

Special Issue Multi-locality studies:
Recent insights and future pathways

FUORI LUOGO

Journal of Sociology of Territory,
Tourism, Technology

Guest editors

Marco Alberio
Simone Caiello
Tino Schlinzig



Editor in chief: Fabio Corbisiero
Editorial manager: Carmine Urciuoli

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Summary

9. Editorial

Multilocalism: the Fragmented Global for a Widespread Local

Fabio Corbisiero

13. Multi-Locality Studies: Recent Insights and Future Pathways. Introduction to the Special Issue

Marco Alberio, Simone Caiello, Tino Schlinzig

19. "I'd rather live in Munich, but my job in Stuttgart is more attractive" - The role of corporate ties in decisions to maintain multi-local living arrangements

Lisa Garde, Cornelia Toppel

33. Emotions through Photos in Qualitative Interviews with Multi-locals as a methodological challenge?

Lena Greinke

47. Multi-local Arrangements and Impact on Work-Life Balance.

An International Research on Flight Attendants

Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay, Anne Gillet

3T SECTION - 3T READINGS

69. Merla, L. & Nobels, B. (2022). *Deux «maisons», un «chez-soi»? Expériences de vie de jeunes en hébergement égalitaire*, L'Harmattan.

Daniela Moisa reads

71. Vendemmia, B. (2020). *Spaces for Highly Mobile People Emerging Practices of Mobility in Italy*, Routledge.

Marie-Kristin Döbler reads

75. Hiitola, J., Turtiainen, K., Gruber, S., & Tiilikainen, M. (Eds.). (2020). *Family Life in Transition: Borders, Transnational Mobility, and Welfare Society in Nordic Countries*. Routledge.

Brunella Fiore reads

INTERVIEW

81. Simone Caiello, Marco Alberio, Tino Schlinzig

Exploring Multilocality: Family Transformations, Belonging, and the Challenges of Mobility - Interview with Laura Merla

FUORI LUOGO SECTION

87. Pursuing Urban Liveability with Nature-Based Solutions: a Multi-Faceted Strategy towards Sustainability

Silvia De Nardis

99. The Flâneur-as-Researcher. An Autoethnography

Giacomo Gaggiassi

111. The Meaning of Work: Life Stories and Career Trajectories of Ukrainian Women from the Domestic and Home-Care Sector to the Third Sector

Giuseppe Gargiulo, Emanuele Scognamiglio

125. New Organizational Responses, Innovations and Social Impacts of Covid-19 on Third Sector organizations in Campania Region

Gabriella Punziano, Suania Acampa, Rosa Sorrentino

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Multilocalism: the Fragmented Global for a Widespread Local

Sociologically, the concept of multilocalism describes an extended and interconnected space in which individuals and groups “mobilize”: they travel, interact, and develop their professional and personal trajectories. In a globalized and digitally connected context, multilocalism recognizes that people can be simultaneously tied to multiple places, both physically and socially (Colleoni, 2022). Living between two or more locations, maintaining a functional residence in each, is no longer an exceptional condition but an increasingly widespread practice. This shift is enabled by modern mobility infrastructures and social digitalization—two key factors that have driven this transformation. High-speed trains, well-developed roads, and low-cost flights allow people to cover considerable distances in reasonable timeframes, facilitating frequent movement and residence across multiple locations (Urry, 2000). This phenomenon is particularly evident in large cities and their hinterlands, where multilocalism often responds to the growing flexibility of work and the need to balance different aspects of life.

In the literature, numerous examples of multilocalism are linked both to work and life biographies. In terms of the workplace, multilocalism involves various remote work practices (e.g., co-working hubs, hybrid work routines, digital nomadism), offshoring strategies where production sites are distinct from consumption sites, or fly-in, fly-out work models (Lapintie & Di Marino, 2018). Professionally, multilocalism signifies the ability to operate (simultaneously) in distant and different locations, leveraging their specific characteristics. This proactive adaptation contrasts with the uniformity of a borderless global landscape. The result? A greater ability to generate and extract value from relationships (Kawata, 2016). In a way, multilocalism emerges as a globalized response to embracing change while preserving the right to maintain connections not with just one place but with multiple, interacting places that reflect our identity and worldview—a fragmented yet rooted global.

Who are the Players of Multilocalism? Businesses, for instance, multilocalize their production and sales networks, even when their goods and services are closely tied to a specific place of origin. Innovative companies working with typically global technologies (such as digital capital) must still align with local needs, which often have unique specificities. In other words, they must be grounded by interacting with local dynamics. This is the challenge faced by incubators and hubs that are part of international networks and promote scalable innovation initiatives—sometimes even at a grassroots level. Financial organizations, which have historically expanded globalization processes, are now recognizing the need for a particular sensitivity to the resources and characteristics of different territories. It is no coincidence that some large and mid-sized banking groups are reviving the appeal of being a “local bank,” challenging actors that have long identified their mission within the local sphere—such as cooperative credit banks—which now seek to expand their reach. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also play a role, operating through retrofit innovation processes that bring back home service models tested in other contexts, as seen with some Italian NGOs in the healthcare sector. On one hand, multilocalism can stimulate the local economy by increasing demand for services and infrastructure in the areas involved. On the other, it poses challenges in territorial management and sustainability.

From a personal perspective, sociology focuses on housing forms related to different types of mobility. In the context of multilocal life, neither mobility nor stability should be overly emphasized, as they are intricately intertwined. Their interaction manifests in at least four ways:

Mobility to Ensure Stability – People who live in multiple places choose mobility to maintain stable reference points in their lives. This could mean preserving a close connection to a specific place, a property, or people residing there. Other reasons include improving family living conditions (Reuschke, 2010) or enriching one’s life experience (McIntyre *et al.*, 2006).

The Need for Stability to Be Mobile – To move frequently, multilocal residents require a certain degree of material stability. This includes not only infrastructures like train stations, parking areas, or rest spaces (Hannam et al., 2006) but also the support of less mobile individuals to whom they can “return,” who ease their burdens, or help them reintegrate (Kellerman, 2006).

Mobility Involves Moments of Immobility – The recurrent mobility of people living in multiple locations inevitably includes moments of pause, such as when they are on a train or in a car, or during waiting periods, which can be experienced according to personal preferences (Bissell & Fuller, 2010). Additionally, like daily commuters, multilocal residents develop routines and rituals along their routes, providing a form of stability even during movement (Hilti, 2013).

Physical Immobility and Virtual Mobility – The absence of physical movement is often accompanied by forms of virtual mobility, encompassing the flow of goods, information, ideas, or imaginaries (Urry, 2007). Thus, even when remaining in one place, people can be highly mobile and connected to other locations through virtual communication or imaginative travel. This complex interplay between mobility and stability defines multilocal living, demonstrating that movement and permanence are inseparable aspects of contemporary dwelling experiences.

Multilocalism is inevitably linked to tourism, manifesting in two primary dynamics: first, the rise of digital nomad workers, who perform their jobs from various locations without being tied to a fixed office; second, the decentralized management of tourism activities, which enables industry professionals to oversee facilities and services across multiple locations. With the rise of remote work and digital platforms, tourism has undergone a transformation that makes it increasingly interconnected. Multilocalism allows tourism professionals to swiftly adapt to market demands, offering personalized and diversified experiences. This results in a more dynamic business model where physical presence in a single destination is no longer necessary for managing a successful enterprise. The tourism industry has embraced multilocalism with innovative strategies that enable professionals to operate in multiple destinations simultaneously. Hotel chains and tourism service providers, for instance, manage facilities spread across different regions through digital platforms and remote management tools. Advanced booking, marketing, and customer experience software have made it possible to efficiently control operations without requiring constant physical presence.

Even independent tourism professionals, such as tour guides, travel consultants, and experiential tourism operators, benefit from multilocalism. They can work in a hybrid model, offering services both in-person and remotely. Many tour guides, for example, have adopted virtual tour formats, allowing them to provide immersive experiences without being physically present.

Adapting tourism destinations to multilocalism is essential for maintaining competitiveness in the global market. Cities and tourist areas are investing in digital infrastructures to attract multilocal workers and visitors by offering co-working spaces, high-speed internet connections, and welcoming policies for digital nomads. Additionally, multilocalism is promoting the de-seasonalization of tourism, as remote workers tend to travel during off-peak periods and stay longer in destinations. This trend helps balance tourist flows and reduce environmental impact caused by seasonal overcrowding.

Despite its many advantages, multilocalism also presents challenges. Managing remote work requires regulatory adaptations, particularly concerning taxation and labor rights. Furthermore, regions hosting “multilocalists” must balance the needs of local residents and newcomers, avoiding phenomena like gentrification and rising living costs. Looking ahead, technological innovation and sustainability policies will play a crucial role in ensuring that these fragmented professional and personal trajectories are inclusive and responsible—truly capable of meeting new mobility needs across various territorial scales.

Multilocalism is redefining societal structures, offering new opportunities, especially for younger generations. The ability to live and work in multiple locations simultaneously is a strategic asset for contemporary society, contributing to its flexibility, sustainability, and competitiveness. To successfully navigate this transition, host locations for multilocal individuals and organizations

must invest in infrastructure, regulations, and innovative, cross-cultural models. This will ensure that, despite its fragmented nature, multilocalism remains impactful and sustainable.

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Multi-Locality Studies: Recent Insights and Future Pathways. Introduction to the Special Issue

Multi-locality: a brief outline of the phenomenon and related research

Mobility can be considered a central dimension in the contemporary world, profoundly impacting and rapidly altering collective and individual lives. As a product of the increasing availability of ever-more instantaneous means of transportation and communication, which allow activities to expand across time and space, the spatial dispersion of everyday life has become one of the defining characteristics of late modern societies (Bonß & Kesselring, 2001; Beck, 2000). Concerning the dynamics of personal relationships, this has resulted in, among other things, persistently high divorce rates as well as the geographic dispersion and recurrent mobility of family members (Nobles & Merla, 2022; Schier, 2016). As a consequence of increasing demands for mobility in the workplace, living arrangements are being spread across a number of different locations, which can be visited for short or long periods (Schmidt-Kallert & Franke, 2012; Schneider & Collet, 2010). Multi-locality is one of the outcomes of social and economic policies and a strategy used to adapt to these conditions across different domains of society: family and social relations, work and labour markets, and territorial interventions. As effectively described by Rolshoven (2006, p. 181; *our translation*)² “Multi-locality means *vita activa* in several places: the activity of everyday life in its entirety is spread over different places, each visited for varying durations and utilised with a greater or lesser degree of functional diversity”.

Although multi-locality is far from a new phenomenon exclusive to contemporary societies (Duchêne-Lacroix & Ködel, 2022; Hilti, 2016), its research is relatively recent, having started mainly in the 2000s. *Multi-locality studies* is still a developing field encompassing various disciplinary backgrounds such as sociology, social geography, housing studies, as well as planning and transportation sciences (Danielzyk & Dittrich-Wesbuer, 2020; Rolshoven, 2009). In the wake of a general *mobility turn* in the social sciences (Sheller & Urry, 2006), it seeks to understand how and why people pursue lives in different places at once, either simultaneously or sequentially (Wood *et al.*, 2015, p. 364). Researchers in the field of multi-locality studies have sought to explain how the mobility of people, goods, images, and information all contribute to the continuous transformation of relations, institutions and places. While some authors have emphasized de-territorialization and the fluidity of space as crucial features (or even drivers) of current social transformations (Bauman, 2000), others such as Sheller and Urry (2006, p. 210) claimed that research on various forms of physical and non-physical mobilities should not lead to a “freedom or liberation from space and place”. Accordingly, studies on multi-locality are interested in the social implications of spatial mobility and of living in multiple places. Scholars are just beginning to fully understand its tremendous impact on cities, neighbourhoods, and communities. Multi-locals are “constituting their own spaces (...) through a very wide range of social practices, contributing to the transformation of the territories they cross on a daily basis, redefining (...) the society they come from” (Bergamaschi & Piro, 2018, pp. 8-11; *our translation*)³. Focusing on and interrogating multi-locality allows us to understand social life in its complexity, taking into account not only

-
- 1 Alberio, Marco, Università di Bologna, Italy, marco.alberio2@unibo.it (ORCID: 0000-0002-7713-9639); Caiello, Simone, Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca, Italy, simone.caiello@unimib.it (ORCID: 0000-0001-8641-1406) Schlinzig, Tino, ETH Wohnforum - ETH CASE, Zurich, Switzerland, schlinzig@arch.ethz.ch, (ORCID: 0009-0008-9534-9657)
 - 2 “Multilokalität bedeutet *Vita activa* an mehreren Orten: Der tägliche Lebensalltag in seiner Gesamtheit verteilt sich auf verschiedene Orte, die in mehr oder weniger großen Zeiträumen aufgesucht und mit einer mehr oder weniger großen Funktionsteiligkeit genutzt werden.” (Rolshoven, 2006, p. 181).
 - 3 “costituendo propri spazi e pratiche [...] attraverso una serie molto ampia di pratiche sociali, contribuiscono a trasformare i territori che quotidianamente attraverso, ridefinendo [...] la società di provenienza” (Bergamaschi & Piro, 2018, pp. 8-11).

the temporality and socio-historical context in which social actors are embedded, but also their structural constraints and capacities of agency in a condition of systemic interdependence of the social dimensions (Alberio, 2020; Carpentier & White, 2013). As Greinke and Lange (2022) have noticed, multi-locality leads to temporary presences and absences with complex consequences for affected places, impacts on people's civic engagement, and entails ecological consequences that are not yet fully understood.

