



RICHERS

RENEWAL, INNOVATION AND CHANGE:
HERITAGE AND EUROPEAN SOCIETY



This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no. 612789

D4.3 Structures for community and territorial cohesion

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- Subject to final approval -

Statement of originality:

This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation or both.





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This deliverable reports on activities undertaken for Task 4.3 – *Structures for community and territorial cohesion* - which has examined the role of cultural heritage in relation to community and territorial cohesion. The task focused on how cultural heritage resources can be deployed in the construction of localised and spatially defined communities, and where relevant, it has examined the ways in which digital technology is being used in this process. The research is based on case studies of urban and rural heritage festivals and local food movements which, in different ways, exploit heritage resources either directly or indirectly for the purpose of community and/or territorial cohesion. The case studies are based on analysis of secondary data, plus interviews with key actors and in two of the examples, participant observation. They are drawn mainly from the United Kingdom, Italy, the Netherlands and Germany.

As noted in the RICHES taxonomy, Cultural Heritage is some form of inheritance (moveable, immovable, tangible or intangible) which has been selected (and reselected) by a nation or community. It is a politically constructed term which involves notions of ownership and reflects social and economic systems of value and cultural politics, including human rights. It is linked with (group) identity and is both a symbol of the cultural identity of a self-identified group (a nation or people) and an essential element in the construction of that group's identity. It is not just history but is an iterative, continuous process which is concerned with contemporary 'living cultures' that may reinterpret and recreate their culture and can play a vital co-creative and participatory role in the expression, production and consumption of culture. Cultural Heritage reinforces a group's 'culture', their way of life. 'Community cohesion' is broadly concerned with achieving harmony between groups who are differentiated by ethnic, faith or cultural characteristics. 'Territorial cohesion' is concerned with spatial development policy and attempts to ensure the balanced and sustainable development of diverse landscapes, cultures and communities by facilitating the exploitation of the features of those territories.

The report comprises four chapters. The second considers urban cultural heritage festivals as a resource for promoting community and territorial cohesion. Empirical data is drawn from interviews and observations at an urban mega festival in a world city (London Notting Hill Carnival), a semi-rural festival (The Corso Zundert Dutch Flower Parade), and a maritime festival in a medium sized coastal city (Rostock's Hanse Sail Festival). The Notting Hill Carnival study investigates how the event has overcome a range of social, economic and organisational challenges to fulfil its objective of promoting racial solidarity in a community of high diversity and to celebrate African Caribbean culture. The Corso Zundert Dutch Flower Parade case examines local people's reflection on social cohesion, the processes involved in its creation and its impact on inhabitants' way of life. Rostock's Hanse Sail Festival example considers the event's economic contribution to the region and its reliance on volunteers in strengthening cooperation and solidarity of people living in Rostock and the Baltic area. Analysis of each case study is fused with discussion of the role of digital technologies in the organisation, communication and transmission of events and their impact on social and territorial cohesion.

The third chapter examines the relationship between food heritage, community and territorial cohesion and draws on a range of examples from the United Kingdom, Germany and Italy. The focus is on place-based initiatives to preserve particular food cultures through growing, sharing, trading and cooking at a local or regional scale. It is argued that community-led and/or citizen-led food initiatives show how culture can be a force for change and how citizens can co-create cultural heritage in three key ways. First, they maintain and develop food skills and knowledge, and this helps to develop and strengthen distinctive food cultures and can also lead to the creation of new 'fusion' cultures. Second, they remember and revive food heritage. This can include re-discovering or rescuing 'lost' or threatened varieties of food such as certain plant breeds ('heritage' or 'heirloom' varieties) or animals (such as rare breeds). Third, they create new social ties and economic spaces. The new social ties can be between people of different generations, or different ethnic groups, as in the case study of 'exotic' vegetable growing and seed saving in England. The new economic spaces can consist of new physical spaces, such as re-used parts of the urban built environment (e.g. rooftops, reclaimed gardens) and new economic relationships based on principles of solidarity, social economy and participatory democracy.

The fourth and final chapter provides a brief discussion, conclusions and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The role of this deliverable is to consider structures for community and territorial cohesion and the social impact that this can have within European society. Two distinct lines of enquiry were undertaken by RICHES partners to consider how society has changed and the ways that this, in turn, affects local communities. The first evaluates urban cultural heritage festivals in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Germany. This is followed by cases considering German, Italian and British relationships between food heritage and how this relates to community and territorial cohesion.

1.2 Role of this Deliverable in the Project

This deliverable belongs within Work Package 4 – *Role of CH in social development* - which aims to identify practices, methodologies and structures that can be applied to cultural heritage, with the assistance of digital technologies and their potential contributions to social development in Europe.

An important theme of the work package is identity. It is interesting to compare the cases provided within this deliverable, that considers identity in relation to place that is enhanced by community activity, in contrast with the cases of D4.1 – *European identity and belonging and the role of digital CH* – which explore the identity of minority groups outside of their native countries.

D4.2 – *Good practice and methods for co-creation* - also shares themes with the research outlined within this document, as it considers the engagement of community activity. The case of the *Dutch Botanic Gardens, Planting the Future* has particular resonance with the discussions within chapter 3.

Although this research has a social focus, it is, of course, not possible to remove economic factors. The festivals described within chapter 2 could equally have been considered as cases within D5.2 – *Place-making, promotion and commodification of CH resources*, and the cases there within this deliverable, as there are both social and economic factors at play that reinforce the benefits to local communities.

1.3 Approach

Task Leader COVUNI issued ‘Guidelines for completing Task 4.3’ to the original task partners Rostock and KYGM in November 2014. The twelve page document reiterated the text from the DoW, with key themes highlighted. To create structural consistency within the deliverable, topics, methods and approaches were suggested, with indicative word count guidance. It also encouraged each partner to interview a minimum of two experts/leading figures in the area. Details of the specific approaches taken to the different cases within this document are integrated within the respective chapters.

As the task progressed, it became clear that further contributions would be needed, as it was uncertain whether case studies considering the Ramadan festival and the Slow Food Movement in the Hamamönü district of Ankara would be prepared. Following a discussion between the Task Leader COVUNI, the Project Manager and WP4 Leader WAAG, the latter agreed to formulate a new case for inclusion; this ultimately explored the Dutch flower parade in Corso Zundert. To maximise the research findings, it was agreed in May 2015, that partner Promoter would also enter the task.

Due to these changes, a revised 'Guidelines' document was issued in June 2015. The further implication of the commission of this additional work was that more time was required to complete this deliverable.

Upon joining the task, a discussion session was organised and hosted by Promoter in Peccioli, Italy on 18 June 2015, with the aim of:

- exploring the role (current and potential) that food culture plays in connecting rural and urban places in Europe.
- examining the case of local food movements, with a special focus on its relationship to territorial cohesion in Tuscany.



COVUNI and Promoter represented the RICHES consortium, with three external experts Tiziana Nadalutti, Monica Zoppè and Marcello Buiatti making valuable contributions to the discussion.¹

¹ Biographies of the three experts are provided as an appendix to this document.

² Phablets are mobile devices, which can be used to combine or extend the size format of smartphones and tablets

CHAPTER 2: HERITAGE FESTIVALS, COMMUNITY AND TERRITORIAL COHESION

2.1 Community And Territorial Cohesion: Scope and Definitions

As outlined in the RICHES taxonomy, ‘community cohesion’ is a term which emerged in the United Kingdom, partly as a response to civil disturbances which occurred in a number of Northern towns during the summer of 2001. Whilst the concept of ‘community cohesion’ may have its origins in the United Kingdom, the problems that it responds to are not unique. Many European cities have experienced tension and violence between different ethnic groups, such as in Paris in 2005. In the case of the United Kingdom, the riots were sparked by racial tensions between ‘Asian’ and ‘white’ youths, mixed at least to some extent, with organised violence between rival criminal gangs and far-right movements. A hard-hitting report on the events was produced by Professor Ted Cante (2001), who criticized government policy, arguing that people in the affected towns were living ‘parallel’ and ‘polarised’ lives and did not mix at all. His report called for an open debate on what ‘multicultural’ Britain meant, and on what could be done to encourage meaningful exchanges and understanding between different social and ethnic groups. The report used the concept of community cohesion to express the idea that social tensions could be eased by efforts to build mutual trust and understanding between different social groups. Community cohesion tries to build a positive vision for diverse societies (source www.tedcandle.co.uk). There have been several definitions of community cohesion, but in general, it focuses on resolving problems between identifiable groups based on ethnic, faith or cultural divisions and often involving a degree of racism or religious intolerance. Cohesion programmes usually seek to tackle disadvantage and inequalities, as it is difficult to imagine cohesion if certain groups or sections of communities are deprived or alienated and feel they have no stake in society (ibid).

As Samad (2013) demonstrates, community cohesion is a highly politicized concept and has attracted criticism, partly due to the lack of clarity in its definition (often being seen as an exhortation to Muslims to ‘fall in line’ for instance), and also due to the difficulties of actually implementing cohesion policies. Samad points out that there have been challenges in recognizing successful examples of community cohesion and that it has also been associated with a tendency to frame certain communities (e.g. Muslims, or white working-class) as a ‘problem.’ The concept has also been ‘contaminated’ by the ‘Prevent’ counter-terrorism programme, which targets the same communities, considered vulnerable to ‘radicalisation’. Despite criticisms, the concept of ‘community cohesion’ has not retreated. In 2015, for example, the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, in the context of a new anti-extremism policy, announced the need to build a more cohesive society, and commissioned a new review into Cohesive Communities (<http://tedcandle.co.uk/about-community-cohesion/>).

Turok and Bailey (2004) identify five dimensions of cohesion - equality and inclusion, social connectedness, common social values, social order and place attachment. They argue that cohesion promotes equality of status and opportunity to ensure people’s circumstances do not become barriers and prevent them from realising their full potential (ibid 2004). Inclusion encompasses social solidarity and public policies to minimise inequality of employment opportunities or accessing other resources, which are critical in mitigating against social

exclusion. Turok and Bailey (2004: 176) argue that inequality is a root cause of 'poorer social relationships, more violence, less involvement in community life, worse health and a lower quality of life for society overall'. Social connectedness is linked to strong social relationships and networks, sense of belonging and identity, cooperation and trust among individuals and wider society. Common social values pertain to practices which encourage shared 'moral principles' and 'sets of rules and codes of behaviour' (ibid 2004: 182). Moreover, the idea of cohesion suggests social order and tolerance between groups and communities. Place attachment or territorial identity is also an important feature of cohesion in that it represented a basic human need – a sense of belonging. Turok and Bailey (2004: 176) believe that experiences of place resonate with ideas of cohesion in terms of shaping people's culture and identity. Practices or policies that inhibit place attachment, they argue, can lead to isolation rendering the concept 'introspective and parochial' undermining the 'stability and diversity of the wider society' (ibid 2004: 186).

The concept of 'territorial cohesion' is very different from community cohesion, reflecting its origins in the realm of regional development and planning and spatial development policy. Territorial cohesion policy attempts to ensure the harmonious development of diverse landscapes, cultures and communities by facilitating the exploitation of the features of those territories (RICHES taxonomy). Rising immigration, economic inequality, globalisation and recent economic crises have magnified debates about cohesion across Europe (Delhey and Dragolov 2015). Part of the reason is that cohesion has 'become central to the project of European integration' capturing a certain 'sense of idealised togetherness' (Andrews, Jilke and Van Dewalle 2014: 559-560). At a European scale, territorial cohesion policy is concerned with the following main issues:

- How to capitalise on the strengths of each territory, so that they can best contribute to the sustainable and balanced development of the EU as a whole.
- How to manage concentration, because cities have positive and negative impacts.
- How to better connect territories, so that all people have access to public services, efficient transport, reliable energy networks and broadband.
- How to develop co-operation to address problems which do not stop at administrative borders, such as climate change, traffic management.

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/what/territorial-cohesion/

An estimated €346 billion – 35% of the EU's budget between 2007-2013 - was invested in cohesion initiatives such as job creation, infrastructure improvements, equal opportunities, wellbeing and social inclusion (European Union 2013). Even though policies and measures aimed at achieving cohesion are wide-ranging and complex, at their heart they seek to recognise and celebrate diversity and a sense of belonging to a territorial context, which provides meaning and identity to members.



2.2 Heritage Festivals, Community And Territorial Cohesion

2.2.1 Introduction

Festivals are intrinsic to all societies - celebrating and promoting cultural heritage and identity, regenerating communities, creating jobs and economic opportunities and attracting distinctive audiences (Ferdinand and Williams 2012). Festivals take many forms and are regarded as intangible cultural heritage. They have assumed an increased economic importance. Urban heritage festivals, for example, are a major influence on city making and the globalising economy as 'spaces of consumption', entertainment, pleasure and festivity (Eizenberg and Cohen 2014: 54). They are a fusion of historical and contemporary cultural heritage, which are brought together and displayed as part of the process of 're-interpreting cultural legacy' (Del Barrio, Devesa and Herrero 2012: 236). They provide a space in which people can '(re)present their past, celebrate their existence and reinterpret stories and myths about their culture' (Quan-Haase and Martin 2013: 524). Moreover, festivals are spaces where 'community values, ideologies, identity and continuity' are performed (Getz 2010: 2).

The ephemerality of urban cultural heritage festivals, as well as the inconvenience, expense, and gentrification effects to which such large scale events can contribute, has led to questions about their ability to sustain community cohesion and socio-economic wellbeing. People may relocate to an area where an event is held triggering renovations and improvements in local houses and the general environment but also resulting in increased property prices which can become unaffordable for existing residents (Martin 2005). Moreover, as such events grow in size and complexity, the necessary attention to crowd safety, logistics, and health can shift the feeling away from a sense of joyful 'spontaneity' towards a feeling of 'serious fun' (Jeong and Santos 2004: 641). Events thus become carefully planned and controlled by festival managers, who arrange programmes for audiences, invite performers, organise security and otherwise 'act as gatekeepers' (ibid 2004: 641).

For some festivalgoers, such events assume the role of a 'virtual community' (Attanasi et al. 2013: 243) where they act and behave as if they know each other, are engaged in relationships or have shared a connection over time. In highlighting the ritualistic nature of festivals, Quan-Haase and Martin (2013: 525) argue that the intrigue of events may be rooted in their role of signifying the reversal of normal power structures, a 'suspension of reality and a unification of society'. Moreover, the consumption of festivals intertwines with emotion and hedonism, which mean the more pleasure derived from events, the more satisfied festivalgoers are likely to make a return visit or attend similar activities (Grappi and Montanari 2010). Correspondingly, factors at festivals that influence togetherness and unity could engender cohesion in the same way. This is not just restricted to being physically present at events, as the prevalence of digital media has ensured occurrences that unfold at festivals extend beyond the local. It means festivals now have more wider and diverse cultural connections, influence and participation.

2.2.2 Festivals and cohesion

Attanasi et al. (2013: 228) argue that scores of local organisations are now becoming conscious that the ‘mutual valorization’ of the intangible and tangible resources of a place can unlock the key dynamics of regional development. For example, value and meaning can be ascribed to places with certain characteristics imbuing them with significance and desirability, which are qualities that can be marketed (ibid 2013). Moreover, the fact that there are hundreds of thousands of urban cultural heritage festivals staged across Europe, means there is recognition of the contribution they make economically, socially, environmentally, culturally and cohesively. Yet there is by no means agreement about the extent to which festivals can contribute to cohesion. Lee, Arcodia and Lee (2011), for example, argue that positive, personal, and cooperative contact between different groups can reduce or eliminate prejudices. In this regard, events such as cultural heritage festivals, not only help minority groups maintain their own culture of origin, but also augment connections with the dominant population and other groups thus breaking down biases (ibid 2011). Lee et al (2011) thus argue that cultural heritage festivals are an effective resource for promoting social harmony and integration. Others have been more critical and have asked *how* is ethnic diversity framed and what role do consumption and commodification play in that? Van der Horst (2012) for instance, stresses that festivals, carnivals and fairs are performances: active interactions between the moving audiences and what is on display. The question is, how is the performance framed, and who designs this framing? The concept of multiculturalism has been critiqued as an essentialist (white upper middle class) ideology and lifestyle in which cultural diversity is viewed as positive and desirable, but in which cultures are perceived as fixed, symbolic and stereotypical. This is in contrast to more recent conceptualisations of culture as ‘repertoire’ (situational, flexible, and fluid). Multiculturalism is strongly linked to consumption such as ‘roots’ festivals and ethnic event marketing in which market principles keep stereotypical simplicity in place (also known as the commodification of ethnicity). The sales of ‘typical’ music, food, crafts are aimed at a certain target group with a ‘cosmopolitan’ lifestyle, which some scholars refer to as ‘boutique cosmopolitanism’ because it remains pleasant and colourful; no political, economic or religious frictions are included. The danger is that such representations produce a simplified reification of cultural identity, rather than self-expression. They are not really about improving communication or knowledge about ‘others’ through genuine social iterations. Through cultural commodification, a mutually performed fantasy of upbeat multiculturalism is generated, catering to consumerist principles (e.g. ‘eating the Other’) and objectifying cultures (despite the *agency* of those who use the opportunity).

2.2.3 Digital technologies

The role of digital technologies in expanding the transmission and consumption of festivals is complex and undergoes continuous changes. This is due to the rapid pace of innovations, which have produced a plethora of options. Tweeting, posting pictures and videos on Instagram and YouTube, updating Facebook, micro-blogging on Tumblr, image and video hosting on Flickr and instant messaging on WhatsApp and texting on mobile devices have become commonplace communication activities.

Images, incidents or conversations from cultural heritage events are captured on tablets, phablets², mobile phones or digital cameras and flashed around the world with standout action assuming spectacular virality.

These new digital forms have led to a compression of time and space and have enabled an instantaneous consumption of urban cultural heritage festivals far beyond their physical bounds (Wallace 2012). By engaging in the 'knowledge commons', virtual consumers ensure 'ideas and experiences are shared within communities and across communities' (ibid 2012: 107). Through digital environments such as networked audience and digital curation³, the layers of presentation, re-presentation, meanings, linkages, influence, value and participatory nature of urban cultural heritage festivals have multiplied (Quan-Haase and Martin 2013: 522). This online environment is increasingly communal and growing numbers of social experiences are being shared beyond their physical urban setting (Villi 2012). 'Digital curation gives power to those (re)presenting multiple perspectives of a single reality, whilst extending the audience activity beyond simple observation and the constraints of the immediate urban space' (Quan-Haase and Martin 2013: 522). These online innovations, once part of the subculture of young people, have become powerful mainstream communication, which has ensured that art forms such as urban cultural heritage festivals have become immersive affairs on par with physical encounters and experiences (Bastos 2009).

The arguments point to the increasing realisation of cultural heritage festivals as a 'form of community and social glue', magnified by 'netizens', (habitual user of the internet) who create a blog every second networking their lives and experiences (Flinn and Frew 2013: 419-424). While it is clear digital technology does have an impact on social cohesion, it is also the case that this impact can be both beneficial and detrimental. Whilst digital technology can increase social connectedness, it can also expose vulnerable individuals to online bullying or harassment. The diversity and unpredictability of users mean consideration should be given to the way in which different individuals and groups use them, and not to the presence of technologies themselves (Wallace 2012).

2.3 London's Notting Hill Carnival

Cameo

A uniformed policeman is sandwiched between two young women dressed in revealing costumes and swilling bottles of beer. One twerks in front of him while the other gyrates, suggestively, from behind. In his normal line of duty they would probably face arrest. Instead, the officer responds accordingly, though somewhat awkward, as if constrained by his heavy-duty garments and rigid protocol. His smile is a mix of abandon and caution, his movement as jerky as the cacophonous calypso beat booming from the huge steel pans mounted on the back of the opened deck lorry.

² Phablets are mobile devices, which can be used to combine or extend the size format of smartphones and tablets

³ See RICHES D3.1 – *Transformation, Change and Best Practice for CH processes* - and D6.1 – *Digital Libraries, digital exhibitions and users: an interactive case study report* - on this topic

Amused eyes from the throng glance at the hilarity. It is a fleeting, yet intimate interaction. The women move on; the officer steadies himself, straightens his tie and rejoins his colleague pounding the beat of London's Notting Hill Carnival. (Observation from London's Notting Hill Carnival, August 2014)



Arresting moves: festivalgoers dancing with police officers at London's Notting Hill Carnival

2.3.1 Introduction

This case study explores the extent to which London's Notting Hill Carnival can be regarded as a catalyst in the promotion of community cohesion. Despite organizational, financial, and social challenges, the event is now in its 50th year and has grown to become Europe's largest street festival, a symbol of London's cultural heritage and diversity and a major revenue earner. This case study suggests that the event promotes a sense of belonging and cohesion in an urban space, particularly amongst younger age groups in the community and festivalgoers generally. This results from the carnival's origin as a community-led celebration of togetherness and its year-round contribution to community leadership and management, events, educational activities, and economic spin-offs.

2.3.2. Approach

The study adopted a flexible qualitative approach. It is primarily informed by semi-structured and unstructured interviews and limited participant observation at Notting Hill (i.e. attending festivals and joining in the festivities). Interviewees were mainly key policymakers and management staff chosen by way of purposive and snowball sampling techniques (Bryman 2008). Festivalgoers at Notting Hill were chosen using opportunity sampling, as interviews were not planned and happened purely by chance (Patton 2015). In total, 18 interviews were conducted across the three case studies. Participants were chosen based on their involvement at managerial, organisational, policymaking, expertise in staging events, administration, or experience of attending urban cultural heritage festivals. The intention was to gain a range of perspectives that would be most suited to explore the role of urban cultural heritage festivals as a resource for promoting community and territorial cohesion.

An interview schedule was drawn up around the key themes of urban cultural heritage festivals, community and territorial cohesion, sense of belonging, use of digital technologies, connectedness to other urban cultural heritage festivals and measures aimed at promoting community and territorial cohesion. A general set of open-ended questions was adopted for the three case studies.

2.3.3. Origins, development and socio-economic value of the Notting Hill Carnival

‘I could see the streets thronged with people in brightly coloured costumes, they were dancing and following bands and they were happy. Some faces I recognized, but most were crowds, men, women, children, black, white, brown, but all laughing’ (Laslett 1989, cited by Blagrove 2014).



Smiles: people in celebratory mood at London’s Notting Hill Carnival

The roots of London’s Notting Hill Carnival are etched in African Caribbean culture. The United Kingdom was experiencing serious labour shortages following the Second World War and began recruiting workers from former territories such as the Caribbean. Faced with hardships, social exclusion, and missing home, the new arrivals felt the need to band together to organise their own social events and activities (Muir 2011). In this way, they could meet and interact with each other freely thus creating a ‘home away from home’ and social solidarity fostering a sense of common identity, and satisfying a sense of belonging. The urgency of meeting this need for psychological and emotional wellbeing became even more pronounced after race riots, which erupted in Notting Hill in 1958 (ibid). The following year, Claudia Jones, a Trinidadian communist, activist and publisher, who had been barred from the United States of America, organised a carnival style event in St Pancras Town Hall, London, both as a statement to the British public and a ‘comfort’ to the dispirited migrants (ibid). The actual forerunner to today’s carnival was organised by Rhaune Laslett, who was born in London’s East End to a Native American mother and a Russian father. In 1964, Laslett, a social worker, had a vision of people in Notting Hill coming together and celebrating in the streets.

She felt that even though there were various migrants living in the congested area, there was little communication or interaction between them. Her dream of a unifying concept was realised with marchers and steel bands taking to the streets under the banner of the Notting Hill Fayre and Pageant in joyous revelry. The essence of jollification and togetherness of Laslett's event has remained an essential facet of today's carnival, which is now seen as the 'largest expression of multiculturalism in the UK and has done much to bring communities together' (Greater London Authority (GLA) 2004). Participants from the United Kingdom and other parts of the world take part in musical forms, costume parades, arts and crafts, provide food and drink, and stage various activities and entertainment aimed at children and adults.

