

SmartCommUnity Project

D1.2.2 Communication of the main outcomes of WPEU

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Communication of SmartCommunity and SmartAlps in different contexts

The **outreach and exchange activities** of the WPEU project partners in different contexts can be structured into 5 communication categories below. They demonstrate that communication in the SmartCommUnity project operated on multiple, interconnected levels — **policy, stakeholder, public, dissemination, and internal coordination** — ensuring that digital transformation efforts in the Alpine region were both strategically aligned and widely accessible.

1. Policy Communication and Strategic Alignment

Focus: Integration of SmartCommUnity into regional, macro-regional, and European policy frameworks through strategic dialogue and coordination.

- **RAVA (PP8)** played a central role as **leader of EUSALP Action Group 5 (AG5)** and **co-leader of Work Package WPEU** (with SAB). Its activities ensured **policy coherence** and the **integration of the SmartCommUnity approach** into the **EUSALP framework**, particularly within the **Cross-Cutting Priority (CCP1): “Promoting the Digitalisation of the Alps.”**
- The project’s Lead Partner and WPEU co-leaders were regularly invited to **AG5 meetings** to present SmartCommUnity’s progress and ensure close alignment with the AG5 workplan. This collaboration enabled SmartCommUnity to become **a flagship initiative within EUSALP’s Cross-cutting Priority 1 (CCP1)** “Promoting the Digitalisation of the Alps,” specifically under the “Smart and Sustainable Communities” pillar. As a result, the project benefited from strong synergies with AG5 activities and was highlighted as **an AG5 Success Story**, receiving dedicated communication and visibility within the macro-regional strategy.
- **SAB (PP9)** enhanced the project’s policy visibility at the **EU level** by coordinating with **DG REGIO, DG AGRI**, and **Members of the European Parliament**. SAB’s targeted lobbying and participation in strategic policy meetings helped embed SmartCommUnity principles into all **four EU macro-regional strategies** (EUSALP, EUSDR, EUSAIR, EUSBSR).

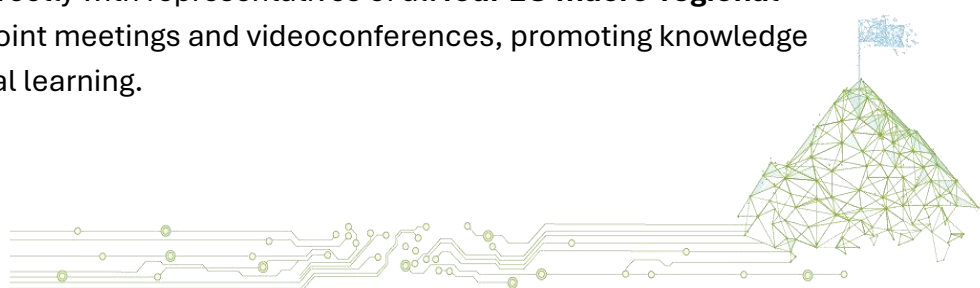


- SAB also developed a **comparative policy analysis** across these macro-regions to identify **best practices and recommendations** for broader adoption of smart community approaches.
- **eNu (PP10)** ensured vertical policy integration by linking SmartCommUnity to **EUSALP Action Group 9 (AG9)**, focusing on **climate adaptation** and **sustainability**. eNu presented updates in AG9 meetings, supported the group's work plan, and aligned project actions with **national and regional spatial planning frameworks**, including contributions to the **Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning (ÖROK)**.
- Together, these actions positioned SmartCommUnity as a **strategic contributor to EUSALP's digital and sustainable development goals**, ensuring policy integration from local to EU levels.

2. Stakeholder Engagement and Network Building

Focus: Inclusive communication with policymakers, local authorities, academia, SMEs, youth, and citizens to foster collaboration and ownership.

