

Future-Ready Alps: Digital Transformation, Resilient Infrastructure and Public-Value in Data and AI in Dialogue with the European Commission

'Pitchers and Respondents'

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Session 1: Digital Transformation of mountain territories

Alison Hunter, Moderator of the conference

Carlo Vigna, Valle d'Aosta Autonomous Region, AG5 Focal point on Digital Transformation

Gianluca Lentini, Poliedra Polytechnic of Milan, SmartCommUnity project

Serafin Pazos Vidal, European Association for Innovation in Local Development (AEIDL), Smart ERA project

Angelo Cerqueti, European Commission DG AGRI

How can digital transformation effectively improve public services and quality of life in Alpine territories, where fragmentation, scale, and accessibility constraints limit impact?

Interreg AS SmartCommUnity (2022-2025)

Co-funded by
the European Union

Alpine Space

SmartCommUnity

Project Overview:

The project focused on the creation of a **community of future-proofed rural areas with a strong emphasis on digital development**. SCU has developed specific tools to this end and has strengthened the **SmartAlps** network within AG5.

Successes Achieved:

Creation of **Smart-alps.eu**, a **digital ecosystem** integrating various tools, resources, and community features designed to support rural areas through the different stages of their smart transition journey. Work in **15+ rural areas** in the Alps.

Challenges Faced:

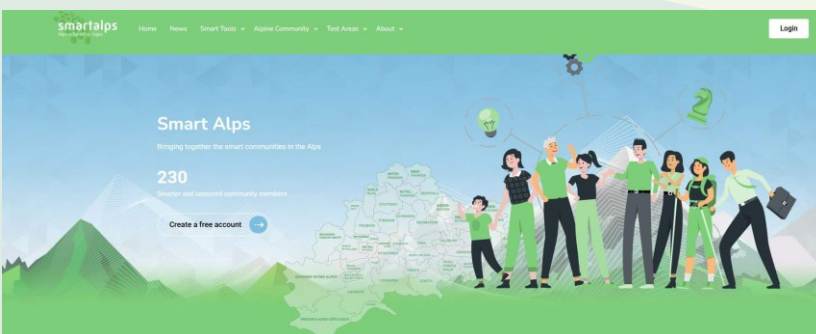
Enabling factors for digitalisation (literacy and infrastructure) were lacking; Lack of local competences and skills; -> **we now aim at the creation of a Digital Hub Taskforce to transfer competences, to be included in the SmartAlps network.**

Policy Recommendations:

Simplify regulations; invest in local skills, including for public administrators; **integrate digital actors in local communities – create opportunities and attractiveness**

• Point of Contact with AG5:

Contribution to scaling digital transformation across the Alps.



SMART ERA: Scaling Smart Rural Innovation



Project Overview

SMART ERA (Horizon Europe 2023-2026, FBK led) supports rural and mountain communities to **design, test and scale** smart solutions that strengthen **resilience, cohesion and digital transformation**.

Successes Achieved (or will achieve)

- ◆ **Integrated solutions (“Smart Innovation Packages”)** → combining digital tools, services, governance and business models
- ◆ **Co-design with local communities** → ensuring solutions respond to real territorial needs
- ◆ **Data-driven innovation** → using local data to guide decisions and improve services

Challenges Faced (or will face)

- ⚠ **Scaling** beyond pilots and ensuring long-term sustainability
- ⚠ **Bridging gaps** between **innovation, funding and policy frameworks**
- 👉 **Opportunity:** align EU, macro-regional and local actions to scale solutions across Alpine regions

Policy Recommendations

- ✓ Digital transformation works when **embedded in local ecosystems**, not as standalone tech
- ✓ **Capacity-building and governance** are as important as infrastructure
- ✓ **Replication requires packaging solutions**, not individual pilots
- ✓ Data can create **public value**, but needs local ownership and usability

Point of Contact with AG5

- **Digital transformation:** community-driven, place-based innovation