The carnival has become synonymous with the area of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and is now firmly arranged in the cultural mosaic of London and Europe. It annually attracts an estimated one million people. The Federation of European Carnival Cities (FECC), a pan-European body set up to promote and preserve carnivals, lists Notting Hill as the biggest event of its type on the continent. Five of the eight% of international visitors to the carnival are from Europe (GLA 2004). The Rotterdam Caribbean Summer Carnival, which started in 1980 and Berlin Carnival of Cultures have been inspired by Notting Hill. Globally, only Brazil's Rio Carnival, in terms of urban street festivals of this type, surpasses the number of people that attend Notting Hill.

It is difficult to ascertain the latest economic impact of the Notting Hill Carnival, as the only study was conducted in 2002. That report, commissioned by the former London Development Agency, showed the carnival contributed in excess of £93 million GBP to the city and supported the equivalent of 3,000 full time jobs (GLA 2004). An estimated £36 million GBP was spent on food, drink and other merchandise at the carnival's 250 licensed trading sites and a further £9 million GBP on accommodation (ibid). Other economic beneficiaries include music producers, clothing designers, merchandisers, and security firms. More than 90,000 foreign tourists, mainly from Europe, annually attend the event. However, the majority of visitors, who are mostly aged 16-34, are from London and other parts of the UK. Such numbers of people offer huge scope for commercial sponsorship, celebratory art form, job creation, skills training, marketing, and merchandising (ibid).

2.3.4 Promoting community cohesion

The Notting Hill Carnival began with the objective of building and creating community cohesion. Historically, the event has been a catalyst for mobilisation against racism, poor housing conditions, extortionate rent, and overcrowding, experienced by local working class people in the Notting Hill area. It gives voice to minorities and the marginalised: 'Carnival allows people to dramatise their grievances against the authorities on the street, when parliament or other spaces of influences are closed off to them' (Dabydeen 2010). As Tompsett (2005: 46) argues, 'claiming public space, is at the heart of Notting Hill Carnival. In this sense, the road is seen as a commemorative space with possession of the street etched in the memory and the psyche, the right of free people to occupy the public thoroughfare.' Moreover, 'it connects past to present' (ibid 2005: 46).



Cohesive spirit: young festivalgoers don British flag themed costumes at London's Notting Hill Carnival

The contemporary vision of the Carnival, which is now run by the London Notting Hill Carnival Trust, is to 'foster the creative development and enhancement of diverse artistic excellence, thus transforming perceptions of London Notting Hill carnival culture locally, nationally and internationally' (Notting Hill Carnival 2015). Its mission is to use carnival arts collaboratively and artistically as a catalyst to facilitate 'artistic excellence, education, engagement, empowerment, entertainment, integration, transformation of perceptions, inspiration' (ibid). From these statements, it can be seen that the carnival fosters a dynamic sense of cultural identity, which is clearly oriented towards the perceptions of audiences and participants within the local community and beyond. Claire Holder, former chief executive of the Notting Hill Carnival Trust, who now runs the Notting Hill Carnival Roadshow, a carnival entertainment touring company, believes events like Notting Hill Carnival are ideally placed to achieve community cohesion, because of the '*pressures and diversity*' of the urban contexts in which they are situated. Notting Hill is rooted in the history of the African Caribbean experience in the United Kingdom, explains Holder. Many of today's carnival participants are descendants of those, who were invited to the UK to help rebuild the 'Mother Country' after the Second World War. Some of the first arrivals had settled in the overcrowded tenements of the North Kensington district alongside the working class British, Irish, Jews, Greeks and Spaniards. Here they faced exploitation by slum landlords and racial tension spurred on by the likes of fascist Oswald Mosley. Hostilities culminated in the 1958 Notting Hill Race Riots and the murder of Antiguan carpenter, Kelso Cochrane, by racists, the following year. Activists saw the carnival as a way of bridging cultural gaps, uniting the community and easing racial tensions. Emerging from this contested backdrop, Notting Hill Carnival has come to be acknowledged as a 'joyous beacon of hope and unity' (Ferris 2010: 522).



Colourful: A costume bearer displays her peacock design at London's Notting Hill Carnival

The Notting Hill Carnival resonates with sense of belonging and togetherness and has been instrumental in laying a cultural heritage foundation for people of African Caribbean origin and their descendants in the United Kingdom today. For many, the event holds special significance as a 'liberated territory' where virulent racism has been resisted (Ferris 2010: 521). As Claire Holder explains:

'These festivals are not organised by government and are community-led and community driven. They only happen whenever there is a collective community will and therefore, as they evolve in their urban contexts they fulfil that role of community and territorial cohesion'.

The idea of collectivity, espoused here, illustrates the fact that the Notting Hill Carnival is about group action, individuals working together, relationships and cooperation. It is these practices, which underpin the foundation for togetherness and solidarity of people cohering in a '*collective community will*', an interrelated effort. Portraying such events as '*community-led*' and '*community-driven*' shows that the notion of cohesion is more than people coming together or merely a social inclusion function. According to Holder,

'The Notting Hill Carnival was incepted with the idea of bringing the 'black' community together. It was about racial integration. Remember the black community at the time had come from many different Caribbean islands and were not mixing. In time, this togetherness, the entertainment value and ethos of a celebration of freedom, appealed to others who subscribe to that spirit'.

It is also about empowering people to make choices and having the '*will*' to create the type of environment in which they feel they belong and want to be a part of, irrespective of their circumstances. Holder's '*collective community*' is also a counter to the 'increasing individualism', which has led to unease about social disintegration, conflict and crime, lack of respect for civic institutions, systematic marginalisation of certain social groups and their geographical concentration in poor areas (Turok and Bailey 2004: 144). Whilst acknowledging Notting Hill Carnival's important economic and political role, Holder stresses that it is important for the event make a positive contribution to wider society:

'If it does not do this, then it is just entertainment. Festivals such as Notting Hill far transcend that entertainment value and are important vehicles for self-actualisation' (Holder 2014).

In the foreword of his Strategic Review of the Notting Hill Carnival, Ken Livingstone, the former Mayor of London, argued that the event has 'succeeded in promoting a fusion of cultures, people and customs' (GLA 2004: 6). This observation was borne out on the Sunday of Notting Hill Carnival 2014 when black carnival goers were visibly in the minority. Even though the event has had a history of predominantly attracting people of African Caribbean origin, this is no longer, strictly, the case. The diversity of people now attending Notting Hill Carnival is certainly reflective of Livingstone's fusion of cultures, people and customs. The vividness of intercultural interactions, different foods, musical genres, entertainment, dress, costumes, parades, languages, rituals, behaviours, and displays all occurring in the name of the carnival, produces strong images of unity.





Good times: scenes from Notting Hill Carnival (Taylor 2014)





Joy of food: festivalgoers tasting the delights of the Notting Hill Carnival (Taylor 2014)

Even though Notting Hill Carnival is rooted in African Caribbean culture, it is something that *'we want everyone to be a part of and enjoy'*, explains Lewis Benn (2014), a trustee of Notting Hill Carnival Enterprise Trust. Providing the opportunity for people to experience other cultures, argues Benn, helps them appreciate their own, breaks isolation and broadens their worldview of what the world is all about:

'The idea of the world as a melting pot of cultures all coming together is encapsulated in the Notting Hill Carnival'.

For Benn, the Notting Hill Carnival amplifies awareness of African Caribbean cultural heritage across Europe and beyond. The event, which he describes as *'inclusive and cohesive'*, is something that he wants everyone to be a part of and to share with each other. While this objective corresponds with a sense of belonging, it also coincides with the carnival's perceived broader societal endowment. As the largest cultural event in London, Benn says Notting Hill Carnival has become synonymous with the UK's capital and is representative of the diversity that exists there. This suggests that the attachment to place inherent in the carnival embodies London as a whole and is not just about the Notting Hill enclave. This broader representation is part of the 'festivalisation' of cities (Del Barrio, Devesa and Herrero 2012: 243) with events becoming pluralised in terms of their economic, environmental, cultural, political, and social impacts on urban landscapes. Such is their influence that even though a sense of belonging is an important benefit of urban cultural heritage festivals, it is only one facet in a complex whole.

For some carnival performers or 'masqueraders' and costume designers, the Notting Hill Carnival is a perennial activity and this is an important way in which the festival contributes to community cohesion. Preparations usually start the day after the carnival ends with the selection of themes and costume designs for the forthcoming year. Most masqueraders are members of bands, each of which can number up to 500 or more people. More than 50 bands participated in Notting Hill Carnival 2014. The bands are diverse in terms of members, age, sex, race, code of conduct, etc. Costumes are categorised as background, frontline, individual, and king or queen designs.

In bands such as London's United Colours of Mas (UCOM), costumes are priced in the region of £200 - £400 (background), £400 - £500 (frontline) and from £600 for an individual design. Throughout the year, bands hold regular carnival themed events for members and other activities such as trips or competition at other festivals around the world. The way bands operate means they are a key feature of the actual carnival event, source of participants, cohesiveness, and sustainability.

Jenny⁴ is a member of UCOM and masqueraded (or playing 'mas') in an individual costume at Notting Hill Carnival 2014. Now aged 30, she has been attending carnivals from as far back as she can recall. For her, being a member of a carnival costume band and actually taking part in the event itself, adds not only to cohesiveness, but also to her emotional and psychological wellbeing. She argues that playing mas in a scantily clad costume in front of thousands of people has helped to improve her self-esteem and confidence. Carnival has also led to a greater appreciation of her cultural heritage and other people's way of life. Jenny believes these considerations are key to the sustainability of carnival and in educating people about aspects of the cultural heritage that underpins events such as Notting Hill. She contends that attending the Trinidad and Tobago Carnival and taking part in the Berlin Carnival of Cultures has enlightened her about different cultures other than her own. Such is the increasing diversity of cultural heritage festivals; Jenny believes events like Notting Hill are assuming a fluid identity where cultural heritage, community and territorial representations have become blurred. This suggests that festivals are embodied spaces where various cultural expressions and practices are acted out and explored. No single culture is represented, but many cultures thus serving as a mechanism for social integration among carnivalgoers (Nurse 1999).

'Berlin's carnival is called Carnival of Cultures and that is very interesting, because you go there as a Caribbean band and you are one band out of 50 different cultures. You've got skateboarders, you've got people from China, you've got people from Japan, you've got Jamaican people, you've got people wearing 1920s flapper girls, so depending on eras, cultures, styles; anything you want. You can have a float and that is represented and I think that's probably where Notting Hill is going. It is not gonna be typically a Caribbean carnival. It's gonna be more of a cultural, any culture represent - bring good vibes, bring good spirit; showcase who you are, what you are about: have a good time' (Jenny 2014).

Another example of the year-round activity is Notting Hill Carnival Roadshow, a commercial spin-off, which, like UCOM, operates throughout the year, as an entertainment touring company, which operates globally. The roadshow runs costume workshops, seminars, steel band hire, carnival catering, schools workshops, carnival design, and carnival management services. The company also participates in various festivals such as the Seychelles Carnival and the Abuja Carnival in Nigeria. As a by-product of Notting Hill Carnival, the continuous activities of such bands, is a major contribution to the sustainability and promotion of the London event. Claire Holder argues that such attributes not only apply to sustainability, but also to cohesion. Preparations and activities associated with Notting Hill, she contends, means participants are building the cohesion and social capital in their own communities before they attend events.

⁴ Not her real name

‘The biggest input that the carnival body make to that cohesion is to foster that sense of togetherness by bringing the disciplines and community together at least three to four times a year in joy, harmony and working towards the same goal of development of the carnival’ (Holder 2014).

These observations indicate different ways in which the cohesiveness generated by urban cultural heritage festivals is maintained beyond the moment of the event.

Another impact of Notting Hill is its social enterprise contribution. One of the reasons the carnival has enduring impact within the local community is because it generates jobs and activity all year round. This is typified by ‘Mahogany’, a limited company run as a not-for-profit social enterprise and receiving funding from the Arts Council of England and Wales. The company first appeared as a costume band at the Notting Hill Carnival in 1989 and now contributes to the business of carnival and preserving its cultural heritage by making costumes all year round for various events across the world. A focus of the project is helping underprivileged young people develop their skills and build greater confidence through the art of carnival.

2.3.5 Challenges to community cohesion



Inconvenience: some of the downsides of Notting Hill

One of the major concerns of the participants featured in this study is the indication that the Notting Hill Carnival has become a victim of its own success. The district in which it is held is a high-density residential area and has to accommodate more than one million people, some stimulated through alcohol or other substances. This causes problems in relation to anti-social behaviour, public convenience, overcrowding and litter etc. The area has also been subjected to increased gentrification. In the mid-19th Century, the outer London district became home to the capital’s wealthier inhabitants fleeing the inner city only to become a dilapidated enclave in the 1950s housing migrants and those experiencing extreme poverty (Martin 2005). The area, which was seen as an area of deprivation and racial tension, has today gained the reputation as one of London’s most fashionable suburbs with homes belonging to the capital’s high-flying business people, celebrities and politicians including the Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron and Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne. A popular film, which bears the name of the district, has garnished the area’s international appeal.

Such has been the metamorphosis of Notting Hill that there are fears that the area may not only lose its carnival, but also its identity. While accepting that part of the appeal of areas such as Notting Hill is that they keep reinventing themselves, the concern is that moving the carnival from its current location would be a forced action, because of what it represents. Ferris (2010: 521) argues that major carnivals are ‘precariously poised between the affirmation of the established order and its rejection’, but Notting Hill has never received political acceptance, particularly from its local Conservative-run council, the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The event holds a special symbolic significance for African Caribbeans, who regard it as a liberated territory because of the many battles won against local racists and the fact the carnival continues to take place despite formidable political opposition (ibid 2010). Like many other impoverished inner city areas of London, old dilapidated houses in the area have been converted into modern flats that are bought by wealthy homeowners, who also oppose the carnival (ibid 2010). As they continue to gain a foothold, pressure will be on the less well off to find affordable accommodation elsewhere altering the make up of the area, its identity and the symbolic meanings it holds for sections of the population.

Remybyn⁵, who is in her 40s, has lived in Notting Hill and other parts of North Kensington all her life. She runs a stall outside her home selling barbecued gourmet burgers. She confessed that the venture was not purely for financial gain, but a way of being involved in carnival and providing a local meeting point for fellow residents, some of whom had contributed to the enterprise by giving her disposable tableware products, extending storage space to her, and generally lending a helping hand where needed. Remybyn insists the area is a nice place to live.

‘You could leave your house in the morning and say you are going to the shops and not come back for two or three hours or even longer on a sunny day. You might bump into people and you stop and chat or you might know a stallholder or people you see everyday; you might not even know their names, but you stop and talk or they talk to you. It is lovely, a really lovely area to live in particularly in the summer when it is warm, you will find everyone out in the streets either sitting on their doorsteps having a cup of tea or drinking or just milling around the market – it is just a nice place to be, a safe place to be’ (Remybyn 2014).

Even though Remybyn insists that the community spirit in the area exists all the time, she argues that things are changing. The popular Portobello Road Market, which she contends, is the hub of the community, like other small businesses in the area, is facing the prospect of high street chains springing up in the district:

‘One of the charms of the area, until recently, is we have managed to resist many of the high street chains in Portobello Road. We are made up of a high number of independent shops that are run by local people. We have market traders whose family have been there for 100 years, but now also own multi million pound houses, because their family bought them back in the fifties or sixties and those properties are now worth a fortune, and yet the family still trade on the markets. It is such a diverse

⁵ Not her real name

community. When I first came to the area, I could not get a cab to drop me to certain parts of the area, All Saints Road, for instance, been one of them. When I lived there, for a brief period, with a friend, it was known as the 'frontline' and the cab driver would drop me two or three streets away and say, 'Am not going there luv' and leave me with a carry cot and a young baby, but now you could go down there and find Prince Harry parked in the Rum Kitchen and it is quite a well to do road – there has been a lot of change' (Remybyn 2014).

Not all the recent changes in Notting Hill can be pinned on the carnival; Remybyn argues that the locating of several high street chains in the area has meant increasing commercialisation, which could lead to a loss of '*community feel*'. She also revealed that recent newcomers to area '*hate the carnival*' and this has added fuel to the speculation that the authorities want to move the carnival to Hyde Park. Losing the event and the on-going gentrification would suggest a complete alteration of the social dynamics of Notting Hill. In his study in issues related to neighbourhood change, place and identity in Notting Hill, Martin (2005) noted that working class people were more concerned about localised issues such as crime, drugs, overcrowding, local authority neglect, new migrants, and gentrification than emotional attachment to place. His middle class respondents, perhaps fixated by aesthetic appeal, appeared more concerned with the loss of traditional landscapes (ibid). While such findings contradict claims (Ferris 2010 and Waitt 2008) that newcomers – deemed prosperous homeowners – are opposed to urban cultural heritage festivals such as the Notting Hill Carnival, they also reveal the contestation surrounding such events.

2.3.6 Digital technology at Notting Hill



Digital natives: a reveller at Notting Hill Carnival takes the ubiquitous selfie with a friend and a stallholder's online advertising at the event

One of the major developments of the Notting Hill Carnival is its global elaboration. Even though place and space are important for focal interaction (Evans 2009), they have become compressed by digital technologies aiding instantaneous consumption globally. Activities at Notting Hill Carnival such as live music streaming by sound systems can be retrieved by anyone with access to the internet anywhere in the world. Moreover, digital technologies have added a sense of permanence to the carnival with the availability of hundreds of thousands of images and video footage online. Benn argues that this has broadened the appeal of the carnival, transforming it into a global event. At the same time, digital technologies have enabled urban cultural heritage festivals such as Notting Hill to be shared within and across communities by virtual consumers (Wallace 2002).

Interviewee Benn explains that Notting Hill Carnival's embrace of digital technologies also relate to engagement with mobile apps, websites and initiatives such as crowd funding to finance the event and more successful export of the concept of what the carnival is about. With the internet now as intrinsic a research tool as word of mouth, Benn argues that digital technologies could help breakdown stereotypes about the carnival by providing a true picture of activities at the event and what the atmosphere is really like. Even though the carnival is rooted in Caribbean culture, Benn believes with the help of online communication strategies the event can bring communities together, *'not just black and white, but all communities across the world'*. This inclusive tenor rationalises new forms of social connectedness in which social cohesion is reinforced and transformed through online communication (Wallace 2012). Moreover, incorporating digital technologies in this way, Benn argues, will ensure Notting Hill's promotion of community and territorial cohesion and its continued development.

Holder (2014) argues that digital technologies can enable communication and improvement in the artistic output of Notting Hill Carnival. This supports Flinn and Frew's (2014) notion that festivities, like social media platforms, are embodied spaces for image centred and aesthetically conscious postmodern identities, which need to be 'captured, mediated and displayed' (Flinn and Frew 2014: 423). Almost everyone observed at Notting Hill was engaged with some sort of digital device either taking pictures, videoing, wired up to earpieces, talking or using the carnival app to guide them around the site. This is aligned to Flinn and Frew's (2014) observation of the internet being a space where cultural communities, like those witnessed at Notting Hill, network their lives and experiences. Blogging, twittering or YouTube have become virtual communities in which rehearsals, performance and feedback take place. Here, they can also develop and communicate a sense of place, sharing experiences and social interaction (Affleck and Kvan 2008). This process, Benn argues, can help to refine performances and engender a sense of belonging under the banner of fun and celebration in a diverse and cohesive environment.

2.3.7 Summary

Formed to counter tension and unease, Notting Hill has been instrumental in laying a cultural heritage foundation for people of African Caribbean origin and their descendants in the United Kingdom today. Moreover, the organisers' mantra of inclusivity and cohesiveness has engendered the carnival to the wider community in terms of participation and attendance.

The findings support literature of the increasing role of digital technologies in communicating events such as urban cultural heritage festivals globally. Organisers of the Notting Hill Carnival argue that showcasing the event online can help to sustain the festival, breakdown negative stereotypes, improve artistic output, communicate sense of place, offer a glimpse of the actual event and can lead to the creation of virtual communities. While there is a carnival app offering a location guide and events' schedule and crowd funding initiatives in the pipeline, other online inventiveness that could exploit the economic potential of the event is limited.

The findings further indicate that Notting Hill is a multifaceted activity providing economic benefits, social empowerment and sustaining cultural heritage. However, the study was limited in that the broader economic benefits of the Notting Hill Carnival were not fully explored and neither were the effects of notions such as place attachment and gentrification on the hosting of such events. There is a need for more in-depth and substantial research to examine critical questions about how different sub-groups within local communities interact with large-scale cultural events, especially as large urban populations tend to have a mix of long-established residents alongside many new arrivals and transient groups. There are also further questions about how festivals are organized, how decisions are taken and how diverse groups (according to age, gender and ethnicity, for instance) can be involved.

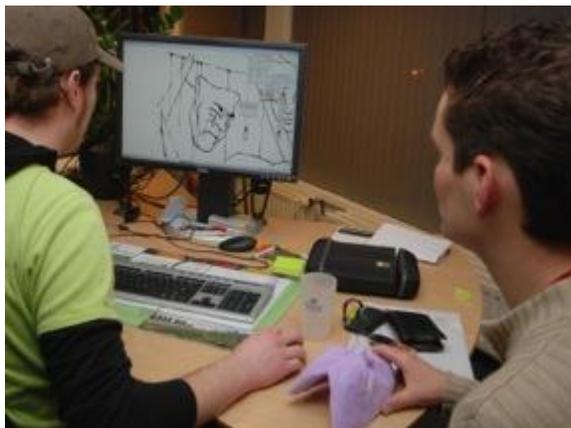
2.4 Corso Zundert - A Dutch Flower Parade

2.4.1 Introduction

In 2012, the Government of the Netherlands ratified the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. For this purpose, a National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage was drawn up, for which the heritage communities themselves could nominate elements for the inventory. The main purpose of the inventory is to support communities in their heritage care. A safeguarding plan is therefore an obligatory part of every nomination for the national inventory, including a SWOT-analysis of traditions.⁶

Corso Zundert was the very first tradition listed on this national inventory. Started in 1936, the festival has become the world's largest flower parade composed of twenty massive floats constructed from steel wire, cardboard, tempex and papier-maché under a blanket of hundreds of thousands of handpicked and carefully positioned dahlias. Design, building and organisation of the yearly festival and preparatory work during the whole year are undertaken entirely by volunteers. Each district, neighbourhood or participating village under the Zundert administration has its own residents' association and temporary building site for this purpose, as well as its own leased dahlia fields. Twelve% of Zundert residents belong to ethnic minorities. This case study examines the role of *Corso Zundert* as a resource for promoting community and territorial cohesion.

