



A NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS
CONTRIBUTION BY THE
ZAGORJE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

SMART VILLAGES

Examples and plans in
Krapina-zagorje County,
Croatia

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Zagorje Development Agency



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INTERESTS AND NEEDS

A smart development values
a bottom-up approach

Until there arises a consensus on a definition, we can outline a pragmatic and clear one: a **smart village** is a developmental approach that includes a **self**-initiative from the population as well as government **support** for such initiatives, aiming to tackle existing and anticipated needs, problems, and goals, and increase overall **quality of living**.



URBAN, RURAL, SMART.

Both cities and villages benefit from a similar smart development approach:

1. **Digitalization**

- a. services
- b. digital infrastructure
- c. competences, innovations, inclusion

2. **Renewable energy**

- a. connecting local and national stakeholders
- b. pilot/test solutions
- c. local energetics

3. **Mobility**

- a. flexible local transportation
- b. car pooling
- c. vehicle sharing

4. General **quality of life improvement**

- a. happenings, events, and tourist content
- b. cultural and natural heritage



HOW TO CONTRIBUTE?

From initiative to implementation:
populace, NGOs, local government

- willingness to hear the needs and wishes of local residents
- inclusion of local stakeholders
- inclusion of experts from without the immediate area
- strengthening the capacities of the local government and relevant partners
- remove unnecessary obstacles and establish access to cofunding mechanisms
- include smart development principles into existing, rather than developing new dedicated strategies
- readiness for flexible responses to priority and acute issues
prioritetne i aktualne probleme



SOME EXISTING EU EXAMPLES

LEADER/CLLP rules are expected to be simplified (2021 - 2027)

- energetics – local heating and electricity plants (wood chips as fuel, photovoltaic cells)
- sustainable local economy – employment and training, biowaste refining for construction and furniture industry use
- ecology – reduction of water pollution stemming from agricultural activity
- mobility – mobile apps to search for and provide personal transportation, adaptation of public transportation timetables
- digitalization and services – mapping needs and addressing problems (aid to the elderly, fast broadband), engaging to help to bring broadband internet connections to remote settlements



POLAND: MICRO PROJECT, LAGRE IMPACT

LAGs may help, but are not
crucial for smart
development

The village of Piaseczna Górka:

- rain garden – aesthetic as well as local flood control role
- living architecture – shrubbery shading for public benches
- autonomous lighting – public lighting with solar panels
- open space library – promoting reading
- questing tourism – promoting local history and culture by info panels with game elements



OUR PROJECTS: SMART FOUNDATIONS

Smart village projects can be financed from both EU and national calls; dedicated calls are expected (2021-2027)

Example projects (both smart city and smart village) from the **Krapina-zagorje County** (Croatia) can be grouped into thematic units:

- **energetic and sustainability** LED lighting, green markets, waste processing and management, incentives to use renewable energy sources
- **festivals and events** promotion and organization of sports, culture, tourism, music, folklore, and other events
- **mobility and services** investments into transportation, education, social care, and employment
- **parks and promenades** building and equipping parks, promenades, trails, panoramic points, gardens and various landscaping
- **internet coverage** smart public benches, broadband development including free public Wi-Fi
- **sports and culture** gymnasiums, playgrounds, sports fields, mobile libraries and open space book stands
- **tourism and environment** hiking and mountaineering routes, bicycle routes and trails, setting up info-panels concerning cultural and natural points of interest



CROATIA: A FEW EXAMPLES

Smart development is a result of cooperation between residents, NGOs, private, and public sectors

- **a decentralized energy distribution system** in the town of Koprivnica enables a nearly uninterrupted distribution network operation in case of a partial failure, efficient electricity use from renewable sources, and reduced operating costs
- the town of Čakovec has procured 20 **electric bicycles** and 2 **charging stations** with part of costs being covered by rentals; bike usage is related to favorable traffic and health effects, and the usage data is being used to improve transportation development planning and bike lane design
- the Belje company (near the city of Osijek) uses modern digital technology for **precise agriculture**; drones are used to survey farmland, and the collected data is analyzed with the goal of optimizing agricultural cycles



Many more smart city/smart village examples can serve as inspiration and guidelines to implement similar ideas. Smart settlements are expected to be increasingly represented in the EU 2021 – 2027 financial period; they are already recognized as a **priority** in EU and national development documents.

Smart development is **inclusive** in terms of stakeholders, **bridges** the local and regional levels, and enables **flexible** implementation of ideas.

Thus, it brings together **sustainability, resilience, innovation,** and **quality of life** improvement.



We wish to contribute to the **New European Bauhaus** by sharing this document. Both urban and rural areas are facing similar problems, and we hold that these can be addressed by a development approach outlined on these pages: a willingness for a bottom-up project design, sustainable planning, and respecting both innovative and traditional elements of a community.

We are interested in networking and sharing ideas and experiences, so please feel free to contact us.

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