Previous studies on multi-locality have shown a great variety of theoretical and methodological approaches addressing different analytical levels (Weichhart, 2015). At the micro level, for instance, studies have focussed on *doing multi-local family* after separation, divorce, or due to job-related reasons (Merla & Nobels, 2021; Toppel, 2020; Halatcheva-Trapp *et al.*, 2019). In addition, multi-locality has been studied as a chosen arrangement and solution for managing long-distance relationships (LAT) (Döbler, 2020). At the macro level, scholars have examined multi-locality in relation to socio-economic inequalities and its implications for spatial planning (Danielzyk & Dittrich-Wesbuer *et al.*, 2020; Scheiner, 2020). In recent years, the focus has broadened from analyzing multi-local life and practices to the examination of potential policies able to address the needs of multi-locals, communities, and infrastructures. New housing, work and care solutions are being studied and proposed, which aim to help the growing number of affected people and to inform policymakers. Studies have also provided insights into changes affecting the labour market, as Garde and Greinke (2022) highlight. In line with other researchers in the field, they emphasize the accelerating flexibilization of the labour market, as well as societal and demographic changes that would eventually lead greater numbers of people to live in multiple places for work-related reasons. Job-related multi-locality is therefore an emerging topic for researchers and planners that requires more detailed investigation (Skora *et al.*, 2012; Schneider & Collet, 2010). In addition, studies in multi-locality increasingly point to the impact of second home ownership on the economic structure, social cohesion, and civic engagement of vacation destinations - a phenomenon particularly linked to rural areas (Greinke & Lange, 2022; Pikner *et al.*, 2022; Perlik, 2020). As well, issues related to the sustainability of multi-local living arrangements have thus far received only limited attention, despite the fact that multi-locality contributes to increased traffic and environmental pollution, as argued by Greinke and Lange (2022). This special issue includes contributions that emphasize multi-localism as a component of contemporary working conditions (cfr. the contribution by Lisa Garde and Cornelia Toppel), as a facilitator of current work arrangements, and a product of specific professions (cfr. Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay & Anne Gilet), as well as a tool of inquiry (cfr. Lena Greinke's contribution to this special issue).

Decisions regarding location are often driven by work-related constraints that must be balanced with family-related constraints, an issue that is being strongly reshaped by contemporary changes in corporate arrangements, technological developments, and new mobility opportunities and practices. These dynamics of change have been unfolding through new arrangements made possible by the connectivity, ubiquity, and reversibility of recent developments in mobility (Kaufmann, 2002). Multiple and more accessible means of transportation allow flexibility in terms of territory and space, offering potential solutions to the need to manage presence in absence under the condition of multi-locality. In this volume, Garde and Toppel aim to analyze "the dilemmas arising from multi-local employees' strong corporate ties on the one hand and their personal and as well as their partners' or families' needs on the other". The ambivalence of balancing the productive and reproductive spheres of life on the one hand, and an employee's commitment to a company and its ability to support its employees on the other, is the focus of their study. While mobility can enable or even promote certain work arrangements, it can also be a distinct feature of a profession itself, as Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay and Anne Gilet show in their research on flight attendants. In addition to the impact of workload, the transnational work schedule of this particular group of employees places a significant burden on work-life balance. This is particularly evident with regard to childcare, where the challenges of working away

from home without family support are compounded by time differences due to their crossing of multiple time zones, exhibited as jet lag (cfr. Tremblay & Gillet). This is a vivid example of the interplay between certain socio-technical conditions imposed by a professional field and the subsequent everyday life challenges of multi-localism.

Following Marcus' (1995) proposal of a multi-sited ethnography, the exploration of multi-locality requires a certain degree of mobility itself and a set of corresponding empirical methods (Hein *et al.*, 2019; Schier *et al.*, 2015). The article by Lena Greinke in this special issue contributes to this body of literature by providing an overview of recent applications of *reflexive photography* in combination with established qualitative approaches, relating it to the field of emotionally-related personal and social dynamics of multi-local experiences. She emphasizes that visual methods are well-suited to address spatial issues, as it allows access to spaces through their visual representation as produced by the interviewee. This is possible because "the photos offer the possibility to quickly and technically easily capture visible information" (cfr. Greinke). Photographs trigger emotional moments in interviews, she argues; they encourage interviewees to reflect otherwise unconscious everyday life practices. In addition to these three papers, this special issue collects reviews of three books published in recent years that approach multi-locality from different angles. In 2020, addressing space and enabling factors for multi-local lifestyles in Italy, Bruna Vendemmia published with Routledge *Spaces for highly mobile people: emerging practices of mobility in Italy*, which provides insights into dynamics that produce "the (re-)design of spaces which support or enable intensive, above-average mobility and are reflected in the planning of cities and transportation", as Marie-Kristin Döbler points out in her review of the book. Vendemmia's work offers an analysis of the ways in which people appropriate spaces and territories in the context of current economic, social and technological processes of acceleration, digitalization and flexibilization. Reversibility, simultaneity, and mobility contribute to the compression and redefinition of the meaning of space and time, producing new social profiles, expressing ideal types of highly mobile subjects. The book's qualitative interview material allows for a better understanding of the experiences of multi-local travellers and contributes to current debates on mobility and its meaning for people and territories in several fields: from geographical research on transport and mobility to urban studies and planning.

The 2022 book *Deux maisons un chez-soi? Expérience de vie de jeunes en hébergement égalitaire* ('Two houses, one home? Experience of young people in shared residence arrangements'), published by Editions Academia-EME and authored by Belgian sociologists Bérengère Nobles and Laura Merla, was reviewed by Daniela Moisa. It focuses on the everyday life and identity of young Belgian teenagers living in shared residence arrangements after parental dissolution. It critically analyzes the specific conditions of multi-local arrangements after separation and divorce, highlighting how "multiple homes can potentially be a resource rather than a handicap for identity construction" (Nobles & Merla, 2022, p. 18; *our translation*⁴). By studying teenagers' relationships with objects, spaces, and homes, the authors were able to understand how the teenagers de/reconstruct family under conditions of multi-locality and related mobilities. Johanna Hiitola, Kati Turtiainen, Sabine Gruber, and Marja Tiilikainen introduce a macro-sociological perspective on family relations in their 2020 book entitled *Family Life in Transition. Borders, Transnational Mobility, and Welfare Society in Nordic Countries*, published by Routledge. As reviewer Brunella Fiore highlights, this work offers a rich interdisciplinary perspective, incorporating family sociology, migration studies, and social policy to understand the family life and parenting practices of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, as well as indigenous Sámi parents, in the context of changing welfare systems in the Northern European countries of Finland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. The authors comprehensively discuss parenthood, motherhood, separations, cultural transmission, and cross-border commuting as they are affected by national migration regimes. As these societies have been challenged by recent economic and social transformations, analy-

4 "disposer de plusieurs espaces de vie peut potentiellement constituer une ressource, plutôt qu'un handicap, pour la construction de l'identité" (Nobles & Merla, 2022, p. 18)

zing the complexity of family lives through the lens of welfare state policies adds another layer of insight to the research on multilocality collected in this special issue.

Finally, this special issue concludes with an interview on recent developments in multi-locality studies and its potential future paths with family researcher Laura Merla. Recognized as one of the most prolific scholars in the field, her work is rooted in the sociology of transnational family studies, but has expanded into social geography, sociology of space and the field of multi-locality studies. She highlights that "one of the central questions posed by multi-locality concerns the ability to 'make do' with multiple territorial anchors and to create stability and continuity in this context". Space, in her understanding, gets multiplied, re-shaped, is always in transformation, is reduced in terms of 'factor of friction' or extended in terms of object of experience. Accordingly, she stresses the relevance of time, continuous processes of synchronization and de-synchronization in order to create "stability and continuity" and "presence in absence". This is an oxymoronic condition, in constant mutation, and of increasing relevance in the contemporary world, where social entropy is growing, and new arrangements appear. Multi-locality studies aim to contribute to a better understanding of current trends at the intersection of housing and mobility. Considering the growing significance of multi-locality, seen in its multiple dimensions, and not solely within Western societies, the existing literature is still relatively limited and there are numerous questions to be addressed in future research.

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«I'd rather live in Munich, but my job in Stuttgart is more attractive». The role of corporate ties in decisions to maintain multi-local living arrangements²

Introduction

In industrial countries, employees in knowledge-based or creative sectors in particular tend to regularly change jobs. The spatial distribution of job opportunities leads to internal migration mainly to regions with thick labour markets (Green, 2018) and to increasing work-related mobility such as long-distance commuting (Bauder, 2015). Over the last decades, increasing numbers of employees find themselves living in more than one place - so-called 'multi-local living' (Hilti, 2009). At the same time, the increasing flexibilization of labour markets as well as progressing demographic change are leading to skills shortages even in economically dynamic regions, with a high number of vacancies in the above-mentioned sectors. To attract and retain a highly qualified workforce, corporate ties are increasingly becoming an important issue in the competition for employees.

The literature in human resource management and the sociology of work shows that employees who are satisfied with their jobs, who have developed a good work-life balance, including flexible working arrangements and who have a strong organisational commitment are less likely to change jobs (Meyer, Allen, 1997; Allen *et al.*, 2015; Rubenstein *et al.*, 2018). This literature implicitly assumes that employees live close to their workplace or at least within daily commuting distance. In spatial sciences, the topic of corporate ties is rarely examined, above all not in association with multi-local living. Literature focusing on knowledge and creative workers has shown that factors other from hard location factors influence staying in one place. However, this strand of literature also mostly focuses on people living only in one place.

This contribution aims to expand these strands of literature by emphasising that people are often tied to more than one place. In our study, we consider the complexity of mobility decisions, the relationship between people and places as well as the 'linked lives' of people (Findlay *et al.* 2015) - especially negotiations within couples and families (e.g., Green, 1997; Blaauboer *et al.*, 2011) - taking account of the processual and relational nature of multi-local living (Schier *et al.*, 2015).

Therefore, this paper analyses the corporate ties of multi-local employees and how they influence multi-local living arrangements. Furthermore, the paper examines the dilemmas arising from multi-local employees' strong corporate ties on the one hand and their personal and as well as their partners' or families' needs on the other. With specific reference to employees in Stuttgart (Germany), the research questions are: 1) Why did multi-local employees decide for Stuttgart and their current workplace? 2) How are strong corporate ties of multi-local employees shaped? 3) And which dilemmas arise from strong corporate ties and couples' and family needs and how are they resolved?

The analysis draws on 24 problem-oriented interviews with multi-local employees working in knowledge-based sectors such as engineering or academia having a residence in Stuttgart and another one outside the region. Providing a high number of such jobs, Stuttgart, a major city in South-West Germany, serves as our case study.

The paper is structured as follows: In our literature review, we focus on location decisions of knowledge workers, corporate ties as well as personal, couples' and family needs. The third section describes our research design and presents the case study city. Our findings are presented

1 Lisa Garde, ILS - Research Institute for Regional and Urban Development, lisa.garde@ils-forschung.de, ORCID: 0000-0002-7504-6922; Cornelia Toppel, ILS - Research Institute for Regional and Urban Development, cornelia.toppel@ils-forschung.de, ORCID: 0000-0003-3392-2637.

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in two sub-sections: 1) Reasons why multi-local employees came to Stuttgart and to their current workplace; and 2) Strong corporate ties, related dilemmas and how they are resolved. The paper then discusses the findings and ends by drawing conclusions and providing proposals for future research.

1. Literature review

1.1 Location decisions of knowledge workers

A significant strand of literature on employees' location decisions has developed, in particular from an urban and economic geography perspective. This strand of literature focuses on the relevance and prioritisation of various factors in the location decisions of knowledge or creative workers. In our study, we focus on knowledge workers, though also consider the literature on creative workers and their location decisions, and understood decisions about internal migration or becoming multi-local as 'holistic investment decisions based on long-term as much as short-term considerations, while assuming that these considerations are both rational and conscious to varying degrees' (Halfacree, Rivera, 2012, p. 101). Internal migration is conceptualised as a 'labour market adjustment process' adjusting the spatial distribution of job opportunities and thus explaining it with advanced job opportunities at the destination region, e.g., economically dynamic areas, compared to the source region (Green, 2018, p. 38). Maintaining a continuous working career is one of the major reasons for internal migration decisions in the working age population (Morrison, Clark, 2011). Thus, motives for internal migration might not directly be aimed at the current job or avoidance of unemployment, but at future employment, upward social mobility and career prospects (also in terms of financial security) (Bartolini *et al.*, 2017). Especially urban agglomerations are seen as 'thick labour markets' offering job opportunities of higher quantity and quality (Green, 2018). Explaining the career outcomes when people move to dynamic urban agglomerations and leave after a time is central to 'escalator' theories (Fielding, 1992; Findlay *et al.*, 2008). However, these studies do not examine whether the observed effects are considered by workers in their initial location decision-making. Gordon *et al.* (2015) study assumes that these moves are also related to gaining professional experience and networks that might also be beneficial in other types of cities. Montanari *et al.* (2018) have shown the relevance of subjective job-related factors such as a job opportunity matching individual professional quests.

Studies focusing on attracting and retaining knowledge workers have shown that hard location factors seem to be more important for attracting workers, while soft location factors are more important for retaining them (Musterd, Murie, 2010). Decisions to maintain a job are made based on living experiences compared to expectations and an evaluation of alternatives of where to live (Hracs, Stolarick, 2014). Qualitative research has pointed to factors such as local atmosphere and personal networks for staying in cities that are not so attractive (Ehrenfeucht, Nelson, 2018). Within these studies, ties to the organisation where one works are often not considered. They implicitly focus on people with only one option for decision-making, thereby lacking a deeper insight into the fine-grained decision-making processes in which people weigh up different factors and possibly end up deciding to establish or maintain a second residence. They also implicitly assume that decisions to stay are made only between the single city where one works and lives and other potential cities and thus neglecting people who are tied to more than one place.

1.2 Corporate ties

Also, corporate ties of multi-local employees have rarely been studied so far. To investigate the work-related and personal reasons why employees stay at their workplace, we draw primarily on

organisational commitment as a concept in human resource management, by complementing it with literature on, amongst others, job satisfaction, organisational embeddedness and personal factors.

Organisational commitment (OC) is defined as an attitude and desire to remain within an organisation (Meyer, Allen, 1991), here with an employer. It describes the extent to which an employee is connected to or identifies with the employer. There is a positive correlation between OC and desirable outcomes such as high performance, low staff turnover, and low absenteeism (Meyer, Allen, 1997). Thus, a strong OC has advantages for both employers and employees. Allen and Meyer (1990) developed a scale with three dimensions to measure OC quantitatively:

Affective organisational commitment describes employees' high emotional attachment to their employer (Luthans, 2010) including, for instance, stable social relationships with colleagues or superiors and identification with the employer's goals and the assigned work. In addition, a high degree of flexibility and support can contribute to people feeling connected to their employer (ibidem). People with a high affective OC are intrinsically motivated to work for their employer and can hardly imagine changing jobs (Felfe, 2008).

Continuance organisational commitment refers to loyalty to a company for cost avoidance reasons. Employees with a high continuance OC do not change jobs due to such reasons as salary level, position, networks which they might lose on changing jobs (Luthans, 2010) or lack of job alternatives. When better job opportunities arise, employees with a high continuance OC, but low affective commitment are likely to quit (Felfe, 2008).

