



# Latest insights of Smart Villages

Thematic webinar on Smart Villages  
Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform

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*28 June 2022*

# Background



**2017**  
**EU ACTION FOR  
SMART VILLAGES**



**2017-2020**  
**ENRD  
Thematic Group on  
Smart Villages**



**2019-2022**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Pilot Project for  
Smart Villages**



**2020-203**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Pilot Project for  
Smart Villages**

# EU ACTION PLAN FOR SMART VILLAGES

Initiatives within EU rural development, regional development, research, transport, energy, and digital policies such as:

- Pilot project on Smart Eco-Social Villages by the European Parliament
- ‘Smart Rural Transport ‘Areas’ (SMARTA) project: transport in rural areas.
- Relevant Horizon 2020 research projects
- Network of Broadband Competence Offices (BCOs)



## ENRD Thematic Group on Smart Villages

- Awareness-raising and networking within the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) (2017-2020)
- Public and private stakeholders at all levels, including local actors
- Briefs with recommendations for policy-makers on how to best support smart villages
- 4 [Smart Villages portal](#) – materials, collection of project examples

# Smart Village Definition

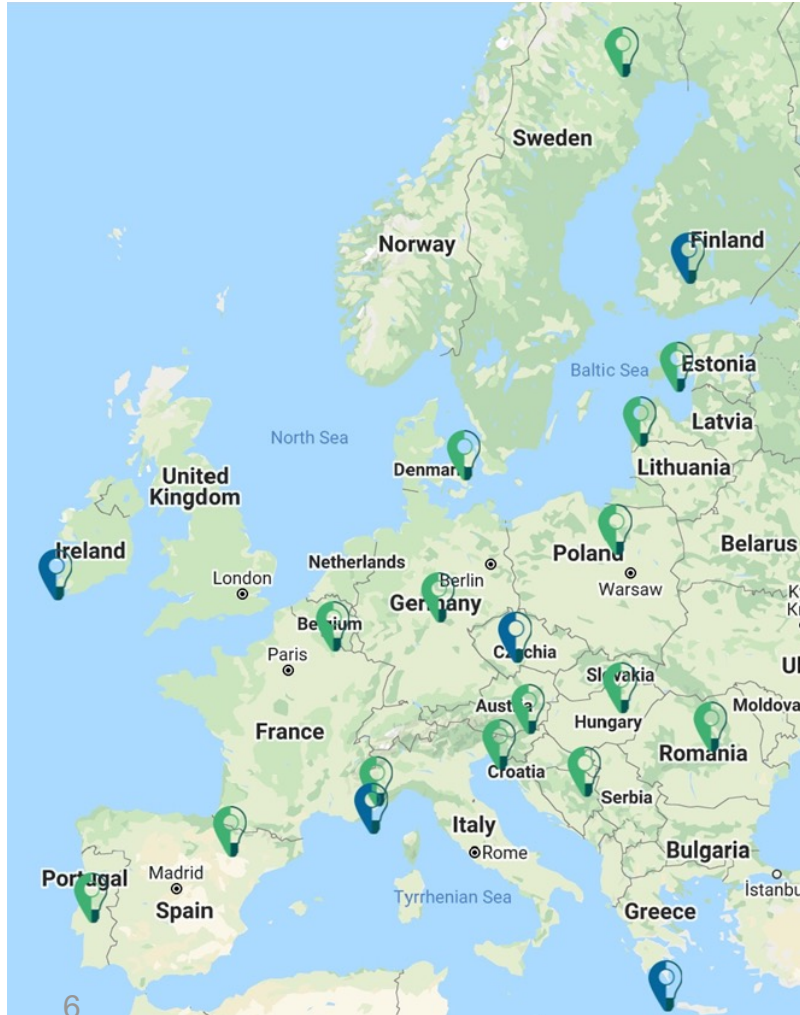
## (Pilot project on smart eco-social villages)

- Local **communities** in rural areas
- Use **innovative** (often digital) **solutions** to improve their resilience
- Focus on economic, social and/or environmental development aspects through a **strategy**
- Build on **local strengths** and opportunities
- Develop and implement their strategy through a **participatory approach**
- **Cooperate** with other communities/actors in rural and urban areas
- Complement existing initiatives
- Raise funding from various **public and private sources**

