



Portfolio – Projects
LAG VALLE D’AOSTA





GAL VALLE D'AOSTA

DIGITAL ATLAS OF UNDERUSED BUILT HERITAGE OF AOSTA VALLEY







Since 2021, LAG Valle d'Aosta has been collaborating with the **Politecnico di Torino** and the **Fondation Courmayeur Mont Blanc on activities and initiatives related to the regeneration of architectural heritage.**

The changes that have occurred in mountain communities in recent years (population decline, reduction of services, territorial abandonment, and the tertiarization of the economy) have caused many buildings to lose their original function, leaving them unoccupied. In this context, the research conducted by the Politecnico di Torino aims, in collaboration with local institutions, to develop a placement strategy that, through the requalification of existing built heritage, enables the creation of a system of services to promote renewed habitability of mountain territories.

The main objective of the project was the creation of a "Digital Atlas of Underused Built Heritage of Aosta Valley," an interactive online platform containing an inventory of public and private buildings that are currently abandoned or underused in the Aosta Valley.

In 2023, **a public questionnaire was launched to identify these buildings**, followed by research conducted by the Politecnico, which involved selecting buildings, visiting them on site, and collecting data and documents to be included in the Digital Atlas. It is now possible to report additional buildings through the website of the Fondation Courmayeur.

To contribute to the construction and dissemination of the Atlas, the working group has organized several activities over time, including conferences, on-site meetings, and a co-design process. In 2025, a new memorandum of understanding was signed, allowing the collaboration to continue through new initiatives and activities of common interest.

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECT "SEROI+ SMART VILLAGES"







Starting in March 2020, LAG Valle d'Aosta took part in the development of a transnational **cooperation project** with the Irish LAGs **Kilkenny Leader Partnership and Forum Connemara CLG**, as well as the Finnish LAG **Leader Ravakka**. Through joint planning and knowledge sharing, it was possible to define a common initiative, **"SEROI+ Smart Villages,"** developed under Measure 19.3.

The project engaged LAG Valle d'Aosta in promoting the Smart Villages approach, an innovative thematic area aimed at addressing the lack of services, depopulation and isolation in rural areas through the use of digital solutions, cooperation, and mutual support within a community.

More specifically, the goal was to promote the application of the **SEROI+** methodology in Aosta Valley, starting with the municipalities of **the Unité des Communes valdôtaines Grand-Paradis** (union of municipalities), selected as the project's **pilot area**. This methodology helps local communities to identify and independently design services and actions capable of fostering the future development of their area, by assessing the economic, social, and environmental return on investment.

The project therefore involved the direct participation of local stakeholders, following a bottom-up co-design approach aimed at genuinely responding to the needs of the communities concerned.

Project activities **began in October 2021** and **concluded in June 2023**, culminating in the pilot implementation of the **Grand-Paradis Digital Desk**, a digital mediation service offered to the local population.

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ENCOURAGING REUSE











Between **March 2024 and May 2025**, LAG Valle d'Aosta collaborated with **Liminal Association**, a social promotion association based in Rome and composed of young professionals and students committed to reactivating social and economic dynamics in rural areas.

More specifically, the LAG was identified by Liminal as a partner for our Region in the implementation of the project **"Encouraging Reuse"**, an initiative aimed at involving Local Action Group (LAG) and municipalities with fewer than 2,500 inhabitants, with the **goal of enhancing the real estate assets of small towns** through data analysis and interdisciplinary approaches for the recovery of unused buildings.

The LAG therefore launched a public call to gather expressions of interest from a municipality or from two neighbouring Aosta Valley municipalities acting jointly wishing to take part in the co-design process envisaged by the initiative, with a **total population between 500 and 2,500 inhabitants**. Following this call, the municipalities of **Fontainemore and Perloz** were selected.

The project unfolded in two phases. In the first phase, a group of young researchers made up of members of Liminal Association and students from prestigious American universities such as MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), as well as from Italian universities was hosted in the area to carry out, on the one hand, **mapping and surveying** activities of local real estate assets using advanced technologies and, on the other, an analysis of the territorial context **through meetings and interview**s with the local community to understand its strengths, needs, and ideas.

The mapping work led to the identification of more than **700 buildings** across the two municipalities. At the same time, the data collected during the interviews made it possible, in the second phase of the project (October 2024 – May 2025), to launch entrepreneurial **facilitation programmes** with certain local stakeholders interested in developing their activities in the area.

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LEADER FORUM

The LEADER Forum is a collaborative initiative among Italian LAGs, created in 2020 to contribute to **the discussion on local development in rural areas and to promote exchange on issues related to community-led local development**. Each year, an Italian LAG is appointed to coordinate the Forum, which includes organizing the annual conference and selecting the workshops.

