3yxuOhOb8&ab_channel=ConsorzioPoliedra
 - <https://www.poliedra.polimi.it/en/project-category/smart-cities-and-communities-en/>
- European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2021/03/29-03-2021-eusalp-policy-recommendations-from-the-%C2%AB-smart-villages-%C2%BB-project

THANK YOU / MERCI / GRAZIE!