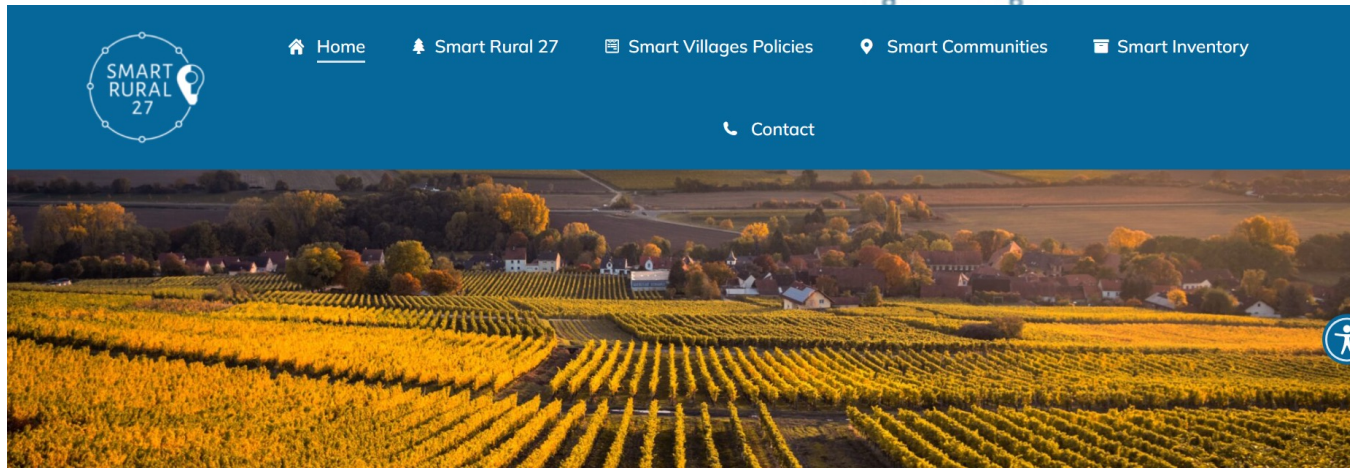
[Source: Smart eco-social villages \(pilot project\) | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)



# 1<sup>st</sup> EP Preparatory Action: “Smart Rural 21”



- 2020-2022
- Experience with animation of development and implementation of smart village strategies in practice, in 21 villages across the EU
- Developing tools (e.g. roadmap) and communicating directly with many more villages
- Draw conclusions on how to best support rural communities in the future
- <https://www.smartrural21.eu/>



## 2<sup>nd</sup> EP Preparatory Action – “Smart Rural 27”

- 2021-2023
- Complement pilot project and 1<sup>st</sup> preparatory action
- Focus on current and future possibilities for MS support for Smart Villages – through CAP, cohesion policy and other EU policies
- To provide an interactive geo-mapping tool presenting Smart Villages initiatives, a group of lighthouse examples, proposal for an EU Smart Villages observatory
- [www.smartrural27.eu](http://www.smartrural27.eu)