⁶ www.immaterieelerfgoed.nl



Designing and modelling floats. Photographs: Marc van Beek





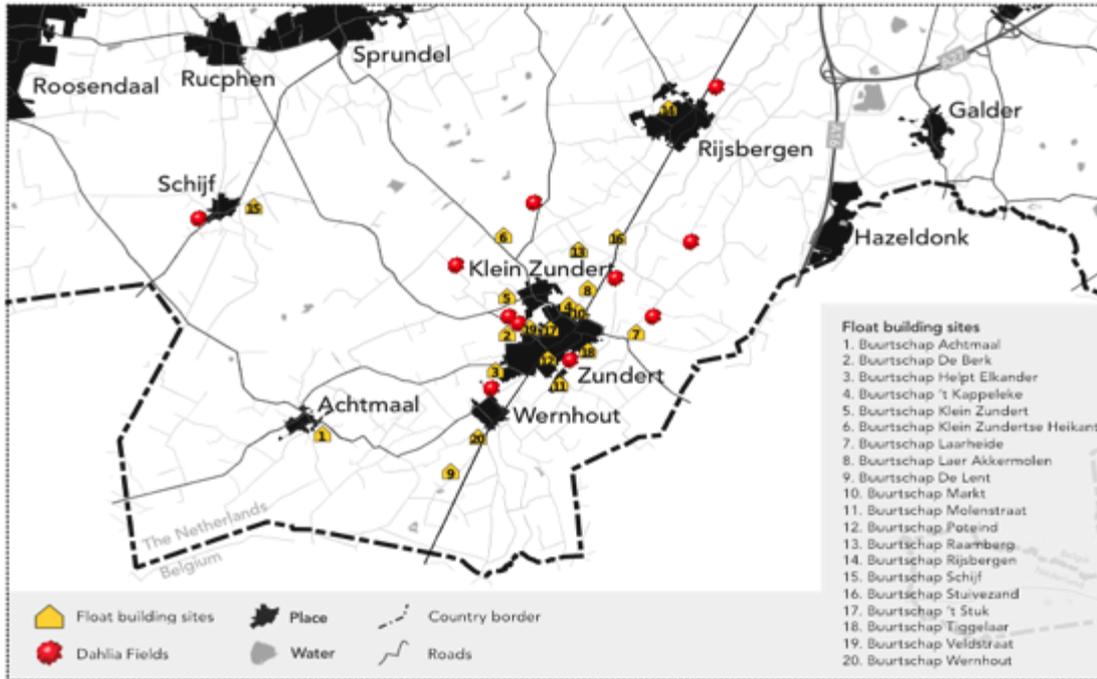
Weeding and picking in the residential dahlia fields. Top photo: Andre Roks, above left and right: Eef Magielsen

2.4.2 Origins of Corso Zundert

The Netherlands may be famous for international flower auctions and tulip fields; however, these are located in the west of the country near the big cities, attracting large numbers of tourists and its parades are run professionally for industrial purposes. Zundert on the contrary, lies in a rural region in the south of the country bordering Belgium, and is known for growing strawberries and cultivating trees. The cultivation of dahlias is a hobby, executed by amateurs, albeit not less profitable. Creating a parade is a costly affair, the money for which is largely accrued by overproduction of flowers to be sold to other parade-type festivals. The dahlia - or 'poor man's' rose - is particularly popular for floral floats, because of its range of colours, prolific growth from July - September, and sturdy durability.



Float parade towns.



Locations of Zundert's float building associations. Map work: Niene Boeijen.

Zundert (population 21,000) is one of about 20 different towns and villages in Belgium or the Netherlands with a flower parade. There are many similarities in techniques and organisation with carnival, except that floral parades take place between April and September in a different atmosphere. According to some, the tradition of decorating people or vehicles with flowers dates back to ancient Roman festivals in honour of Flora or Dionysus (also the god of fertility in ancient Greek mythology). Most authors relate it to former allegoric parades. In recent times, most were related to secular festivities, yet it remains unknown why flower parades became so popular particularly in the Netherlands. The *Corso Zundert* tradition originates from 1936, organised around the Queen's birthday by protestant politician Van Ginniken, for the local, mainly catholic, population with the following aims in the language and atmosphere of the interbellum era (Kunst: 11 - own translation JP):

1. We would like to in a time of Revolutions and denial of all authorities to increase affection for our honoured Queen through befitting festivities in a time of Revolutions and denial of all authorities.
2. We want would like to offer in this time of misery and unemployment a day of recreation in this time of misery and unemployment, to even to the poorest of our citizens, which is free of charge.
3. We want would like to provide 'a good day' for the local entrepreneurs too through the organisation of a festival.

The 'we' consisted of the so called, *Oranje Comité*⁷. To obtain the full participation and sympathy of all citizens, the committee sought representatives from all different districts (at the time hamlets centred around a church) to take part in the committee.

⁷ Translation: 'Orange Committee', orange referring to the Dutch royal family name: Orange



Nobility initiated *Corso Zundert*, but the event has since become ‘of the people’ and has only been interrupted by WWII. Since 1946, around 20 different districts in and around the town of Zundert have participated, each represented by their own unique floral float. From 2004, neighbourhood or district identities also got highlighted through heraldic banners, depicting a chosen logo, often of a float from the past the residents liked best.



-  Molenstraat
-  't Stuk
-  Veldstraat
-  Markt
-  't Kapelleke
-  Laer-Akkermolen
-  Klein Zundert
-  Klein Zundertse Heikant
-  Raamberg
-  Stulvezand
-  De Berk
-  Helpt-Elkander
-  Poteind
-  Tiggelaar
-  Laarheide
-  Wernhout
-  De Lent
-  Achtmaal
-  Rijsbergen
-  Schijf



Districts and their digital banner logos derived from the original local needlework. Photo: Mark Maas

2.4.3 Organisational adjustments

Between the years 1995 - 2000, the entire managerial structure was reorganised. No longer would the mayor of Zundert be chair of the central committee, *Stichting Bloemencorso Zundert* and the entire event gradually became less and less embedded in the city council. Currently, there are about 150 people involved in the administration and organisation of the event; all unpaid volunteers divided over a well-structured set of committees and project groups with proper task descriptions, including codes of behaviour, etc. For some, this takes up an additional working week on top of regular jobs and, in particular, board members of the umbrella organization, could use support with various executive tasks. The event has recently become so big and professionalised that it may become a victim of its own success, partly due to the ideal of strictly unpaid voluntary work. The entire event is 100% driven and organised by unpaid volunteers. Various activities require funds however, such as print work, seating platforms, VIP facilities for sponsors, hiring top quality drum bands and of course float construction costs.

The annual budget of the umbrella foundation is approximately 500,000 Euro; the budget for each district is on average 30,000 Euro (Geene e.a: 411). Approximately one third of the income is accrued through self-organised trade in dahlias outside Zundert as well as catering during parties, a third is found through local and regional sponsoring and around a third comes from ticketing revenue. Non-Zundert visitors and those who want to be seated near the market square need to buy tickets, though the event can elsewhere be watched along the road for free. Nowadays, support from the municipality is mainly to do with bureaucratic affairs such as preventing sleeping policemen in the main parade thoroughfare, help with changes in safety rules that effect the temporary float building construction sites, facilitating space and permits for those sites in compliance with planning policies, etc.

Self-organised flower parade festivals like this where ownership lies entirely with volunteering residents themselves are in essence meant to be *social* events, not to be commodified, so as not to lose its *raison d'être* for the participants. The sole intention of the parade is to foster community solidarity all year round, through all sorts of group activities around float construction. Creating an economic profit is not on the agenda at all. People are entirely driven by intrinsic motivation; a social need they seek to fulfil. When looking at people's motivation in interviews⁸, the incentives mentioned are that people want to be immersed into a group not only for a sense of belonging but also to *create* something larger than life *together* which is what lifts them above and beyond their individual selves. What also gets stressed by locals is that *anyone* can contribute and that there is a direct relationship between one's personal input and responsibilities given, which offers made-to-measure space for self-actualisation, within a *team*. Creating a float involves extremely close collaboration between a variety of usually separated talents like creative and technical, theoretical and practical, high-skilled and low-skilled labour, etc. Only those teams that manage to overcome emotional or professional frictions manage to reach above average quality⁹. As a result, a parade seems to offer less specialised attention than other hobby clubs like sports, music and such. Its wide range of activities allows it to absorb anyone as part of a whole, inviting various sorts of recognition, offering opportunities to gain additional social contacts, develop extra skills and generally contributing to a feeling of wellbeing and fulfilment¹⁰.

2.4.4 Artistic merits

Another distinctive feature of parades is the competition element between different floats – and the associations that they represent. Each float is linked to a particular district with its own identity, perceived by locals alone¹¹. A professional jury of outsiders will re-order the hierarchy between these districts, so there is definitely something at stake for each team. How well will they perform, when compared to others? Taken as a whole, a parade is often seen as a display of the power of ordinary people, taking over public space for the day to serve as their stage.

⁸ Over the years many reporters, for television and written media, asked participants why they invest so much time and energy for free into such an ephemeral event.

⁹ Interview Paul Bastiaansen.

¹⁰ One might argue that this results in increased 'happines', which, according to some scholars makes citizens more trusting, often seen as a prerequisite for social cohesion.

¹¹ To give an example of such locally perceived variety: 'Helpt Elkander' is nicknamed "the Germans" because they are said to share a solid quality attitude; 'Tiggelaar' on the contrary are thought to be more intellectual and alternative; district 'Kappelleke' is said to be rather parochial in the sense that it will only allow float designs from within the own group and never invite outside designers.



The local traffic signals are dismantled and the police assist in the temporary removal of street signs and other obstacles to let the giant floral sculptures pass. The local bank is closed, to be turned into the day's operational centre: cameras and radio connections along the five kilometre route, featuring 20 floats and music bands, monitor the parade and communicate with public services when needed (fire brigade and ambulance, etc.). Early morning, such as every first Sunday in September, 80 volunteers arrive from nearby Prinsenbeek (a similar small town where they happen to have a huge carnival parade) to help redirect traffic; this is not a luxury when it is considered that visitors triple or quadruple the town's normal population – including foreign guests¹². Only paying visitors, jury members and VIPs get access to the market square where there are special rented seating arrangements. One of the attractions for which they pay is the top drum and brass bands, hired in Belgium and the Netherlands, to spice-up the atmosphere and street performances in between each passing float¹³.

¹² A quarter of pre-sold tickets are reservations made abroad. Local residents can have free access along the entire 5 km route. Despite this, there is a run on seats sold for a place near the market where the jury is doing its job. Therefore, it is here where the performances are best and... where the winning float is publicly announced. This results in the so called, *Zundertse jubel*, the emotional high of the day. For designers and builders, this is their decisive moment. The jury verdict will, however, remain a topic for many a fierce debate, which is part of the fun. The public themselves can also vote, often leading to different end results. The differences in taste remain talk of the town, for years to come.

¹³ There is some controversy about the music bands, especially among the local float designers, as they feel that it takes away from their theatrical performances. The floats themselves are increasingly accompanied by their own electronic music or sound systems to accompany technical movement or acting figures. Yet, many audience members do value the marching bands with at times elaborately choreographed street performances. The bands themselves, in turn, value the Zundert performance as one of the best, due to its scale and quality – despite the fact they need to work hardest (5.2 km).



Facebook posts of corso Zundert boasting international media coverage.

The cultural aspiration usually classifies as folk-art, albeit that Zundert – and Lichtenvoorde – stand out in terms of scale and artistic design. A professional jury of outsiders judge the flower covered floats on criteria of (anatomic) shape quality, use of colour, theatrical qualities (including sound, movement, etc.), use of materials and originality. The resulting jury reports are very outspoken, because Zundert likes to be challenged and wants to remain the world’s best in terms of scale, quantity and quality.¹⁴ It appears that Zundert perceives the parade of Lichtenvoorde as its closest competitor. So far, however, only Zundert and few others can boast national broadcasts¹⁵ – apart from regional television, which broadcasts count the highest regional ratings.

Due to an art-house documentary, by Dorien Janssen *Corsokoorts* (‘Parade fever’), the festival caught the attention of visual artist duo Heringa/Van Kalsbeek. They became fascinated by the random shapes that appear during the destruction of the giant floral float sculptures two days after the parade and decided to collaborate with Zundert float builders on the art project *Cadavre Exquis*, which was exhibited on the premises of the municipal museum of Den Bosch, the province capital.

¹⁴ Personal communication management dd 16 dec 2015.

¹⁵ The Zundert parade is broadcast by *Omroep MAX* that caters to an older audience ‘MAX shows 50+ people as they are: often very active, involved and part of society. ... independent of political or religious views... we are engaged, connective and reliable’ from mission statement (own translation). Zundert aspires to have live national broadcast, but did not succeed in that (yet), not even during Van Gogh themed parades that attracted more than average media attention (personal communication Paul Bastiaansen).



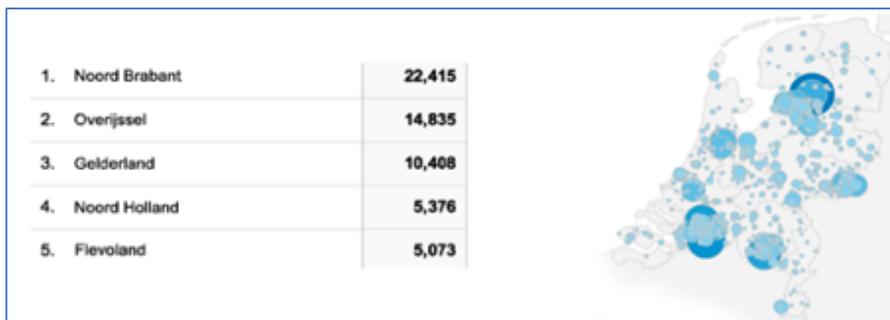
Heringa/Van Kalsbeek *Cadavre Exquis* at Den Bosch museum. Photo: Peter Cox.

This is by no means the only instance where the often used distinction between so-called high and low art meet in this small border town, as Zundert happens to be the birthplace of the world renowned Dutch Master, Vincent van Gogh. In 2003 and 2015, this led to Van Gogh theme parades, which provoked huge international publicity. This, however, always leads to controversy between locals who favour creative freedom, local district democracy and accessible fun experiences against those who strive for public recognition, professionalisation and success in numbers.

2.4.5 Digital technologies and flower parades

The management of the event aims for a gradual growth of actual visitors and rapid media outreach, provided each of the 20 local districts agree, because that is where the final say lies in the Zundert parade community (*corsogemeenschap*). Most districts have their own websites, as well as hardcopy newsletters. On top of that, Zundert founded a quarterly glossy magazine *Corsief* that is gradually broadening its scope with reports on other (inter)national parades. The number of subscriptions is growing, and so far the amount of volunteers contributing seems to keep up. Other Dutch and Belgian parade towns communicate their passions too, all twenty share the online platform: <http://www.corsonetwerk.nl/>. This is a follow-up from the 2003 bulletin board *CorsoForum* set up by an enthusiast in the town of Lichtenvoorde. Since, news and gossip travel fast and easy. Current webmaster, Jeroen Berk from the town of Vollenhove recalls that since 2005, he, like others, uses online connections for organising deals, like flower-glue for one place and cheap tape from another. The regional online presence for the Netherlands in 2013 looked like this:

CorsoNetwerk will, in the future, embark on live streams and moving image clips too and on *YouTube* hobbyists can - and do – themselves post their own images.



Regional online presence of flower parades in the Netherlands in 2013. The figures show the number of users of the shared corsonetwerk platform and their whereabouts.

Social media like *Facebook/Whatsapp* and *Twitter* have created an ever-growing national parade community, albeit less centralised than the bulletin board. Where it started with 1,000 to 1,500 aficionados, the year 2015 had 50,000 unique visitors online.¹⁶ This is double what it was in 2013 when figures looked like this:



Flower parades' social media presence in 2013

The statistics show a mutual interest across parade towns; visitors read about each other's festivals, both in news items and blogs. In other words, at least online cross-fertilisation takes place. The available technology is more used by locals to increase the quality of their floats than by organising committees for marketing or ticketing purposes. Sales seem to be second, performance is priority, also online. Communication is meant to spread pride about achieved results, which in its slipstream, of course, could lead to more attention. However, more online visitors do not result in more 'live' visits¹⁷.

Digital technology is also increasingly used for designing, modelling and assisting the float performances with computer-aided movements, lights and music, etc. However, the main use for digital technology thus far seems to lie in expansion of the parade town networks, allowing local traditions to connect different (inter)national territories. The following cameo shows an example: it is through *Facebook* that the Spanish fishing village of Laredo, near Bilbao, finds out it is not unique with its flower covered floats. An abridged online interview between the towns of Zundert and Laredo:

¹⁶ NL 93%, Belgium 2.5% other 4.5%

¹⁷ Interview René Renne.



It wasn't hard to find the person behind the Facebook account of Batalla de Flores. A simple message was all that was needed to get an enthusiastic response from Spain.

| ORIGIN OF INTEREST IN FLOATS IN HOLLAND?

I have a blog (batalladeflores.net) about Batalla de Flores and other similar parades. In 2009 I received an email from Holland with informatie about the Tiel and Zundert floats and I was very impressed. Until that day I thought we were alone in the world of floral floats. The following year I planned a trip to Zundert to get to know the Bloemencorso. Since then I try to go every year but sometimes Batalla de Flores and Zundert Bloemencorso are held on the same weekend. Last year I visit Zundert during exposure models, this was equally impressive. The trip for this year is already planned!

| WHICH FLOATS IN HOLLAND DO YOU KNOW BESIDES ZUNDERT?

I have only seen the parade in Zundert live thus far. And via the Internet I try to keep up to date of all the parades in the Netherlands and the rest of the world.

| HOW MANY VISITORS COME TO BATALLA DE FLORES EACH YEAR?

Is very difficult to answer that because the public does not have to pay to see the floats so there isn't a record of viewers. It is estimated that during the weekend more than 200.000 tourist come to Laredo.

| WHY SHOULD WE ALL COME AND VISIT BATALLA DE FLORES IN LAREDO?

The week of the Battle of Flowers is the most important of the year in Laredo. The night before the Battle thousands of tourists walk to see all the floats and the groups working. The main day begins with a great atmosphere all over the streets of Laredo. At 17:30 starts the Battle of Flowers which takes about 2-3 hours and after the finish the party continues. One of the most anticipated moments is at midnight.



Although it is not the first priority for the local parade community itself, it is particularly through the online free publicity that Zundert has come into the international picture, literally,

featuring in arts and design blogs, lifestyle articles, digital newspapers, etc. from Japan to Russia, Arabian countries, the Americas, etc. In particular the digital daily mail, the Smithsonian online magazine and influential this is colossal are popular international platforms on which *Corso Zundert* surfaces regularly.

The web and digital platforms obviously have their attraction. However, mainstream media are not less popular when looking at flower parade broadcasts for national and especially regional audiences. Each regional television station broadcasts its own parades live, also to be seen elsewhere digitally. These programmes are said to reach 300,000 to 600,000 viewers, which is quite possible as they are repeated for quite some time. When watching live though, people can participate directly by voting via text message for their favourite float¹⁸.

2.4.6 Future developments of *Corso Zundert*

In terms of visitors, the current management team aims for a gradual growth of on-site visitors and steep growth of free publicity in all thinkable media. Zundert is proud of what it achieves and wants the world to know about it. It also intends to remain the world's largest flower parade in terms of combined scale, quality and attention. That said, innovations are in the hands of the locals themselves as they run the show ultimately – which is felt to be both strength as well as weakness. An event driven 100% by local volunteers cannot become fully professional, technically or artistically. The main aim remains to foster solidarity within the communities in a time of economic crisis, globalisation, individualism and increased social fragmentation.

Threats for the future may be not attracting enough young volunteers, who are willing to invest their spare time and energy into something that is in essence ephemeral – the giant constructions get demolished two days after the parade and obtain their fleeting beauty from wilting flowers. Zundert is however adamant in securing this 'useless' tradition for the future by including it in the local elementary school curriculum. Three local teachers found sponsoring to create elaborate work packages for each different age group. The assignments involve homework that invite other family members to add their real life experiences from past parades. In the end the children may show off their efforts in the children's flower parade, taking place two weeks after the big one.

¹⁸ Apart from the official jury prize, there is always an audience award. This is just as well, since the artistic judgement of the professional jury is often very much at odds with a more conventional audience taste.



Opposing views on the future of *Corso Zundert* are voiced well by two young adults in the parade magazine *Corsief*, as follows (own translation and emphasis):

Jesse Verheijen (23)

I was about 13, not capable of anything. Poteind district, where my eldest brother was involved, needed help, so I went along. That summer I learned all about papier-maché, how to weld and I could now open beer bottles on a scaffold clamp! Ever since, I could only think 'corso'. It became an internalised lifestyle and after a passionate decade, it still is. Memorable moments of the kind you'd like to share with grandchildren. ...

Luckily, I still see 13-year old boys and girls heading towards the corso-tent. It is the beginning of a lifestyle that they too hopefully take on board. They'll learn and experience a lot that is of use for the rest of their lives.



Once you step into one of those tents, **you get into a system that has enriched so many people**. That system should never disappear from Zundert.

This system in which so many volunteers invest their spare time results in a beautiful parade. The world's largest flower parade. But this may precisely be the beginning of the end! Because, **with ever more events to choose from**, with people more mobile than ever seeking action, thrills and adrenaline; **how long will a flower parade remain interesting enough for visitors?**

On social media, you can see that Corso Zundert is still alive and it will remain alive for some time. But a floral parade has no eternal life. We need to realise that, or else our future 13-year olds won't have the same possibilities that I had. So **we need to rethink to what extent our Zundert system should result in a flower parade, in its current shape**.

'Creative destruction'. That's what we need. (Corsief 19.4 March 2015)

Bas Herrijgers (31) responds

Jesse implies: visitors = success = existence. Such an approach may fit large scale music events like Pinkpop, but not our parade. Putting visitors' whimsicality and ephemeral (social) media central when defining success, that is the beginning of the end! **It is us, the float builders, who are the success**. We provide the parade its raison d'etre through our devotion and love.

The amount of **success is measured by ourselves** during our own Zundert New Year, over and over again: the quality of floats, flowers, beer, food, technical and personal issues, etc.

Traditions are great but not at every cost. Creative destruction, yes please! As long as it will be constructive destruction! The kind of **change that does not impinge on the passion and energy of the float builders**, but instead result in more of that.

A few suggestions, and if you don't like them, let more and better **ideas** surface...:

Change route, alter selection process about float design, no more drum bands, beer instead of cash donations, and exhibition of floats along motorway, emphasise how hip folklore and craft can be. (Corsief 20.1 June 2015)

The current organising committee confirms that probably nothing will change in the parade process or financing structures as these are constructed to serve solidarity purposes. Without a penny to spare and no outside visitors in sight, the parade will remain regardless – so they claim. The only room for improvement that they might seek in the future is finding a place other than kitchen tables and pubs for the organising committee themselves – as they do not have a site specific tent to work from. As professionalisation and planning regulation increase, a moment may arrive when paid support is needed for some of the ever-increasing executive work overload for the organising volunteer management.

In short, the main threats consist of increasing professionalisation, including safety and planning regulations that require specialist expertise and in general work overload. And in the

future it may become more of a challenge to remain attractive enough for young adults to volunteer¹⁹.

2.4.7 Economic perspective

The number of tourists that the Spanish parade town of Laredo manages to attract is not at all the case in Zundert. Neither the municipality, nor the *Corso Zundert* management or community districts make much effort in this regard. Local businesses are in two minds about the event, as on the one hand eating and drinking establishments like an increased turnover, of course, yet they need to invest in additional facilities and staff in order to cater for such crowds. It requires a lot of effort only to break even. In the past, friction has arisen between the pubs and self-organised catering organised by *Corso Zundert* itself (one of its revenues), although this has subsequently been resolved. Attracting tourism is in any case not on the agenda of the *corsogemeenschap* ('corso community') itself, as it is not really in their interest; it simply causes more work and they already deal with nearly too much.

Zundert's municipality could possibly do more in this respect: when combining all of its local assets, it may tempt existing visitors into staying around longer. Many arrive throughout the year because of various Van Gogh sites: his father's parish, the Van Gogh house museum - an art centre at the place of his house of birth. Apart from culture, Zundert has attractive outdoor recreation to offer: walking and cycling tours in the adjacent woods, across historical estates and towards the local Abbey with its brand of *Zundert* Trappist beer. Float building tours and dahlia trips could be offered as trips and would be welcomed with open arms by the *Corsogemeenschap*, as long as someone else organises it. It is only recently that an awareness is slowly growing among local businesses, politicians and organisations that it might be profitable to combine efforts and use tourism as an additional asset. As it is, Zundert is relatively well off, due to its successful professional agriculturalists²⁰, therefore it may never have felt the need to seek further economic benefits.

2.4.8 Social cohesion in *Corso Zundert's* flower parade, a close up

In terms of social cohesion, there are two opposite assumptions in relation to *Corso Zundert* flower parade, none of which is based on exhaustive empirical evidence, it seems. Some claim that cohesiveness around these parades is *explained* by the fact the activities are only to be found in small villages and towns with an intact social fabric and homogenous population. Others, including the current Zundert organising committee, claim that creating a parade *causes* social cohesion. Before looking at theoretical perspectives on social cohesion, first some down to earth empirical findings: what do people themselves consider social cohesion and how do they construct it; what does the Zundert 'system that has enriched so many people'²¹ entail?