Normative organisational commitment exists when employees do not leave their employer for ethical and moral reasons. For instance, if a company has supported employees through a trainee programme, they feel obliged to stay (Luthans, 2010).

While OC is the employees' attitude towards their employer, *job satisfaction* means the employees' attitude to various aspects of a job (Avunduk, 2021). Thus, employees might feel positive about their employer, while being unsatisfied with their job with that employer. Internal job satisfaction means, e.g., the usage of skills, creativity and responsibility, while external job satisfaction relates to working conditions or employer practices (ibidem).

Organisational commitment, job satisfaction and thus employees' willingness to maintain a job have been linked to flexible working arrangements. Especially working from home which has increased during the Covid-19 pandemic (Geh, 2022) can contribute to enhanced job and life satisfaction, especially among high-skilled employees (Wheatley, 2016), reduced work-family conflicts (Allen *et al.*, 2013), more family and leisure time and thus to an improved work-life balance (Geh, 2022). It can also improve opportunities for employees living in specific areas, such as rural areas, which usually do not provide thick labour markets and job opportunities of high quality and quantity (Allen *et al.*, 2015). However, working from home can have negative impacts such as a lack of separation between work and private life (Allen *et al.*, 2013) or social and professional isolation (Kurland, Cooper, 2002).

In one of the rare studies linking location decisions with organisational perspectives, Montanari *et al.* (2018, 1125) employ the concept of organisational embeddedness: 'the forces that affect a person's intention to stay in her present employment setting in terms of fit with the organisation, links developed with organisational members, and the sacrifice an individual would incur if she leaves her present organisation'. In their empirical study, the primary motivation to staying in the city was related to organisational embeddedness. Organisational embeddedness is linked with opportunities for skills development, collaborative work environments within and outside the organisation and the potential to develop a network of personal contacts relevant for work, thus enhancing future employability in the respective sector. Moreover, negative aspects of the job are compensated by positive ones.

Apart from work-related aspects, the literature also mentions relevant personal factors influencing employees' willingness to maintain a job. The older employees are, the less likely they are to leave the company (Rubenstein *et al.*, 2018). Younger people have higher expectations of their

company and are therefore more willing to seek their fortune with a new one. Furthermore, employees with children are more likely to stay with the company. However, there is a lack of studies on corporate ties and the turnover of employees who do not live within daily commuting distance.

1.3 Location decisions and corporate ties of multi-local employees

As mentioned above, internal migration is often aimed at future employment and career prospects and to maintaining a continuous working career (Morrison, Clark, 2011). Scholars have argued for taking account of a complex set of motives in the decision-making process and, thereby, of motives and contexts beyond economic reasons for internal migration (e.g., Halfacree, Rivera, 2012). Similar needs, restrictions and ties are considered in decisions to become multi-local (Hilti, 2009). Having more than one residence has been understood as a strategy to extend (job) opportunities (Weichhart, 2015).

As multi-local employees are present in and absent from places alternatingly, their living arrangements do not only affect multi-local individuals themselves, but also their partners and families (Van der Klis, Karsten, 2009; Schier *et al.*, 2015) such as time together spent together, distribution of household and care duties. Similar to that, internal migration decisions are seen as household decisions where not only job opportunities but also the needs, spatial ties and 'linked lives' of all household members are considered (Findlay *et al.*, 2015). Complementing this, there is an extensive literature dealing with local and distant ties and family migration (e.g., Van der Klis, Karsten, 2009; Mulder, Malmberg, 2014), as well as the negotiations within couples and families (e.g., Green, 1997; Blaauboer *et al.*, 2011).

Acknowledging that people can have multiple ties and more than one relevant place at the same time (Halfacree, 2012), emotional and personal reasons built an important part of spatial ties while hard factors such as home-ownership, a partner's job or children's schools further contribute to them (Schier *et al.*, 2015). People living multi-locally with their aim to combine important life domains at different places might be especially reliant on the reconciliation of different life domains due to absence-related time constraints. It could be assumed that such aspects form an important part of the organisational commitment and job satisfaction of multi-locals. Especially working from home has been seen as being important to combine living in several places (Van der Klis, 2009; Garde, 2021) and thus presumably for strong corporate ties of multi-local employees.

2. Research design and description of the case study city

The paper focuses on a city characterised by a tight labour market in the tech sector. Located in South-West Germany, Stuttgart has 636,000 inhabitants and is one of Germany's most dynamic regions. Knowledge-based industries are among the key sectors and the city is known for its international tech and automotive companies. Furthermore, it features above-average income levels and is easy to reach for commuters and multi-local employees due to its good transport connections. Due to demographic change and a high share of specialised jobs, forecasts for 2035 see a skills shortage in highly qualified jobs of up to 25 percent of positions (BWIHK, 2022), increasingly forcing employers to recruit people from outside the region and to retain them. Using Stuttgart as case study city, we examine decisions to move to and stay in a city offering a tight labour market in a specific sector.

To capture the complexity of multi-local employees' corporate and spatial ties, an explorative-qualitative research design was chosen. The participants were recruited via social media groups as well as mailing lists of academic networks. They had to meet the following selection

criteria: a) working in a knowledge-based sector; b) living in Stuttgart primarily for work reasons; c) having a further residence at least one hour away; and d) having at least a monthly commuting rhythm with a minimum of 60 nights per year spent in each residence. The paper draws on 24 problem-oriented interviews (Witzel, 2000), including narrative elements with multi-local employees, conducted in German in 2018 and 2019. The interviews lasted 80 to 120 minutes. All citations in this article were translated into English by the authors. For data protection reasons, participants' names were pseudonymized, only the first letter of all places mentioned (except Stuttgart) is shown and company names are completely pseudonymized.

Our participants (see Table 1) consisted of 16 male and 8 female multi-local employees with a median age of 31. 15 had permanent contracts, 9 fixed-term ones. Twelve participants were 'shuttles', i.e., employees living and working in Stuttgart, but with their main residence elsewhere. Ten were living-apart-together partners (LAT-partners), i.e., people in long-distance relationships with two separate households, while two were 'young multi-local employees', i.e., people working and living in Stuttgart and at the same time at their parents' homes (Garde, 2021).

Although not representative, the research provides in-depth insights into the considerations of multi-local employees, focusing on their corporate ties as well as personal conditions and needs. The interviews were recorded, fully transcribed, and analysed in accordance with qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2021) using the MAXQDA software. We used Allen and Meyer's (1990) quantitative approach to assess participants' organisational commitment from their narrations, taking the dimensions and underlying items into account.

Table 1. Overview of research participants

Name	Age	Sex	company	Employment contract	Form of multi-local employee	Preferred place of residence	Corporate ties
Alexander	23	male	large	fixed-term	Young	Stuttgart	average
Bernd	38	male	large	permanent	Shuttle	both	strong
Christoph	42	male	SME	permanent	Shuttle	both	strong
Daniela	30	female	large	permanent	Shuttle	other	strong
Esther	31	female	Public authority	permanent	Shuttle	other	average
Felix	25	male	large	fixed-term seconded	LAT-partner	open	average
Gregor	27	male	Research institute	fixed-term	LAT-partner	open	average
Heiko	32	male	Research institute	fixed-term	LAT-partner	Stuttgart	average
Inga	30	female	Foundation	permanent	Shuttle	other	strong
Jonas	31	male	SME	permanent	LAT-partner	Stuttgart	average
Kai	28	male	large	permanent	LAT-partner	open	strong
Léon	27	male	large	permanent	LAT-partner	other	strong
Michaela	30	female	SME	permanent	LAT-partner	open	average
Nils	34	male	large	permanent	Shuttle	both	strong
Oliver	33	male	Research institute	fixed-term	LAT-partner	open	low
Pia	33	female	SME	permanent	LAT-partner	Stuttgart	strong
Raúl	52	male	large	permanent	Shuttle	both	strong
Stefanie	31	female	large	fixed-term	Shuttle	other	average
Tim	37	male	Research institute	fixed-term	Shuttle	both	strong
Uwe	47	male	Research institute	fixed-term	Shuttle	both	average
Vincent	40	male	Research institute	fixed-term	LAT-partner	open	low
William	31	male	Research institute	fixed-term	Shuttle	open	average
Xenia	28	female	SME	permanent	Young	both	strong
Yasemin	39	female	SME	permanent	Shuttle	both	strong

3. Empirical findings

This section presents our empirical findings, showing the reasons why participants came to Stuttgart and their workplace. We describe how strong corporate ties of multi-local employees are shaped, which dilemmas arise from strong corporate ties and specific couples' and family needs and how these dilemmas are resolved.

3.1 Why multi-local employees came to Stuttgart and to their workplace

This section focuses on the complex decision-making processes behind why multi-local employees came to Stuttgart and their workplace, albeit not focusing on why they decided to keep their other residence and live multi-locally, as a large corpus of literature on this aspect exists. We discuss the various reasons why participants applied for jobs in Stuttgart and - in the case of several job offers - why they decided to accept their job.

First, it must be noted that the number of available jobs was limited for each participant, meaning that they were mostly unable to choose between several job offers and deliberately decide where to work. It was generally a coincidence that they had found their current job and not another job.

«You never choose where you work, you just choose where you apply. And whether you accept an offer. [...] Of course, I wanted to go there [current employer], but the fact that I ended up there and not anywhere else is because I got an offer at exactly that time and accepted it». (Kai)

Work-related reasons

Several work-related reasons were linked to the specific economic structure of Stuttgart, in particular its regional specialisation, though tight labour markets in these sectors were not mentioned. As participants were working in knowledge-based sectors such as engineering or IT and the city is well-known for its tech companies, some participants consciously searched for jobs here and applied to specific employers. Many of those working in highly specialised jobs even felt forced to work in Stuttgart, as their jobs and similar positions were not available in other regions of Germany due to the spatial distribution of job opportunities. Raúl, who lives in the city of A together with his family, explained: «If I take my experience in my specific field to Stuttgart, it has more value than near A».

Many participants applied in Stuttgart because salaries were higher than elsewhere in Germany: «An engineer can find a job everywhere, but when it comes to salaries, especially in Stuttgart, it's oceans apart». (Bernd). Nevertheless, the salary needs to cover not only usual living expenses, but also costs related to multi-local living arrangements such as housing and commuting between places of residence.

Participants working in jobs such as engineering or IT consciously searched for jobs in Stuttgart and applied to specific employers due to their positive image. Kai's company «always features among the top three employers in Germany. People apply on their own. They don't need to do any marketing».

The specific sectoral structure of Stuttgart can contribute to subjective professional benefits. Working for certain employers contributes to building up career capital and professional networks, thereby raising expectations of future employability and improved career prospects after working there, an aspect mentioned as a key argument particularly for employees at the beginning of their career. Alexander applied for his company far away from his hometown to improve his career prospects: «If you have the chance to put that company on your CV... Once you've been there for two years, you'll be accepted almost anywhere».

Existing networks helped employees get a job. Participants already with roots in Stuttgart, were able to build on existing professional networks, as Heiko explained: «I wrote my diploma thesis at this institute and applied there». Similarly, existing personal networks helped participants: «A friend referred me to my boss, who is very active in my specific field» (William).

Further reasons for accepting the job include gaining diversified work experience, such as «to have a look at something else» (Nils).

Others applied to their employers due to specific company sizes. For example, Yasemin switched from a large company to her current SME because «in big companies, you're just a number. In smaller companies I like that family-like atmosphere». By contrast, Léon wanted to work in a big company to have the chance of gaining experience in different work areas: «It is easier to change work within a company than between two companies».

Also, the impression gained during the job interview, e.g., of potential superiors or working atmosphere, featured among the reasons for accepting a job offer. Jonas «had the best overall impression of the atmosphere here».

In the case of having more than one job offer, the promised support for multi-local living arrangements such as financial support or telework were important reasons for accepting the job. This was especially the case for 'shuttles', such as Christoph:

«My boss wanted me to be there the whole week, I said: 'No, my centre of life will remain in B. If we do five days, my centre of life is Stuttgart' [...] We agreed that I fly to Stuttgart on Tuesday and return on Thursday».

In contrast to these more voluntary motives of living multi-locally, some participants felt forced to take up their job far away from their main residence. Many employees in project-based jobs, e.g., in the IT sector, are seconded to different locations as part of their job description as a consultant. Felix had a permanent contract with an IT company at his girlfriend's place of residence but was seconded to Stuttgart. He could «not choose the location and had no word in it».

Others felt forced to live multi-locally as there were no other job opportunities available at the time. Particularly, young participants were unable to choose between several positions and took up the first job offer they received. Stefanie applied within her company for a job close to her main residence, but was not accepted for that job, but instead for the job in Stuttgart. Even though she found it too far away from her hometown, she liked the promised working tasks and was thinking about her future employability:

«I wrote an incredible number of applications. [...] I was faced with the decision: Do I move far away to my current company to get my foot in the door or do I keep trying and end up somewhere out of necessity? It might be a worse job».

Personal reasons

Although work-related reasons played a decisive role in deciding to work and live in Stuttgart, personal reasons for applying and taking up a job there were mentioned due to the 'linked lives' of couples and families. LAT-partners based their workplace decisions on proximity to their partner, with places of residence supposed to be within weekly commuting distance: «My job search radius was 200km around my girlfriend's study location» (Gregor).

In other cases, living close to family and friends was a reason to choose a job in Stuttgart. Jonas had two job offers. He chose the one in Stuttgart due to the company itself and to the fact that he could «reach most of the friends and family within two hours».

After her studies, Esther wanted to move closer to her hometown. She consciously applied in Stuttgart and not in other regions within feasible weekly commuting distance, as her «brother, his wife and a good friend live in Stuttgart, meaning I already have connections».

No participant spoke of Stuttgart's amenities, such as infrastructures or the natural environment as reasons to apply there. But many younger employees decided to apply there, even though the city was far away from their hometown, as they wanted to experience «something different» concerning their place of residence and thus experience (temporary) multi-locality, such as Michaela:

«I wrote one application, which was farther away - in Stuttgart. The interview was really cool. I had several other jobs offers, but I said 'This is my chance to get away, to get to know something new. I'll probably only do this once in my life, to go somewhere where I don't know anyone. I'll do it now'».