Within this framework, interested LAGs can propose **thematic workshops**, open to registration by all LAGs wishing to work on the topic. Throughout the year, workshop participants meet, either online and/or in person, to discuss the theme and prepare a presentation of the **results achieved**, to be shared during the annual conference.

The conference is the heart of the initiative: a two-day meeting during which participating LAGs can debate the results of the various workshops, as well as other **topics of common interest**.

Since the first edition, LAG Valle d'Aosta has actively contributed to the workshops both as a proposer and as a participant, and has taken part in the **annual conferences**, with the exception of the 2021 edition.

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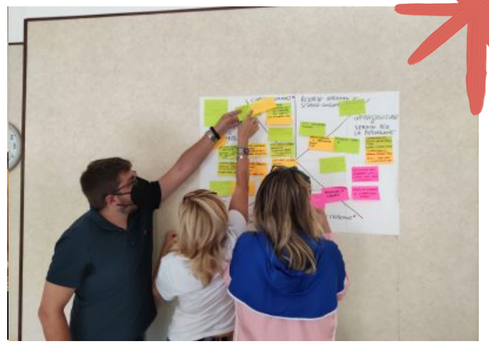
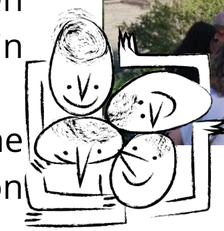
SMART RURAL HUB











As part of the 2022 Leader Forum, LAG Valle d'Aosta, together with LAG Colline di Bergamo e del Canto Alto and in collaboration with nine other Italian Local Action Groups, organized the thematic workshop **"Opportunities Offered by the Smart Villages Approach for Rural and Mountain Areas: Analysis of Case Studies."**

The Smart Villages approach aims to extend the benefits of information and communication technologies to rural and mountain areas, in order to make these territories attractive places to live and work, as well as sustainable for the future of the environment and the communities that inhabit them. The objective was to create a **participatory process**—well known to the LAG— involving local communities and leading to the implementation of a development strategy aimed at improving their **economic, social, and/or environmental conditions**. This theme aligns with the objectives of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Within the workshop, which brought together more than 40 participants from around twenty LAGs across 16 Italian regions, the participating LAGs selected and analyzed several **good practices** related to Smart Villages, connected to four thematic areas and replicable throughout the national territory, capable of introducing innovation into the development planning of rural and mountain areas.

The four workshop webinars were also integrated into the broader **"Smart Rural Hub"** initiative, developed in collaboration with the **National Rural Network**, with the aim of building a shared space for reflection and in-depth study on the topic, bringing LAGs and municipalities together around the Smart Villages approach. The first meeting of the workshop, organized with the National Rural Network, was held **on the 8th April 2022** and provided an opportunity to launch dialogue among the LAGs and present the work program. On that occasion, the National Rural Network also launched the "Smart Rural Calling," aimed at LAGs interested in developing proposals for **Smart Village projects.**

The 37 LAGs that submitted a project idea in response to this call were invited, in July of the same year, by the National Rural Network in collaboration with LAG Valle d'Aosta, to Cogne to participate in the in-person workshop **"Smart Village: From Theory to Practice."**

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RURAL LAB







On **Thursday 12 and Friday 13 June 2025**, LAG Valle d'Aosta and the University of Valle d'Aosta organised the event **"Rural Lab – Workshop on Participatory Rural Development"**, a free initiative aimed primarily at young people under 35 – whether from Valle d'Aosta or elsewhere – who are interested in issues relating to **local development** and **territorial regeneration**.

The workshop was established as part of an agreement signed in 2025 between the GAL and the **GREEN University Centre** – Groupe de Recherche en Education à l'Environnement et à la Nature – aimed at fostering collaboration between the two organisations to carry out activities and initiatives across the Aosta Valley on topics of mutual interest.

The event was designed as an opportunity to raise awareness amongst the younger generation of the importance of contributing to the development of the region and to highlight the opportunities through which this can be achieved.

The afternoon of the first day was devoted to an **in-depth seminar** on the tools available for local development, whilst, on the following day, participants took part in a **co-design workshop** where they had the opportunity to experiment with the approaches characteristic of participatory development.

Given the interest shown by the participants, the results of the first edition of the Rural Lab will form the basis for organising the next one and for expanding activities aimed at engaging young people in issues relating to local development.

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WalkinGAL

On Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th July 2026, LAG Valle d'Aosta organised the **first edition of the WalkinGAL** event to explore the Rhêmes Valley, an initiative to showcase the local area which aimed to promote walking as a form of slow tourism open to everyone.

