

Interreg



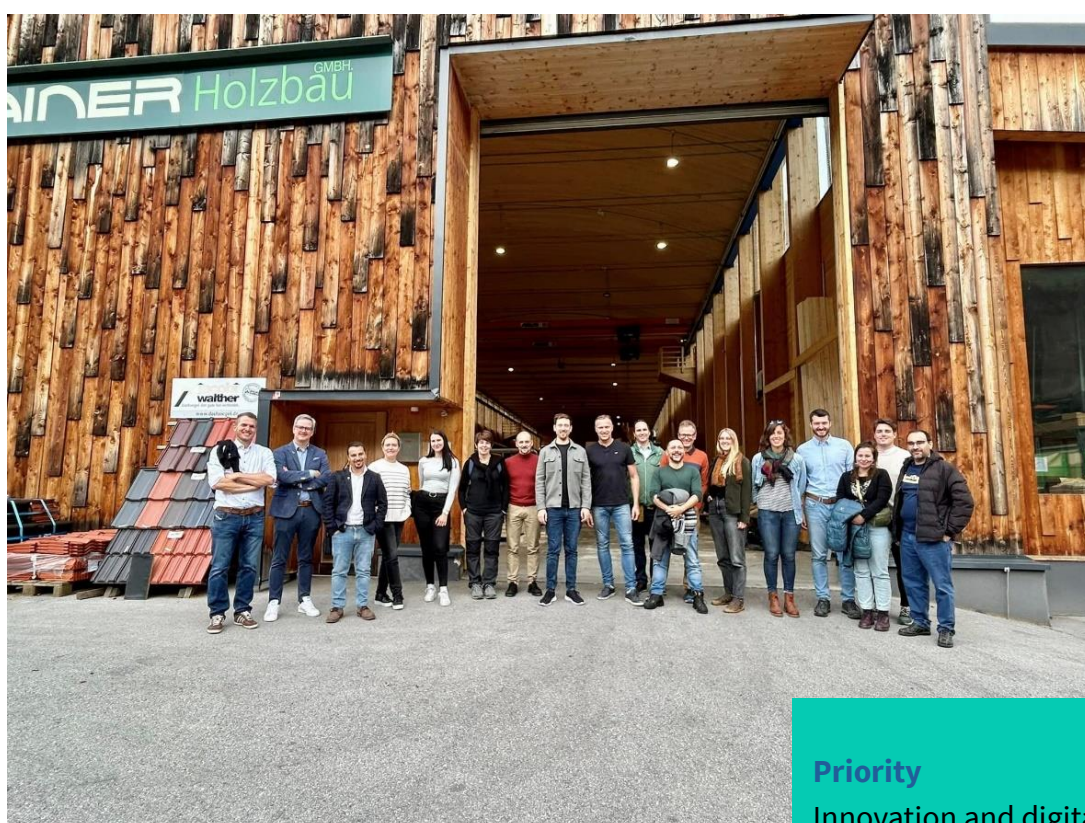
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Newsletter#2

Alpine Space

January 2025

SmartCommUnity



**SMART COMMUNITY** is a conscious community that wants to improve itself by utilizing all varieties of knowledge, social innovations instruments as well as digital opportunities to improve the quality of life for the people living in these communities.

**Priority**

Innovation and digitalisation supporting a green Alpine region

**Specific objective**

SO 3.2 - Reaping the benefits of digitisation for citizens, companies, research organisations and public authorities