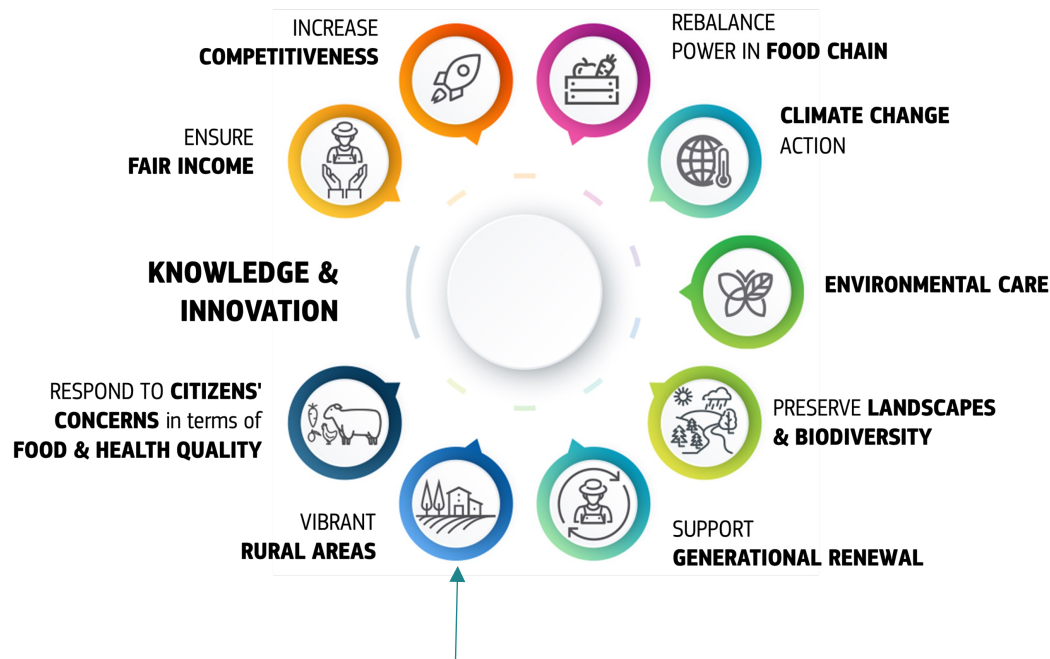
# Frequently asked questions

- What is a village? There are no specific limitations or restrictions
- What is smart? Innovative solutions (digital & social innovation)
- How Smart Village strategies can be funded? (CAP, Cohesion Policy, funding instruments of sectoral strategies)



# Smart Villages funding: CAP 2023 – 2027 (1)

## CAP Specific Objectives



### Notably *Specific objective 8*:

*Promote employment, growth, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including the circular bio-economy and sustainable forestry*

- Recitals 32, 78, 83, 84
- Article 73 Investments
- Article 77 Cooperation (including LEADER) – Preparation/implementation of SV
- Result Indicator 40 : “Smart transition of the rural economy: Number of supported smart-village strategies

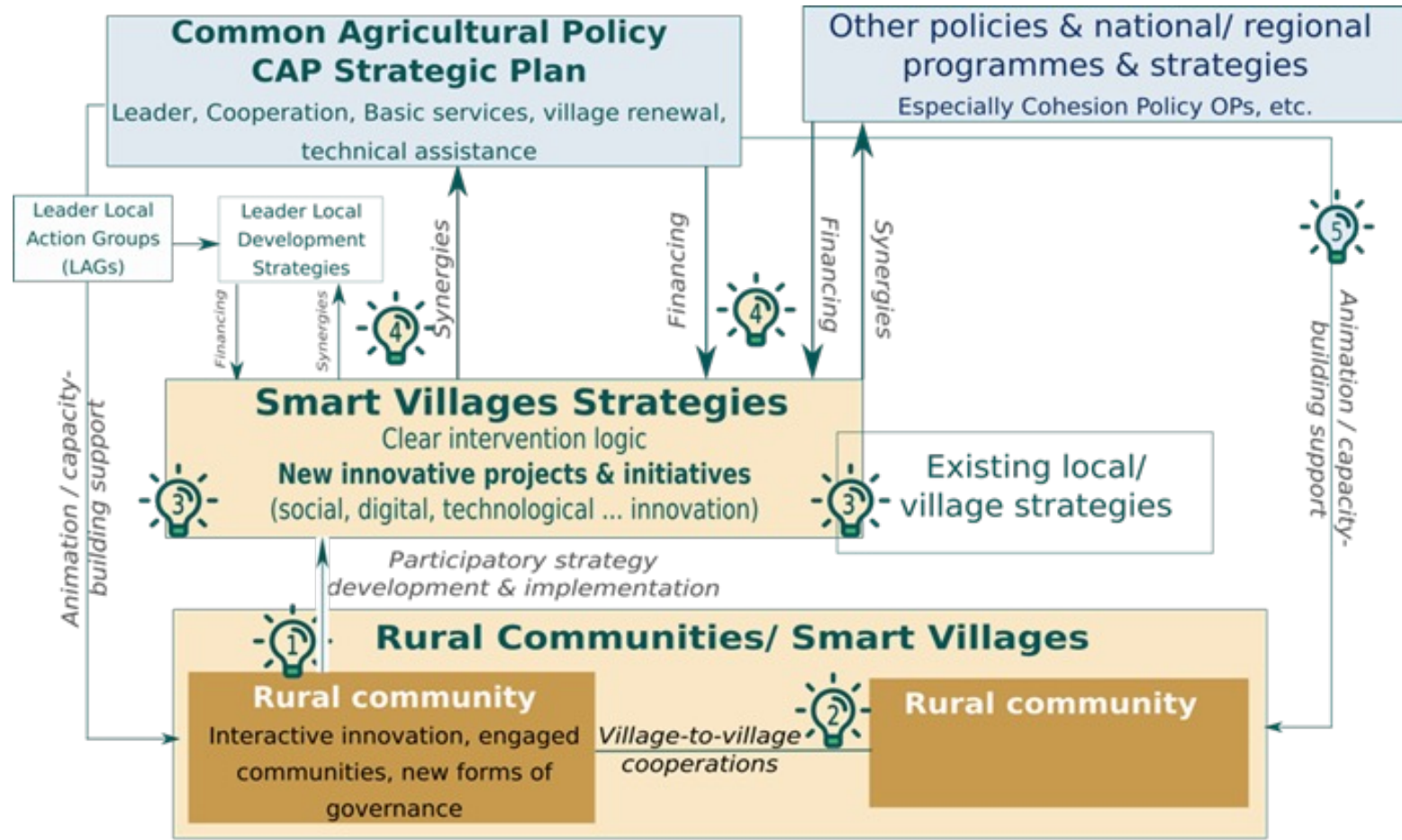
# Smart Villages funding: CAP 2023 – 2027 (2)

