



Smart Villages

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16TH MAY 2023

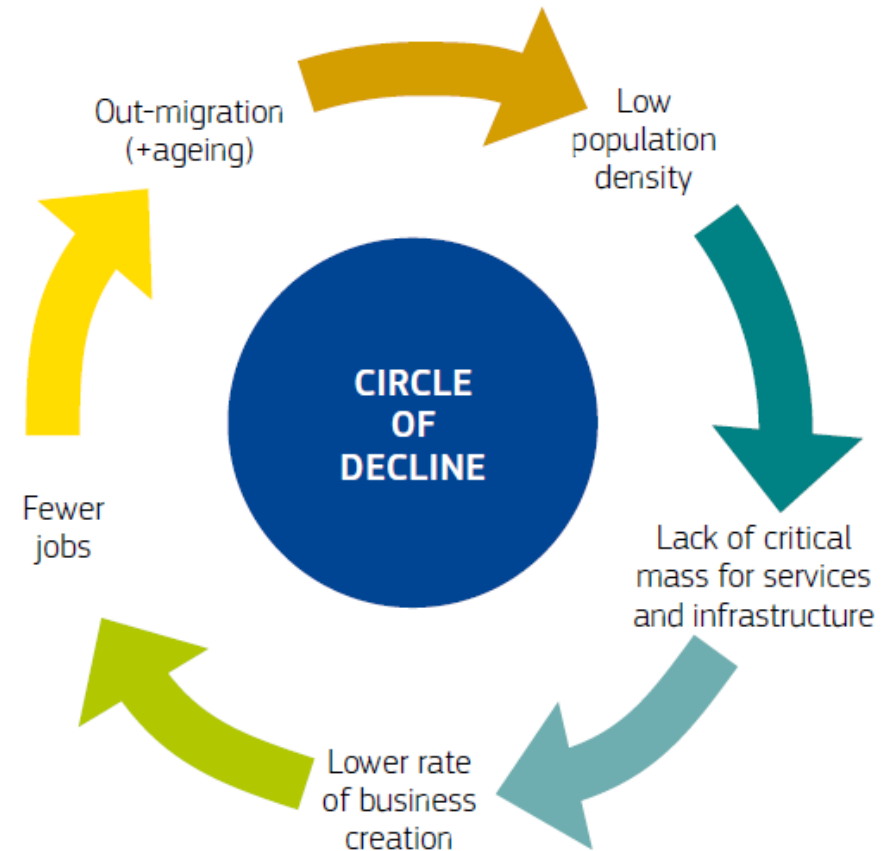
Presentation Overview....

- ▶ Smart Village Overview
- ▶ Pat Kennedy (eTownz)
- ▶ Niamh Nolan (University of Galway)
- ▶ Marilyn Fleming (Smart Villages Mountbellew)
- ▶ Ann O'Brien (Smart Villages Mountbellew)



Drivers of the Smart Village Concept

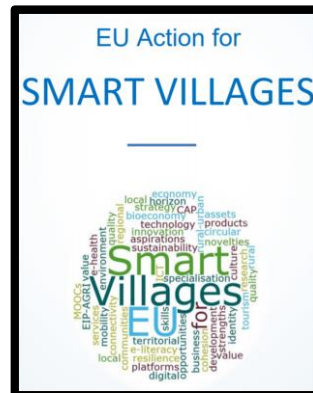
- ▶ Challenges facing rural areas – fundamental change
- ▶ Depopulation
- ▶ Low degree of connectivity – broadband and transport
- ▶ Perceived urban-rural divide



EU Smart Villages Concept

- Launched in 2017 by the EU Commission to counteract decline

Rural communities which build on, and enhance their existing strengths and assets through creative thinking and by embracing digital and social innovation to create desirable places for rural people to live and work.



In creating a Smart Village, a group of rural citizens work together to overcome rural challenges and barriers by exploring, driving and implementing practical and tangible solutions to local services, such as health, social services, education, energy, retail and rural transport.

Key Considerations for Smart Villages



- The concept of Smart Villages is not prescriptive and there is an acknowledgment that there is 'no one size fits all' model/method that can be applied universally – *Essentially about people.*
- While digitisation is key to the creation of a Smart Village, social innovation is also paramount – *thinking 'smartly', and outside the 'box' at local level.*

Key Considerations:

- Smart Villages strategies should not be perceived, interpreted or promoted as **yet another layer of formal, territorial strategic documents**
- Instead, can build on existing programmes and can be integrated into existing local structures and strategies.



Thank You!!



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