**Start Date** 11/2022

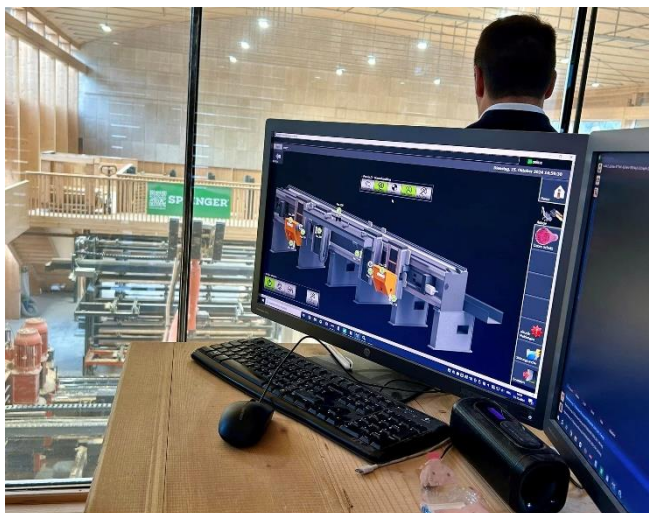
**End Date** 10/2025

**Total eligible costs** 2.960.288 EUR

**ERDF grants** 1.882.601 EUR

**Building on the concept of Smart Villages towards a transnational and EUSALP-integrated Smart Community in the Alps**





## ABOUT PROGRESS ON THE SMARTCOMMUNITY PROJECT

### Discover Our Guide on Good Practices!

We are excited to announce that the SmartCommUnity project has published its **Good Practices Guide**, a resource designed to empower rural areas to embrace smart technologies and sustainable development while strengthening their unique community identities.

This collection highlights successful initiatives from our Lighthouse Test Areas (LTAs), providing inspiration and practical examples for Follower Test Areas (FTAs) to embark on their smart transformation journeys. It showcases how innovative approaches can enhance services, support local economies, and create resilient rural communities.

Aimed at rural and mountain regions across Europe, the guide also fosters cross-border collaboration, promoting a shared vision for a smarter, more sustainable future.

Let's work together to transform challenges into opportunities for thriving and sustainable rural areas. Dive into the guide and join us in shaping the future of our communities!

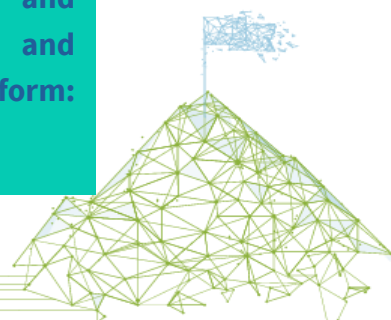
→ Access the guide on the following link  
[**Collection of Good Practices**]

Over the summer and autumn, the WPIT finalised the content of the [https://smart-alps.eu/ platform](https://smart-alps.eu/platform), making it accessible and spreadable to test areas and beyond. You can find diagnostic tools relating to the smartvillages approach, as well as thematic discussion forums to create links and synergies between test areas and enable the exchange of good practices.

Gamification has also been the focus of development work, with an interactive guide enabling users to follow the various stages of a smart approach and transform their community. Finally, guidelines for test areas have also been created to explain what is meant by gamification and how it can be implemented locally.

→ Access the guidelines on the following link  
[**Guidelines for gamification**]

Discover more about the SmartCommUnity project and explore useful tools and resources by visiting and registering our platform:  
<https://smart-alps.eu/>



## Smart Alps network

Being part of the **Smart Alps network** offers numerous advantages, including:

- ✓ **Collaboration and Networking:**  
You will have the opportunity to collaborate with other municipalities and organizations that share similar goals, facilitating the exchange of ideas and good practices.
- ✓ **Access to Resources and Tools:**  
The network provides access to useful tools and resources for implementing smart approaches in communities, improving quality of life and the local economy.
- ✓ **Long-term Sustainability:**  
Participating in the network helps ensure the sustainability of local initiatives, aligning with broader strategies such as those promoted by Eusalp.
- ✓ **Digital Innovation:**  
You will benefit from the latest digital innovations and technologies that can improve services and local governance.
- ✓ **Active Participation:**  
The network encourages the active participation of citizens, fostering a sense of community and involvement.