In all cases, no single factor was important for deciding for the workplace in Stuttgart. Decisions were prompted by multiple work-related and personal reasons. Léon described his decision to work in Germany for an IT company, weighing up a bundle of reasons:

«I wanted to gain international experience in my career [...] In Germany and Northern Europe, salaries are high for engineers. That was an argument. Not the main one, not third best one, but it's still a good thing to think about. [...] There aren't jobs everywhere. It's a kind of specialised area. [...] I had several interviews. The one at my company: first, the interview went very well with the guys and the work seemed very interesting. [...] I thought it was the best option and the company is also a big name. That surely has an influence. Plus, Stuttgart is not far from France, so I get to see my friends in N or my parents in L.»

Similarly, employees accepted jobs because of the «best fit» (Kai). Work-related reasons such as salary levels and the subjective work area were decisive for accepting positions in Stuttgart, albeit in different combinations. Personal reasons such as Stuttgart being close(r) to the partner and family further determined decisions to accept jobs.

3.2 How strong corporate ties are shaped, related dilemmas and how they are resolved

In this section, we look at the corporate ties of multi-local employees and how these affect possible intentions to quit Stuttgart and the job. One third of participants could imagine staying with their current employer and remaining multi-local in the future. Two-thirds planned to stop living multi-locally soon. Among those, plans were mixed: four planned to only keep their residence in Stuttgart, five planned to only keep their other residence, while seven were open about where to live in the future. Concerning corporate ties, two participants had low corporate ties, ten average ties, and twelve strong ties. We focus on those with strong corporate ties. Furthermore, we will discuss the dilemmas arising from strong corporate ties and how these are resolved.

Staying due to strong corporate ties

Twelve participants had developed strong corporate ties via a combination of affective and continuance OC as well as organisational embeddedness. Strong affective OC was due to satisfaction with the assigned job, relationships to colleagues, flexible working time, or the superiors' acceptance of living multi-locally. Most of them also had a strong continuance OC when job opportunities at their other place of residence were limited or due to the higher salaries paid in Stuttgart. In the case of participants with average corporate ties, while their affective OC was less developed, their continuance OC was very pronounced. Many said they would quit if suitable job opportunities arose elsewhere (e.g., at their other place of residence). In all cases, normative OC was rather low, with no one expressing ethical or moral reasons for staying with their employer. Multi-local employees intending to live a mono-local life faced few tensions when they had developed strong corporate and spatial ties to Stuttgart and when their partner or family were willing to relocate to Stuttgart. This comprises four participants - interestingly three with average and one with strong corporate ties. As they would be able to live with their partner or families at their preferred place, tensions and conflicts were low.

Pia works in Stuttgart and lives in a LAT-partnership. She has developed a strong affective OC: she sees herself «as a PAKler», likes her colleagues and «feel[s] really comfortable» at work. Pia and her boyfriend have a strong attachment to Stuttgart as both grew up there. They plan to live together there as their single place of living, because «to start a family we want to be close to our parents». Her boyfriend's company has a department in Stuttgart, and Pia is sure he will be able to relocate to Stuttgart soon.

This is a typical case of multi-local employees where everything fits into implementing the plan of living together in the future.

Eight participants, most of them already deep into their professional careers, could imagine living multi-locally in the long term. One had average corporate ties and seven strong ties. Living multi-locally was accepted initially or over time and had since become a practice no longer questioned by themselves or family members. As they and their families accepted their temporary absences, they did not see their multi-local living arrangements as producing dilemmas or great tensions within their social relationships. Aware that there were no (good) job opportunities available close to their other place of residence, they received support for their multi-local living arrangements.

52-year-old 'shuttle' Raúl intends to stay with his company for a long time. Because of his specialised profession, he has lived multi-locally almost his entire professional life and is used to only seeing his family at weekends. He has a strong affective OC due to his work, but also due to receiving «a lot of recognition from the boss and colleagues» and being able «to decide what to improve at work». Allowed to work from his main residence once a week and with his commuting time counting as working time, he enjoys a flexibility facilitating his living arrangement.

Quitting despite strong corporate ties

Most participants with strong corporate ties and strong ties to Stuttgart assumed they would stay at their current workplace for a long time. But because of their partners' ties, they would like to stop living multi-locally, forming a dilemma for them.

33-year-old Daniela has her main residence together with her boyfriend in H. She has been working at her company in Stuttgart for seven years, developing a mix of strong affective and continuance OC. She feels «branded, having experienced much with the company». Moreover, her «bosses take care that [she] can develop the career». At the same time, she «feel[s] very good in Stuttgart», amongst others because of her friends. Due to her strong corporate and spatial ties, she faces a dilemma: on the one hand, she wants to stop commuting as she is «extremely annoyed by the commute» and wants to start a family. On the other hand, her company has no location in H and there are no other employers in her field of work: «If it wasn't for my boyfriend living in H, I would stay in Stuttgart, because the whole package suits me». However, they want to live close to one of their families: «My boyfriend's family lives in H and my family is not in Stuttgart either». In her view, her boyfriend's ties to H are stronger than hers to Stuttgart. «That's why at some point I said, 'I'll come to H, even if it's not ideal for me from a job perspective'».

In other cases, partners could imagine living in Stuttgart but were not able to work there due to the specialised nature of their jobs and the regional specialisation of Stuttgart.

Léon has developed strong corporate ties, because he feels comfortable at work due to, e.g., social contacts or space-time flexibility. He wants to stay with the company in the future, but meeting his girlfriend has put paid to his plans, as she has a specific profession where no jobs are available in Stuttgart. Léon has had to decide whether to move to his girlfriend or stay with the company. As he is an engineer, «the chances of her moving here are much smaller than the chance of me moving there and finding something interesting to do». Thus, he decided to move to his girlfriend and leave his company. Despite his strong corporate ties, it was not that difficult for him, as he hardly had any other ties to Stuttgart.

Daniela and Léon are typical examples of multi-local employees in the (pre-)family formation phase. After living multi-locally for several years, the wish to live together in one place leads to increased tension and negotiations among couples about where to live and thus to a weighing of the needs of both partners. Daniela's case illustrates the prevalent argumentation in our research on how the regional distribution of sectors and job opportunities influence mobility decisions. Léon's case illustrates how the regional specialisation of Stuttgart can become an obstacle rather than an asset. In both cases, quitting the job and moving to the partner, even though not always ideal regarding job prospects, can be a solution to the private dilemmas in dual-earner couples. In these cases, the couples' needs such as living in one place to start a family were prioritised over the corporate ties of the partners.

Staying longer due to strong corporate ties

Some participants accepted the dilemmas - at least for a certain time - , resulting in enduring (temporary) multi-local living arrangements longer than initially intended due to strong corporate ties. Inga has her main residence in B with her boyfriend and her «expectation was to do a 15-month parental leave replacement» in Stuttgart. This period seemed «long, but bearable». Over time, she developed strong corporate ties, learning a lot and being given more responsibility. After one year, she was given a permanent contract. She felt a dilemma due to her corporate ties, as the commuting «put a strain on the relationship». As Inga «didn't want to pull up stakes in B» because of her friends and family there, she couldn't imagine moving to Stuttgart permanently. Eventually, instead of 15 months she stayed three and a half years, saying «that's typical when you enjoy a job and are passionate about it: You'd like to take this or that milestone or experience this or that».

There are also multi-local employees, especially LAT-partners, who temporarily accept their dilemmas. As none of the ten LAT-partners could imagine living multi-locally in the longer term, the decision about where to live with their partners was just postponed.

Kai has been working for an automotive company in Stuttgart for two years. He has developed a strong affective and continuance OC due to his identification with the company. Describing himself as «hooked on cars», he works for «one of the most respected employers in Germany», has «more responsibility than normal at that age» and «is moving up the career ladder». In his view, «leaving would be the stupidest thing to do». Kai and his girlfriend want to live together in the future. But his strong corporate ties and his girlfriend's ties to her hometown M pose a dilemma for the partners: «I'd rather live in M, but my job in Stuttgart is more attractive [...] Where we want to live in the future is a very difficult topic».

Inga and Kai are examples of multi-local employees staying much longer at their workplace and being passionate about working there due to their strong corporate ties and job satisfaction. In their cases, strong corporate ties weighed more than their personal and couple's needs, which have led to personal dilemmas such as partnership conflicts.

4. Discussion

The paper analysed the reasons for accepting a position in Stuttgart and living multi-locally. Moreover, it examined corporate ties and reasons for staying at their workplace or quitting, as well as dilemmas arising from living multi-locally and how these were resolved. Decisions on starting, continuing, or stopping living multi-locally are complex, as are all mobility decisions. In addition to existing literature focusing on reasons for becoming multi-locally (e.g., Hilti, 2009; Schier *et al.*, 2015), we discovered why multi-local employees decided for a job in Stuttgart and for their workplace. We found that the number of available jobs was limited for each participant and

that it was a coincidence that they had found their current job and not another one. Nevertheless, the reasons to apply and - in case of several job offers - decide to work in Stuttgart and for a specific employer were mostly linked to the spatial distribution of job opportunities in Germany and Stuttgart's regional specialisation in the tech sector, but interestingly not to its tight labour market. Thus, we assume that people initially living multi-locally focus more on their career capital and future employability - both locally and generally but not specifically in Stuttgart. This adds to 'escalator theories' that people already expect certain benefits for their future careers when moving to a specific place. These and further work-related reasons such as salary levels were decisive for accepting the job, while personal reasons such as being at least in weekly commuting distance to the partner and family further determined decisions to accept jobs. This underlines the dynamics between economic reasons such as job opportunities and couples' and family choices.

Furthermore, this paper focused on the corporate ties of multi-local employees and their intentions to stay in Stuttgart at their workplace. Even if the findings of Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997) on quantitatively measuring organisational commitment do not focus on employees living in several places, our analysis has confirmed that qualitative interviews are also suitable for studying corporate ties and especially those of multi-local employees. Our results show that multi-local employees can also develop different dimensions of OC: while some develop a (strong) affective OC, for instance due to their identification with the employer, others have (additionally) developed a (strong) continuance OC, for instance due to higher salaries paid in Stuttgart or limited job opportunities elsewhere (Luthans, 2010). Employees with only strong continuance OC tended to leave their companies, if better job opportunities came up. This applies to both mono-local employees and multi-local employees. Contrary to what is stated in the literature (Luthans, 2010), our participants' normative OC tended to be non-existent, with ethical or moral reasons being no motives for multi-local employees to stay.

Looking at affective and continuance OC, the same factors were found for both multi-local and mono-local employees, though certain factors seem to be more important for multi-locals. For instance, salaries needed to be high enough to cover additional expenses for living in more than one place, while employer support such as teleworking was a crucial factor prompting multi-locals to stay with their employer as it can lead to a good work-life balance (Van der Klis, 2009).

Literature assumes that (mono-local) employees with strong affective and continuance OC are likely to stay with their employer for a long time (Meyer, Allen, 1997; Luthans, 2010; Rubenstein *et al.*, 2018). By contrast, multi-local employees are more likely to quit, despite having developed strong corporate ties. Their subjective evaluation of maintaining multi-local living arrangements and staying at their workplace is complex, and underlines that multi-local individuals' decisions depend on job prospects and future employability as well as personal needs of both partners or all family members. Multi-local living does not only affect multi-local individuals, but also their household members (Van der Klis, Karsten, 2009; Schier *et al.*, 2015). Thus, couples' needs and the partners' spatial ties to the other residence can weigh more than strong corporate ties of the multi-local individuals. This also underlines that even strong corporate ties cannot prevent employees from quitting, if reasons to relocate to the other residence dominate. This finding also resembles previous studies pointing to different factors determining decisions to move on or stay (Ehrenfeucht, Nelson, 2018; Montanari *et al.*, 2018). When there are no job opportunities in the place where one wants to live in the future due to thin labour markets (e.g., in rural areas), tight labour markets (regional specialisation, e.g., in Stuttgart) or when professions are so specific that even in a thick labour market it is impossible to find a suitable job (personal specialisation), this can lead to work-related dilemmas. Only 'shuttles' with strong corporate ties, receiving employer support for their multi-local living arrangements by space-time-flexibility can imagine living multi-locally long-term. Some have come to terms with these arrangements because of their individual professional specialisation. If no solution to the dilemma of finding a common place of residence is found, some multi-local employees stay longer at their workplace and just postpone their decision to quit.

5. Conclusion

The study underlines the dynamics between structural factors such as spatial distribution of job opportunities and couples' and family needs on the other. Internal migration, long distance commuting, but also living multi-locally can be strategies to combine these structural factors and personal needs. We investigated, first, reasons for accepting a position in Stuttgart and thus living multi-locally and, later, for staying at a workplace or quitting. Involved in the decision-making process is a complex set of factors. While some participants felt forced to accept their job in Stuttgart and to live multi-locally - e.g., receiving only one job offer -, others voluntarily decided to take a job farther away from their other residence to gain experience in personal and work life, expressing a continuum between forced and voluntary multi-local living.

Strong corporate ties and the willingness to stay at a workplace can have advantages for both employers and employees. The study has shown that flexible working arrangements can facilitate multi-local living, contributing to strong corporate ties and a good work-life balance. Working remotely, which has increased due to the Covid-19 pandemic, is seen as a chance to widen job opportunities of knowledge workers (Bartik *et al.*, 2020). The implications of the pandemic on multi-local living arrangements in the long-term remain open. A decrease could be assumed if employees can end living multi-locally in case they are allowed to fully work from home. In contrast, a higher amount of households might consider living multi-locally as the possibilities to work from home might lead to extended search radiuses in residential location decisions and open up job opportunities farther away. Work flexibility can also mitigate structural factors when employees can live in areas offering limited job opportunities. Thus, further empirical research is needed on the impacts of increased possibilities to work from home on the living arrangements of households.

Finally, it should be noted that our results concerning corporate ties and couples' and family needs focus on knowledge workers. For other professional groups and regional contexts with a different sectoral structure, results might differ.