- **RAVA** engaged **13 mayors from Val di Sole** through a dedicated **webinar on digital transformation**, and presented SmartCommUnity objectives to mayors of **test areas** during **Regional Stakeholder Group (RSG)** and **WG5** meetings. These dialogues facilitated local understanding and alignment on project goals and implementation strategies.
- RAVA strengthened the **SmartAlps network** by involving diverse actors—**youth, SMEs, and universities** (e.g., University of Valle d'Aosta and Zurich University of the Arts)—in thematic events such as **Futuralps – Montagna 4.0** and the **Annual Forum**.
- **SAB** expanded stakeholder participation by organizing **five thematic webinars** in the framework of the **SmartAlps Network (2023–2025)** on topics including **Smart Villages, Coworking Spaces** (see fig 1), **Mobility, Digital Communication Platforms**, and **LoRaWan for Municipalities**, attracting participants from public authorities, businesses, and academia.
- SAB also engaged directly with representatives of all **four EU macro-regional strategies** through joint meetings and videoconferences, promoting knowledge exchange and mutual learning.



- **eNu** focused on **local community engagement** in Lower Austria, collaborating with municipalities, **KLAR! regional managers**, and NGOs. Activities such as the **“Climate & Me” exhibition** in public spaces and lectures for municipalities promoted active citizen participation.
- All partners maintained engagement with **youth networks**, including the **EUSALP Youth Council**, ensuring intergenerational dialogue on digital and sustainable transitions.



Fig.1 Crossregional webinar on coworking spaces, one of five SmartAlps webinars. The results of the webinar are depicted on the <https://smart-alps.eu/> website (P. Niederer SAB)

3. Event Organization and Public Communication

Focus: Organization of major events to disseminate results, promote visibility, and foster dialogue across governance levels.

- **RAVA** organized and moderated the **Digital Alps Conference (DAC) 2023** in Courmayeur (Italy), the flagship communication event for **EUSALP AG5**, featuring **thematic workshops**, **SmartCommUnity partner presentations**, and participation from the **EUSALP Youth Council**.



- RAVA also co-organized the **Lab on Civic Engagement for a Smart Regional Transition** during the **EU Week of Regions and Cities (EWRC) 2023** in Brussels, increasing the project's European-level visibility. The results of the project will also be disseminated at the **EUSALP Annual Forum 2025 in Innsbruck** on 25–26 November during the Networking Village.
- As flagship follow-up events, **DAC 2024** (Izola, Slovenia) and **DAC 2025** (Lienz, Austria) were coordinated by RAVA under respective **EUSALP Presidencies (Slovenian and Austrian/Liechtenstein)**. Both attracted a wide range of stakeholders — **ministries, universities, enterprises, EU institutions, and youth representatives** — and featured SmartCommUnity as a best-practice case for **digital transformation in marginal and mountain territories**.
- **SAB** participated as a moderator and panelist in several major events, including the **DAC sessions, Mediterranean Coast and Macro-Regional Strategies Week (2024 and 2025)**, and the **RURACTIVE Forum (2025)** (see fig 2).



Fig.2 The SmartCommUnity project has been presented together with the SMART ERA project in a plenary of the Mediterranean Coast and Macro-Regional Strategies Week (Izola 2025) (Lana Lavrac EUSAIR)



- **eNu** showcased SmartCommUnity and its “**Climate & Me**” exhibition at the **EUSALP 9th Annual Forum in Brdo pri Kranj**, engaging stakeholders from **seven Alpine countries**.
- Together, these high-visibility events positioned SmartCommUnity as a **reference project** for digital innovation and cross-regional cooperation in the Alpine region.

4. Dissemination, Visibility, and Knowledge Sharing

Focus: Public dissemination, media visibility, exchange of good practices, and cross-project learning.

- **RAVA** prioritized communication and dissemination by issuing **project newsletters**, presenting SmartCommUnity at **European and regional events**, and continuously promoting the **SmartAlps network**.
- DAC sessions in **2023–2025** (fig 3) were key dissemination moments, where SmartCommUnity outputs—such as **policy recommendations, evaluation methodologies, and best practice exchanges**—were shared widely.
- **SAB** disseminated project outcomes at **European events** (e.g., EWRC, Mediterranean Coast Week, RURACTIVE Forum, SMART ERA partner meetings in Mallorca and Milan), enhancing cross-programme visibility and collaboration.
- **RAVA’s study visits** in **Valle d’Aosta** and **Lienz** connected SmartCommUnity with complementary initiatives like **More than a Village** and **SMART ERA**, enabling direct knowledge transfer.
- **eNu** developed a **Climate Adaptation Best Practice Platform**, consolidating lessons from its **Functional and Local Test Areas (FTAs and LTAs)** and supporting replication.
- Dissemination activities also contributed to **EUSALP’s communication priorities**, ensuring that the **DAC outcomes** feed into **Cross-Cutting Priority 1 (CCP1)** on smart and sustainable communities.