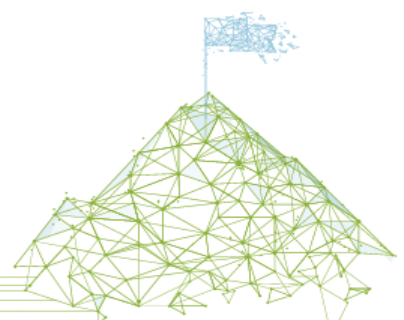
Joining the Smart Alps network can therefore be an important step for your municipality towards a smarter, more sustainable future. If you have further questions or need more information, please do not hesitate to ask!

For more information: <https://smart-alps.eu/smartalps-network/>

Contact: [eusalp.ag5@regione.vda.it](mailto:eusalp.ag5@regione.vda.it)

### SmartCommUnity: an EUSALP Success Story!

Thanks to the initiative of the Presidency of EUSALP, it has been possible to focus attention on relevant topics through practical examples, helping to raise awareness of EUSALP's activities and achievements. The **SmartCommUnity** project is one of these success stories, showcasing how collaboration and innovation can transform alpine challenges into opportunities for growth and well-being.



## Discover the SmartCommUnity Test Areas

### Giving Voice to Local Stakeholders in the Test Areas

The project partners continue to make progress in their Test Areas, engaging local stakeholders to ensure the voices of the community are heard. Here we have few pills from their interviews:

#### Spotlight on Lower Austria

The Local Transition Areas (LTAs) in Lower Austria are making strides in climate adaptation projects. We spoke to several managers about their experiences.

*How would you describe your role in the region?*

**Stefan Czamutzian (LTA KLAR! Wagram):** "I see myself as a coordinator, like a spider in a web. I organize and oversee climate adaptation projects with municipalities, ensuring that plans turn into action."

**Roswitha Haghofer (LTA KLAR! Waldviertler Hochland):** "My task is to identify problems in the region and turn challenges into opportunities through targeted measures."

#### What are the biggest challenges in your job?

**Rupert Wychera (LTA KLAR! Tullnerfeld OST):** "The toughest part is involving those who aren't already engaged with climate topics. It's about stepping out of the bubble and bringing everyone on board."

**Sonja Wirgler (FTA KLAR! Lanzendorf+):** "Building a network at the beginning was challenging, but finding partners who share the vision has been key to our success."

#### What has changed since you became a manager?

**Stefan Czamutzian:** "Climate adaptation is becoming a more prominent topic, and people are taking advantage of our initiatives."

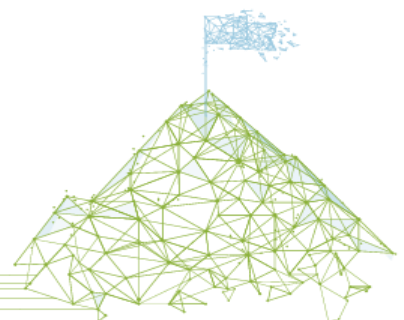
**Roswitha Haghofer:** "Positive changes are visible, but the process is ongoing—it's a journey that will last decades."



**Stefan Czamutzian**



**Roswitha Haghofer**



## Innovative Digitalization in the Southern Upper Rhine Region

We also spoke with stakeholders in the Southern Upper Rhine region about the **SmartCommUnity** project, which focuses on finding digital solutions for rural communities.

### Mr. Brucker – Director of Regionalverband Südlicher Oberrhein

*What is SmartCommUnity about?*

"It's about improving the quality of life in rural areas through digital solutions, working with partners across Europe."

*What does your work involve?*

"We identify local needs and implement digitalization modules tailored to them, like citizen apps, coworking feasibility studies, and digital skills workshops for older residents."

*Any final thoughts?*

"These projects show how digitalization can meet the specific needs of rural areas, not just here but across Europe."