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Emotions through Photos in Qualitative Interviews with Multi-locals as a methodological challenge?²

Introduction: Multi-locality and Emotions

Researchers have discussed methods and emotions widely so far. In the literature, however, the two topics are mostly considered separately. A study on multi-local lifestyles in rural areas of Germany gives reason to link the two fields. Multi-locality as a way of living in several places at the same time is understood as a phenomenon of late modern societies. In this context, multi-locals spread their everyday life over two or more locations, which are used more or less functionally in different periods of time (Rolshoven, 2006, p. 181). Multi-locality distinguishes from circular daily commuting and migration: Circular (daily rhythmic) commuting is where individuals commute from an origin to a destination and back (Weichhart, 2009, p. 6). Migration involves a complete shift of residence across municipal or state boundaries (Weichhart, 2009, p. 6). Multi-locality represents a new pattern of mobility that lies between migration and circulation. The motives and reasons for living in several locations are just as diverse as the lifestyle (ARL, 2016, p. 4). There are leisure-, work-, training-, family-, partnership-, or origin-related forms that may even overlap (Hesse & Scheiner, 2007, p. 143; Dittrich-Wesbuer *et al.*, 2014, p. 361; ARL, 2021, p. 3). Multi-local lifestyles are not only found in urban but also in rural areas (cf. Lange, 2018; Greinke, 2020).

Multi-locality studies are traced back to various interdisciplinary research fields, such as mobility, migration, transnationalism, tourism, and second home studies, or housing, household, and family studies. Meanwhile, the term "*Residential Multi-locality Studies*" bundles numerous research papers and projects (Wood *et al.*, 2015, p. 367). Especially in spatial science, the research field has gained importance and is investigated with numerous qualitative and quantitative methods (e.g., Di Marino & Lapintie, 2018; Plöger, 2020; Garde, 2021). There are although some studies dealing with visual methods in different disciplines on diverse topics, for example, work-life biographies and reflexive photography of multi-locals (Garde & Greinke, 2022), the exploration of the social role of images (Burri, 2012), reflexive photography as a method of self-reflection for visual learners (Amerson & Livingston, 2014), the impact of photography to inspire and cultivate sociological mindfulness (Hyde 2015), methodological issues using photo-elicitation (Church & Quilter, 2021), the benefits of photo-elicitation in housing studies (Soaita & McKee, 2021) or the use of reflexive photography to investigate design affordances for creativity in digital entertainment games (Hall *et al.*, 2021). However, emotions have played no or subordinate role in the studies.

In science, emotions have been studied since the nineteen seventies (Schramm & Wirth, 2006, p. 25). Disciplines here include, for example, psychology, biology, ethics, philosophy, sociology and many more (Rosenthal, 2021, p. 12). There is a long history of emotion research, which is why defining and delimiting the subject of emotion seems complicated (Kappas & Müller, 2006, p. 4; Mau, 2009, p. 7; Brandstätter *et al.*, 2018, p. 164). Emotions consider central phenomena of life (Meyer *et al.*, 2001, p. 11) and primarily associate with personally relevant experiences (Mau, 2009, p. 7). In this context, they are understood to be temporally dated and characterised by a certain quality and intensity. Mostly, they are object-directed and characterised by altered behaviours (Mau, 2009, p. 10ff.). They determine states of consciousness, thought and action processes (Brambilla & Flinz, 2019, p. 153). In the literature, authors mainly deal with affects, which are divided into moods and emotions (Rosenthal, 2021, p. 45). Moods are commonly temporally extended and less intense (Brandstätter *et al.*, 2018, p. 164). This paper focuses on emotions,

1 Lena Greinke, Leibniz Universität Hannover, greinke@umwelt.uni-hannover.de, ORCID: 0000-0001-8378-9956.

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which, in contrast to moods, are relatively short-lived and intense (Rosenthal, 2021, p. 45). They often refer to concrete objects or events (Rosenthal, 2021, p. 45). Deriving from the Latin *emovere*, the term emotion means “to move out, to set in motion” and thus drives behaviour (for example, rejecting or motivating) (Rosenthal, 2021, p. 45).

The literature develops many classifications of emotions (Rosenthal, 2021, p. 46; Brandstätter *et al.*, 2018, p. 165). In most cases, the approaches include the four primary or basic emotions: Fear, Anger, Sadness, and Happiness. These primary emotions are assumed to be universal and can be shown and understood across cultures (Brandstätter *et al.*, 2018, p. 167). These can be simplified in the Circumplex Model of affective states, according to Rosenthal (2021, p. 47) (see Figure 1). The circular model describes combinations of two dimensions each: valence (pleasant-unpleasant) and excitement (activated-deactivated). Happiness, for example, is a pleasant-excited state, and sadness is an unpleasant state of low excitement (Rosenthal, 2021, p. 46). Fear and Anger are unpleasant-activated states.



Figure 1 Simplified illustration of the circumplex model for structuring affective states with the dimensions valence and excitement in four quadrants (basic emotions in bold) (source: according to Rosenthal, 2021, p. 47).

In emotion research, images or photos are mostly not reflected upon much. They are merely used as emotion triggers or toolboxes (Kappas & Müller, 2006, p. 7). However, it has long since ceased to be a hypothesis that images have a more emotional effect than the written or spoken word (Frevort & Schmidt, 2011, p. 21). Especially in (post)modern societies, images are ubiquitous and part of everyday life (Burri, 2012, p. 45) as we live in a “visual culture” (Jenks, 1995). Therefore, in sociology, there is the need to “not focus on images alone but take the social practices and contexts of image production, interpretation and use into account”, as studies mostly dealt with

topics like taking a picture and the content of the photograph (Burri, 2012, p. 45). The methodological questions are relevant, but it is important that images are made through social practices (Burri, 2012, p. 54). "A picture is worth a thousand words" (Amerson & Livingston, 2014, p. 208) as it shows or hides things through the image producers (Soaita & McKee, 2021, p. 282). They (only) show what is important to them (Soaita & McKee, 2021, p. 282). Besides, photos are used to explore the society (Becker, 1974, p. 3). Carlsson (1999) attributes five benefits of using photographs in research: first, photos can express what can not be put into words. Second, pictures stimulate conversations about what is visible. Third, images foster discussions about time and space. Fourth, photographs reflect the values of the photographer who decides what to photograph (and what not to photograph). Fifth, images facilitate the expression of feelings and emotions about a place. This paper aims to determine the pros and cons of reflexive photography for emotions in qualitative interviews. For this purpose, the four basic emotions, Fear, Anger, Happiness and Sadness, are examined in more detail with the help of the Circumplex Model, according to Rosenthal (2021, p. 47). The question is explored to what extent photos in interviews can evoke emotions in qualitative interviews? This paper fills a methodological research gap and addresses emotional moments in particular, which have often been concealed in previous research. The paper first explains the state of research on multi-locality and the theoretical background on emotions (Chapter 1) before explaining the methods of reflexive photography and qualitative interviews (Chapter 2). Afterwards, a discussion of the results of emotions in photos in interviews follows (Chapter 3). Finally, a conclusion and an outlook succeed (Chapter 4).

1. Methods: Reflexive photography and qualitative interviews

The paper is based on the analysis of work-related multi-local lifestyles in rural areas (Greinke, 2020). Starting with an intensive literature review (s.f. Brink, 2013, pp. 46ff) on multi-locality and emotions through photos to introduce both topics (see Chapter 1). Different approaches to the thematic fields are exploratory.

Following the literature analysis, problem-centred, guideline-based qualitative interviews (expert interviews c.f. Liebold & Trinczek, 2009; Mayer, 2013; Meuser & Nagel, 2002) with multi-locals in the case study district Diepholz in Lower Saxony (Germany) are conducted. The central research questions were, what are the characteristics of work-related multi-local lifestyles in rural areas, and how do people living in more than one place organise their living and working environment? The district Diepholz is suitable for analysing work-related multi-locality as many small, medium, and large-sized companies work internationally and globally. Therefore, (highly skilled) employees are expected in the rural district. In total, fifteen multi-locals were interviewed, lasting between 45 and 75 minutes. The interviewees were between 33 and 64 years old (median age: 50), 13 were male and two were female. Most of them were in management or in higher-level positions (e.g., project leaders) (Greinke, 2020). The interviews were structured as dialogues: With the help of a defined questionnaire, the interviewer structured the dialogue and added questions spontaneously (Helfferich, 2011, p. 36; Liebold & Trinczek, 2009, p. 35ff). Leaps of thought and abrupt changes in topics get avoided by the "natural" flow of argumentation, and sufficient openness is made possible (Bogner *et al.*, 2014, p. 29; Helfferich, 2011, p. 180). Before the primary qualitative interview, the interviewees are asked in an initial telephone dialogue to make up to three photos of their everyday life in the chosen locations and to send them to the interviewee. While taking the photos, the interviewees should write down their impressions, reasons and reflections on the pictures (Dirksmeier, 2007a, p. 87). In addition to the telephone interview, the interviewees received a detailed instruction manual describing how to take the images and how to label them with the help of an example photo. The interviewer prepares prints of the pictures for the following interview.

The interviews start with the photos of the method of reflexive photography (c.f. Dirksmeier, 2009, p. 164). Reflexive photography is a hybrid method from cross-cultural studies that combines interview and photography techniques into a coherent methodology (Brake, 2009, p. 378; Dirksmeier, 2007a, p. 87). It can be realised in two ways: first, the researchers produce the pictures or second, the participants make the photos (Schulze, 2007, p. 539). In this case study, the interviewer asked very openly why the interviewees chose the pictures. The interviewees explain their intentions, meanings, thoughts and influencing factors of the photos (Dirksmeier, 2007a, p. 87; Schulze, 2007, p. 540). In doing so, they reflect on the topics addressed and make everyday spatial ideas recognisable (Dirksmeier, 2013, p. 90f). Photographies can easily show visual information quickly and technically (Dirksmeier, 2009, p. 160). During reflexive photography as a method of qualitative socio-spatial-science, the interviewer and interviewee change their roles: interviewers are scientific observers (Brake, 2009, p. 384f; Dirksmeier, 2009, p. 168), and interviewees are experts of their photography's reporting their intentions and interpretations (Krisch, 2002, p. 133; Amerson & Livingston, 2014, p. 208). Moreover, with the help of this methodology, the visible information and textual-linguistic representations of the interviewees can be collected (Dirksmeier 2009: 165). Interviewees chose the motives independent and subjective (Krisch, 2002, p. 133; Amerson & Livingston, 2014, p. 208). The method is a „*starting mechanism*“ or narrative impulse for the interviews (Brake, 2009, p. 379; Dirksmeier, 2007a, p. 88). The photos incorporated as a symbol for the interviewees to represent the impact and meaning of things, people, environment, etc. (Schulze, 2007, p. 539). Therefore, the interviewer gets impressions from the lifeworld of the people. *“Photographic feedback creates a state of awareness and evokes emotional feelings that lead the interview into the heart of the research. Photographs sharpen the memory, give interviews immediate character and help to keep them focused”* (Schulze, 2007, p. 540). Therefore, the method is particularly well suited for spatially related questions (Dirksmeier, 2013, p. 87) because access to spaces is created that would not have been possible without photography (Johnsen *et al.*, 2008, p. 205). Living conditions, as well as feelings and thoughts, can be represented by this method (Keller, 2010, p. 37)

A qualitative approach is particularly well suited because the visual and the emotional are challenging to capture quantitatively (Kappas & Müller, 2006, p. 3). The interviews are documented using research-accompanying documentation in the form of interview protocols, which are filled out after the interview (Helfferich, 2011, p. 193). With the help of qualitative content analysis, the interviews will be scientifically analysed (according to Mayring, 2010). For this purpose, the interviews are recorded and transcribed according to consistent transcription rules (Meuser & Nagel, 2002, p. 83). The analysis is computer-assisted using a deductively and inductively developed code system (Liebold & Trinczek, 2009, p. 40ff; Mayring, 2000, p. 1). All interviews were conducted by the author in German, with any citations translated into English by the author.

The photographs from the method of reflexive photography are evaluated with the help of image interpretation (according to Brake, 2009; Breckner, 2012; Schulze, 2007). Here, the actual interpretation is left to the interviewees and misinterpretations by the interviewers are avoided. For this purpose, the pictures are first explained carefully, and the landscape, people and objects are described in detail. In addition, the perspective, (central-)motifs and special features are noted. The analysis focuses on the content of the pictures (Schulze, 2007, p. 542). Through the photographs, the interactions of the interviewees with their social and physical environment become clear (Schulze, 2007, p. 552). The pictures express the Schemata of perception, thinking, and action of the interviewees (Dirksmeier, 2007a, p. 80). This also allows the social everyday locations and ways of life to be visible and evaluated (Dirksmeier, 2013, p. 91; Johnsen *et al.*, 2008, p. 196; Krisch, 2002, p. 132). These findings are significant in the context of research on complex multi-local lifestyles. Using image interpretation, the photographs are divided into the four main categories, *“Mobility”*, *“Social Relations”*, *“Working World”*, and *“Living World”*, with the corresponding subcategories (see Table 1). Further categorisations were not used to leave the main interpretation of the images up to the interviewees and avoid misinterpretations or overin-

terpretations. With the help of the explanations during the interviews, the images can be sorted into categories almost uniquely (Greinke, 2020, p. 74ff). In addition, similarities and differences of the images at the respective locations are recorded, and the number of photographs in the categories is analysed.

Table 1 Category system of the evaluation of photographs (Source: own illustration)

Maincategories	Subcategories
Mobility	Vehicles
Social Relations	Family
	Animals
	Leisure time
	Friends - Tours
	Landscape/View
Working World	Companies
	Working place
	Colleagues
Living World	Accommodation - Outside
	Garden
	Accommodation - Inside

2. Results and discussion: Emotions from multi-locals through photos

Following the Circumplex Model (cf. chapter 1), the study examined the four basic emotions, Fear, Anger, Happiness and Sadness, in more detail. The results show that reflexive photography and image interpretation methods offer numerous opportunities and challenges. The photos of reflexive photography used in the interviews enabled a start- or narrative impulse for the interviews (Dirksmeier, 2007b, p. 88). They made it possible to make clear the interactions of the interviewees with their social and physical environment (Schulze, 2007, p.552). Schemata of perception, thoughts as well as actions of the interviewees are expressed through the photos (Dirksmeier, 2007a, p. 80). In addition, visible information and textual-linguistic representations of the interviewees can be collected (Dirksmeier, 2009, p. 165). The interviewees thought more deeply and reflectively (Dirksmeier, 2009, p. 168; Amerson & Livingston, 2014, p. 208). This allows everyday social spaces and ways of life to become visible and evaluated (Dirksmeier, 2013, p. 91; Johnsen *et al.*, 2008, p. 196; Krisch, 2002, p. 132). The researcher thus gains insight into the social and personal context of the persons (Latham, 2004 in Johnsen *et al.*, 2008, p. 195) and has the opportunity to recognise directly locations significant to the photographer as well as to describe their perception of the space (Johnsen *et al.*, 2008, p. 196).