¹⁹ Interview management dd December 16th 2015.

²⁰ www.seswestbrabant.nl *Corso Zundert* profits from these industries too as the huge strawberry auction site provides space for the parade volunteer afterparty and temporary exhibition of floats. The municipality rents the auction area for these few days; auction activities move take place at a large tree cultivating company for the time being. The agriculturalists themselves only visit the parade; they cannot be involved in float building activities – taking place during summer – as that is their own high season.

²¹ As Jesse Verheijen put it in magazine *Corsief* 19.4, March 2015.



Welding workshop. Photo: Marc van Beek.



Putting nails into hundreds of dahlias. Photo: Andre Roks

The parade is what the public and media get to see, share and remember. However, the work behind the scenes, all year round, is what matters most to the participating citizens. In the case of Zundert, about ten to twenty% of the population involve themselves to some degree in either organisation behind the scenes, outside work in the dahlia fields or inside the tents where giant sculptural floats gradually take shape.

‘Try to get a commercial company or another organisation to organise a project, which entails many hundreds of man hours of work and the presentation of which only lasts a couple of days. The work is not particularly interesting, sometimes it is totally boring, involves considerable discomfort and is certainly extremely dirty, and it has a very strict deadline. The problem of motivating a sufficient number of people would seem to be almost insurmountable.

However, in Zundert, every year in the first weekend of September 20 such projects are completed, without the organisation of sufficient manpower being an issue. No personnel planning is done and nobody is paid nor are there any prospects of remuneration. Nobody seems to be worried about whether the 20 times 250 people will turn up to help. Yet, they do, always, every year, of their own accord, and they work on and on until the job is done, even if that takes the whole night. It usually does’ (In: *Het Geheim van Zundert* Geene e.a. 2009: 397).

What drives these people? What is it that engages up to 5,000 volunteers (25% of the local population) to invest spare time and energy, for free? And, why would it possibly matter to others? The latter question five parade enthusiasts set out to answer, resulting in even more work: a 400-page illustrated book *Het Geheim van Zundert* (‘Zundert’s secret’), meant to spread the word and make local people realise the value of their tradition. A first edition of 2,000 copies sold the first weekend, a second edition is nearly sold out. The hefty volume shows in detail – a result of 25 locals taking pictures everywhere – the places, processes and

people involved²². The routines they portray are transmitted informally at home and in the pub, and formally taught at all local schools. The parade routine and history are taken so seriously, because they are explicitly meant to ‘cultivate solidarity, cement relationships and encourage to develop new relationships’ as (Geene ea. 2009: 396):

‘All of a sudden, the realisation dawned that individualism had gone too far and that ‘old-fashioned’ values such as solidarity and community spirit were important. ... How could this be achieved? ... Zundert has its own unique and concrete answer to these questions. It’s the ‘Corso’



Preparing fields. Photo: Valerie Voeten.



Welding on site. Photo: Mark Maas.



Honorary banner. Photo: Luzanne Foesenek-Roelands.



Nailing dahlias. Photo: Werner Pellis.

²² Most of the pictures used in this case study are taken from this book’s image database, generously made available by the editors, under creative commons license.



Multiple float building activities inside tent. Photo: Werner Pellis.



Photo: Masha Domen.



Photo: Wilma Taks.



Trading flowers for amount and right colours. Photo: Mark Maas.



Photographer unspecified.



Demolition. Photo: Susan Elst.

What exactly does the 'Corso' routine consist of and who gets involved doing what? Creating a parade is generally meant to be a collaborative activity, open to all, regardless of one's capacities as contributions can be made in very many ways: all sorts of administrative roles (taking minutes, bookkeeping), creative roles (designing, music composing and mime acting), constructive roles (erecting scaffolds and welding), computer skills (coordinating lights, movement, etc.), caring roles (catering to humans or flowers) and agricultural work (planting, weeding, harvesting, clearing fields). Then there are organisational duties (activities for children, women and men during the year such as baking cup cakes, going fishing, barbecues, etc.), editorial (newsletter, magazine or online), commercial (sponsoring, advertising) and hands-on (pasting, papering, nailing flowers). Last but not least, there is the honorary job of pushing one's float during the parade, hidden inside an undercarriage (*manpower* over horses or tractors being a Zundert invention)²³.

²³ It has never really been explained why it was Zundert, out of all villages and towns with parades that came up with the idea of silent manpower to move the floats forward. Speculation would be that it had to do with remnants of its smuggling history. Before the European unification, it was quite common in this border area – especially during times of hardship - to cycle across to Belgium with goods such as cigarette paper hidden inside frame, tyre or saddle. After WWII, the illegal trade became professionalised with vast amounts of butter, now hidden inside armoured constructions. The first time Zundert used manpower at the floral parade, the pushers were hidden out of sight too, stunning audience and jury and setting a new standard.



In: P.Kunst 1980.

In general, older men take care of the dahlia fields and flower trade; the locals that design floats are mostly male too, albeit of all ages and professions. Young women participate equally in float building – including welding – older women mainly take care of catering and needle-and-thread work. During the summer, entire families can be found in the flower fields and tents. Two days before the parade, a substantial part of the town from all socioeconomic backgrounds, age and gender join in. When some float appears to fail completion before the deadline, other neighbourhoods rush over to help. After all, Zundert aims to present itself as a unified whole to itself and the world, where *together* you are so powerful that only the sky is the limit. There may be a competition, but it needs to be fair and therefore it is never at the expense of fellow townsmen.

This is what a short breakdown of the entire parade year cycle looks like:

<u>When</u>	<u>What & who</u>	<u>Level of intensity</u> ²⁴
February	Designers present ideas, districts select their next float design	xx
March	New designs debated, dahlia tubers inspected and sorted	xxxxxxxx
April	Separate beds planted for variety of needed colours	xxxxx
May	Scaffolding and tarpaulin erected for giant float construction site	xxxxxxx
June	Scaled models exhibited, queuing for ticket sales, polls held	xxxxxxxxxxx
July	Tough construction work in tents, weeding and watering fields	xxxxxxxxxxx
August	Pasting and papering, flower tending and trading, <i>Corso</i> song festival	xxxxxxxxxxx
September	Road clearing, stand building, parade festivals, party, demolishing	xxxxxxxxxxx
October	Dig-up and store dahlia tubers for hibernation, parade evaluation	xxxxx
November	<i>Corso</i> photo exhibition, banner of honour made in secret	xxx
December	Conception of new float designs, adjustments and plans discussed	xxxxxxx
January	Banner festival: women unveil winning float design on fabric	xxxxxxxx

²⁴ The intensity and amount of people involved are locally referred to as *corsokoorts* (parade fever). This strongly condensed overview is based on tutorials taught at school and the book, *Het geheim van Zundert* (Geene e.a.)

2.4.9 Further comments on cohesion: Zundert and the Netherlands (local and national)

Whether or not the Zundert routine contributes to social cohesion depends on a few factors. Firstly it seems that the activities achieve cohesion predominantly at meso level: between neighbours, districts and other towns that share the same tradition of cultural flower parades. One could argue that ‘bridging’ takes place between generations, and at times between socioeconomic strata - especially towards the end when all join forces side-by-side to get the flowers nailed onto the float. Whilst working together in the tent, and sharing beers in the pub afterwards, people say that they befriend others that would not normally belong to their circles. However, all participants seem to belong to a common denominator in-group in the sense that few people with (mental) health concerns and no ethnic minorities take part proportionately²⁵. Therefore, in terms of distances *between* different categories of people in the small-scale society of Zundert, there is some increase in cohesion due to the flower parade. When looking at the dimension of social inclusion people do befriend others outside of their own educational strata and both age and gender gaps are immaterial during collaborative activities. In principle, *Corso Zundert* is open to all, however, in practice there appears to be a set of unwritten – and unnegotiable – culturally informed values that are common to most, yet not all inhabitants. In terms of equality the parade allows for many to realize their full potential and it also qualifies nicely on the dimension of social connectedness. This is especially due to the digital communication technologies networks that have increased in numbers and size, which have expanding territorial cohesion. Although the district banner-identities, construction tents as well as dahlia fields are bound to geographical spaces the individual float teams are not solely held together by one’s physical address in Zundert. It used to be the case that each street could only belong to that specific float, nowadays teams are built around kindred spirits and shared lifestyles. In other words: cohesion is centred more around shared social values than territorial boundaries. Within one household even, people can belong to different float building teams, which was unheard of in the old days. On individual and neighbourhood level place attachment may currently be less important; Zundert as community in relation to other parade towns *is* however highly relevant. Each parade town has its own reputation at stake, with Zundert on top – closely followed by Lichtenvoorde.

Other indicators of social cohesion such as wellbeing, mutual trust and participation (of *all* citizens) are now and then measured, like in 2013 by the Dutch central bureau for statistics (CBS). For the first time, a mixed-methods approach was adopted to ensure greater inclusivity²⁶.

²⁵ Two% of the residents in Zundert are of Moroccan or Turkish descent and ten% of temporary labourers are migrants from Middle and Eastern European countries (highest ratio in the Netherlands due to agricultural seasonal labour opportunities and its location between the harbours of Antwerp and Rotterdam). About – and with – the agricultural labour migrants local theatre maker Peter Dictus created a play, performed on location in greenhouses. According to him, the so-called *MOElanders* (Middle and Eastern Europeans) are not interested in joining in the *Corso*, as they want to invest all their available time into earning money. They are also quite surprised that the Dutch have so much leisure time and wonder why migrants need to do the labour they themselves are being hired for. If Zundert wants to include Polish temporary residents, other cultural events would stand far better chances, according to Iwona Gusc (for instance in 2016 ‘[Loving Vincent](#)’ about Van Gogh by the Polish film director Dorota Kabiela will be released and Dutch filmmaker Karin Kooijman investigates the Polish dream of labour migrants in <http://depooldroom.nl/en/>). Gusc, familiar with Polish expats in the capital claims that nowhere in the Netherlands cohesion between cultural ‘others’ appear without some sort of intervention. This is confirmed for Zundert by social worker, Thomas Frankhuijzen who works in a two-storey building, with upstairs the local scouting club and downstairs youngsters from district *De Berk* where most residents from Moroccan descent live. He notices a strict segregation between the two groups, seemingly based on culturally informed customs but also differing levels of education and wealth. Initiatives to organise shared activities thus far are met with mutual reluctance and refusal.

²⁶ www.CBS.nl ‘Sociale samenhang en welzijn: een paradox?’ Hans Schmeets 31-10-2013.

Research up until 2010, showed a steady increase in social cohesion in Dutch society. However, the findings from 2013 revealed overall stability²⁷, although the province of Brabant scored comparatively low within the Netherlands, yet no cause for concern from a European perspective.²⁸

Secondly, when taking into account 17 different variables contributing to social capital, as distinguished in the 2013 CBS research, one in particular stands out in relation to the Zundert case: wellbeing. Especially people with frequent family and neighbourly contact would score highly on this variable, with a strong correlation to employment or volunteer work. These findings did not change when interrelated with education, age or gender²⁹. Therefore, one could argue that *Corso Zundert* does contribute to social cohesion, especially due to the way the entire preparatory process is structured, with its many additional activities outside the parade routine that stimulate social connectivity (going fishing, barbecuing and baking, etc.). Social activities seem to have a more than average high impact on wellbeing as contributing factor of cohesion and in that sense *Corso Zundert* certainly offers resources.

The sort of cohesion achieved, however, seems limited to meso level and to favour ‘bonding’ over ‘bridging’ social capital. It remains to be seen to what extent this is problematic, as the ideology behind mixing (ethnic) groups rests on assumptions (proposed by for instance contact theorists) for which sufficient empirical evidence has not yet been found. In the Netherlands, the national sociocultural planning bureau (SCP) carried out a survey in 2008 showing that inter-ethnic contact – or bridging social capital – had no influence on social mobility whatsoever; only education and socioeconomic situations did.

A third factor derived from the same report³⁰, is a little more worrying in relation to festivals such as the one held in Zundert: no interrelation at all was found between social cohesion and leisure time activities, although this differed slightly for various ethnic backgrounds. In Zundert as well, the Polish and Moroccan people spoken to, including those who had participated in the festivals as children (because it is part of the local school curriculum) confirmed they had ‘better’ things to do with their spare time than building floats: earning money, setting up a business, getting a degree. They felt no need for additional social contacts, as they felt socially embedded enough within their own networks, which provided them with the opportunities they seek.³¹ These personal perceptions are supported by CBS findings, in general: migrants and their descendants achieve social mobility through their own networks and do not necessarily need more.

²⁷ 84% of Dutch citizens experience high to very high wellbeing; a high score internationally. However, this is an average and does not include everyone; migrants from non-western descent and all with lower education experience much less wellbeing (ibid. 7).

²⁸ www.cbs.nl ‘Sociale Samenhang 2010’: 15. The nearby city of Breda shows the highest score in social cohesion (despite relatively low wellbeing and prosperity), which is interesting, as it undermines the assumption that rural areas and villages are better off in terms of social fabric. This report sees a comparative lower social cohesion in Zundert, and a higher prosperity level – compared to neighbouring municipalities (p 34).

²⁹ Health is another indicator for wellbeing, and this is the only area where Zundert shows deviating scores: people here smoke considerably less, yet drink far more. There is no explanation found, it would be speculative to relate this to float construction lifestyle although Hoeffler (2009) does mention a connection between beer drinking and parade floats as ‘art of socializing’ albeit in Michigan U.S.

³⁰ www.scp.nl ‘Betrekkelijke betrokkenheid. Studies in sociale cohesie.’ (2008)

³¹ This sense of identity is discussed in RICHES deliverable D4.1 – *European identity and belonging and the role of digital CH*

If they are temporary migrants who intend to stay in a region for a period of years rather than settling permanently, then spare time is often spent maintaining links with the home country. These nuances may call for more context specific interpretations of the concepts ‘cohesion’ – and ‘integration’.

For some a point of departure is deliberate *blurring* of social, cultural and economic lines, values and identities to create *new* place-based identities. Such an approach is unthinkable in Zundert, at present, as the organising committee members are explicitly in favour of an *assimilation* attitude in relation to immigration; new citizens are expected to adapt to (often unwritten and unconscious) social rules. The tents and teams offer open access for all who feel they can adjust. *Corso Zundert* is simply not designed to create something new together, taking a *mutual integration* ideology as a starting point. It is, on the contrary, reasoned that too large a cultural gap to bridge will not glue together in the Zundert area³².

So whether or not this event contributes to solidarity depends on the specific *kind* of solidarity and social cohesion sought. There are many different ways to live together with differences; a multicultural ideology may not be the only solution – not even in so-called super diverse contexts³³. The Zundert case study shows that those who are involved in the flower parade favour ‘bonding’ social capital over ‘bridging’ when taking so called ethnic minorities and vulnerable citizens into the equation³⁴. Within districts locals claim they *do* bridge with perceived ‘others’ – in terms of age, education and socioeconomic status. More detailed empirical mixed methods research on perceived in- and out-groups is necessary for more nuanced statements.

2.5 ROSTOCK’S HANSE SAIL FESTIVAL



³² The nearby village of Rucphen has the highest percentage PVV voters (party of Geert Wilders). In the Zundert region there is also no sympathy for the nationwide blackface or Black Pete debate drawing attention to its racist character. Emotions rise high under the perceived threat of losing that tradition – apparently meant to stay fixed rather than flexible. This thought pattern belongs to an essentialist view on ‘culture’ that is fairly common in the Dutch sociopolitical context. The case of Black Pete is discussed in greater depth in RICHES deliverable D3.1 – *Transformation change and best practice for CH processes*

³³ It remains to be seen what measures are needed and how much can be achieved, when looking at Wessendorf (2010) for instance, studying the London Borough of Hackney, one to the most diverse areas in the world. When mapping patterns of social relations across categorical boundaries she found an internalised ‘commonplace diversity’ in public spaces with intercultural competences facilitating everyday interactions described as ‘corner-shop cosmopolitanism’. This mentality co-exists with ‘parallel lives’ in private spheres where social networks can be far less diverse.

³⁴ For ethnically more inclusive approaches, it might be interesting to investigate the impact of Brussels’ *Zinneke parade*, because of its policy is to ‘involve immigrant participation through local arts and cultural activities’... ‘reflecting the city’s multiculturalism through the collective creative present(s) and not through re-presenting the individual traditional past(s) of its residents’ (Costanzo 2013: i).



Images depicting Rostock's harbour during Hanse Sail

'The Hanse Sail is a stroke of luck for Rostock and the Northeast. It is not only a great festival, but entails monetary - as well as priceless cultural- and social image effects'. (Dr Klaus-Dieter Block, Public Relations work Hanse Sail Office)³⁵

2.5.1 Introduction

With a population of 203,000, Rostock is the largest city in the north German state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Its annual Hanse Sail maritime festival attracts an estimated one million tourists and thousands of sailors from around the world. Perhaps, the largest event of its kind in Europe, Hanse Sail is one of the most renowned meeting places for traditional sailing and museums ships on the planet. About 250 traditional sailing vessels of all types and sizes flock to the coast of Rostock each summer to join in its festivities. Such is the number of people that throng to Hanse Sail that in 2014, one ship owner recorded more than 30,000 guests, that boarded his vessel for sailing cruises³⁶ during the event. This indicates the event makes a substantial contribution to the local economy and offers the opportunity for locals to get together to support and enjoy local traditions. Since 1991, Hanse Sail has been a fixture in the local events calendar and clearly has an effect on the area's economic development and social wellbeing. The aim of this case study, therefore, is to examine Hanse Sail as a resource for promoting community and territorial cohesion and the role of digital technologies in this endeavour.

2.5.2 The origins of Hanse Sail

Hanse Sail forms part of the joint Baltic Sail, which takes place in several countries bordering the Baltic Sea during July and August. There are many reasons that the Baltic around Rostock has an international reputation for excellence. One of them is related to quaint Warnemuende area, which has become a distinctive feature of Rostock's coastline. Locals, as much as tourists, enjoy the maritime flair of neat and small old houses, a long beach, a new and an old lighthouse and a traditional fisherman's port. Warnemuende hosted the first Hanse Sail from 22–28 July 1991 and since then, during every second week in August.

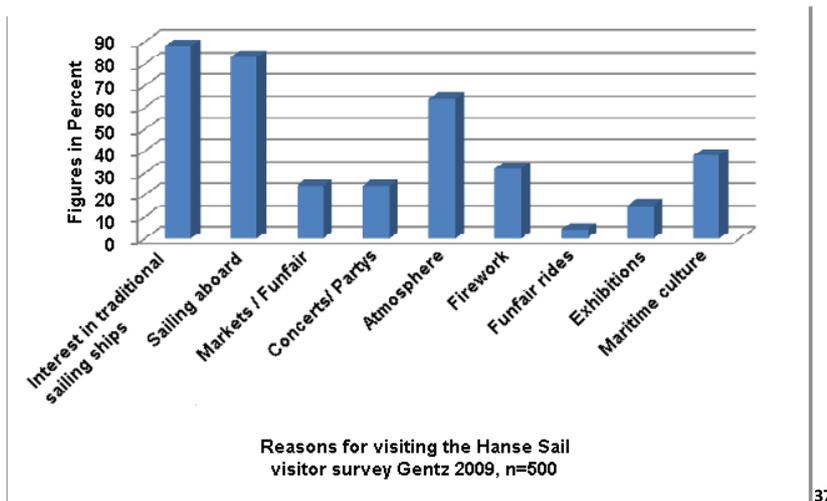
Despite initial scepticism, the first Hanse Sail turned out to be a great success. This was probably due to enthusiasm sparked by German reunification, as the sea border was opened for the first time in decades. In the past, major German Navy vessels such as the training ship Gorch Fock, the sailing ship Alexander von Humboldt and the Peace from Jamaica, have taken part in Hanse Sail festivities.

³⁵ Interview Klaus-Dieter Block

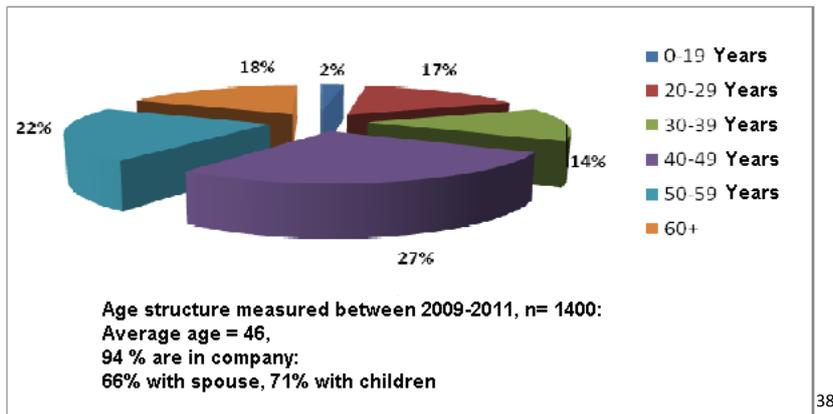
³⁶ cf. PresseSpiegel, Hanse Sail 2014, Tourist Centre Rostock & Warnemuende, Hanse Sail office, p23.

This indicates the event’s political significance, a fact, which is reinforced by the regular attendance of prominent politicians such as Gerhard Schroeder, the former German Chancellor and his successor Angela Merkel. The high-profile visits also highlight the event’s importance to the local tourism industry. For ship and sailing enthusiasts, Hanse Sail is a haven of cruise ships, ferries and military vessels exhibiting their uniqueness, craftsmanship, history and cultural heritage. Most vessels allow visitors on board when they anchor, as well as the opportunity to enjoy exhibition cruises when they set sail. From the quays and the open-ships, there is also the chance to admire some of the most elegant sailing vessels in the world. The yawls, small sailing ships, cutters and zeesen boats offer a spectacular contrast to the tall ferries and huge cruise liners in the Warnemuende harbour.

The onshore programme is a colourful fair of market stands, carousels and dozens of exhibition and entertainment stages. Additional fora, conferences and showcase events take place. Moreover, there are sightseeing flights on seaplanes or helicopters, performance shows and a popular firework display on the edge of the spectacular Warnemuende harbour. Cruise ships from around the world head for the port at Warnemuende during this period boosting tourist numbers at the event. For many tour operators Rostock during the Hanse Sail is a highlight for their guests. The day before the Hanse Sail, small fast fishing vessels traditionally join a competition at a Haikutter-Race from Denmark to Germany. One of the main highlights on the Saturday of the event is a race involving traditional sailing ships on the seafront area of Warnemuende. Even though a wide range of cultural and touristic attractions accompanies this cultural heritage festival, the ships remain the focal point.



³⁷ J. Gantz: Master thesis on customer satisfaction Hanse Sail 2009, Rostock University, 2010.



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The Hanseatic city of Rostock including the seaside resort Warnemuende has 10 million daytime visitors every year. This gives the city a leading position as a tourist destination in northern Germany. The majority of visitors are aged 40-49 and over. The statistics also indicate that someone accompanies 94% of all visitors.³⁹



Shipshape: celebrating Rostock’s maritime cultural heritage

³⁸ Determined values from the visitor survey Geiszus Messe-Marktforschung on behalf of the NDR 2011, a bachelor thesis on customer satisfaction Hanse Sail 2010, technical college Brandenburg, K. Herlitz, 2011 and a master thesis on customer satisfaction Hanse Sail 2009, Rostock University, J. Gentz, 2010.

³⁹ Cf. dwif-Consulting GmbH, Rostock – seaside resort Warnemünde – tourism concept 2022, 2012. Determined values from the visitor survey Geiszus Messe-Marktforschung on behalf of the NDR 2011, a bachelor thesis on customer satisfaction Hanse Sail 2010, technical college Brandenburg, K. Herlitz, 2011 and a master thesis on customer satisfaction Hanse Sail 2009, Rostock University, J. Gentz, 2010.