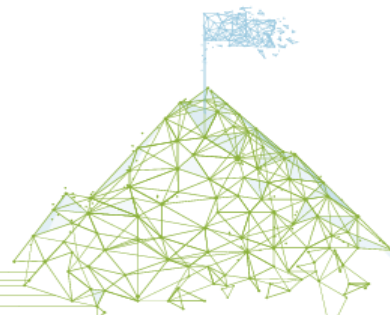
### Mayors of the Test Areas Reflect on the Project

**Roland Tibi (Elzach):** "Digitalization is the most crucial step for our future. The citizen app and the coworking space are standout results that highlight SmartCommUnity's impact."

**Klaus Hämmerle (Winden im Elztal):** "Citizen-driven workshops have led to innovative ideas like a digital forest nature trail for children, empowering our community with practical solutions."

The testimonies from these stakeholders underscore the importance of community-driven, innovative approaches in addressing local challenges and creating sustainable, connected futures.

**Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to highlight progress in the Test Areas!**



## NEWS&EVENTS

### SmartAlps Webinar on "communication platforms", 27th of November 2024

#### Factors of success for a realisation and sustainable running of communication platforms

Assess thoroughly the user needs (wealthy, visits etc.)

Use participatory prototyping in the developing process.

One platform for several municipalities? municipal cooperation regional cooperation could save resources.

Trustworthiness of the platform (data protection)

What are the important **players** for the operation of a communication platform and **how can they be supported** by the municipality/region?

Young people, that can advise their parents on what to include and which tools to use

Target group "associations", they serve as multipliers

Users such as public, secondary/home owner's, tourists.

Promotion (eg. roadshow). Local people should be aware of the existence of specific communication

A tool as easy as possible, userfriendly

Natural hazards helped in the promotion of the app.

Local Action groups (LAG), acting as a link between the national, regional level and local

Youth, perform a survey among young people on their habits, needs etc.

Civil protection, and agencies dedicated to the safeguard of citizens, mostly for emergencies

Usability by the actual local people. Providing a good user experience use tools that are tailored to locals

The challenge is to provide for different user groups one common tool.

Interfaces with Swiss/Tourismus, homepage etc. make the tool more efficient.

Most of the discussion focused on emergencies and the need for immediate communication.

commitment of public administration of using the platform

Schools, and school managers, acting as a link for students and families

Sport facilities

Clear and concise communication needed.

Very small municipalities (around 100 people or so) may not need any special communication.

Interreg Alpine Space "SmartCommunity" project, SmartAlps Network, Peter Niederer (SAB) <https://www.alpine-space.eu/project/smartcommunity/>

## 4th SmartAlps Webinar on «Digital communication platforms for municipalities»

On the 27th of November the 4th SmartAlps Webinar on «Digital communication platforms for municipalities» took place. 2 presenters revealed the factors that are important to ensure a successful implementation and sustainable operation of such platforms.

Thanks to Bernd Kalbermatten – general secretary of the Swiss municipality of Saas Fee – were introduced to the setting up of a digital communication platform and the main steps in community building that should accompany such a project. Dominik Magin from the Fraunhofer (IESE) in Germany presented experiences from different regions in Germany on how the provision of services of general interest could be improved via the «DorfFunk», a citizen Application.

Presentations and webinar notes are available here: <https://smart-alps.eu/de/webinar-smartalps-digital-communication-platforms-for-municipalities-an-exchange-of-experiences-2/>

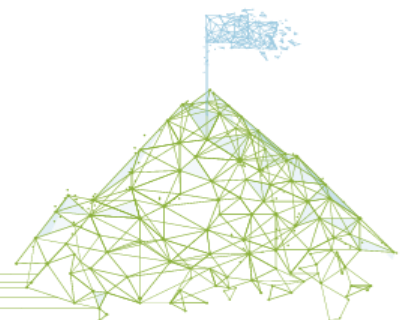
## Digital Alps Conference

From September 16-20, the EU Mediterranean Coast and Macro-Regional Strategies Week with an integrated DigitalAlps conference – organised by EUSALP AG5 – took place in Izola (Slovenia). The partners of the Interreg SmartCommunity project – SAB, Anci Liguria, ITC Murska Sobota and Greenpoint organized workshops on coworking/integration of young people and on macro-regional cooperation. They demonstrated with concrete examples how the digital transformation in rural areas can succeed. Stay tuned for the next DigitalAlps conference taking place 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2025 in Lienz, Austria. Visit this [link](#) for more information.