1. Supporting activities related to the preparation and/or implementation of smart Village strategies as a distinct intervention for Smart Villages (outside LEADER), (Article 77, para 1, point e, SPR 2021/2115), or
2. Include Smart Villages in LEADER local development strategies, by proposing preparation and/or implementation of Smart Village Strategies (Article 77, para 1, point b, SPR 2021/2115), or
3. Supporting investments (e.g. digital infrastructure, basic services etc.) related to Smart Village Strategies (Article 73, SPR 2021/2115).

# Other funding opportunities 2021-2027

- Cohesion Policy, Policy Objective 5 : a Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories and local initiatives (ERDF, ESF+)/Recital 30 (CPR 2021/1060)
- ERDF (Article 10, Regulation 2021/1058) special attention for disadvantaged regions and areas, in particular rural areas and areas which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps
- European Territorial Cooperation (INTERREG) within regional policy
- EMFAF: supporting the economic and social vitality of coastal communities
- Other financial instruments of sectoral strategies (energy, mobility, skills)
- Horizon Europe

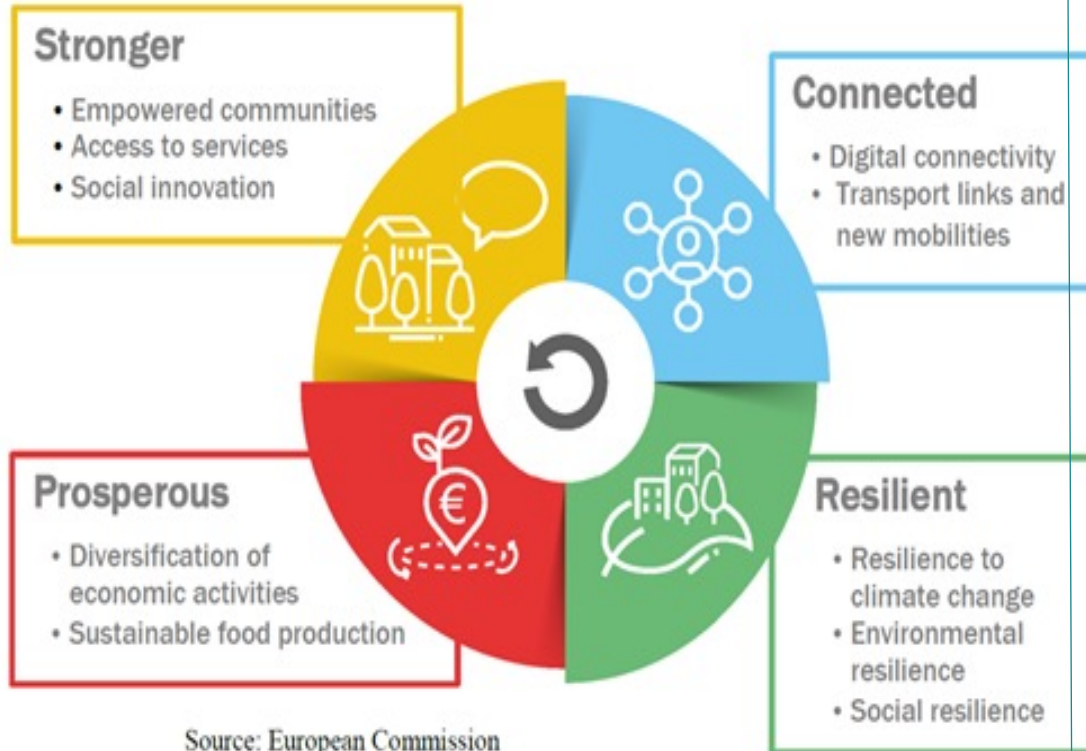
# Smart Village funding



Source: Smart Rural 27 project

# Smart Villages and the Long-term Vision for Rural Areas

*Smart Villages activities also feed in to the activities under the Long-term vision for rural areas, that will continue to promote smart villages approaches.*



Source: European Commission

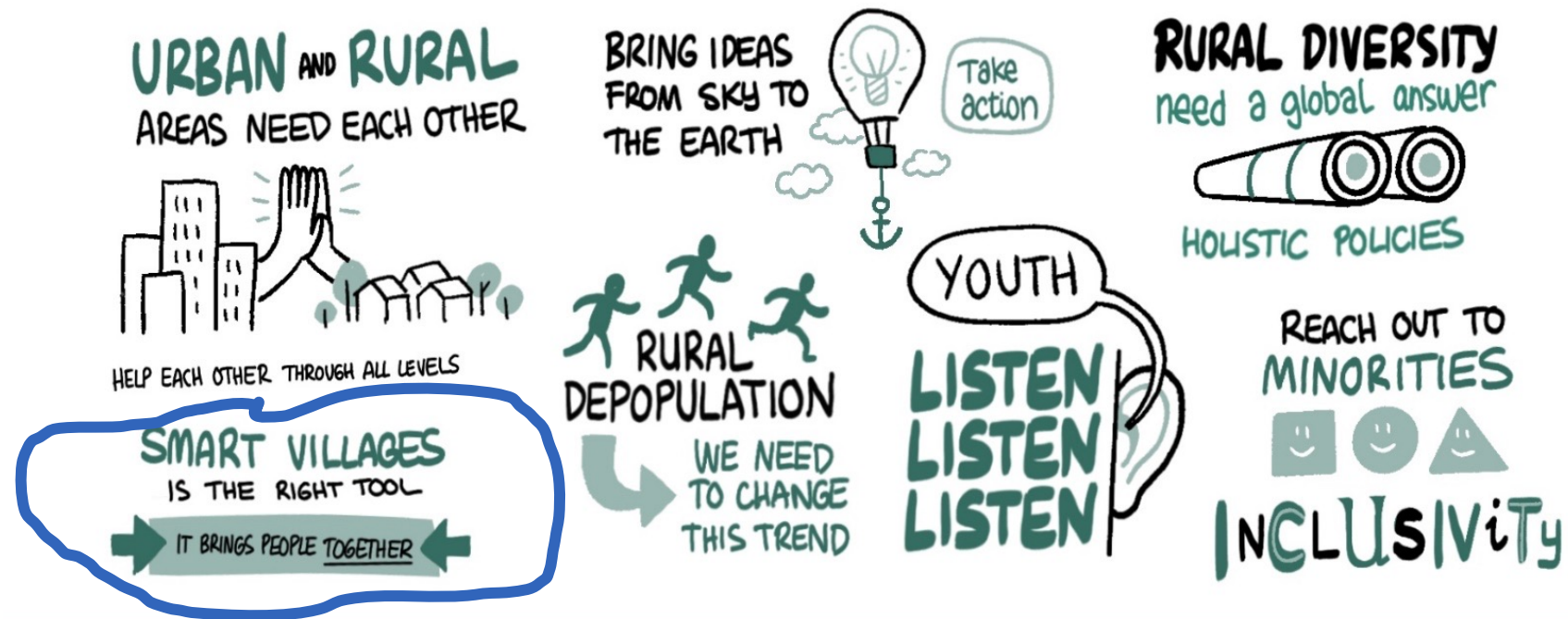
- **Flagship “Set-up a rural revitalisation platform”:** A one-stop shop for rural communities, sharing information and best practices on tools and strategies.
- **Action “Enhanced networking for LEADER/CLLD and Smart Villages”**
- **Flagship “Research and innovation for rural communities”**
- **Start-up Village Forum:** Focus on start-ups and entrepreneurs as innovation engines – to strengthen innovation eco-system