In collaboration with the municipalities of **Rhêmes-Saint-Georges and Rhêmes-Notre-Dame**, a programme of activities and events was organised throughout the weekend, immersing participants in the natural surroundings, traditions and flavours of one of the magnificent valleys of the Gran Paradiso.

The event kicked off on Saturday 11th in Rhêmes-Saint-Georges with two sessions of **guided tours of the village's communal ovens and mills**, as well as the chance to watch bread-baking demonstrations. At Maison Pellissier, a **market of local producers** was also set up, alongside a **cooking demonstration** using local specialities. The day concluded with a visit to the barn of a local farm.

The programme on Sunday 12th in Rhêmes-Notre-Dame, on the other hand, was dedicated to the environment and the landscape, offering the chance to take part in two different initiatives, accompanied by **guides from the Gran Paradiso National Park**. On the trail towards Lake Pellaud, two large groups took part in the **choreographed walk "DislocActions"**, featuring artistic performances along the route, organised by a local theatre company. At the same time, a **hike along the Grand Ru** was offered, focusing on the natural and geological aspects of the area's unique environment.

The event attracted a diverse audience of families, couples, young and old alike, with **around 250 participants**, including both visitors and local residents.













PouR TouS

From January 2026, LAG Valle d'Aosta launched the **support initiative "PouR TouS – Regeneration Pathways for Sensitive Territories"**, in collaboration with the IAM- Research Centre of the Mountain Architecture Institute within the Department of Architecture and Design at the Polytechnic University of Turin.

This initiative has been part of the activities envisaged under the 2023–2027 Local Development Strategy to support participation in the calls for proposals promoted by the LAG. It also serves as a **preparatory step for Call AS.2, dedicated to the theme of "Inclusive Services, Assets and Spaces"**.

The programme has been addressed to public bodies, associations and cooperatives in the Aosta Valley interested in **engaging in a co-design process** aimed at developing projects for buildings and spaces to be renovated in order to enhance the **provision of services for residents, businesses and visitors**, also through the creation of public-private partnerships.

Through a public call for expressions of interest, **eight project ideas were selected** to participate in the support programme, which has been structured into two phases:

1. **Sharing and defining the project idea**, through:
   - a plenary meeting involving the proponents of all selected project ideas;
   - for each project, three local working group meetings, organised in collaboration with the project proponents and representatives of stakeholders and the local community.
2. **Technical support** provided by the Polytechnic University of Turin working group to local administrators, municipal staff and appointed professionals during the project development phase.

The programme has continued until June 2026 and has also enabled participating organisations, that have submitted their projects in response to Call AS.2, to benefit from additional scoring advantages.

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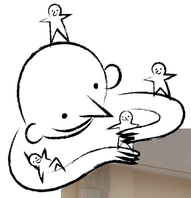
POUR TOUS

Workshop "Effetto LEADER"











LAG Aosta Valley took part in **'Effetto LEADER 2026'**, a national workshop launched as part of the Forum LEADER 2026 and aimed at **young people aged between 18 and 35** who are keen to discover and acquire practical skills in the field of rural development.

This workshop was first held in 2024, with 15 participants working across the territories of five LAGs. For the 2026 edition, the initiative was expanded to involve **nine Local Action Groups** (LAGs); in addition to our own, the following also took part: LAG Escartons and Valli Valdesi in Piedmont, LAG Valtellina in Lombardy, LAG Leader Siena in Tuscany, LAG Valle Umbra and Sibillini in Umbria, LAG Maiella Verde and LAG Costa dei Trabocchi in Abruzzo, as well as LAG Metropoli Est and LAG Elimos in Sicily.

Following a selection process, **27 candidates** were chosen and divided into **teams of three people** each. Each group was tasked with carrying out **evaluation analyses and territorial storytelling** relating to the LEADER projects and initiatives proposed by the member LAGs.

The workshop programme included online **training sessions** aimed at providing the tools needed to carry out the work, as well as five days of **practical fieldwork**, designed to meet stakeholders from the various projects and gather the information required for the evaluation.

The workshop activities concluded in L'Aquila, where, over two days, the teams worked on finalising their **presentations** and their **storytelling videos**, which were presented to the assembly of participants at the Forum LEADER 2026 Congress.

The team working in the Aosta Valley focused its analysis on the **'PouR TouS' support programme**, with a view to assessing its effectiveness and reviewing the experience, whilst conveying the perspectives of those who took part. The results are summarised in a storytelling video available on the GAL's YouTube channel.