2.5.3 Community and Economy at Hanse Sail

The population of Rostock identifies with ‘their’ Hanse Sail in various ways and considers it as a major contribution to local community and territorial cohesion. Two features are of major importance here: The *‘objective target of the Hanse Sail is to strengthen the cooperation between all participants and to strengthen the sense of solidarity of the people living in Rostock and in the Baltic area’*.⁴⁰ Firstly, the Hanse Sail increases social inclusion and local participation during the days of the event. Its multi-faced cultural offerings attract local tourists. This common experience in combination with the people’s attachment to their home region brings together the local population. Secondly, the Hanse Sail supports the local economy, as a promotional tool and via its reputation as a popular seaport. Accordingly, many local companies use the event for business and matchmaking activities. ‘Business meets Hanse Sail’, for example, organised in 2014 for the 11th time, is a well-established, successfully operated business-culture format. It aims to bring together personalities from business, culture and politics in the context of the event.

The people of Rostock are proud of the success of the Hanse Sail. It is a feeling, which adds to their sense of community and strong bonds. This results largely from local people’s involvement in the organisation and planning of the event. The festival affects all sectors of Rostock including the general improvement of the cityscape, local public transport, hotels, catering, construction and activities of individuals and companies.

Probably, the strongest contribution of local people to the festival is their voluntary non-paid commitment. The Sail counts more than 250 unpaid volunteers⁴¹ of all ages, that support the employees during the event days and with preparation activities. To them, the engagement offers a chance to make new contacts and relationships, to experience teamwork and commonality. Most volunteers extend their personal abilities and get the opportunity to be part of a team that improves existing conditions, to correct possible imbalances and to enhance organisational structures of the cultural heritage festival. In general, volunteers at the Hanse Sail have a very good reputation.

The voluntary input of local people enables the Hanse Sail a certain degree of independence in terms of reliance on third parties. Voluntary involvement creates value for the festival and the community, a notion reinforced by the knowledge of citizens being endowed by their fellow citizens. Moreover, unpaid commitment provides coherence in the community, fosters solidarity and has integrative effects, which the government alone could never achieve. It means that the Hanse Sail can make cultural offerings at the event at reasonable prices. This structural attribute also gives flexibility to the festival in terms of the event being able to react quickly and appropriately to changing social needs and new developments. The social capital produced by local’s benevolence illustrates the cultural importance of volunteering and how this serves as a resource for the city and the community.

⁴⁰ Interview; Holger Bellgardt; head of the Hanse Sail office

⁴¹ Klaus-Dieter Block: Hanse Sail Rostock Baltic Sail European Maritime Heritage, Tourismuszentrale Rostock & Warnemünde, HS BS EMH2014 engl.ppt.p28.

'The sailing ships are the heart of the Hanse Sail, the soul, however, are the unpaid volunteers of this festival'.⁴²

It can be argued that the long-term liberty of a social system directly depends on the extent to which the people, independently and voluntarily, are able to organise themselves. Furthermore, it is contingent on how far they are willing to take self-responsibility. Voluntary involvement stabilizes a democratic community and can contribute to its sustainability. For example, an event like Hanse Sail is a meeting place between all sectors of the local population. The event provides a space where children, young people, adults and senior citizens can experience and learn collective action and social responsibility. It thus strengthens integration of social groups in society.

The high percentage of voluntary involvement in Rostock also contributes to social and education policies.

The Hanse Sail has led to greater economic use of the city harbour outside of the four days of the festival. The city of Rostock benefits from this new niche product and the city port is used according to its original function once again. Ultimately, it is a position of mutual dependence. The Hanse Sail as the biggest and most important maritime festival in and around Rostock increases the awareness level towards the region. It acquires money for urban development and preserves cultural heritage. There is a great commitment to maintaining traditional sailing ships and other local ways of life. On the other hand, development and success of the Hanse Sail will depend on its ability to win and retain the required number of voluntary helpers. Nonetheless, even voluntary involvement has its limits. There needs to be increased efficiency and pro-active marketing campaigns to attract even greater numbers of people from around the world. The Hanse Sail is important for Rostock's economy, its international image and, also has social, cultural and global impact in the Baltic area.

'The Hanse Sail has constantly developed, both in quantitative terms (visitor figures, participation of traditional ships) and qualitative terms (arrangement of the event). Nevertheless, in quantitative terms and in terms of spatial expansion the Hanse Sail reached its limits. The dimension of the event requires a consistent collaboration of all sectors of public administration. The role of municipality as the organizer is an absolute prerequisite and unquestionably'. (Holger Belgardt Head of the Hanse Sail office)⁴³

2.5.4 Role of digital technologies at Hanse Sail

The organisers of the Hanse Sail determined that digital technologies were useful and could make the event more efficient and successful. There are numerous possibilities in this regard. Over the last few years, the website of the Hanse Sail Association was the most common digital medium used by tourists and employees of the Sail. It has been active since 2005 and is now used to promote the event, to offer additional services concerning all aspects of the festival, and to inform people about the Sail through image material, movies and articles. In 2007, the process was enhanced with the implementation of an online sales and booking process.

Male inhabitant Hanse Sail 2014

⁴³ Interview Holger Belgardt

possible new sponsors, as well as partners for the Hanse Sail. For these purposes, the Hanse Sail is also linked and integrated into further partner networks of associations. Altogether, the high volume and the activity of communication opportunities through digital technologies have grown extensively in recent times. It is a virtual world with great potential. However, this digital world has its limits. The cultural experience of sailing aboard and being part of the maritime festival Hanse Sail can only be experienced physically not virtually.

2.5.5 Summary

The Hanse Sail is a Baltic festival that is concerned with the preservation of maritime heritage in the Baltic Sea area. The Sail illustrates how heritage festivals can promote community and territorial cohesion aided by the use of digital technologies. It is one of the world's most important meetings of traditional ships and vessels, which take place annually. It is a cultural and political forum and an economic factor of urban development. Moreover, it helps to preserve maritime traditions and cultural heritage.

For more than 20-years, this urban cultural heritage festival has made a huge contribution to Rostock and the city's important role in the Baltic Sea area.

One can say that the Sail belongs to the most astonishing historical achievement of Rostock citizens. For the local inhabitants, the Hanse Sail contributes to being attached to the home region. It intensifies the feeling of identification with their hometown. Moreover, it recalls Hanseatic traditions, which were dominated by a peaceful and trade-led cooperation in North - Central - and Northeast Europe. This great cultural achievement arose under extraordinary historical conditions. It would now be inconceivable today to start and establish a maritime festival of such dimensions in Rostock due to the financial limitation the city has experienced and further experiences. The reason for the success in 1991 was the bureaucratic vacuum that occurred immediately after German reunification. The German reunification meant, for the city of Rostock, a dramatic decline of the ports transshipment figures. In its original role, the overseas port became redundant over the next few years. Nevertheless, Rostock knew how to help itself and was resourceful. The large-scale area located directly in the city centre was redesigned as an event location. Today, the Hanse Sail is an excellent example for the reactivation and cultivation of former industrial areas. The festival was and still is an appropriate tool to give an important piece of identity to the citizens of Rostock, based on historical roots. Rostock saw in this the opportunity to identify with the traditional field of vessels and to support the preservation of this maritime cultural heritage.

Nevertheless, the format and scale of the Sail would not have been possible without the implementation of digital technologies in various ways. The Hanse Sail went from being a locally recognized festival promoting traditional local values towards becoming an event of international cultural significance. A decisive factor for that change was the early implementation of digital technology into sales and marketing processes. Through the festival and the meeting of traditional vessels the Hanseatic City of Rostock makes an internationally recognized contribution to the preservation of this maritime cultural asset. This event is a great way of promoting community and territorial cohesion in sectors of economic, culture, tourism, science, cruise and heritage preservation in and around Rostock.



2.6 Summary And Conclusions: Festivals And Cohesion

Festivals can help to shape cultural identity, belonging and sense of place, as well as animate local employment and volunteerism (Gibson et al. 2010 and Lee et al 2011). These perspectives are embedded in notions of co-operation, unity and working together and have contributed to urban cultural heritage festivals being seen as promoting social cohesion (Holtorf 2011). Moreover, they can encourage a sense of identity and responsibility, which enable people to feel that they belong to one or different communities and to wider society (UNESCO 2011). In this sense, they are connected to cultures and to places, can help bind people to their communities, foster and reinforce group identity, encourage inter-generational communication and are central to cultural heritage transmission and connections. It is a phenomenon, which is being heightened by digital technologies, which are used to capture and disseminate events globally. In this way, festivals extend beyond the local, encouraging wider and more diverse participation, cultural connectedness and sense of belonging.

Analysis of the distinctive cultural heritage festivals - London's Notting Hill Carnival, the Dutch Flower Parade of Corso Zundert and Rostock's Hanse Sail - show that there are common threads in how the events contribute to community cohesion, but they are nuanced and highly place dependent. Commonalities include the vital role of volunteers who work all year round and the convergence of historical events which create a sense of impetus and a sense of empowerment which arises from the 'take over' of public spaces for a period of time ('reclaiming the streets'). Less clear is the extent to which cohesion extends beyond the participants who are already included in the festival genesis and organisation, or the degree to which the festivals lead to deeper and transformational mutual understanding between different groups in society. For example, the study indicates that the Dutch Flower Parade of Corso Zundert contributes to social cohesion by way of its organisation, operational structures and continuous behind-the-scenes activities. This occurs at a local level and is more reflective of bonding than bridging social capital. The discovery that crosscutting links at Corso Zundert were weak suggests attachment to place reflecting the limited cultural diversity and nature of relationships in the area. The study indicates that the event was rooted in local cultural traditions and linkages between different groups in the community were based on economic as opposed to social factors.

All three festivals are hugely dependent on volunteers. For the Hanse Sail's volunteers, being involved in the festival was an opportunity to make new contacts, relationships and experience teamwork with like-minded people. Gibson (2010) argues that the importance of co-operative, unpaid voluntary work at festivals was recognised as contributing to events becoming deeply embedded in local economies in a non-monetary way. In the words of one respondent, '*The sailing ships are the heart of the Hanse Sail, the soul, however, are the unpaid volunteers of this festival*' (Gentz 2010). With more than one million visitors from 30 different nations, Hanse Sail was also a major contributor to the local economy.⁴⁴ Another typical insight is that the events are hybrid affairs of culture and economics (Gibson et al. 2010). A crucial consideration here is that a balance is maintained and one aspect does not outweigh the other.

⁴⁴ Economic factors are also discussed in RICHES deliverable D5.2 – *Place-making, promotion and commodification of CH resources*



Overall, the study suggests that digital technologies were assisting in the instantaneous consumption of cultural heritage festivals globally. Live streaming, mobile apps, websites and other social media tools were viewed as important mechanisms for exporting events to online audiences around the world. Organisers of Notting Hill Carnival argued that the internet was as effective as word of mouth and was helping to breakdown negative stereotypes about the event by providing a realistic picture of activities being staged and a sense of the atmosphere. An important digital development was the availability of maps, schedule of events, online booking and other information on specially designed apps. Moreover, digital technologies were said to increase online participation of events by way of virtual consumers.



CHAPTER 3: LOCAL FOOD MOVEMENTS, COHESION AND EUROPEAN CULTURAL HERITAGE

3.1 Introduction

This part of the report discusses research into the relationship between food heritage and cohesion in Europe. Food is a powerful medium through which cultural heritage is practiced, developed and communicated. Heritage can be expressed in individual foods, which are imbued with particular cultural meanings, or in the composition of entire diets. The Mediterranean Diet, for example, has been inscribed in UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The European Union has also demonstrated commitment to preserving and promoting European know-how in food production, recognizing that the high quality of European food provides a competitive advantage in the global market place. In the early 1990s, under the remit of the Common Agricultural Policy, the EU established the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG)⁴⁵ quality schemes. These regulations aim to secure farm incomes by promoting and protecting the particular quality of European food products, but they also serve a twin purpose of maintaining distinctive food and farming cultures (discussed further below). More recently, in 2014, the European Parliament adopted a report on European Gastronomic Heritage: Cultural and Educational Aspects⁴⁶ that calls upon the Commission and EU countries to further include European gastronomic heritage in culture-related initiatives and policies.

The topic of food heritage and cohesion is very broad and therefore this research has focused on the ways in which citizens and communities actively participate in the production of food heritage. This has been achieved through case studies of place-based initiatives to preserve particular food cultures through growing, sharing, trading and cooking at a local or regional scale. On the basis of the research, it is suggested that community-led and/or citizen-led food initiatives show how culture can be a force for change and how citizens can co-create cultural heritage by:

- maintaining and developing food skills and knowledge
- remembering, and reviving food heritage
- creating social ties and new economic spaces

The following report offers case studies from Italy, the United Kingdom and Germany which illustrate how food heritage projects can contribute to community and territorial cohesion. The case studies are based on a mixture of secondary research and primary data from interviews held with food project leaders and a workshop with food activists in Italy.

⁴⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/schemes/index_en.htm

⁴⁶ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2014-0127+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN#title3>
PDF version (in English): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2014-0127+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>



3.2 Food Heritage, Community and Territorial Cohesion

Our relationship with food and its value as cultural heritage has been greatly modified in the transition to the “Urban Age”. In this new era, over half of the global population lives in cities, and food is more widely available than ever before in human history. For most people in Europe, daily life is no longer dominated by activities concerned with the acquisition and preparation of food. Like any other mass produced commodity, food is easily acquired and quickly consumed. Yet in many ways our collective relationship with food is troubled – eating disorders have increased amongst young people, and poor diet is the leading cause of ill-health in wealthy countries (e.g. obesity, heart disease, certain cancers). Globally speaking, some 795 million people do not have enough food to lead an active, healthy life, and childhood malnutrition causes 3.1 million deaths of children under 5 every year⁴⁷. Even wealthy Europe has seen a rise in the use of emergency food banks and malnutrition. In the longer term, Europe’s future food security is also threatened by the impacts of global climate change which are already affecting food production in some regions, and given that the supply of healthy soil, clean water and biodiversity has been seriously eroded by industrialized agricultural practices (Kwasek 2012). Indeed, European agricultural and research policies recognize that new thinking and innovation are urgently required if the farming and food system is to provide sustainable and healthy diets for all⁴⁸.

People have become increasingly ‘disconnected’ from food’s origins, from knowledge about where food comes from and how it is intimately connected with our health and with the very essence of our diverse cultural identities. As expressed by Pretty (2002:2)

“[A]s food has become a commodity, most of us no longer feel a link to the place of production and its associated culture. Yet agriculture and food systems, with their associated nature and landscapes, are a common heritage and thus, also, a common form of property. They are shaped by us all and so in some way are part of us all, too.”

The food system globally now depends on a limited number of plant and animal varieties, which in turn has reduced dietary diversity and threatens the survival of local cultures of food and farming. There has also been a rapid and dramatic transformation of the way in which most people procure their food on a daily basis. Although there are important differences between the EU member states⁴⁹, the general trend has been for food to be purchased from large retailers (with increasing concentration of the sector) and for eating outside the home to become more common, with a corresponding tendency for ready-made meals and convenience foods to replace meals cooked from raw ingredients. There is now a widespread availability of global, standardised brands of products and catering outlets (famously called the ‘McDonaldization’ of society (Ritzer 1993). The ingredients for this food system are provided largely by industrialised, productivist and subsidised farming which works in tandem with the application of commercial property rights to seeds and genetic materials.

⁴⁷ <https://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats>

⁴⁸ <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/news/designing-path-strategic-approach-eu-agricultural-research-and-innovation>

⁴⁹ Within this general picture, differences in the profile of the food retail sector and in food cultures exist between Eastern and Western European countries, the Mediterranean and Scandinavian countries. There are also significant differences in rates of overweight and obesity, although the problem is recognized as a Europe-wide one.

3.2.1 Communities (re)connecting with food

Despite the ‘disconnecting’ effects of the industrialisation and globalisation of food culture, the relationship between food heritage and cultural identity has not been completely eroded and in fact, communities and citizens are leading the way in attempts to ‘reconnect’ people with food culture. By preparing and eating particular foods, people can express their identity and sense of belonging. Particular foods come to symbolize particular places and are often used to evoke memories of home for those who have migrated (see also RICHES D4.1 – *European identity, belonging and the role of digital CH*). They can also be used as an economic resource by migrants that are often highly entrepreneurial, and adapt their cultural heritage to new and often challenging situations. In many cases, foods have been ‘transplanted’ through the migration of people, compelled to uproot themselves from their homes for economic or political reasons, and often finding inventive ways to retain their food cultures in a new setting. Just one of the many interesting examples can be found in Birmingham in England, where a small corner in the south-east of the city has become known as the ‘Balti Triangle’. In this particular area there are over 50 restaurants and takeaways, with about a dozen specializing in serving the ‘Balti’, a dish which has become associated with this part of the city since the mid 1970s. The Birmingham Balti is currently being considered for the award of a ‘Traditional Speciality Guaranteed’ (TSG) status, which is one of the certificates provided by Europe’s protected food names regulation. The application⁵⁰ provides an account of how the Balti was brought to Birmingham by migrants from the Potohar area of Kashmir in Pakistan (with over 110,000 residents, or 11% of the city’s population, it is one of the largest overseas Pakistani communities in the world). Many were displaced by the Mangla Dam project in the early 1960s and allowed to settle in the UK under an agreement between the Pakistan and British governments. According to the application for TSG, the migrants brought with them their traditional method of cooking, which is to slow cook vegetables and meat on the bone (chicken, lamb and beef) in an earthenware or cast iron receptacle in which the meal would be served. The meal would be eaten with fingers, using naan bread to scoop up the food and mop up all the juices.

The new arrivals opened up restaurants but found that the indigenous population wanted a faster service and healthier foods. The chefs began to innovate: they started using meat off the bone, which would cook quicker. They also began to use vegetable oil instead of the more traditional Ghee, which made the dish healthier and gave a fresher taste. Finally, they commissioned a local steel manufacturer to make thin pressed steel bowls with two handles, similar to a wok, which would enable them to cook at a higher temperature. They called it a ‘balti’. There is an on-going debate about the origins of the name, but according to the TSG application, “the term was used on the basis that indigenous ‘Brummies’⁵¹ found it easier to pronounce than the generic term ‘Karahi’ and also gave a unique name to this new fusion dish”.

⁵⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protected-food-name-birmingham-balti-tsg>

⁵¹ colloquial term for residents of Birmingham

“The process of preparing the meal is to use onions or tomatoes as a base with freshly cooked chicken breast (balti murgh), or part cooked lamb (balti gosht) in meat baltis, fish or vegetables for vegetable baltis. During the fast cooking process over a high flame, ginger and garlic purée are added with a selection of spices including fenugreek, turmeric, cumin, garam masala mix and a small amount of the restaurant’s own freshly prepared sauce. On the point of serving fresh coriander is usually sprinkled on top” [extract from application for TSG status, prepared by the Birmingham Balti Association, 2015].

The example of the Birmingham Balti provides a fascinating and documented case of how a ‘fusion’ food culture has developed through the migration of people and ingredients, and over a period of some four decades has become a valuable resource around which a distinctive place identity has been consciously developed. The Balti Triangle draws visitors from the city and beyond, who can sample the foods, watch a cookery demonstration and also learn about the history of the original migrants and other communities living in the area⁵². The example shows that food culture is ‘alive’ and food connection to places is an evolving process that enriches cultural exchanges between different communities.

Balti Breaks

Whether you like curry or culture, a visit to Birmingham's famous Balti Triangle is not to be missed. Recently listed in the **Rough Guide's 25 Things to do in Britain before you die!**. Balti breaks can be organised for groups of ten people or more and with the services of professional guides you can find out the mysteries behind balti, including a cookery demo and then enjoy a shopping experience with a difference rounded off by a traditional balti with a fun quiz, prizes and a cookery pack to take home.

If there is a large group of you locally and you need transport, why not hire a 'Balti Bus'. Contact is Sue who runs the legendary 'Brum Buzz' and for more details you should visit www.birmingham-tours.co.uk.



<http://www.balti-birmingham.co.uk/visit/balti-breaks>

Citizens and communities are playing a dynamic role in countering the ‘disconnecting’ effects of the globalisation and industrialisation of food culture. Driven by an interest in reconnecting with food, nature and identity, there has been a rise in community-led initiatives to restore food to its central place in peoples’ daily lives. There are no European-wide data on the scale of this activity although some idea can be gained by looking at the revival of home food production. Clues are provided in Church *et al's* (2015) analysis of 2003 and 2007 data from the European Quality of Life Survey (15 EU countries – Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Portugal, Greece, Italy, Finland, UK, France, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, Netherlands, Ireland).

⁵² <http://www.balti-birmingham.co.uk/home>



It showed that in 2003, 9.61% of respondents from EU15 reported growing their own food; by 2007 this rose to 15.5%. Another example is the rise of domestic livestock production. For instance, although there are no official figures, media reports have estimated that up to 750,000 households in the UK now keep domestic chickens (the practice having largely disappeared in the post-war years). Despite the lack of quantitative data, there is no doubt that examples of community-led food projects are found in all countries, and also that thousands of European citizens are involved in international networks that have been established in this arena. One well-known example is Slow Food International, founded by Carlo Petrini in Italy in 1986. It began with a campaign against the opening of a new McDonald's burger store in Rome, and at its heart is concerned with protecting local foods, traditional gastronomy and food production. It has around 100,000 members and branches in 150 countries. One of the key activities of Slow Food is the creation of the Ark of Taste, which is the

online catalogue of traditional foods that risk extinction in the modern world. The current catalogue lists over 1000 products, including, fruits, vegetables, dairy products, animal breeds, breads and sweets from around the world. The Ark was created to point out the existence of these products, draw attention to the risk of their disappearance within a few generations.⁵³

Although it has been criticized as elitist, the movement has responded to this by trying to connect more effectively with a more diverse range of people and communities. The 'Terra Madre Youth – We feed the Planet' event⁵⁴, was held as part of the EXPO 2015 in Milano.⁵⁵ This event brought young farmers, indigenous people and students from all over the world to Milano. During this time, young women and men presented their personal experiences, hopes and expectations in the area of food culture and the Slow Food movement. The network of Terra Madre food communities brings together active members of the food production chain to support sustainable agriculture, fishing and food production. As well as other Slow Food projects, the Terra Madre program includes several national and international action days and a well-structured network.⁵⁶

3.2.2 Food and Community Cohesion

In relation to community cohesion, the focus here is on the role of local food initiatives, especially those that are led by communities themselves. There is a long history of growing and sharing food in communities across the EU. Prior to industrialisation, the majority of people worked in agriculture and related sectors, and depended on the food economy in some way for survival. With the growth of factory working in urban centres, food habits changed, but it was still not uncommon to find gardens and livestock inside the city. Indeed, a number of 'model villages' were constructed by industrialists to provide workers with good quality housing, which included spaces for food growing (examples include Port Sunlight in England, with community allotments, and Crespi d'Adda in Italy where each house had a vegetable garden).

⁵³ <http://www.slowfood.com/international/152/save-a-product>, 18 March 2015

⁵⁴ See: <http://www.wefeedtheplanet.com/en/>

⁵⁵ https://www.slowfood.de/termine/termine_international/expo_2015/ 15.April 2015

⁵⁶ https://www.slowfood.de/wirueberuns/slow_food_deutschland/die_geschichte/ 16 April 2015

People remembered and reproduced their cultures of food production and preparation as they migrated to towns; even today, whilst it is true that a widespread ‘disconnection’ has happened, another perspective is to recall that many urban residents are only a generation removed from the countryside and around half of the EU population still lives in intermediate or predominantly rural areas.