## Next Event

- ✓ 5<sup>th</sup> Project Meeting in **Valence** (FR) – 19/20 March 2025
- ✓ DigitalAlps conference taking place 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2025 in **Lienz** (AT)
- ✓ Final Conference in **Freiburg** (DE) – 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025



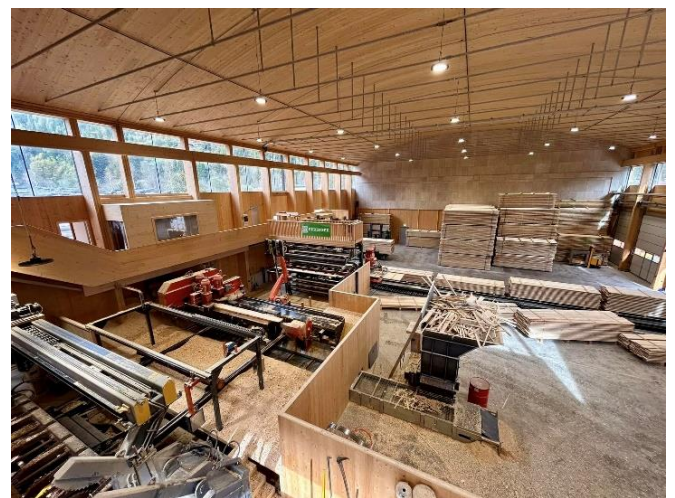


The study visits were particularly inspiring. Participants had the opportunity to explore the SÄGEBOX in Ainet, an innovative modular sawmill showcasing sustainable and efficient wood processing technologies. This was followed by a visit to the Hochsteinhütte, where, during the shuttle bus ride, a workshop was conducted on analytical tools used in the Aosta Valley study visit. The day concluded with a sundowner and dinner at the Hochsteinhütte, offering a perfect setting for networking and informal discussions.

### SmartCommUnity project meeting in Lienz and Amlach

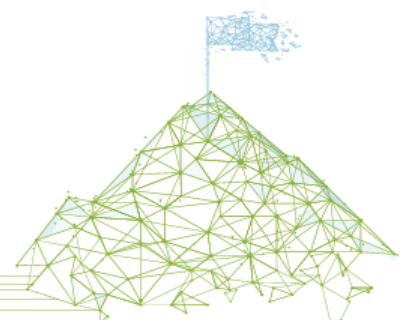
From October 15 to 16, 2024, the project consortium gathered in Lienz and Amlach to exchange insights on regional projects aimed at shaping new perspectives and fostering a smart vision for the Alps.

A key highlight of the meeting were the interactive workshops. During the "Workshop on Megatrends and Future Technologies", students engaged in discussions about emerging developments and their impact on the region. Meanwhile, a "Systems Thinking Workshop" provided a structured approach to identifying and strengthening key conditions for innovation.



The meeting also focused on digitalization and sustainable regional development. Mayor Stefan Clara introduced the Smart Region District Lienz, outlining key initiatives to enhance digital and sustainable transformation in the region.

Another important topic was the use of data spaces and innovation platforms, with contributions from datahub.tirol and Standortagentur Tirol. These discussions underscored how digital solutions and smart networks can drive sustainable innovation across Alpine communities.



Interreg



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## Alpine Space

SmartCommUnity



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[alpine-space.eu/project/smartcommunity](https://alpine-space.eu/project/smartcommunity)

