Highlights of the
Profondeville Smart Village Strategy
Belgium

About Profondeville

The municipality of Profondeville has a population of around 12 000 inhabitants. Profondeville is a municipality assembling six villages in the Haute-Meuse river valley situated 80 km south-east of Brussels, in the Namur Province, Belgium.

Profondeville is not famous for its cathedrals, museums or monuments, but for its rich and picturesque nature (out of 50,34 km², 50 % is farming land and 27 % are forests). The area is famous for its paragliding spots, underground cavities good for speleology, outdoor activities such as hiking and bicycling and, above all, water sports on the Meuse river.

Profondeville's villages also have a reputation for the vivid social life they offer. All year long, festivities set the pace for gatherings that strengthen social ties and help newcomers to get involved.

Located near the city of Namur, Profondeville faces the stakes of many suburban villages. It has to keep its rural identity and quality of life while accompanying the unavoidable development of housing and tertiary sectors.

Key challenges & assets

The municipality of Profondeville intends to meet the following **challenges**:
- Ageing of the population;
- Management of urban pressure and mobility;
- Strengthening of local identity and tourist attractiveness;
- Citizen involvement in social and political local life;
- Management of the environment (soil, water, etc.) and biodiversity;
- Improvement of digital infrastructures and skills of public actors and civil society;
- Carbon footprint.

To achieve this, Profondeville has several **assets**:
- Cross-cutting strategic plan developed;
- Strong communities and social cohesion;
- Global population wealth and education level;
- Territory attractiveness and good lodging and food offers;
- Civil servants motivation and involvement.

Main objectives of smart village strategy

Our overall objective is to set the conditions for developing smart services and projects in a small context. We need to work on the foundations (raising awareness, evolving processes), along with obtaining small but inspiring results that make sense for both for our own population and for other villages.

Objective 1: Define and implement a data management strategy
Objective 2: Develop online involvement of citizens
Objective 3: Promote our territories online
Objective 4: Offer better infrastructure

What is smart?

The smart village process was initiated by one of the deputy mayors, with the support of the regional coordinator of BEP (Economic Office of the Province of Namur). One of the main challenges is to generate commitment within the administration by forming a program team.

A smart strategy steering committee should soon be set up, including in particular the sponsor and members of the college, external experts from BEP, DNA and potentially other institutions involved (telecom operators, representatives of the digital government etc.) as well as representatives of the local community, chosen for their knowledge of smart development and/or rural development.

The setting up of a Smart Village advisory council, composed exclusively of citizens chosen on a voluntary basis is also planned. In addition, in partnership with the BEP, Profondeville already uses online participatory tools, particularly in the context of the development of public spaces.

Links to other strategies

- ✓ Profondeville's **'transversal strategic plan'** is based on six major strategic objectives:
    1. Maintain the quality of life in our villages: public infrastructure, buildings and monuments; cleanliness of public spaces; mistrust of major development projects.
    2. Maintain the attractiveness of our villages in relation to the environment: enhance our assets in all their dimensions.
    3. Face up to our environmental responsibility: meet the challenges of mobility, biodiversity, town planning and energy performance.
    4. To be a city where everyone feels good: improving social cohesion, meeting the challenge of ageing, maintaining and encouraging solidarity.
    5. Provide a user-centered approach to local public services.
    6. Improve and modernise management to meet long-term challenges: improve citizen participation, deal with internal functioning.
- ✓ Profondeville has a **digital diagnosis and roadmap** which enabled the preparation of its smart strategy.

First smart action planned

Improving the local mobility and energy efficiency of municipal buildings through data management by defining and implementing a data management strategy :

- o Raise competence in data management and open data;
- o Deploy pilot projects;
- o Implementation of the plan in most areas.