In general terms, food is an important marker of belonging: eating the same foods as neighbours and friends can help to build trust and shared experiences and routines. Also, sharing foods from different cultures can break down barriers between groups. Growing food together, which has been a component of community identity for millennia, can help to create and strengthen social relationships. Urban farming has become a new element in cities worldwide, often in combination with innovative re-use of urban spaces and buildings. An increasing trend is the installation of vegetable gardens as rooftops of urban buildings. Toronto, for example, passed a City’s Green Roof Bylaw⁵⁷ in 2009 to require and govern the construction of green roofs on new development. Similarly, the Municipality of Barcelona has created an action plan called “Living Roofs^{58, 59}” to promote living and green roofs in the city. The plan includes public funding to support communities in the rehabilitation of roofs for community use and their conversion into green roofs, gardens and urban gardens. This new trend in sustainable urban growing has also led to the creation of new SMEs, such as Growinpallet⁶⁰, a social enterprise in Barcelona that offers its services for the creation, management and consultancy of urban organic gardens. Being a recent trend, the real impact and success of these new urban agriculture initiatives will need to be assessed in some years.



Many cities have begun to develop strategies to nurture the connections between food, place and cultural heritage. An example is the Consiglio del Cibo di Pisa (Food Council). The Pisa Food Council is a pioneer experience in Italy, an opportunity to organise in a democratic way the links between the needs of citizens looking for healthy and sustainable food in the urban space, the public interests and the private prerogatives. In this framework, the Province of Pisa, the Departments of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary from the University of Pisa, and the Laboratory of Rural Studies Sismondi have developed the Piano del Cibo⁶¹ (Food Plan), which was presented in December 2014⁶². The Carta del Cibo⁶³ defines the main objectives, instruments and strategies of the Food Plan.

⁵⁷ <http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=3a7a036318061410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>

⁵⁸ Urban vegetable gardens as rooftops developed by citizens: <http://www.ecma.cat/tv3/alacarta/programa/Horts-urbans-al-terrat/video/4464461/>

<http://www.pressreader.com/spain/que-fem/20150213/281951721249166/TextView>

<http://alambins.cat/ca/barcelona-rooftops-terrats-consum-col-laboratiu/>

⁵⁹ Press release: http://premsa.bcn.cat/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/140923_DOSSIER_TerratsVerds.pdf

<http://www.lavanguardia.com/natural/20140327/54404158205/barcelona-promovera-cubiertas-vegetales-azoteas.html>

The Mayor of Barcelona presents the initiative: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GUTHeLx8s>

⁶⁰ <http://www.growinpallet.com/>

⁶¹ <http://www.provincia.pisa.it/interno.php?id=49111&lang=it>

⁶² <http://www.provincia.pisa.it/interno.php?id=53371&lang=it>

⁶³ http://api.ning.com/files/ZfkZcSjsSG6pq72mNtAW788-ftvUACt-uSIa-OUBmB-zcHR86DL5Z7ZusOdbYof42mEbuHUnj38QenMCxuYxRqXAGxUUMQeJ/cartadelcibo_strategiadelcibo_15ottobre20111.pdf



Urban vegetable gardens have been created in Pisa⁶⁴ for social reasons, considering their positive impact on favouring relationships between people. In the economic crisis situation, the urban vegetable gardens have been revealed as a key asset for communities. Ruled by the municipality, urban vegetable gardens were created 10-15 years ago at the periphery of the city. Targeting older



people, the gardens gave them occasions to come out and interact with other people. With the economic crisis the situation changed, and urban agriculture can be used as a way to provide food and to create positive interactions. In this new scenario, the first people to lose their jobs were immigrants, who asked for access to municipal apartments where they could live and access these vegetable gardens. The interaction spaces created by the urban vegetable gardens become an element to create positive relationships, transforming conflictual situations into positive exchanges and opportunities. Their social role become much more important than the initial scope for which they were created, representing a space for:

Figure 1: Urban vegetable garden (CEP-Pisa, Italy)

- Communal exchange & economic sustainability: Urban vegetable gardens allow domestic food production, and can be considered as a form of self-organised job. People grow vegetables for their family and for the community, not only for themselves.
- Cultural exchange & social inclusion: Around the urban vegetable gardens arise social events, parties and occasions to cook together, a way of cultural exchange. At the same time, for people that do not speak a language, this framework has opened new ways to communicate by showing how to cook, facilitating the social inclusion and cultural exchange.

There are many examples of local, community-led food initiatives, including community gardens, and Community Supported Agriculture. The latter is a form of partnership between citizens and a farmer or grower. There are various stories about how the idea originated. Some say that it came from Japan in the 1970s, when a group of mothers approached their neighbouring farms to source organically grown, fresh food directly for their children. Others say that the idea originated from the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner⁶⁵, who was influential in the American biodynamic agriculture movement, where CSAs started in the 1980s. Whatever the origins, the concept is now widespread, and there is an international network⁶⁶ to promote these local, 'solidarity partnerships' between farmers and citizens, known as *Community Supported Agriculture* in the UK/USA, or *Solidarische Landwirtschaft* in Germany and *Gruppi di Acquisto Solidali* in Italy (GASAP⁶⁷ in Belgium or AMAP⁶⁸ in France). Although there are

⁶⁴ The project "Urban vegetable gardens (Orti Urbani)": <http://www.comune.pisa.it/en/ufficio-scheda/8599/II-Progetto-Orti-Urbani.html>

Users of the social urban vegetable gardens and representatives of the institutions involved present the experience: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyCV-WLOdnA>

⁶⁵ <http://newfarm.rodaleinstitute.org/features/0104/csa-history/part1.shtml>

⁶⁶ <http://urgenci.net/the-network/>

⁶⁷ <http://www.gasap.be/>

⁶⁸ <http://www.reseau-amap.org/>

variations in form, the basic principle is that consumers make partnerships with farmers and growers in their locality, agreeing to buy a share of the harvest and to accept the risk as well as the rewards of farming. They commit to eat seasonally, to eat what is grown (not choose from a supermarket) and usually to share some of their labour. Most initiatives invest time and effort into creating communities around the growing of food through sharing recipes and skills and organising social events (music and arts). They are run on democratic principles and put environmental and ethical priorities first.

As shown earlier in this report, community cohesion requires equality and inclusion, social connectedness, common social values, social order and place attachment (Turok and Bailey 2004). Many community food projects address some if not all of these elements. For example, notions of place attachment are important in most projects. They usually operate at the human scale of the neighbourhood or locality; many also operate along principles of social justice and inclusion.



Figure 1: *Mondeggi bene comune - fattoria senza padroni*

An example is the case of Podere Mondeggi⁶⁹ in Florence (Italy), a place that has become a "common good", land of encounter, relationship and sharing. Described as a 'farm without masters', a group of people has worked together to

reclaim a neglected farm and its buildings, working according to the principles of participatory democracy to defend the "common good" from abandonment and privatization. In Italy, there is a new generation of people interested in becoming farmers, linked to these social movements and ideas around good, local and traditional food. In many cases, these local movements link collective working with collective cultural events: live music, theatre, arts and of course, sharing and eating food.

3.2.3 Food and Territorial Cohesion

An important component of territorial cohesion is a common or shared sense of place identity. This helps to motivate territorial actors and provides cultural and environmental resources that development strategies can be built upon. Food can contribute to this territorial identity and resource base in many ways. For example, agricultural practices have created a great variety of distinctive regional landscapes, from the terraced vineyards of Tuscany to the stonewalled fields of the Yorkshire Dales, and these can form the basis for rural tourism. The raw materials from agriculture are also incorporated into regional dishes, which can, if effectively managed, contribute to sustainable and balanced development, the key goal of territorial cohesion policies. Innovative projects linked to experiential and enogastronomic (food and wine) tourism can provide important social and economic benefits to the regions

⁶⁹ <http://www.greenreport.it/news/urbanistica-e-territorio/battaglia-dei-prof-per-mondeggi-fattoria-bene-comune/>
http://www.ilcambiamento.it/beni_comuni/mondeggi_fattoria_senza_padroni.html
http://www.gazzettinodelchianti.it/articoli/primopiano/6750/notizie-su-bagno-a-ripoli/grazie-comitato-mondeggi.php#.VZKdi_ntmko
<http://www.fuoribinario.org/blog/2015/06/15/mondeggi-bene-comune-fattoria-senza-padroni/>

involved, its food culture and heritage. Tuscany, for example, has launched Vetrina Toscana⁷⁰, a project to promote and enhance the food traditions of Tuscany, valuing local food production and crafts. The project achieves its objectives in close cooperation with the local SMEs working on food production, crafts and touristic services, ensuring also the links of this network with the cultural and artistic offer of the territory. Similar initiatives can be found in other European regions, such as the Food and Wine⁷¹ tourism offer by the Slovenian Tourist Board, the Wine and Gastronomic Tourism Club⁷² developed by the Catalan Tourism Board, or the Wine Tourism Club Sud de France⁷³. The European Commission is aware of this tourism and economic potential. An example of this interest is the Food Tourism Week held at EXPO Milan 2015⁷⁴.

European rural development policies have also supported food-based tourism, through the LEADER programme, which has, over several decades, developed the concept of ‘community-led local development (CLLD).’ Europe’s Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 has placed renewed emphasis on CLLD⁷⁵ which is to be delivered through the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. Community-Led Local Development is seen as a way of allowing communities to take ownership of objectives in the Europe 2020 strategy. In line with the Common Strategic Framework, “Member states shall promote the development of local and sub-regional approaches, in particular via community-led local development”. CLLD can be a particularly powerful tool “particularly in times of crisis, showing that local communities can take concrete steps towards forms of economic development, which are smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive, in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy” (EC 2014: 7). On the basis that local actors have better knowledge of local challenges, they can mobilise local resources, have a greater sense of ownership and commitment. CLLD is directly linked to territorial cohesion because the focus is on specific **territories**. The idea is that projects are led by **local action groups** (consisting of public and private interests) and design local development strategies, with the aim of promoting community ownership, building community capacity, assisting multi-level governance, and discovering untapped potential from within communities and territories. A great number of local action groups have worked on territorial development strategies using food culture as a resource⁷⁶.

Another interesting example is the case of Món Sant Benet (Spain)⁷⁷, a cultural heritage centre established in 2007 which brings together cultural, tourism, leisure and scientific services. The site includes the medieval monastery of Sant Benet del Bages, entirely recovered and refurbished, open for visitors and playing host to a busy cultural programme; the headquarters of the Alícia Foundation, which works on food research, and the Món Hotel, targeting holidays and business meetings⁷⁸.

⁷⁰ <http://www.vetrina.toscana.it/>

⁷¹ http://www.slovenia.info/en/en/en/en/food-and-wine.htm?kulinarika_in_vino=0&lng=2

⁷² <http://www.act.cat/wine-and-gastronomic-tourism-club/?lang=en>

⁷³ <http://en.destinationsuddefrance.com/Club-Oenotourisme>

⁷⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=8204

⁷⁵ EC (2014) Guidance on Community-Led Local Development in European Structural and Investment Funds

⁷⁶ http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd-static/themes/local-food-and-short-supply-chains/en/local-food-and-short-supply-chains_en.html

⁷⁷ <http://monstbenet.com/en>

⁷⁸ <http://monstbenet.com/en/whole-world-within-your-reach>

Of particular relevance is the work of the Alícia Foundation⁷⁹ which is devoted to technological innovation in cuisine, to the improvement of eating habits and to the evaluation of the food and gastronomic heritage. Alícia is a private, non-profit foundation created in 2003, with the support and collaboration of the best chefs and leading scientists. It enjoys the strategic leadership of the chef Ferran Adrià, the executive assessment of the cardiologist Valentí Fuster in health matters, and the valuable contribution and support from leading chefs and the collaboration of leading scientists⁸⁰.



Figure x: Mon Sant Benet

As expressed by Patrick Torrent, Deputy director of Turisme de Catalunya, “Món Sant Benet is a model intending to get away from fast to slow tourism”⁸¹. Slow Tourism, which has grown out of the Slow Food movement, is a fast growing niche within the new food tourism sector. According to Lane *et al* (2013:20) Slow tourism “stresses the importance of the travel experience, the enjoyment and understanding of destinations, cultures, landscapes, slow food and drink, and it has a very strong link to climate change...” The growth of food tourism and Slow Tourism is inter-linked with the growing consumer interest in local and quality food products.

Europe’s regulations to protect food products with distinctive geographical origins (Protected Designation of Origin and Protected Geographical Indication) also create potential for food based economies to contribute to territorial cohesion. To qualify for either of these awards, the food producers have to be able to demonstrate that their quality is either ‘essentially due’, or ‘attributable to’, the place of their production. In order to do this, a narrative has to be constructed about the historical origins of the food and the ways in which its identity is uniquely tied to a particular place. In other words, the story of how the food came to be ‘placed’ has to be told and verified, although this process is not always straightforward and can be contested by competing interests. Rippon (2014), for example, illustrates how the English cheese known as Stilton gained its PDO status through a long process which caused local controversy and disagreements because the actual town of ‘Stilton’ which gave the cheese its name is excluded from the boundary within which the cheese can be produced. This is apparently because the 18th and 19th Century inhabitants of the village were sellers of the cheese but did not consistently produce it. This illustrates that foods can be consciously enrolled into territorial identities but also that the procedure can be contested and perhaps even exclusionary.

⁷⁹ <http://www.alicia.cat/en/>

⁸⁰ <http://monstbenet.com/en/alicia-foundation>

⁸¹ <http://www.raco.cat/index.php/Paradigmes/article/viewFile/226121/307694>



<http://www.stiltoncheese.co.uk/>

The potential for regional development is not restricted to rural regions, as has already been shown in the case of the Balti Triangle which is an urban setting. Recent years have also seen the rise of urban food policies which seek to connect cities with their regional farms and food cultures within the framework of 'territorial' food systems approaches. There is also the rise of urban agriculture.

Recently, the Milan Urban Food Planning Pact was signed by over 50 cities from Europe, which included a whole range of actions designed to promote sustainable food systems⁸², including a commitment to urban and peri-urban food sourcing and citizen-led and solidarity economy models where appropriate. This is captured in the concept of 'city region food systems'⁸³. A similar concept has been explored in the EU Foodmetres project, which proposed the idea of 'Metropolitan Agricultural Systems'. Whilst there may be different ways to re-connect and re-imagine urban food systems, a common denominator in these emerging concepts is the desire to better connect rural and urban places, through the development of 're-localised' food chains, and recognition of promotion of distinctive regional food cultures.

3.3 Case Study: Renewing and Exchanging Food Heritage in Multi-Ethnic Communities in England

3.3.1 Community Food Production in the UK

Although there is a long history of community growing in the UK, the full extent of community food production is not known and there has been relatively little systematic research into its scale or impact on community cohesion. As noted by Milbourne (2012) there are only a handful of studies on community gardening and allotments in the UK, and still fewer examples of research that situate community food production in a social, environmental or food justice framework.

⁸² <http://www.foodpolicymilano.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Milan-Urban-Food-Policy-Pact-EN.pdf>

⁸³ <http://cityregionfoodsystems.org/resources/>

Amongst the few studies available, there is a broad consensus that community growing is capable of delivering public health and well-being, educational, and social benefits such as increased social capital and improved inter-ethnic and inter-generational relationships (Firth et al 2011; Caraher and Dowler, 2007; Milbourne 2012) but there have been few detailed analyses of the long term capacity of such projects to build community cohesion, particularly from a cultural heritage perspective.

Whilst studies are usually positive about the impact of community food production, the ability of such projects to contribute to broader political goals of restructuring food systems into more socially just and environmentally sustainable forms has been questioned. Bell and Cerulli (2012: 35), for instance, in their study of a community garden in London conclude that “community gardens make significant contributions to their local communities and neighbourhoods, but their impact on urban food systems remain limited”. Pudup (2008) argues that North American community gardens are mechanisms which enable the dominant neoliberal system to persist, by allowing it to accommodate crises which hit down hard at the local scale. Through community gardening, vulnerable people in society are cared for and helped to survive by voluntary and community sector organisations in the absence of state responsibility or safety nets. Reviewing a range of critical studies primarily from the USA, McClintock (2014:155) shows that initiatives have proliferated as the result of “increased dependence on non-profit, voluntary, faith-based, or community-based alternatives” as the welfare state has been eroded. In the UK context however, Milbourne (2012: 955) found “little evidence to suggest that the UK projects [community gardens] have been initiated in response to the withdrawal of the (local) state from key areas of welfare provision” and actually, “the absence of the local state provided opportunities as well as constraints allowing them to wrestle back control of local space and to produce more meaningful and democratic community spaces.”

The most common form of community growing in the UK is the ‘allotment’, which dates back to the 19th Century when land was provided to the poor to grow food (Kell *et al* 2015). The 1908 Small Holdings and Allotments Act placed a duty on local authorities to provide allotments according to demand. The 1922 Allotments Act strengthened the rights of allotment holders and the 1925 Allotments Act established statutory allotments, which local authorities could not sell off. An allotment is defined as an area of 40 ‘poles’, which is an ancient measure, equivalent to about a quarter of an acre, which was considered sufficient to feed a family of four. It is for the growing of fruit and vegetables to be consumed solely by the occupier and their family. It is estimated that there are 330,000 allotments in the UK (Miller 2015). Allotments are usually managed by a committee of community members and operate according to a written constitution, which usually includes rules about the kinds of developments which are allowed on plots (e.g. no livestock allowed, rules about the size of sheds that can be erected) and the use of water (e.g. whether hosepipes are allowed). Sales of produce beyond the immediate membership of the allotment are usually forbidden. Unfortunately, many allotments have been under pressure as local authorities look for new land to build houses on (Miller 2015). Allotments have increased in popularity over recent decades, with many urban allotments having waiting lists.



Typical UK allotment scene. Photo: A Rosenfeld.

Allotments have not always been regarded as sites in which community cohesion can be nurtured. Critics have observed that they have been a space traditionally dominated by older, white, working class men, who are not always known for being welcoming to women, children or non-white ethnic groups and who have often had quite an individualistic and even competitive approach to growing. However, the face of allotments is changing, as families have become increasingly interested in growing vegetables and are introducing their children to the practice. Migrant groups have also gained access to allotments and so they are generally becoming more diversely populated spaces. There has also been an increased in 'community allotments', which move away from an individualist approach and encourage more collective behaviours e.g. collective initiatives to source funding for equipment and infrastructure such as shared poly tunnels and tools. Allotments are not the only community growing spaces in the UK; there are also community gardens and community farms where vegetable plots are collectively tended, as opposed to the allotment model where each plot is usually the responsibility of an individual or family group. The Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens (FCFCG) acts as an umbrella organisation for community gardens and has had rapid membership growth over recent years. It supports 1,000 community gardens, 200 city and school farms, and the development of 100 city farms and community gardens.

3.3.2 The example of "Sowing New Seeds" and "Growing from your Roots"

"In a world where the supermarket triumphs, where corn syrup is king and fast, highly processed food is the norm, is it not heartening to hear, that on tiny patches of land across our cities a different picture is being painted?"

"These crops may not be readily identifiable by many, they may seem strange or rare, but they often speak of home to the grower, of other cultures and other heritages. When these seeds are saved, replanted and passed on, they start to tell a new story, one that reflects the great multiculturalism of Britain. These seeds are a living story, being retold and with this adapting and evolving." (Alys Fowler, TV Gardener, cited in Kell *et al* 2015)

As the UK's ethnic diversity has changed⁸⁴, so have the growing practices found in community growing spaces. Despite the lack of research noted earlier, advocates of community growing and food projects argue that they do provide an opportunity to address community cohesion. The Sowing New Seeds (SNS) project has focused on the potential for community growing to encourage inter-cultural exchange and mutual understanding and has been examined in further detail for the purpose of the RICHES research.

SNS began in 2010. It was organised by Garden Organic (GO), a charity that promotes organic gardening and specialises in developing volunteer based projects to encourage more people to grow and eat organic food. Funded by a range of charitable sources, the aim of SNS was to promote 'non-traditional' or 'exotic' crop growing, encourage the collection, safeguarding and distribution of seeds, and ensure that skills and knowledge passed on to younger generations. As explained by Kell *et al* (2015) 'non-traditional' or exotic crops are plants grown in relatively small quantities that are not traditionally grown in a country or region. In fact, they note that all food crops grown commercially in the UK actually originate from other countries, but are considered 'traditional' just because they have been grown here for a long time. The example that is often mentioned is the potato, now grown in most parts of Europe, it was once considered exotic when it was introduced from South America in late 16th Century. Recently there has been an increase in exotic crops grown on small scale in gardens and allotments in the UK, with some entering into commercial production.

The SNS project employed two part-time, highly experienced growers with skills in communication and training, who were tasked with identifying interested members of the community to act as volunteer 'seed stewards'. The seed stewards' role was to act as links between GO and the communities they were connected to (they were typically allotment committee members, community group leaders, teachers etc). The seed stewards received training in the skills of seed saving and worked with their communities to promote the practice. The GO personnel organised workshops for community members to learn about growing exotic crops, seed saving and crucially, cooking with the produce. The first evaluation of the Sowing New Seeds project (Bos *et al* 2013) concluded that the project had been highly effective in supporting people to grow more exotic crops, but it also identified that the project had helped to promote neighbourliness and friendships amongst those involved. It did not go so far as to suggest that the project promoted 'social cohesion'.

A second evaluation focused more specifically on the element of 'cultural cohesion' (Owen and Kneafsey 2014), and found evidence that participating in Sowing New Seeds had enabled people to meet someone new through the workshops on how to grow and cook exotic vegetables. Interestingly, a common theme was that undertaking the shared activity of growing and cooking enabled people who would not normally speak to each other to start to communicate, as shown by the following quotes from a focus group held in the Northern town of Bradford:

⁸⁴ In 1991 census, approximately 3 million people described themselves as belonging to non-white ethnic groups (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Black Caribbean and Black African). In 2001 this rose to 4.6 million and in 2011 it was 6 million. Certain urban areas have much higher concentrations. In the UK's second largest city of Birmingham, 42% of residents self-classified as from ethnic group other than 'white'.



“...it is not just about food; it is about bringing people from different backgrounds together and getting them to talk to each other, just something as simple as that. It is the idea of people that would not normally talk to each other actually engaging with each other....” (Male participant, Bradford, cited in Owen and Kneafsey 2014: 19)

“I think if we sat down and said ‘everybody from different parts of the community come together, sit together and make friends’ it wouldn’t work, but we’ve got something else to be doing and something to focus on...when people invite me to a multi-faith group or something, I don’t go as it’s not my thing, but I love talking to people about the things they are growing, what they are eating and things like that” (Female, participant, Bradford, cited in Owen and Kneafsey 2014: 19).

This respondent from London felt that cooking and gardening can even help to overcome language barriers:

“You can do cooking without words. The cooking and gardening you can make friends without even using words, you know. Then after you’ve made friends you can start to sort of have words” (London participant, female, cited in Owen and Kneafsey 2014: 20).

A later evaluation by Kell *et al* (2015) focused more on the actual crops that were grown and concluded that skills in seed saving, sowing and harvesting had increased in the community. In a survey of 107 plot holders from 31 different allotment sites they found that 26% of all food crops recorded were exotic and were grown by nearly half of all respondents, who represented 13 different ethnic groups. Many had been growing these crops for more than 10 years, and the majority saved their own seed and swapped with each other. To help ensure that the diversity in seed banks is not lost through discontinuation, the Sowing New Seeds project collected seeds, tubers and cuttings to store in the Heritage Seed Library at Garden Organic. The report emphasizes that growers need to be encouraged to continue to cultivate these crops and save the seeds, as well as pass them to younger generations.

Interestingly, the report also suggested that crops begin to show local adaptations, thus increasing the gene diversity, which is ultimately a vital component of long-term food security. Looking ahead, the report suggests that crops currently grown on a small scale could become commercial and this would expand the diversity of the national food crop base which could be very important due to climate change threat (which genetically uniform crops are very vulnerable to). Therefore, whilst these crops are already a key source of nutritional diversity for their growers, they could assume an even greater role in future. The evaluation stressed that little of the experience and knowledge about growing these crops is currently documented and concluded that allotments are important ‘store houses’ of exotic crop diversity, so they need to be protected from development. The report also stated that “they are more than just genes; these crops teach of people’s heritage”.