Photos can be systematically distinguished into three modes in terms of emotions. Firstly, photos are pictorial motifs that show situations or people expressing emotions (for example, laughing, crying, anger, etc.). Secondly, photographs can elicit emotional responses when viewed (for example, exhilaration, longing, happiness, etc.). Thirdly, scientific and popular discourses discuss the relationship between emotions and photographs in the past (Brink, 2011, p. 105).

The Photos, as such, initially make visible exclusively what has been seen and not more. The viewer's assignment of meaning is not included in this. Only the words or texts with which they are explained or the contexts in which they are placed make clear how the interviewee wants the photos to be understood. These contextualisations can be provocative or approving (Brink, 2011, p. 106). The images become understandable, explainable, and narratable by connecting the photos to the descriptions of the interviewees and their lifeworld (Brink, 2011, p. 122). The pictures triggered (very) emotional moments in the interviews (Kappas & Müller, 2006, p. 3). They support what was said and, above all, they also "*set in motion*" (cf. Latin origin in chapter 1)

situations and feelings that would not have happened without the pictures in a one-to-one interview (cf. Spowart & Nairn, 2014, p. 337). Images can open immediate access to human feelings (Frevert & Schmidt, 2011, p. 22). Especially sensitive and private moments could be addressed more easily through photographs and therefore help to simplify interview situations (Garde & Greinke, 2022, p. 11). Among other things, pictures, in contrast to written texts, are more accessible, direct and faster to internalise (Frevert & Schmidt, 2011, p. 22). With the help of the pictures, a kind of basis of trust was established with the interviewer, which created access to the interviewees' minds and explanations. At the same time, the photographs also provided unpredictable, emotional situations that were not expected. It is striking in the interviews that the multi-locals begin with the photographer's description of positive aspects of the multi-local lifestyle and later discuss negative consequences only (cf. Greinke, 2020, p. 199).

2.1 Emotion Fear

The definition of fear seems simple but is widely debated in the literature, mostly as emotions are conscious and subjective states (Mobbs *et al.*, 2019, p. 1205). Mobbs *et al.* (2019) asked different scientists to define fear. From Kerry Ressler's perspective, *"'Fear' is the combination of defensive responses—physiological, behavioral and (perhaps in the case of humans) the conscious experience and interpretations of these responses—that are stimulated by specific stimuli. In the case of experimental systems these stimuli are external cues, but presumably in humans can have internal representations as well (thoughts and memories that can be fear-inducing cues themselves)"* (Mobbs *et al.*, 2019, p. 1208f.).

During the interviews, fear as emotion plays a rather subordinate role. On the one hand, this causes because most interviewees reported rather positively about their way of life in several places. On the other hand, the interview situation with a somewhat foreign researcher is probably relatively unusual for talking about fears.

Nevertheless, some of the multi-locals emphasised that they felt job-related anxieties while showing pictures from the company site or their desk. This was supposed, for example, when talking about changing jobs. The interviewee looked at a picture from the current job position and spoke about a planned job or company change. On the one hand, this situation made the interviewee feel positive because he was looking forward to the new experience. On the other hand, anxiety was noticeable because unpredictable situations could come his way. Thus, the image of the current job triggered an emotion related to actions in the future. For example, a 55-year-old female multi-local anxiously described: *"No one ever gives you a hug or makes a nice gesture or anything. My youngest daughter wants to get married next year, and I am afraid I will miss out on too much. And I do not want that. I would like to be where I feel comfortable, where I am at home."* In this situation, the picture of her home normally activates positive feelings, provoking bad vibes, mingled emotions and anxieties.

Another interviewee said, while looking at a photo of his primary residence (see Figure 2) and, at the same time, that of his family, that he was afraid that his daughter and his wife would fall ill again or further. The family has already had some strokes of fate; thus, the picture of the residence triggered fearful feelings, which even moved the person to tears. Fear is, therefore, present in the photos, even if the images do not immediately look like it. In the interviewees, however, the pictures can evoke anxiety because the interviewees associate the photos with emotional moments that appear through viewing them. For the interviewer, most of the photos just looked like nice pictures of houses, gardens, families and so on, but through the emotions and explanations of the interviewees, the feeling of fear got clear.



Figure 2 Photo of the primary residence triggers fear (original picture from interviewee)

2.2 Emotion Anger

Anger defines a state of emotion, which consists of varying intensities. They can be mild irritations but although intense fury. Mostly anger appears in response to provocation, mistreatment or exploitation. It contains complex variables (e.g. physiological, cognitive and emotional) (Iyer *et al.*, 2010, p. 120). In literature, there are three dimensions of anger: firstly, the affective dimension, including the feeling of anger. Secondly, the cognitive dimension includes clinical attitudes, and thirdly, the behavioural dimension includes verbal and physical aggression (Iyer *et al.*, 2010, p. 121).

Like the emotion of fear, anger was a less discussed emotion during the interviews. Nevertheless, interviewees reported negative experiences in their current employment. They vented their anger and emotionally reported prohibitions at work or a lack of opportunities. For example, a multi-local explains that there are no options of professional training on the company's site, and employees are not allowed to take opportunities elsewhere. The pictures of the location of the job (see Figure 3) sometimes triggered gestures and facial expressions that illustrated anger. Locations can consequently evoke emotions or give rise to new ones (Brambilla & Flinz, 2019, p. 161). Locations have a tremendous significance for memories and are very strongly associated with verbalising emotions (Brambilla & Flinz, 2019, p. 172).

In addition, the voice of the people became partly more energetic. Accordingly, the photos also triggered physical reactions that clarified emotions. Consequently, anger as an emotion is not as present as other emotions in the interviews. Still, in some cases, it triggers clear verbal and physical reactions that need to be recaptured during the conversation to focus on the main topic of the research again. Therefore, especially the affective dimension and the behavioural dimension of anger (c.f. Iyer *et al.*, 2010, p. 121) became apparent through the feeling of anger as well as verbal and physical aggression during the interviews while looking at the photos.



Figure 3 Photo of the workplace triggers anger (original anonymised picture from interviewee)

2.3 Emotion Sadness

Sadness can be experienced when one has *“the perception that a goal has been lost”* (Lench *et al.*, 2016, p. 13). Most of the time, this emotion is documented in nonsocial situations with failure experiences, but there are although theories that focus on social aspects (Lench *et al.*, 2016, p. 13): The images often triggered the emotion of sadness in the interviews. These negatively charged situations were challenging for the interviewees and the interviewer because they were often unpredictable and spontaneous. The interviewees mostly got into an insecure and sad mood, which they would have preferred to avoid in front of a somewhat foreign researcher. This situation was also not easy for the interviewer because they were not trained for emotional situations. Therefore, the interviewer had to react as empathetically as possible not to disturb the interview process and primarily to protect the sensitive privacy of the interviewees. Besides, *“it is important to plan how to engage with emotionality, especially when working with [...] sensitive topics”* (Rolland *et al.*, 2019, p. 286). Interviewers should thus pay attention to the well-being of the interviewee and perceive changes in body language and voice as signals of distress, which should be avoided (Rolland *et al.*, 2019, p. 286).

For example, while looking at a photo of a hiking group, one interviewee reported that someone had died unexpectedly shortly before the interview. The 55-year-old female multi-local explained close to tears: *“I have a relatively small family. [...] and in this respect [the group in the photo] is my family. And that is why it is affecting me so strongly now. [takes a break to breathe heavily] And I also question my situation here massively. Because I think life is over faster than you can look. And if you do not spend such things where you feel comfortable. Not with the family. Then you miss something. Or you lose a lot.”* If the interviewee had known before the conversa-

tion that the person would die, the photo would not have been sent to the interviewer to avoid the sad situation. This loss made the interviewee very sad, so she could not hold back the tears. She recounted the shared experiences in the picture and the deep friendship. Without the interviewee's narration, such insights would not have emerged. The picture looked happy but triggered quite the opposite and deep emotions. Unlike in other research, the interviewees mainly address the issues directly and do not use some metaphor for their descriptions (cf. Brambilla & Flinz, 2019, p. 166).

Furthermore, the photographs of the primary residences (see Figure 4) often triggered sad emotions in the interviews. The interviewees mostly pointed to photographed houses and explained that their family and/or friends live there, whom they rarely(er) get to see due to their living in several places. They were often on the road or at the second location. Therefore, they pointed out that contact with friends and family is less. This made almost all interviewees very sad. Even without the photos, this sadness might have been revealed in the conversation. However, the impression was that the pictures intensified the emotions of the interviewees because they created closeness to the respective location and deepened the reflective thinking.



Figure 4 Picture of friends in garden causes sadness (original anonymised picture from interviewee)

2.4 Emotion Happiness

The emotion happiness *"is often taken to mean something very close to an extended feeling of pleasure or an extended good mood or pleasant affect"* (Michalos, 2017, p. 285). However, there are many variations of understanding happiness across language, culture and implications (Oishi *et al.*, 2013, p. 574).

The positive emotion of happiness was frequently evident in the interviews. The interviewees mainly explained their positive experiences with joyful expressions and sometimes talked in depth about the events that were visible in the pictures. For example, interviewees showed newborn babies or grandchildren.

Often friends and family were thematised. For example, (grand-)children or friends were shown in the pictures. The interviewees spoke intensively about their experiences directly associated with the photos and about other (related) events. For example, they talked extensively about celebrations such as birthdays or childbirths. The interviewees mostly smiled, and their explanations were highly detailed and very profound. Without the interviewer asking questions, they speak openly and happily. For example, a 53-year-old male multi-local explained very happily and smiling while showing a picture of a church: *"So I have been in the church community since I was a kid. I do not know if you know that. It is the New Apostolic Church. And I have been a pastor there since I was a teenager, so I have done everything there is to do. That is a great support for me, the Christian faith. That is in municipality A (anonymised). I have only had one picture now. However, I am also active here in municipality B (anonymised). And I am also a pastor, a priest. So what a catholic pastor does, I do in my free time. Holding services, funerals, baptisms, everything, you know. Voluntary pastoral visits. That is one area, because I have always done a lot with children and wanted to have children myself. So I was active in children's and youth work. And that was a picture of the church building."*

In addition, many interviewees explained happy emotions while talking about photos of their pets or hobbies (see Figure 5). They showed many pictures of animals or their sports equipment (for example, bicycles). Some of the photos were very recently taken, and others showed happy situations from the past. For example, running races were reported while a Team T-shirt from their company was shown in a picture. The person spoke very openly and exuberantly about experiences with the company team. Furthermore, a 32-year-old female multi-local pointed enthusiastically: *"I am actually always doing something. I can not go straight from work to the hotel. And it is the same at home. That is why I also photographed the sports mat"*. In addition, people talked about long walks with dogs and running training in the mountains or close to the water. The photos supported the emotional, positively charged stories and made it possible for the interviewees to tell more and more stories. Especially in the case of pleasant events, the explanations often became intense, which may be because many authors regard the pursuit of pleasant emotions as a *"basic motor of human behaviour"* (Rosenthal, 2021, p. 46).

The fact that positive and happy emotions, in particular, were the focus of the interviewees is also clear from the number of photos taken. Most of the pictures were taken in the main categories of *"Social Relations"* (56 pictures) and of *"Living World"* (61 pictures). The photographs mostly show people, animals or landscapes (Greinke, 2020, p. 119). While in the categories *"Mobility"* and *"Working World"*, 12 and 21 pictures each were taken. Personal relationships and happy emotions are consequently brought into focus in the interviews and the selection of photos. For example, at their primary locations, the interviewees take more shots (31 pictures) than at their secondary locations (19 pictures), which is why it can be concluded that social relationships, in particular, are more pronounced at primary locations than at the other locations (Greinke, 2020, p. 119). Photographs in the category *"Living World"* are also very private. For example, the photos show direct insights into the living rooms of the interviewees (Greinke, 2020, p. 121).



Figure 5 Photo of pets creates happiness (original picture from interviewee)

3. Conclusion and outlook: Emotions as methodological opportunity or challenge?

The photographs illustrate conditions and make clear that emotions are not bound to territorial borders (cf. Greinke, 2020, p. 197). Although emotions are often more strongly tied to primary locations because family and friends live there, there are also positive and negative emotions belonging to the other locations of multi-locals. Multi-locals can learn to feel connected according to Nadler's (2014, p. 381ff.) heuristic appropriation concept "*Plug&Play Places*". Consequently, they can make emotions "*pluggable*" and "*playable*" in former and new locations because they have learned the necessary mentalities for transfer (Nadler, 2014, p. 387).

This paper fills a methodological research gap and addresses emotional moments in particular, which have often been concealed in previous research. Using Rosenthal's (2021, p. 47) circumplex model, the four basic emotions, Fear, Anger, Happiness and Sadness, triggered by reflexive photography in qualitative interviews were examined in more detail. It became clear that some emotions were addressed more often in interviews than others: interviewees always started expressing positive emotions, followed by negative ones. The photos triggered emotional moments that probably would not have come up in "conventional" one-to-one interviews. At the same time, the interviews are crucial because, without the spoken words, explanations, mimics and gestures, the meaning of the photos would have remained hidden or even mis- or overinterpreted. Consequently, the method of reflexive photography in qualitative interviews offers numerous challenges but, above all, many opportunities to discover emotions and gain insights into multi-local lifestyles.

The pictures from the reflexive photography offer a great added value to the results of the analyses. The photos can operate as mediators and triggers of emotions. Without the photographs, many topics would probably not have come up at all (Greinke & Choffat, 2022). In addition, many positive and negative emotions would have been absent or significantly lower in the interviews. Consequently, combining interviews with participatory visual methods, especially reflexive photography, makes sense and opens up new insights. The method is thus particularly well suited for spatial-related questions (Dirksmeier, 2013, p. 87) because access to locations is created that would not have been possible without the photos (Johnsen *et al.*, 2008, p. 205). Living conditions, as well as feelings and thoughts, can be represented through this method (Keller, 2010, p. 37). Nevertheless, there is a challenge for researchers to leave the main interpretation of the images to the interviewees and not to misinterpret images (Garde & Greinke, 2022, p. 4).