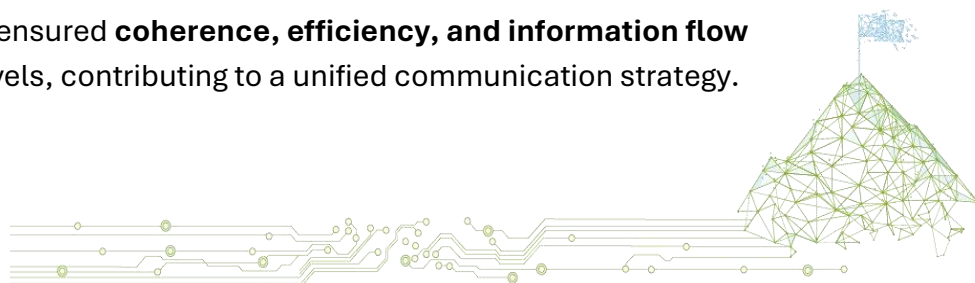


Fig 3: DAC session during Digital Alps Conference 2023 (Aosta Valley)

5. Internal Communication and Coordination

Focus: Efficient management of communication within the consortium and with EUSALP governance structures.

- **RAVA** ensured continuous coordination through **monthly WPEU meetings** with partners (**UL, Poliedra, and eNu**) and **regular reporting** to the **Project Management Board**.
- Internal communication supported planning of **flagship events (DAC 2024 and 2025)**, ensuring consistency in thematic focus and partner involvement.
- **SAB** maintained internal coordination with RAVA to align policy communication efforts and cross-macroregional cooperation outputs.
- **eNu** organized **internal workshops** with local stakeholders, regional managers, and the **KLAR! network** to align field-level implementation with SmartCommUnity objectives.
- Coordination extended to EUSALP governance structures, with partners reporting progress at **AG5 and AG9 meetings**, reinforcing transparency and collective ownership of results.
- These mechanisms ensured **coherence, efficiency, and information flow** across all project levels, contributing to a unified communication strategy.



Conclusion – Communication as a Strategic Enabler of SmartCommUnity

Effective communication represented a central pillar in the implementation and success of the SmartCommUnity project. **Through coordinated efforts led by RAVA, SAB, and eNu, communication activities ensured policy coherence, stakeholder engagement, and knowledge exchange across local, regional, and macro-regional levels.**

RAVA's leadership in organizing and moderating high-level events such as the **Digital Alps Conferences, Regional Stakeholder Group meetings, and thematic workshops** established a structured platform for dialogue among policymakers, local authorities, academic institutions, and youth representatives. These initiatives not only enhanced the project's visibility but also facilitated the integration of the SmartCommUnity approach into EUSALP's strategic frameworks.

SAB complemented these efforts by reinforcing inter-macroregional communication and cooperation. Through targeted policy dialogues, thematic webinars in the framework of the **SmartAlps Network**, and coordination with EU institutions, SAB ensured that SmartCommUnity's outcomes contributed **to broader European discussions on digitalization and sustainable regional development.**

At the local and regional levels, eNu demonstrated the importance of clear, accessible communication for community engagement. By translating the principles of smart and sustainable development into practical initiatives, exhibitions, and stakeholder meetings, eNu effectively linked local action with macro-regional objectives.

Collectively, these actions **underline that communication within SmartCommUnity was not limited to dissemination, but functioned as a strategic enabler of cooperation, policy alignment, and shared learning.** The continuous and transparent exchange of information fostered mutual understanding among diverse actors and strengthened the **foundation for a cohesive and sustainable digital transformation across Alpine regions.**