Magenta spreen or 'fat hen' grown by Sikh community members. Photo: A Rosenfeld.



Bangladeshi Kodu. Photo: A Rosenfeld



Pakistani Keera cucumber. Photo: A Rosenfeld.

The community growing officers who worked on SNS spoke to a lot of people and realized they had many interesting stories, not only about growing, but also about their experiences of migrating to a new country.

“It’s been absolutely fascinating – I just didn’t realize how interesting it would be and how important it is to preserve the culture” (Project officer, interview February 2016)

A lot of the growers are elderly people and so it is important to capture stories and knowledge before they are lost. GO managed to secure £71,900 GBP from the National Heritage Lottery Fund to document the stories behind the exotic crops grown by multicultural communities in Birmingham and the West Midlands. The new ‘Growing From Your Roots’ project is now developing audio ‘podcasts’ and ‘growing cards’ which combine the personal stories of migrants along with knowledge about their growing practices. The experience has shown that whilst people talk about their growing, they also share stories about what life has been like, including how they may have experienced racism and what its affect has been. The project deliberately decided to steer away from video and encourage people to ‘listen’ to stories; the project workers also found that people tend to relax more, whereas video can sometimes change peoples’ behaviour.

‘Growing From Your Roots’ is working on three sites in Birmingham (one is a garden at a refugees’ house, the others are community growing sites) which are used by many nationalities, including many recently arrived refugees. The range of countries of origin includes Afghanistan, Chile, Iraq, Kenya, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Sicily, Somalia, Syria, and Zimbabwe. Some participants have more experience of growing than others – some are from urban environments whereas others are from rural areas and tend to have more food growing knowledge. For those who were used to growing food at home, it can be a really important way for them to retain skills and memories of home, as discussed by the project leader:



“Often they’ve just left everything behind...a lot of them have come from growing backgrounds anyway and being able to relate back to those, it provides them with a bit of a memory from home...I’ve also found that people who are quite shy and reserved, when you give them an opportunity to start talking about their country, it really transforms them. You might think that recording someone would be an intimidating experience, but actually a lot of them have said ‘thank you so much’ ‘I really enjoyed being able to talk about my experience’.”

Some of the participants are quite lonely and with no job, they are not sure what they will be doing the next day – so having something to look forward to such as working on the garden can be extremely important for their mental wellbeing. Some people are referred to go to the sites as a place of sanctuary, whereas others just turn up for a cup of tea and don’t even do much gardening. About twenty people take part each week at each site and they can be a varied mix of the settled community (which is itself ethnically diverse) and newer migrants or refugees. On one memorable occasion, the project organised for a group of growers to visit a Zimbabwean white maize farmer in Hackney (one of the London boroughs):

“A lot of Zimbabwean people said it was the first time they’d tasted white maize since being in the UK and it was actually quite an emotional experience to be sitting in a field full of white maize and cooking on the fire. At the end of it they all sang a song to thank the farmer – it was quite emotional really”.

The visit was an important moment for many of the migrants who experience reduced mobility on arrival in the UK, and often find themselves living in a highly urbanised environment with restricted access to wide open spaces and very little possibility to experience rural areas. In terms of how this project can contribute to community cohesion, the project leader noted that “there’s quite a lot of fusion between cultures”. An example –

“We had a Zimbabwean woman demonstrating that you can eat pumpkin leaves and all the Bangladeshi women thought this was an amazing idea and a few days later they were just all queuing up to get their pumpkin leaves! There definitely seems to be a cross-pollination of cultures.”

The extent of diffusion and cross-pollination also depends on the culture in question. Based on many years of working with different ethnic groups, the project officer observed that the Indian and Pakistani people tend to “hang on” to their culture and pass it down, whereas with the Jamaicans it tends to get a bit more “diluted”. Looking ahead, it is hoped that the project can do more work on health benefits for refugees, including non-food uses of crops (e.g. medicinal uses such as turmeric as an antiseptic).



3.4 Case Study: Slow, Regional and Fair Trade Markets in Germany

The investigations in Germany and specifically for the Rostock region have identified three major approaches / initiatives when it comes to projects, which are based on cultural heritage surrounding food (which includes the growing, sharing, trading, cooking and eating of food). All are based on the understanding that food is one important element of national, regional or local identities – and all interlink food traditions of their own country with sustainable approaches and a profound understanding that food consumption is closely interlinked with sustainability, responsible handling of resources and a critical consumer behaviour.

In the following investigation, regional structures related to Slow food, Regional food and Fairtrade food are analysed regarding their intentions, work on cultural heritage, organisation and communication structures. It is recognized that community and territorial cohesion are overlapping concepts, but with these case studies the focus is more on the territorial aspect, and in particular, the question of how rural and urban places can be connected by networks of multiple dimensions.

The findings and interviews show that wide-ranging, holistic work on the topic food is being implemented in Germany. The approach includes a strong political dimension that is reflected in attempts to influence food and agricultural policy. The members of the initiatives consider themselves as “conscious gourmets” and/or “empowered consumers” who see their main task as protecting and maintaining a culture of heritage-confident eating and drinking. They support responsible farming and fishery, animal welfare, traditional food handicraft and regional diversities of tastes. Furthermore, they aim to bring producers, traders and consumers into direct contact with each other, disseminating information about food production and, thus, making the food market more tangible and transparent.

3.4.1 Slow Food

‘We see growth and strengthening of the movement, since an increasing number of people in the Global North is becoming aware of the important role food plays. We see a shift towards localised food systems and an increasing demand for transparency regarding origin and production of food. Concerning the situation of feeding the growing world population, we perceive sustainable food systems, sustainable food production, and rights-based access to land, water and seeds as prerequisites for food sovereignty. Reaching the food sovereignty will decide whether we successfully can feed the growing population and preserve the planet as a place to live for the future generations. Hence, Slow Food as a global movement has all the opportunities to encourage people to value and support food sovereignty’⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Interview; Frau Dr. Ursula Hudson

Founded in 1992, Slow Food Germany is a registered association with its head office in Berlin. It was one of the first national Slow Food organizations outside Italy. Eberhard Spangenberg, a wine merchant from Munich who was also active as book publisher, successfully endeavoured to get the license for a German edition of the Slow-Food-restaurant guide “Osterie d'Italia”. The German Slow Food association was founded with Spangenberg as Chairman, in Königstein in the Taunus region. After only one year the young association already had 150 members. From 1997 until 2001, Slow Food markets took place every year in various cities in Germany. In 2004, the association counted more than 5,000 members and in 2010, the first German Campus-Convivium was founded at Fulda University of Applied Sciences. Convivium activities are of major importance in Germany since they bring to life the concept behind the movement. In 2014, the German Slow Food movement numbered more than 13,000 members, in about 80 convivia. There have been a number of milestones:

- 2000: German ‘Ark of Taste’ established. The Ark passenger “Ostheimer Meat loaf” has been served in all dining cars of the German railway DB since autumn 2006. In 2012 the three youngest German “passengers” were included in the Ark: Lusatian carnation apple, Jakob-Fischer-Apple and the Ramelsloh chicken. All three are ‘typical’ regional foods, but had virtually disappeared before their revitalization by Slow Food. There are now about 35 Ark-products in Germany.
- 2007: The first national Slow Food Fair “Market for good taste” held in Stuttgart, attracted 65,000 visitors. Success continued the following year in Bremen with the Slow Food Fair “Slow Fisch”. Due to quality tested exhibitors and products as well as diverse and interesting framework programs the fairs attract more than 100,000 visitors every year.
- 2007: Assisted by Slow Food, the first Culinary Cinema took place at the Berlinale, a main film festival in Berlin. The Culinary Cinema is a combination of showing films whose stories involve culinary culture and of serving evening meals inspired by them. This event establishes a connection between food and culture.
- 2009: the project “From the earth to the customers plate”, initiated by the Slow Food Convivium Weimar-Thüringen, was awarded as the official project of the UN-Decade “Education for Sustainable Development”.
- 2010: the project “Healthy food Table and Culture” was launched for an initial term of 10 years in cooperation with the Christoph-Sonntag-Stiftung GmbH in Stuttgart. The programme, particularly designed for children, is about sensible training and education in flavour and taste. In 2012 it was integrated into the UNESCO framework of sustainable education.
- 2011: the Slow Food movement Germany became an active member of the campaign “My Agriculture”. The brand name “My Agriculture” stands for food that is produced in the region, i.e. is available without long transportation paths to the customer and with the whole history of the product as well as the farmer in charge being known to the buyers, so that all impacts on the food product are “traceable” and the name of the manufacturer stands for a high food quality. Through “My Agriculture”, Slow Food Germany actively engages in a dialogue with policy-makers about issues such as industrialization of agriculture, food waste, species-appropriate husbandry or the fight against hunger.

- The most recent project of Slow Food Germany is a non-profit Slow Food entrepreneurial company, a wholly owned subsidiary of the organization Slow Food Germany. Its purpose is the promotion of education in the fields of nutritional knowledge and food culture.



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Despite the growing membership of Slow Food Germany, the head of the International movement itself, Petrini, warned that in 2011 it would become too elitist and too much reduced to consumption. The earlier dominance of contributors aged between 40 and 60 is now being supplemented with a stronger involvement of younger people, visible in sub-initiatives like Slow Kids or Slow Food Youth. Here, it is particularly the youngest generations that are addressed by a free information platform which was operated from 2008 to 2011. It presented information on all topics related to good taste development, eatable school gardens, and healthy nutrition for the young, cooking with kids. One main objective was the promotion of a dialogue between parents, schools, authorities, cooks, farmers and food traders. In 2011, the platform was integrated into the website www.slowfood.de as main website of Germany's main Slow Food initiative.



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⁸⁶ <http://hei-mat.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/slowfood14.jpg> 18 March 2015

⁸⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/yfm.deutschland> 15. April 2015

⁸⁸ https://www.slowfood.de/slow_food_youth_deutschland/ 15. April 2015



Since 2010, the number of young members of the Slow Food movement in Germany has been increasing constantly. The Slow Food Youth Network got itself much talked about during the last few years. Through cooking and eating together in purpose built student kitchens they call special attention to the modern throwaway society and create awareness for a healthy eating culture. Slow Food Youth Germany, was already established back in 2008 and not only has its own website, but also a separate fan page on Facebook and other social communities.

As described above, Slow Food Germany is a comparatively new social movement concerned with environmental sustainability. For the purpose of the RICHES project, the questions that arise now are: How does the Slow Food movement Germany contribute to territorial cohesion, especially through rural-urban linkages? In addition, how does the Slow Food movement incorporate digital technology in increasing awareness and developing sustainability strategies? These questions are answered with the help of two expert interviews with high level actors in the Slow Food movement Germany. The first interview was conducted with Frau Dr. Ursula Hudson, executive chairwoman of Slow Food Germany e.V. The second interview was conducted with Dr. Hanns-E. Kniepkamp, Director of the Commission "Ark of Taste Germany".

According to the interviewees, the Slow Food movement in Germany creates a strong sense of community and of territorial cohesion. Food connects communities and economies to a large extent. In a holistic manner, Slow Food Germany tries to bring together producers, processors, chefs and consumers as co-producers. The aim is to create a stable network with more profit for everyone. This happens primarily through regional structures of the *convivia*. When reading through the list of projects initiated by the Slow Food movement it becomes obvious that the promotion of local systems of good, fair and clean food plays a major role in connecting community and territorial cohesion.⁸⁹

'The city cannot survive without its rural surrounding. But today's agricultural structures can change only through political awareness of the urban population. Nutrition is a highly political issue that needs to be embedded in urban and rural planning of municipal administrations.' (Rupert Ebner, Board member of Slow Food Germany e.V.)⁹⁰

Taking a closer look at the connection between urban and rural places, Slow Food Germany focuses on several projects that are primarily concerned with the relationship and cooperation between these two areas. Dr. Ursula Hudson takes up the example of one of Germany's major urban centres, Berlin. She states that Berlin overflows: "with innovative attempts of bringing agriculture to the city, as well as have city dwellers willingly provide fair prices for local farmers by ordering their products."⁹¹

⁸⁹ Interview; Hanns-E.Kniepkamp

⁹⁰ https://www.slowfood.de/aktuelles/2015/slow_food_messe_die_zukunft_ist_regional/ 29 April 2015

⁹¹ Interview; Frau Dr. Ursula Hudson,

Enhanced co-operation between rural and urban places is a global concept that is used in many regional and local areas in Germany. One cannot function without the other. This applies to the food supply as much as to the relation to nature and cultural life. As a sub-segment of cultural life, cultural heritage is a main field of work. It is high localised and therefore especially heritage food is a basis for diversity. The Slow Food movement in Germany has led to the re-discovery of food diversity and increased the awareness of the need to preserve eating cultures and habits. As founder of the first national Slow Food association outside Italy, Germany is considered to be one of the most important pioneers in contributing to community and territorial cohesion through Slow Food. Slow Food creates a fundamental connection between people. Education of nutritional knowledge and food culture is most essential for the health of the society and the community. To choose healthy and regional food means to identify with a cultural product and to stand up for the preservation of a cultural heritage. It is already clear today that there is a growing awareness for the great importance of local food products and of a cooperation system between urban and rural areas.

The internet, mobile devices and social networks are used by the Slow Food movement to communicate their messages, to inform about new projects and communicate with members and a global audience. To mention just a few areas of application; digital technology is used for interaction between suppliers, customers and competitors. For that reason, the internet has become a tool for Slow Food business organization. Retailing and distribution as well as design and manufacturing through digital technologies are gaining more and more importance. Nowadays, it is easier for producers of Slow Food to collaborate, to take an active role and to take important business decisions.

Moreover, mobile devices, interactive multimedia services and online platforms are used for food sharing, recycling and reusing projects. A good example is an initiative of the German Federal Ministry for consumer protection, food and agriculture in co-operation with the Slow Food movement Germany: "Too good for the garbage can"⁹². It is a project to limit food waste in Germany. An app, several fan pages on social platforms such as Twitter and Facebook as well as online information and education videos have been developed especially for this nationwide project. So far, no statistics exist to demonstrate the effects of the initiative, but the posts on Facebook and Twitter show a significant interest particularly among young people, who exchange information on how to avoid waste and comment on waste reduction efforts and bad practices.



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⁹²cf. <https://www.zugutfuerdietonne.de/> 29April 2015

⁹³ <http://www.mobiflip.de/zu-gut-fuer-die-tonne-app/> 29April 2015

Looking at cultural sustainability, it is obvious that digital technologies are used to strengthen cultural identity through the promotion of Slow Food production areas all over Germany. Online workshops, conventions, chat conversations and permanent availability of information through digital technology help to support and guide the Slow Food movement outside of the internet.

3.4.2 Fairtrade food initiatives

As much as the global Fairtrade initiatives, the German Fairtrade initiatives are focused on the issue of how to produce and trade food according to the principle of fair profit-sharing, i.e. allocating the profit to all involved parties based on their specific efforts with the food production, shipment and selling:

“For producers Fairtrade means prices that cover the costs of sustainable production, an additional Fairtrade premium, advance credit, longer term trade relationships, and decent working conditions for hired labour. Fairtrade is an alternative approach to conventional trade and is based on a partnership between producers and consumers. Fairtrade offers producers a better deal and improved terms of trade. This allows them the opportunity to improve their lives and plan for their future. Fairtrade offers consumers a powerful way to reduce poverty through their everyday shopping.”⁹⁴

Where food meets the Fairtrade criteria, it can apply for a related certificate – which applies for producers, traders of any kind (from shops to restaurants) as well as for locations. Rostock, for instance, was appointed as a Fair Trade City in 2014 which indicated that the city in total met criteria determined by the Fairtrade certification providers.

The initiative reports an increasing demand for fairly traded products, but clear membership figures are hard to find. Studies and statistics seem to focus on the effects of Fair trading for the producers of the relevant products, but do not display any consumer figures. What is known is the number of institutions which participate in TransFair - the organisational background of Fairtrade Germany: 33 member organisations ranging from development cooperation, church, social work, consumer protection, community building institutions, education, politics and environmental institutions contribute and support the idea with actions, campaigns and ideas. TransFair is not an association as such but a communication initiative that places the arguments for following the approach and awards regions, places and initiatives that convincingly implement the FairTrade principle with a related “FairTrade seal”. Again, the consumption of food is interlinked with the sustainability philosophy in this initiative. The overall aim is to encourage as many local/regional initiatives as possible. In the Rostock region, the initiative Open Fair Brunches was established in 2013. For the purpose of this research, five young women, aged between 20 and 25, took part in a group interview where they presented their initiative.

⁹⁴ <https://www.fairtrade-deutschland.de/bot/fairtrade-in-english/>

The members stated that the initiative was founded out of the Fair Trade Coordination Point Rostock, but is based on voluntary work and community cooperation only since then. Strengthening community cohesion is the primary principle in the background of the work on the Open Fair Brunches. Since the end of 2013, about 100 people each took part in monthly ‘brunches’, with students and young families with an existing preference for organic and fair-traded food being the main focus. The food for the brunches is bought and prepared by the organisation team, but participants can bring their own contributions to the brunch, if they meet the criteria: vegan, fair-trade, regional and self-made. Every participant pays 5 Euro as a lump sum for what he/she eats. Only fair-traded vegan food is served at these brunches, which take place in an outdoor location in Rostock’s city centre in summer time and at the café of a centrally located community centre in winter times. In addition, the Open Fair Brunches take place in the context of public events such as the Community Day of “Sharing instead of Possessing” held in the local cultural centre in November 2014 and 2015. Asked about the reason for focusing on fair-traded, vegan food, one of the interviewees answered:

“We intend to make people more curious about food. I experience again and again that people from my direct environment do not understand why me, not being a strict vegan and following the fair-trade principle only as far as I can afford it, like to cook vegan fair-trade food. These people I do not want to address via a moral cudgel, but convince via experience and open their mind to thinking about food and where it comes from. People who take part in our brunches start to think about the fact that it is not essentially necessary to eat animals. And that their food must not necessarily come from the discounter, but still can be affordable – if you cook or bake it yourself. Which is what we prove with our brunches. Sometimes there is even money left which we donate to non-profit initiatives in such cases. And they learn, that eating is delight and not only consumption.”⁹⁵

The shopping for the brunches is organized jointly via Fairtrade shops – only from the region, as “regional” is one additional criterion for the food served on the brunches.

The circle of contributors is permanently changing. To keep the initiative open to as many community members as possible, the work on preparing, implementing and marketing the Open Fair Brunches is conducted through digital technologies as specified below. The overall aim is to give the organization a clear structure that allows new members to easily step into the joint working process and share responsibilities and tasks among the involved community members. Joint work thus becomes possible that enables a relaxed and friendly cooperation between all members, a quick integration of new members and an easy communication of the Brunch dates to the potential visitors. Out of the interviews, the following uses of digital technologies were identified:

- **Marketing of the Open Fair Brunches:** a blog and a Facebook profile are operated and regularly updated to keep the community informed, interested and involved. The blog, available at <http://openfair.blogsport.eu/category/allgemein/>, publishes the coming

⁹⁵ Stadtgespräche Rostock. Issue 78 (2015), page 37: http://www.stadtgespraeche-rostock.de/media/sg78_2015/sg78/2015_komplett/sg78-2015_komplett_v1.pdf

Open Fair Brunch dates, provides short reports on the previous brunches, publishes photos on the events and provides information on how to join the brunches and/or the organization team which is supported by regular calls and invitations to take part in preparing the coming Open Fair Brunch.

- The Facebook profile⁹⁶ presents this information too, but combines it with disseminating information on fairly traded food, with a focus on regional organic products and offers the community the chance to comment, ask questions, share information and add things they consider as relevant for the community. Those Open Fair Brunches that take place in the context of major event are additionally promoted via the websites and Facebook profiles of these events, their organizers and supporters. The only print marketing tool the initiative has at all is printed leaflets, which are printed from time to time.
- **Communication between the initiative members.** For this purpose, a Wiki was established, where every community member that registered with his/her full name has access to. Here, the contact details of all active members as well as an overview of the most relevant information are available – everything arranged in a way that allows easy access and comprehension. In addition, a joint internet pad is used for agreeing on who buys what food and ingredients and what amounts are needed in consideration of all planned recipes. This, of course, includes some dishes that are always served, bread and vegan spreads among them. Of course, everybody is open to make own proposals during the preparation stage of every single brunch.

Those interviewed clearly stated that they consider the use of digital technology as an excellent tool to organize their work according to the democratic and open principles they consider as essential.

3.4.3 Regional food initiatives

This approach includes the greatest variety and approaches, which are not even presented under one label or name, but only by the belief that trading food mainly on the regional level is more sustainable and environmentally friendly than global food trading. The degree of implementing this approach differs significantly from one German region to the other. There are certain regions, like the Allgäu area in Bavaria where regional food trading has become the guiding principle. Local and regional markets and small shops selling local products dominate the region. In other areas, like the region Vorpommern in the federal state Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the approach is still in its infancy. For the German territory in total, a significant increase of the consumers involved in this approach can be stated as documented by Kearney (2014)⁹⁷. It determined that, compared to the previous year, 35% more consumers bought regional food at least once a week. Furthermore, the share of regional food within the overall food consumption increased by 20%. Although there is no consensus criterion on what is considered as regional food, the transparency of food production and the understanding that “regional” stands for a low distance from the selling location can be considered as consensus here. A related certificate for food products is under development. The main sellers of local/regional food are the producers themselves, food box cooperation groups and market places implemented once or twice a week.

⁹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/Open.Fair.Rostock/>

⁹⁷ <http://www.atkearney.de/documents/856314/4058970/PM+Regionale+Lebensmittel/91265f38-ff5c-44f7-b8e8-14c90591c615>

Even supermarkets have started to sell regional products. The regional approach is particularly closely interlinked with food-related cultural heritage as traditional regional food and related recipes are often communicated by the food producers and by relevant regional communities.

For Rostock region, two larger regional food initiatives have been identified: Biofrisch Nordost (Organic Freshness Northeast) and SoLaWi - Solidarische Landwirtschaft (Solidarity Farming).

Biofrisch Nordost is an umbrella organization that collects regional products from the producers and sells it on joint stands on the weekly food markets of the region. *Biofrisch Nordost* runs a Facebook profile and a website, which are mainly used to keep customers informed about the main ideas of the initiative, their permanent implementation and latest activities. The producers “behind” the organization are presented in detail, thus, supporting the idea of transparent ways from food production to food consumption. The understanding that local food is part of a local identity and tradition is included in all presentations, traditional forms of food production and processing are communicated as part of the initiative work. Posts explain how seeds are gained from vegetables, how cakes are baked according to traditional recipes etc. For instance, a post published on the initiatives Facebook profile on 20 November 2015 documented a visit to a traditional mill and the handicraft procedures implemented there.

The initiative *SoLaWi*, promoting itself with the slogan “Sharing the harvest” is subdivided into regional groups and the group in Rostock region is one of more than 20 regional groups. In addition, the initiative work is sub-structured according to topics – education, international exchange, seeds, research being the main ones here. What is special here is a specific structure called Web Crew⁹⁸, that focuses on promoting and supporting the idea of solidarity farming via digital technologies. Overall objectives are to enable supra-regional networking between the regional groups, provide online training to interested groups and people and strengthening the democratic approach within the initiative:

“Our aim is to provide adapted online and software solutions to the federal network Solidarity Farming as well as to regional Solawi groups and initiatives. These shall make their organization, planning, administration and coordination work easier, thus, allowing them to spend more time on the field than in front of their computers. [...] For us, self-administered communication and organization structures are a part of the sovereignty of nutrition as much as farmer seeds and joint possession of field and machines. With our communication tools we oppose monopolies like Facebook, Google & Co as much as we refuse to use seeds produced by monopolists like Monsanto, Syngenta & Co. We are aware of the fact that providing such infrastructure is a huge amount of work and aspire to a professional mode of working. To finance this, users are asked to make a contribution to the operation and maintenance costs of this infrastructure medium-term. This will enable us to make developments that are oriented to the needs of the initiatives instead of capitalist added-value.”⁹⁹

⁹⁸ <http://www.solidarische-landwirtschaft.org/de/das-netzwerk/arbeitsgruppen/web-crew/>

⁹⁹ Ibid.