# A couple of lessons learnt so far

- Smart Villages are already there and find solutions in a wide range of fields – agriculture, infrastructure, public services, transport, renewable energy, environment, rural businesses, tourism, community facilities, bio-economy, social inclusion, young people...
- Flexibility is needed for using the concept for funding in different national/regional/local contexts
- Awareness – still a challenge to make sure that EU support actually reaches beneficiaries on the ground
- Local engagement: many communities lost people, need for creative approaches to engage certain groups such as young people
- Need for capacity-building and animating the process.

# RURAL PACT CONFERENCE: Day 2, Plenary harvest

## THE WAY FORWARD FOR THE RURAL PACT

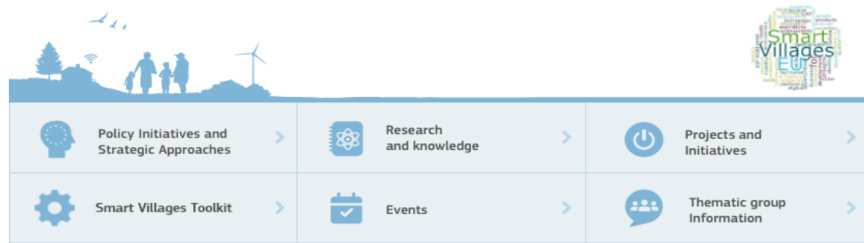


Rural Pact Conference  
15-16 June 2022

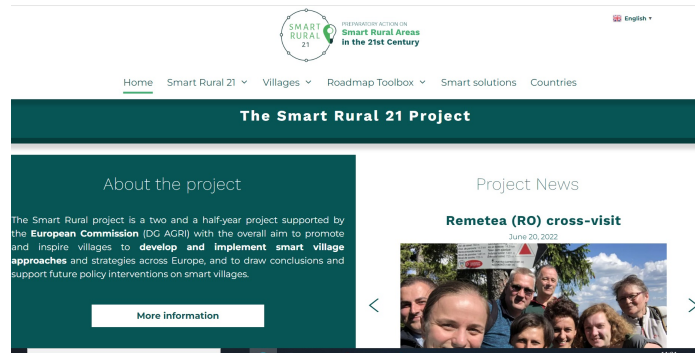


# More information

## Smart Villages Portal



[Smart Villages Portal | The European Network for Rural Development \(ENRD\) \(europa.eu\) – www.enrd.eu](http://www.enrd.eu)

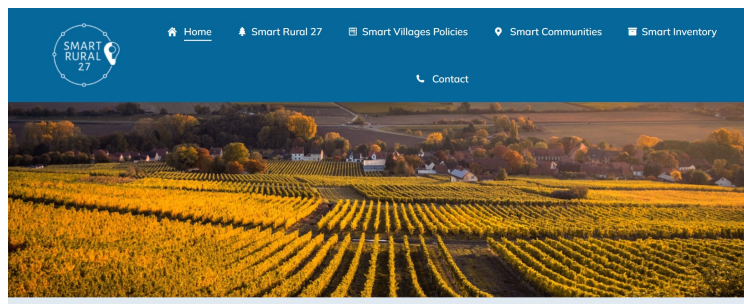


[www.smartrural21.eu](http://www.smartrural21.eu)



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# Thank you!