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Multi-local Arrangements and Impact on Work-Life Balance. An International Research on Flight Attendants²

Introduction and problematic

Multi-locality and mobility issues are a recent research subject (Larsen *et al.* 2006, Shier *et al.*, 2015, Schmidt-Kallert, 2009). Even if the notion of mobility is ambiguous and polysemic (Montulet, 2005), a broad definition is useful: "the fact of changing one's position in a real or virtual space, which may be physical, social, axiological, cultural, affective, cognitive" (Bourdin, 2005a). The definition of mobility that interests us here is spatial mobility, which underlines that it is a movement involving at least a change of place of living (or working). Mobility is "the property or character of that which can move or be moved in space" (dictionary). Mobility thus encompasses many forms of spatio-temporal movement.

For a long time, the geographical mobility of people has remained relatively neglected in sociology, except for a few authors (Simmel, 1908; Urry, 1995, 2000; Allemand *et al.*, 2004; Bourdin, 2005a,b; Montulet, 1998, 2005), and this, even though states have always wished to regulate mobility across their borders (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980). Mobility is a strong feature of our modern societies (Allemand *et al.* 2004), 'movement' being an integral part of modernity, of which it is a consequence but also a producer of social activity participating in the dynamics of modernity. According to several authors, the organization of time and space is even central to the forms and transformations of societies (Giddens, 1994). Mobility also questions the articulation of distance and proximity in relationships (Bourdin, 2005).

Mobility in the context of work, linked to multi-locality, is still insufficiently analyzed and is a highly relevant subject for understanding the functioning of our contemporary societies and the world of work, particularly in terms of working conditions and interaction with time outside of work. We thus explore the dual dimension, spatial and temporal, of mobility in the context of multi-locality.

Multilocality is a complex social phenomenon. Residential multi-locality has garnered attention in various research studies through diverse approaches, portraying it as a highly complex social phenomenon.

The experience of dwelling in multiple habitual locations (primarily exemplified by 'second homes', or specific couples - and family - behaviors) represents a contemporary reality within our technologically advanced and urbanized societies. However, this multifaceted phenomenon remains incompletely explored, owing both to epistemological and empirical challenges. Consequently, a more comprehensive and refined framework is necessary to fully grasp its nuances and implications (Hilti, 2013; Weichhart, 2009; Weiske *et al.*, 2009).

The emergence of "multilocal living" as an emerging field of investigation is evident through an array of studies focused on residential multilocality (Bonnin and Villanova, 1999; Heisse and Scheiner, 2007; Hilti, 2013; Petzold, 2013; Reuschke, 2010; Schmidt-Kallert, 2009; Sturm and Weiske, 2009), despite its association with well-established practices (Duchêne-Lacroix and Mäder, 2013). The exploration of residential multilocality requires a reevaluation of familiar concepts such as, mobility, materiality, residentiality, household, and family.

Notably, a comprehensive social theory encompassing all aspects of residential multi-locality remains conspicuously absent. Researchers are diligently working to refine macro - and mi-

1 Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay, Quebec University (Canada), diane-gabrielle.tremblay@teluq.ca,

ORCID: 0000-0002-3343-9146, ResearcherID: AED-3661-2022;

Anne Gillet, Conservatoire national des arts et métiers, Lise-CNRS, Paris (France), anne.gillet@lecnam.net,

ORCID: 0000-0001-8833-2568.

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cro-level theories, drawing from a diverse array of notions within demographic studies, time geography, spatial sociology, environmental psychology, new mobilities studies, livelihood approach, actor network theory - adopting an individualistic perspective. The overarching goal of these endeavors is to comprehend the social and political repercussions of multi-local living arrangements, shedding light on their influence over settlement structures as well as their broader impact on social, economic, and political contexts (Weichhart, 2015). In several research fields (e.g., Danielzyk *et al.*, 2020; Wood *et al.*, 2015) a discourse has emerged distinguishing multi-locality from daily commuting (circulation) and permanent relocation (migration), emphasizing that multi-locality inherently encompasses a distinct set of dynamics (Weichhart, 2009, p. 6). Within a considerable number of multi-local arrangements, a central point of departure typically exists (often where the remainder of the family resides or stays) and one or more secondary or subordinate locations (e.g., workplaces, second homes, etc.) (Greinke & Lange, 2022). For the purpose of our study, we adopt Rolshoven's (2006) insightful definition of multilocality as «'vita activa' manifesting in places: everyday life is distributed across different locations, practiced over various durations and used for different functional partition». While some professions have embraced a multi-locality perspective for an extended period, this has not necessarily attracted so much attention in research. Notably, flight attendants and civil aviation personnel emerge as prominent examples of professional groups deeply entwined with this phenomenon.

Mobility in civil aviation

In our comprehensive investigation into the work of flight attendants (authors, 2019, 2020, 2021), we delve into a distinct facet of their work that requires them to travel (mobility) and to stay (for varying lengths of time) in different places of residence (or places of rest as hostels during the stopover). This distinctiveness emerges from their need to operate away from their established domicile, often devoid of family presence, and further compounded by temporal disparities due to traversing multiple time zones (jetlag).

Within this intricate framework, we analyze the repercussions of professional mobility in this context of multi-locality. Mobility (in the sense of transport/ travel/movement) is the heart of the activity of the civil aviation personnel, whose mission is to transport passengers in complete security/safety. Mobility requires a personal organization (management of its private life planning and conciliation family-personal work / life), and multi-locality makes this organization both personal and professional more complex.

Undoubtedly, the airline industry stands as a prime exemplar of multi-locality activities with the intricacies of localization and spatial considerations exerting a profound influence on the competitive dynamics in the sector. Through its evolution, the industry has navigated through several critical crises, including the aftermath of 9/11 events, the repercussions of the 2008 financial crisis and the unprecedented challenges posed by the 2020-2022 Covid-19 pandemic.

Amidst the array of challenges it faces, the airline industry has shown a continuous propensity for adaptation, particularly in the realm of flight arrangements. This includes a large spectrum of adjustments, ranging from the calibration of flights frequencies and daily workload for flight attendants, the duration of layovers and other elements which reverberate not only on company finances, but also resonate within the lives of flight attendants and civil aviation personnel.

The duties of cabin crew are governed by a multitude of regulations including instructions, standardized work practices and procedural guidelines. These protocols are established by influential institutions such as the IATA (International Air Transport Association), ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization), EASA (European Union Aviation Safety Agency), national transport ministries and individual airlines through collective agreements. These regulations are enforced by a network of codes (of civil aviation in the transport code), international conventions, European regulations in Europe and at national level: the Ministry of Ecological Transition and Solidarity in France, the Ministry of Transport in Canada. These same governing bodies are also instrumental

in regulating working hours, ensuring compliance with international standards, while nuanced variations may arise due to negotiations between airlines and employee unions³.

The work schedule is atypical, imposing a specific temporal structure. Characterized by staggered and adaptable working hours, often orchestrated through specialized software (embedded within the company's internal system), the scheduling process is executed a month in advance. However, due to the dynamic structure of the industry, adjustments can occur, even up to a week before the start of each month. As a result, personnel must continually adapt to varying flight schedules and destinations on a monthly basis, with last-minute changes sometimes taking place. Even if there have been adjustments in policies and practices, work-family balance remains a challenge in this industry working 24 hours a day, and 7 days a week. Hence, our focus gravitated towards unraveling the influence of mobility and multilocality on work-family balance and working time organization, with a particular emphasis on the dynamic context of airline personnel, especially the commercial crew.

Mobility and work-family balance

Work-family balance is an important issue addressed in research over the last four decades or so, as women entered the labour market. Much of the research has dealt with work-family conflict, that is the conflicts in working times and working roles in particular. It has also dealt with measures which can lead to a better reconciliation of these working times and roles, if not to a 'balance' per se (Poelmans, Greenhaus, & Maestro, 2013; Tremblay, 2019). While the Canadian province of Québec is recognized for its family policy and good public support to work-life balance (Tremblay, 2014, 2008), the challenges are still important at the organizational level and in professions such as these, with multilocality and mobility issues. In this type of situation, workers and women in particular hope for or expect the support of their supervisors and employers (Fiksenbaum, 2014, Goh *et al.*, 2015).

Measures aimed at improving the work-family interface have an impact on work engagement and professional stress, which can in turn have an impact on how the personnel deal with their clients (Braunstein-Bercovitz, 2013). Organizational measures and policies aimed at helping workers reconcile work and family are thus very important, but research has shown that this is particularly essential in organizations functioning 24-7, as it is not always possible to benefit from flexible schedules or telework in such sectors (Tremblay, 2019). The objective of the measures is to reduce the negative effects of work-family conflict on work attitudes and organizational performance and results (Fiksenbaum, 2014). Some authors have also observed that the application of work-family measures depends on top management (Hammer *et al.*, 2009).

Organizational culture can also have an impact on work behaviours and results, and a non-supportive organizational context can have a negative impact on the offer of measures, as well as work attitudes and results (Kossek *et al.*, 2011; Allen, 2012).

Our research on mobility of flight attendants

In this paper, we will present results from a research conducted on flight attendants, from the point of view of multi-local arrangements and impact on work-life balance. Over the years, employees, including cabin crews in many companies, have given up many advantages and have seen their working conditions reduced or become more difficult over the years, from the point of view of multi-locality and work-life (Boyd & Bain, 1998; Gil, 1990; Whitelegg, 2007; Gillet & Tremblay, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019).

Indeed, not only have their working times been ever more flexibilized and maximized (Shalla, 2004; Gillet & Tremblay, 2021), but also the fact that these hours are done often over many cities

3 Liberal pressures and competition from low-cost airlines, whose flight conditions are worse than others, make it difficult for unions to negotiate.

and even different continents, adds to the challenges for work-life balance in this profession. These challenges in multi-locality, and multiple layovers in the specific case of cabin crews, lead to many challenges as concerns workloads, working time and work-life balance, themes that we center to our research and will be discussed in this article.

The topic of work-related mobility is highly relevant and insufficiently analyzed, in particular in the perspective of multi-locality (variation of spaces).

Our article highlights the existence of several forms of cabin crew mobility through circulation in multiple locations (multi-destination). These multi-locational mobilities are defined by the strict rules of the civil and commercial aviation providing the framework for the work activity.

These multiple mobilities determine the working conditions and describe diverse professional practices in particular relationships to space-time. They influence (and are influenced by) family situations, couple relations and personal life in many ways. We analyze space and time together, while these two elements are usually studied separately. Indeed, in the case of cabin crew - with working conditions involving shifts and multiple workplaces - the spatial and temporal dimensions of work are very strongly intertwined, and interact in various ways with several dimensions of 'non-work' (i.e. domestic or parental work, leading to work life interaction). Moreover, cabin crew have certain resources (personal, familial and professional) which influence their experiences of these particular time-spaces and the ways in which they deal with the various constraints of their work.

This issue led us to opt for a comprehensive methodology based on people's experiences and the concrete characteristics of their working conditions.

1. Methodology and Portrait of Respondents

Our research is based both on quantitative and qualitative methods. In this article, we will concentrate on the results from the online questionnaire, although the interviews also contribute to our analysis on the elements presented here, and are referred to at times.

This article is based on the responses of 1664 flight attendants from France (720), Canada (504), and Germany (440) who responded to a questionnaire distributed to members through unions' listings. Participants were also invited to mention their willingness to take part in face-to-face or phone interviews, as a second phase for this research. Consequently, we have been able to carry out 100 in-depth interviews with cabin crew members from France (41), Canada (41) and Germany (18) in the following years. This article mainly focuses on the data from the questionnaires, which contributed to our better understanding of the context, and to the selection of most pertinent data for quantitative and also qualitative analysis (Patton, 1999).

As mentioned previously we solicited unions to participate in our research. We then developed a partnership research (Gillet & Tremblay, 2017) with the unions representing the Cabin Crew Members of various airlines from several countries and the European Cabin Crew Association, representing the cabin crew in Europe.

In Canada, there are two main national companies and their two unions participated in the research; smaller low-cost companies were not solicited as they are not very present in the Canadian market. There were two low cost companies oriented mainly towards the South and winter season, and we did not solicit them as they are less important and also service a very particular market. In France, we worked with one of France's largest national union and also for Europe, with the European Cabin Crew Association - European organisation representing 70% of all cabin crew in Europe. The association includes most of Europe's unions and airlines. In our paper, we concentrate on the two countries where there was a sufficient number of answers - France and Germany - as the other countries only present a limited number of respondents. In France, the respondents are from four main companies (national and low-costs). In Germany from a national and a low cost company.

Our questionnaire is very detailed, which made it possible to collect objective and subjective data on our research questions. The questions focus in particular on working time and its effects, work constraints, teamwork during flights, or during stopovers, work relationships, work-family and personal life integration, work-life measures. There were also questions on classic sociodemographic data such as sex, age, level of education, seniority and others related to family situation and work experience. It is difficult to obtain a representative sample of all airline companies and countries. However, we obtained an important number of respondents and a diversity of profiles, diverse situations and experiences (sex, family situation, age and seniority in the job) and also people working in different contexts (short, medium and long haul; low cost and "national" companies). We selected among the people who volunteered for an interview following their completion of the online questionnaire. The ratio of women to men is the same as that found in the occupation, that is 2/3 women and 1/3 men).

Women were a majority in the three countries. The French group is comprised of 440 women and 280 men; in Canada - 401 women and 103 men; 279 in Germany 279 women and 161 men, which does not come as a surprise in a traditionally feminized workforce. Canadian participants were quite evenly distributed within four age categories (between 20 and 30 years, between 41 and 40, between 41 to 50 and over 60), participants of 41 and over being slightly overrepresented. In the other countries, the French participants were rather between 31 and 50 years, with few respondents under 30 (4.2%) or over 60 (8.6%). In Germany, each age category was represented, with 14.3% under 30, 31.4% between 30 and 41, 39.5% between 41 and 50 and 14.8 % over 60. It is thus important to keep in mind that while our Canadian group was quite evenly distributed in terms of age, it was not the case in Germany and less so in France.

In Canada, 20.4% of participants, that is 25.5% of women and 10.7% of men, had at least one child under 12. Thus, less than one quarter of Canadian participants had childcare responsibilities, in similar proportions as Germany (20%) but less than in France where 46.1% of participants had at least one child under 12, the population being slightly older than in Canada (few between 20 and 30). It is thus interesting to compare Canada to France regarding perceptions of work-family or work-life balance, keeping in mind that the French participants had more family responsibilities than Canadian participants.