3.5 Threats to Food Heritage and Cohesion

There are many threats to food heritage and cohesion, and these can operate at different spatial scales, from international political and economic processes which shape agricultural production (and hence the diversity of crops, size of farms etc) down to local level decisions affecting land use and access to spaces for growing in cities and neighbourhoods. There are also global cultural trends towards 'fast', nutritionally poor, convenience foods which are diluting traditional food cultures, eroding food knowledge and squeezing out opportunities for shared conviviality around food. These trends operate in tandem with the reduction of time people spend preparing and eating food and particularly with the transition of women away from domestic work into paid work outside the home. In the following section, three particular threats are identified which were emphasized in the case studies.

3.5.1 Loss of Biodiversity

Although this may not be immediately perceived as a threat to cultural heritage and cohesion, biodiversity is actually of fundamental importance to cultural health. This point emerged from the workshop held in Peccioli, where one of the participants, Professor Buiatti presented a number of initiatives to increase awareness about the dangers linked to climate change and loss of biodiversity (e.g. Manifesto on climate change and the future of food security¹⁰⁰, Manifesto on the Future of Seed¹⁰¹, Manifesto on the future of knowledge systems - Knowledge sovereignty for a healthy planet¹⁰²). The point was also noted in the case studies in Germany and England. For example, Germany's Slow Food movement defends biodiversity, arguing that it holds the key to guaranteeing that everyone has access to good, clean and fair food. There are many reasons for this:

- local varieties and breeds have adapted to their local areas, becoming stronger and more resistant and requiring fewer external interventions (pesticides, fertilizers, veterinary care, etc.)
- uniform or biodiversity-poor systems are more fragile and highly vulnerable to unexpected events
- there are no monocultures in nature; it is nature that can show us the best way to feed the planet
- biodiversity is also a priceless source of medicinal remedies
- biodiversity guarantees the well-being of rural communities, who are free to choose what to produce and to be able to earn a decent income from their harvest
- by cultivating and eating biodiversity, it is possible to learn how to fight waste, to respect the seasons, to safeguard traditional knowledge and bring it into dialogue with official science: by starting from biodiversity it is possible to imagine a different model of development, one that is truly sustainable.
- "Talking about biodiversity means talking about sustainable agriculture, food sovereignty and access to good, clean and fair food for everyone."

¹⁰⁰ http://so-on.be/SO-ON/articles/future_of_food.pdf

¹⁰¹ http://navdanya.org/attachments/Know_Your_Food1.pdf

¹⁰² http://www.swaraj.org/manifesto_future.pdf

[\(http://www.slowfood.com/expo2015/en/feeding-the-planet/save-biodiversity-save-the-planet/](http://www.slowfood.com/expo2015/en/feeding-the-planet/save-biodiversity-save-the-planet/)

The Sowing New Seeds and Growing From Your Roots projects in England (see 2.3) also have at their heart the aim of preserving biodiversity and genetic resilience, by recording and disseminating the knowledge held by different ethnic groups with experience of growing a wide range of plants for food and medicinal purposes.

A key point is that many diverse forms of cultural heritage draw from human relationships with nature. Just as biodiversity is crucial for resilience in eco-systems, so is cultural diversity crucial for cultural resilience. Culture has to be conceived as a dynamic rather than static concept. Terralingua¹⁰³ is a non-profit organisation that works to sustain the “world’s precious heritage of biological, cultural and linguistic diversity.” It explains how cultural values are interlinked with human-nature relationships and shows that cultural diversity is directly linked to diversity in nature:

Through this vital dependence on the environment, over time human societies have developed detailed local knowledge of plants, animals, and ecological processes. They have also developed cultural values and practices that stress respect for and reciprocity with nature—taking care of the natural environment that sustains us. This diversity of local knowledge, values, and practices is expressed and transmitted in the thousands of different languages spoken on our planet—7000 different languages, to be more exact, the vast majority of them spoken by small indigenous and local communities.

This is how language, knowledge, and the environment are intimately, in fact inextricably, interrelated: in each place, the local environment sustains people; in turn, people sustain the local environment through the traditional wisdom and practices embedded in their cultures and their languages. The local interdependence of language, knowledge, and the environment translates into strong correlations at the global level, between the total diversity of human cultures and languages (that is, cultural and linguistic diversity) and the total diversity of nature (that is, biodiversity).

By recognising the link between cultural diversity and biodiversity in this way, it is possible to understand why the loss of biodiversity ultimately threatens cultural heritage. Many indigenous and traditional cultures have developed ways to co-exist with and ensure the resilience of biodiverse ecosystems through careful management of land and resources. If biodiversity disappears, the knowledge, skills and practices that humans have developed to co-exist with, and sustain biodiversity, will also disappear. Ultimately, this poses a threat not only to food heritage, but also to long-term food security.

¹⁰³ <http://www.terralingua.org/>

3.5.2 Loss of seed diversity

Seeds are a part of cultural heritage and many citizens have recognized this. For example, the Civiltà Contadina network of hundreds of “seed savers” (“custodi dei semi”) in Italy keeps growing and sharing local seeds^{104, 105}. In Spain, the Seed bank of Vallès Oriental¹⁰⁶ is an example of co-operation between municipalities, local government, museums and associations to preserve and transmit local varieties. A reference point on seed banks is the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership (Kew Gardens, UK)¹⁰⁷, the largest ex situ plant conservation programme in the world. Working with a network of partners across 80 countries, it has successfully banked over 13% of the world's wild plant species. However, most local scale seed saving schemes are aimed at growing from the seeds rather than ‘freezing’ them and this is beneficial for gardeners as they are able to select seeds from the plants which thrive best in their locality.

There has also been a growing campaign against the commercialisation of seeds and the commoditization of plant genetic material through the application of Intellectual Property Rights to certain varieties and laws which restrict the sale of unusual or traditional varieties. As explained by Garden Organic’s Heritage Seed Library in England, it is illegal to sell the seeds that have been collected by citizen seed savers. This is because:

Under European law only seed included on the UK National List, and ultimately the EU Common Catalogue, can be marketed. To be on the list a variety must go through a series of tests, termed DUS tests. The D stands for distinct (different from another variety), the U for uniform (all plants are the same), and the S for stable (the same over generations). Many of the varieties we hold would not pass these tests, as they are inherently variable. The test also cost money, and there is an additional cost for maintaining a variety on the list.

With the costs incurred in breeding and maintenance of a variety, a large, profitable market is a necessity. This means that seed companies often decide against ‘niche markets’, e.g. gardeners in favour of large-scale growers. The varieties available are therefore tailored to their requirements, that is, they ripen at the same time to make mechanical harvesting easier, are tough enough to withstand transportation and supermarket handling, and are visually familiar to appeal to the average shopper. Flavour often takes a back seat.

Source: Heritage Seed Library (2014) Seed Saving Guidelines.

104 <http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/hsl>

105 http://www.civiltacontadina.it/modules/cms/start.php?start_id=9&seite=custodi-di-semi

106 <http://www.llavorsvallesoriental.cat/inici/>

107 <http://www.kew.org/science-conservation/collections/millennium-seed-bank/about-millennium-seed-bank>

The major multinational lobbies are grouping cultural/food diversity and values, described by one of the Peccioli workshop participants as a ‘*flattening force*’. In opposition, a more rich culture comes from mixing and exchange practices. An interesting counterpoint to this is the “Law of the Seed”¹⁰⁸, released on May 2013 at Terra Futura (Florence, Italy). The document is intended as a tool to be used by citizens everywhere and in every context to defend their seed freedom and seed sovereignty as well as to provide a practical guide to all future development of laws and policies on seed.



Seeds are part of our heritage and require preservation, communication, exploitation, and value from a cultural point of view. Civil and public initiatives are addressing these issues.

Figure 2: Seeds (Seed Bank of local varieties of agricultural interest in Catalonia)

Social events and opportunities for cultural exchange are also growing linked to seed preservation and transmission. This is the case of the Pan-Hellenic Festival of Peliti in Greece for the Exchange of Traditional Seed Varieties¹⁰⁹. An increasing amount of initiatives and networks are working on defending Seed freedom¹¹⁰/Seed sovereignty as the foundation of Food Freedom/Food Sovereignty, based on ecological production and fair and just distribution, beginning with protecting and promoting local food systems. In this light, the Global Movement for Seed Freedom¹¹¹ is a network of individuals and organisations committed to protect the biodiversity of the planet by defending the freedom of the seed to evolve in integrity, self-organisation, and diversity.



Figure 3: Pan-Hellenic Festival of Peliti (Greece)

3.5.2 Access to land

There are two main ways in which land access issues can threaten food heritage. The first is the difficulty facing young and/or new entrants to farming. There is a growing interest in farming amongst a new generation of young people, who do not necessarily have cultural roots in the countryside, but would like to develop agroecological farming systems, with high social and ethical values. This trend appears more marked in some countries than others; for example it is identified as a particular problem in Italy. Land prices are often high, especially near the cities where pressures on land for housing and amenity services push prices up.

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.navdanya.org/attachments/lawofseed.pdf>

¹⁰⁹ http://www.peliti.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=551&catid=2&Itemid=4&lang=el

¹¹⁰ Declaration on Seed Freedom: <http://seedfreedom.in/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/declaration.pdf>

¹¹¹ <http://seedfreedom.info/global-movement-for-seed-freedom-our-resolve-our-commitment/>

Access to finance for farming start-up is also very difficult – banks are reluctant to invest in what is perceived as risky or un-tested business models. The nature of farming and food production (e.g. growing seasons) means that farmers and growers have to invest but may have no prospect of an income for at least the first year. It has to be noted that the problems and opportunities for young farmers can vary between countries and regions, and that this is a topic requiring further research (Zagata and Sutherland 2015). Moreover, there is little research on the cultural dimensions of the inter-generational transitions in farming.

The second issue, which is again under-researched, is a perceived threat to public land used for urban growing. Currently, many urban initiatives are based on land which is not protected from development. Community groups have been campaigning to secure access to land for food production. An example is the Community Food Growers Network, based in London, which is campaigning for food growing spaces to be protected in local planning regulations¹¹².

3.6 Summary and Conclusions: Local Food Movements and Cohesion

This research focused on the ways in which citizens and communities actively participate in the production of food heritage. This has been achieved through case studies of place-based initiatives to preserve particular food cultures through growing, sharing, trading and cooking at a local or regional scale. On the basis of our research, it is suggested that community-led and/or citizen-led food initiatives show how culture can be a force for change and how citizens can co-create cultural heritage by:

- Maintaining and developing food skills and knowledge – for example through sharing knowledge about how to cook and grow with ‘exotic’ crops
- Remembering, and reviving food heritage – by renovating old growing spaces, protecting local crop and animal varieties, recovering old recipes and cooking practices and for all of these, reinterpreting them through the lens of contemporary life.
- Creating social ties and new economic spaces – by developing new business models based on principles of fairness and social justice, such as fair trade and solidarity economies, which can build relationships between farmers/producers and citizens across local and global scales.

The case studies provide evidence that community cohesion can be enhanced through community food projects, although there is also a clear need for more in-depth and longitudinal studies to understand the full depth and resilience of the social relationships that are created. Further research is also needed to gain a better understanding of the ways in which political-economic context affects the potential and durability of such projects, especially in terms of inter-ethnic relationships. In terms of territorial cohesion, community food initiatives have been shown to make a contribution most particularly in terms of rural development, where there are successful examples of food-based tourism linked to regional speciality foods.

¹¹² <http://www.cfgn.org.uk/2016/02/community-food-growing-food-production-policies-recommendations-for-the-london-plan-draft-february-2016/>



CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study finds that cultural heritage festivals and community/citizen food projects can be a resource for promoting community and territorial cohesion although the extent to which this is achieved is dependent on place, cultural diversity and needs. For example, while there is a greater emphasis on cultural diversity in Notting Hill, this is less so in Zundert and Rostock. Notting Hill has a highly culturally diverse population compared to the other case studies. However, there is indication in all three case studies that their cultural heritage events promote community cohesion to varying degrees. In Zundert, this could be put down to the localness of the traditions, which underpin the event and the close relationship enjoyed by the people involved in the festival. In Rostock, the economic benefits and input of local traditions are significant, while in Notting Hill inter-cultural engagement and understandings are important.

A salient point highlighted by the study, is the way that cohesion is achieved. This appears to be largely governed by the degree of involvement of local people. All three case studies show that events are underpinned by the unpaid commitment of local people. In Notting Hill, people actually pay for their own costumes to be designed and made so they can take part in the festival, while the Hanse Sail relies on 250 permanent unpaid workers. Volunteers are involved in every aspect of the Corso Zundert parade. This notion of voluntary help supports existing literature, which shows that the cooperative, unpaid work at festivals contributes to events becoming deeply embedded locally in a non-monetary way (Gibson et al. 2010). Moreover, it reinforces ideas of collective action, social responsibility, togetherness, coherence, solidarity and interaction.

While the study indicates that digital technologies are contributing to the consumption and transmission of cultural heritage festivals, this is rather more conventional than innovative. This appears to relate to the nature of the events, their structure, organisation and remit. Notting Hill is a largely free street event, while charges at Zundert and Rostock are limited. This seems to act to restrict economic generation approaches and all the events rely on local authority funding and organisational input on varying levels. At the same time, it is recognised that this is inevitable in relation to policing and other emergency services.

The case studies add to existing knowledge in terms of the diversity and multifaceted social and economic nature of cultural heritage festivals. While some events like Notting Hill Carnival and the Hanse Sail attract numbers in excess of one million people annually, other festivals like Corso Zundert are much smaller affairs organised to mark or celebrate cherished local activities, place, identity or certain traditions thereby rendering a therapeutic benefit. While economic advantages and potentials cannot be overlooked, the key is to ensure that balance is maintained. Without much doubt, however, it is clear that cultural heritage festivals make a major contribution to place image making this a powerful marketing and local development tool. Nevertheless, the study suggests this area could benefit from further substantive and detailed research. For example, the last publicly obtainable economic impact study of the Notting Hill Carnival was from 2004 and no such studies appear to be available for either the Hanse Sail or Corso Zundert.

With economic and social cohesion seen as an expression of solidarity between EU member states capable of instigating balanced and sustainable development, reducing structural variances locally, nationally and internationally and promoting equal opportunities for people, further investigation of the case posited by this study, is a necessity.

An aspect that requires further research is the extent to which rural areas and cities require different policies, based upon specific demographic and socioeconomic fabrics. Social theory on cohesion seems not much of a support yet, as more situated field data, allowing for a multiplicity of variables like ethnic and migrant minorities (including differentiations in terms of migration histories) religions, educational backgrounds, legal statuses, length of residence, socioeconomic backgrounds and, last, but not least, attitudes. Further empirical data are needed using mixed-methods, including fieldwork on location, as so called vulnerable citizens and ethnic minorities are usually not reached otherwise. It may well be that different types and levels of social relations would be found that call for nuancing the concept of 'social cohesion' in a more or less socially diverse context.

In terms of food culture, the study has identified many ways in which community and citizen-led projects are contributing to cohesion by helping to strengthen collective identities through the revival of place-based food cultures. It has looked in more depth at how this is being expressed in Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom. In all three countries, there persist traditional forms of community food production in gardens and allotments, but it is also taking place in new spaces such as roadsides, rooftops, schools and reclaimed lands, and with new organisational formats. There are also thousands of examples of urban food initiatives oriented towards generating inter-cultural and inter-generational exchange around the growing, preparing and sharing of food, such as Pisa's vegetable gardens, Rostock's 'Open Fair Brunches' and the 'Sowing New Seeds' project in several cities of the United Kingdom. In some cases, these initiatives benefit from the support of local authorities, which make space available to them, but they tend to emerge outside of formal heritage institutions. As in the case of the festivals, the role of voluntary work is fundamentally important. Whilst many of the initiatives have some local authority support, they are often initiated and driven by local residents, and certainly would not persist without their unpaid efforts. They are concerned with living and evolving cultures, which draw on older traditions and knowledge; their aim is to breathe life into these, rather than try to preserve or 'freeze' them in time. In addition, these food cultures are open to new influences, just as European food culture always has been: growing and sharing of food together creates opportunities for new migrants and longer-term residents to interact and build mutual understanding. Finally, another important aspect is the continued work of various seed libraries and seed sovereignty initiatives, which are trying to protect the diversity of local seeds. The "seed savers" ("custodi dei semi") in Italy and the "seed guardians" in the UK consist of networks of hundreds of people that save, grow and share local seeds, to resist the homogenisation of plant life. The research draws attention to the crucial but often under-recognized link between biodiversity, seed diversity, and cultural diversity and highlights the threat to food culture which is posed by current threats to biodiversity and seeds. Identification and understanding of this link demands policies which are cross-sectoral and integrated.

In addition, more research is needed to fully and critically examine the cohesive effects of community food projects. For example, how deep, trusting and lasting are the social relationships that are created? How resilient are they when political economic conditions change? What are the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion in such projects and how do these vary in different places? More longitudinal, mixed methods and in-depth studies are needed to answer these questions. Additionally, a full cross-cultural study of the scale and diversity of such projects is currently lacking in Europe, meaning that basic information such as 'how many' examples exist, and where they are most successful is currently lacking.

Relating to territorial cohesion, there are many examples of rural projects which promote this on the basis of regional food products and cuisines (see the European Rural Development Network for many examples). An under-researched area is how better linkages between rural and urban places can be achieved. Whilst tourism is of key importance as a means for urban residents to engage with rural food cultures, it would be interesting to explore how this could be enhanced. For example, what infrastructural and governance innovations are needed to encourage greater rural-urban synergies for territorial cohesion?

To conclude, Task 4.3 – *Structures for community and territorial cohesion* - has undertaken a challenging attempt to consider the community and territorial cohesion impacts of a very diverse set of practices. The exercise has revealed some common themes, but has also raised many questions for further research. The festivals and food projects share a common emphasis on the sensory and creative 'experience' of being involved, and on the fun, enjoyment and pleasure that can be gained as a result. As well as encouraging a direct interaction with cultural resources of music, dance, food, flowers, soil, seeds and the sea, all the examples – to varying degrees – contribute to how place identity is experienced by residents, visitors and external audiences. All the examples can demonstrate a contribution to cohesiveness, (understood in the broadest sense of the word) and yet all of them also require further and deeper study in order to develop a more critical understanding of their limitations and potential. For example, many of the food projects are vulnerable to sudden cuts in public funding, or changes to local development plans. Also, the research confirms that communities are not always necessarily sites of social inclusion. The research thus reinforces our understanding of communities as highly complex, contested entities and because of this, recommends that policies to promote cohesion (community or territorial) must pay very close attention to the local context and to dynamic processes of change amongst communities.

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Biographies

Below are mini biographies of the three experts present at the discussion event held in Italy in June 2015:

Tiziana Nadalutti

Born in 1971, she studied agricultural sciences with specialisation in the protection of the agro-forest environment (University diploma and BSc degree in 1996 and 2003). She is also expert in GIS design and implementation.

Free-lance consultant since 1996. Her experience up to 2004 was mainly focused on environmental reporting and assessment. From 2004 to 2014, she has been collaborating with the company Timesis Srl for designing and/or implementing projects on the basis of specific tenders and calls for proposals. In 2011 started implementing activities aimed at building partnerships and synergies for participating in tenders and/or calls in the field of sustainable development, agriculture and agro-energy in Italy, Europe and the Mediterranean regions. She is currently collaborating with Timesis for a contract with the Tuscany Region, aimed at assessing the effects on environment and biodiversity of the regional Rural Development Plan 2007-2013.

For about 11 years, in the period between 2001 and 2013, she was member of the External Monitoring Team of the Astrale Consortium¹¹³, in charge of monitoring and assessing - on behalf of the European Commission - the projects funded by the LIFE Programme. Since 2014 she cooperates with companies, local bodies and research institutes for designing LIFE projects, mainly focused on the relationship between agriculture and environment. She is also member of various environmental associations (Legambiente¹¹⁴, Società dei territorialisti e delle territorialiste¹¹⁵, Consiglio del Cibo di Pisa¹¹⁶), and participates in different political and cultural activities.

Monica Zoppè

Monica Zoppè, was born in Milan (Italy), where she studied and graduated in Biology in 1987. She subsequently worked at several laboratories both in Italy and abroad, dealing with cellular biology, with particular interest in the cellular transport and viral vectors for gene therapy.

Since 2002 at the Institute of Clinical Physiology of the CNR (Pisa), where she now runs the group SciVis¹¹⁷, (Scientific Visualization), whose research, of a strongly interdisciplinary nature, focuses on the activity of proteins and other biological macromolecules.

¹¹³ www.Astrale.org

¹¹⁴ <http://www.legambiente.it/>

¹¹⁵ <http://www.societadeiterritorialisti.it/>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Consiglio-del-Cibo-di-Pisa/731832320235854>

¹¹⁷ <http://www.scivis.it/>

In particular, the group has built, based on Open Source software, an innovative system for the calculation of the movement of proteins and has developed a new visualization code that transmits in an immediate and intuitive way the factors that regulate molecular behaviour at the base of all vital processes. In recent years, SciVis has produced numerous videos, all visible on-line on the website, some of which have received awards and mentions both in scientific and in technical and cinematic settings. Beyond the videos, Monica Zoppè publishes regularly in international scientific journals, and is in regular contact with the global community of cellular and structural biology through scientific societies and the participation in conferences and meetings around the world.

In addition to the work activities, contributes to society through volunteering, particularly in environmental association. Monica Zoppè is vice president of Legambiente Pisa, active component of the GAS-P (Gruppo di Acquisto Solidale-Pisa), and participates in different political and cultural activities.

Marcello Buiatti

From 1979 to 2010 full professor in Genetics and Evolution of behaviours from bacteria to humans (University of Florence, Italy). During this period, Prof. Buiatti has been working on plant biodiversity and the molecular tools for these studies, and developed "molecular cards" for the description of plant cultivars, as a tool against biopiracy in several ancient plant cultivars in carnations, beans, tobacco and so on. During this period published books on biodiversity ("The benevolent disorder of life") and studies on GMOs. Involved on fighting GM plants since he found out with molecular tools their possible dangers not only on the consumers but on the whole agricultural systems. At the same time, Prof. Buiatti has been working with the Tuscany region under the governor Claudio Martini together with Vandana Shiva. Within this community, several Manifestos were written and discussed in many international meetings, addressing topics as the value of seeds, the conservation of human agroecosystems, the soil as a living system, and the conservation of human traditions. Actually member of Navdanja Italy, an organization of Navdanja led by Vandana Shiva.

Prof. Buiatti has published 200 papers in international journals and ten books. A new book on the evolution of behaviours from bacteria to humans is under preparation, that will be published by Hermann eds in Paris soon. Member of the board of an European Network of Scientists for Environmental and Social responsibility¹¹⁸, President of Res Viva¹¹⁹, an interuniversity association of Philosophy of Biology in Rome, President of the environmentalist association Ambiente e lavoro¹²⁰, member of the scientific board of the International Society of Doctors for environment (ISDE)¹²¹, member of Legambiente, the largest environmental association, the scientific committee of CRIIGEN¹²² (France), etc.

¹¹⁸ <http://www.ensser.org/>

¹¹⁹ <http://www.resviva.it/>

¹²⁰ <http://www.amblav.it/>

¹²¹ <http://www.isde.org/>

¹²² <http://www.criigen.org/>

Last but not least, Prof. Buiatti has been working on science and human diversity and has been discussing this issue in all orders of schools and universities in Italy. Actually, Prof. Buiatti gives short courses in different towns in Italy and France and is a member of two groups studying the relationships between knowledge and religions in the framework of one Catholic and one Jewish group in Italy.