Also, several positions need to be distinguished: flight attendant, service director or "purser" and chief purser (for long haul flights). While they should all attend to passenger needs and keep the cabin safe, service directors have more responsibilities as they need to ensure that the flight is run according to company standards. They are also the ones flight attendants will reach out to if they feel unable to deal with a situation onboard, such as a disruptive passenger. Chief purser is a position found on long-haul flights with two service directors onboard. This person usually works in first class with elite passengers and works on customer retention, applying methods to retain customers. However, chief pursers should also normally take part in the service.

2. Results

In this section on results, we first present the issue of flight legs, which translates into multilocality, then we highlight the characteristics of the cabin crew's work in terms of working hours (FDP, flight duty period). We then delve on the effects of these working conditions on family and personal life: interference of work with family life, changes in planning, impacts of family on work. Leisure and social life is another aspect of the lives of cabin crew that is strongly influenced by the working conditions of mobility and shifts and which we studied, as social support (from the family or the partner in a couple) and cabin crew support. Finally, we highlight the measures developed, or not, by the airlines of the different countries.

2.1 Multi-locality and Flight Legs

Geographical displacement is of course a reality with each flight. Flight attendants work shifts or pairings of varying length depending on the destination or localities where they fly. For example, flight attendants may fly short range pairings which are characterized by many short "legs", that is flights from one point to another, with the possibility to go back to home base at the end of the day. Domestic flying may also imply a short layover at destination and then coming back to home base the next day. It may also imply many very short legs, sometimes up to 4 or 7 short flights, depending on the times and distances. Usually, domestic pairings will comprise more stops because the legs are shorter and allow for more trips in one FDP (flight duty period). Long distance rotations are characterized by longer flights and longer layover. Mobility to a distant destination requires a long stopover time used for various activities in different locations (sight-seeing, rest in hotels).

Moreover, particularly in Europe, cabin crew also engage in commuting mobility, not always living close to their assignment base of (their place of departure/final arrival). Some of them travel, sometimes rather far, (inter-regionally / inter-provincially or even internationally in Europe) to get to their base of assignment. This mobility is daily for short-haul flights (returning home every day) or occurs more or less frequently depending on the length of flights planned (long and medium-haul flights).

In our research (see table 1), the maximum flight legs reported in Canada was 7; however this was only mentioned by 4 respondents. Similarly, very few Canadian participants reported flying more than 6 legs (2.8%). A minority (9.1%) did fly up to 6 legs per FDP, which is a strikingly small proportion compared to the 73.4% of German participants who reported so (and 6.5% in France). The majority of Canadian participants reported flying maximum between 3 legs (44.2%), 4 legs (21.8%) and 5 legs (17.3%) per FDP; also the majority of French flight attendants (3 legs 56.7%; 4 legs 6.3%; 5 legs 27.1%).

Thus, it seems that French and Canadian participants were better off than their German counterparts in terms of work intensity, since they tended to fly less legs per FDP, in - part due to the work rules, and in Canada to the size of the country and distance between some destinations. Consequently, they did not have to go through so many stops in different localities, which imply repeating the same procedures (boarding, greeting passengers, deboarding, saying goodbye, etc.) with little time to do it. This was reported as a source of stress by our German interviewees who stressed they did not have enough time between flights on domestic pairings, barely 45 minutes, thus hardly getting a chance to sit down before the next flight. However, the situation was not necessarily less tiring for French or Canadian participants: as one service director reported, she sometimes had to wait 3 hours at the airport between two flights which put her out of the "momentum". She qualified these 3 hours as "extremely draining".

Our qualitative findings also suggest that junior flight attendants often have to fly more legs, and visit more localities, and they also do more commuting between localities abroad, which is another draining aspect of the job. For instance, a Canadian flight attendant may fly from Montreal to Nantes, in France and then have to commute to Brussels to work on the next flight leg from Brussels to another destination. Thus, because the junior flight attendants are getting the least attractive pairings, they are prone to flying more legs in one FDP and to commute between localities, not always returning home from the same place.

2.2 Hours worked

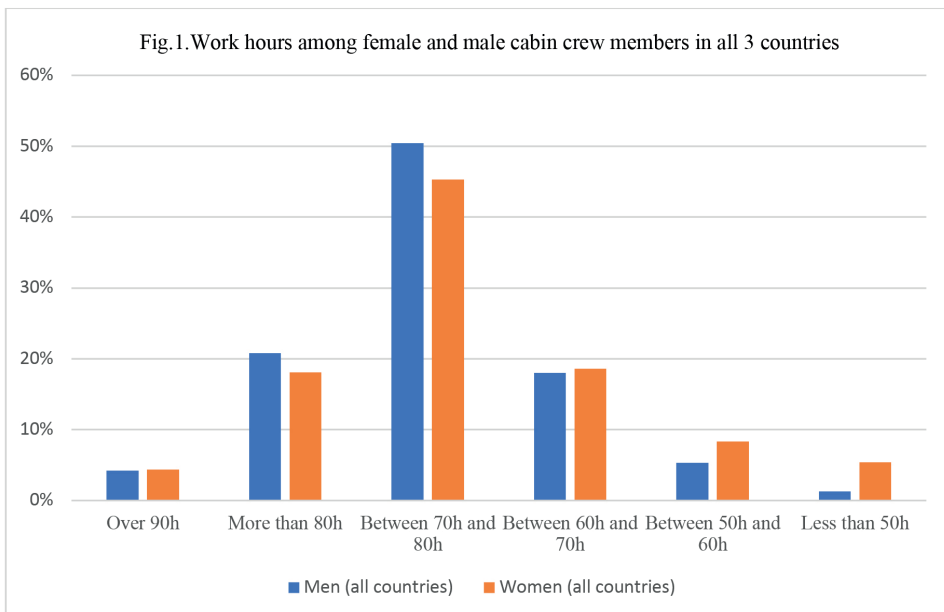
It is important to consider how the mobility and multilocality impact on flight attendants' working times and long hours, precisely because of this mobility. Indeed, the number and length of flights have an impact in terms of number of hours worked. There is a given maximum number of flight legs that cabin crews can fly in one flight duty period (FDP). A FDP is the time between

reporting for an assignment and release from that assignment. It comprises pre-flight duties such as boarding, flight time and post-flight duties such as cleaning the aircraft before the arrival of the next crew. If this occurs in many localities in one day, this of course impacts on the total working time. A "rotation" or "pairing" describes the whole pattern of flights from the moment cabin crews leave their home base until they return. Thus, a pairing usually includes several FDPs with a layover as recovery time in between. An important number of FDPs with a certain number of destinations or localities involved can impact working time and fatigue for cabin crew. We analyzed cabin crew working times, as well as the nature of their tasks onboard and the intensity of their workload.

In Canada, the greatest proportion of participants (47%) worked between 70 hours and 80 hours per month. A minority of Canadians (12%), that is 10.7 % of women and 16.5% of men, worked more than 90 hours per month. This may not appear to be such a high number of hours, but one needs to take into account the fact that flight attendants are sometimes waiting for a flight or in recovery time, but are not necessarily home to rest during those times. This is significantly more than their European counterparts, with 2.3% participants working such hours in Germany and only 0.3% in France. Few Canadian participants worked less than 70 hours (11.4%) when compared to Germany (26.4%) and France (44.6%). Our qualitative findings indicate that as much as 33 different part-time options were available in Germany, where participants found it easy to reduce their working time, which may account for a greater take-up of reduced working time in this country. Indeed, 46.6% German participants were using voluntary reduced working time, compared to 23.9% of French and only 15.7% of Canadians. Thus, Canadian flight attendants tend to work more hours than the French and German flight attendants (see table 2).

In fact, women of all countries were more likely than men to reduce their hours to the minimum, even in small proportion. Overall, there was a tendency for men to work more hours than women, without a big difference however.

It's important to note that the flight duty period (FDP) hours are more restricted compared to the actual monthly working hours, which encompass a longer duration. This includes the time from the briefing on arrival at the airport to the moment of return, to which can be added the hours during stopovers).



3. Work-life balance

In this section, we delve on how participants view their work-life balance. We analyze the way job demands in terms of working time, mobility and multi-locality, interfere with home and family, as well as how family demands can interfere with work. We also question participants' ability to engage in social and leisure activities, given the very specific characteristics of their work in terms of mobility and multi-locality.

3.1. Work-family interferences

In our research a majority of respondents indicated that their work requirements concerning mobility, working time and multilocality interfered with their home and family life. In Canada, it was the case of 63.3% of women and 54.4% of men for an Canadian average of 60.7. Similarly, participants with at least one child under 12 were 62.8% to report so. Among women, 38.4% strongly agreed with this view and 34% of men did as well. This was less in both France (89%) and Germany (76%); in these two countries almost 53% of respondents strongly agreed with this view (37.5% for Canada). Even though men were the least likely to report work-home interferences, they reported higher difficulty to fulfill family responsibilities because of work demands than women. In Canada while 23.9% of women strongly agreed with the idea, it was the case of 20.4% of men; in Germany (21.5%; 26.7%) and in France (36.4%; 36.8%). In all countries, female flight attendants perceived more interference between job demands and family life but felt somewhat more able to fulfill family responsibilities than male flight attendants in the face of time demands. In Canada, women were more likely than men to report difficulty fulfilling family responsibilities because of job-related strain (62% vs. 54.4 %). Among parents of children under 12, 42.4% reported having difficulty fulfilling family responsibilities because of their job's time requirements and an equal proportion reported that their job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfill family duties. An important group (39.8%) reported that things they want to do at home don't get done because of their job's requirements, i.e. mainly being often out of town and having long hours because of this. However, we observe that parents were not more likely than the average to report work-home related difficulties.

3.2. Work Schedule

A vast majority of flight attendants reported having to make changes to plans for family activities because of their work and its implications in terms of mobility, with no major difference between sexes. Even if there is a high percentage, in Canada (77.8%) it is less than in France (84.7%) and Germany (85.5%). These results undoubtedly reflect the fact that the schedule is usually unstable at the beginning of one's career. The work schedule also depends on the company's policies. A few respondents from a Canadian airline reported being on call (or on "stand-by" or "reserve") for many years, without the possibility to hold a "block" schedule that is a schedule, which can be determined one month in advance with some degree of choice. Being a parent while on reserve, especially as a single parent, was particularly difficult and participants had to bend over backwards to find child care solutions. While this does not imply mobility or multilocality per se, the flight attendants have to plan for a possible mobility and flight to an unknown locality, which can be quite complex. Without a partner with a compatible schedule, a lot of child care issues were reported. That being said, the more one advances in seniority, the more stable the schedule and/or the more choices one has over one's flights, mobility and schedule. However, airline operations are easily disturbed whether because of a mechanical reason or the weather. Anything can happen so that planes are often delayed and one may not be able to make it home as planned, no matter how senior they are, thus increasing the challenges related to multi-lo-

cality. Indeed, there always has to be a “plan B” in case the schedule is disrupted and one has to stay longer than planned in another locality. As opposed to the way Canadian airlines worked regarding keeping flight attendants on call to adjust to business needs, our qualitative findings showed that German and French airlines made it so that all flight attendants are assigned to one month of reserve time per year, irrespective of their seniority. This gave a chance to the most junior to have a better schedule and less challenges or surprises in multi-locality work. However, the need to make changes to family plans because of multi-locality work were still the highest in Germany and in France.

3.3. Family-work interferences

Regarding family-to-work interferences this time (impact of family issues on work), answers were more divided. Less than a quarter of Canadians mentioned that their family or partner interrupted their work one way or another, contrary to French (32%) and especially to Germans (more than 66%). Our qualitative findings reveal that spouse insecurity, jealousy or simply discomfort with the flight attendant partner’s multi-locality work and schedule made certain female participants feel like they often had to sacrifice preferred pairings and destinations so as to accommodate the partner or the family.

Our quantitative results reveal that male respondents found themselves even more disturbed by their families than women. In Canada 23.3% of male respondents strongly agreed that family interrupted work-related activities (France, 18.8%, Germany, 49.40%). It was the case of 14.4% of Canadian women, 17.6% of French women; 52.7 of German woman (possibly because they made compromises in advance, such as sacrificing some destinations).

However, it remains that a high proportion of participants disagreed that their family or partner interfered with work-related activities (in France 44 %; in Canada 42.6%; in Germany 12.9%). In comparison with France and Germany, Canadian participants were the least likely to complain about their families interfering with work. Only 10.5% suggested that their home life sometimes prevented them from getting to work on time, accomplishing certain tasks at work or working overtime or in various destinations, and even less (8.8%) that family-related strain interfered with their ability to perform job-related duties.

Our qualitative study evidences a strong tendency and ability to segment home and work frontiers among flight attendants, that is to leave family problems behind them - or rather try to deal with them beforehand as much as possible - upon transitioning toward the airport and moving to a new locality. Among Canadian parents of at least one child under 12, 30.1% reported family-to-work interferences; this is a bit more than the average. Less than a third (32.7%) reported having to put off things at work or refuse some multi-locality destinations because of home time demands. A small proportion (13.3%) reported that home life interfered with work responsibilities and mobilities. Thus, parents were not much more likely to report home to work interferences compared to the average.

4. Leisure and social life

Canadian cabin crew were more likely to find that their job allowed them enough time for leisure activities (41.6%) than the contrary (36.1%). The situation is opposite for French and German flight attendants who find that their job does not allow them enough time for leisure activities (French 63.9 %; German 52.4%), only a small percentage finding the contrary (French 14.9 %; German 23.1%).

Still, the latter represents a significant percentage. If we look at job categories in Canada, we observe that 36.4% flight attendants, 41.8% pursers and 34.2% chief pursers found they did not

have enough time for leisure activities because of the characteristics of their work, which brings them to other localities to perform their duties. The unpredictability of the distances, schedule and possibility to return home, especially during the first years of one's career and as a junior service director, may partially account for these differences. Regarding gender differences, 17.5 % of male participants strongly disagreed with the idea that they did not have enough time to do leisure activities because of their job, compared to 9.2 % of Canadian women. This suggests that men tend to find more leisure time or consider that job is not an undue hindrance to this. Compared to other countries, Canadian participants were by far the most likely to report having time for leisure activities since more than half of the respondents in France and Germany) reported that it was not the case for them. It thus seems that shorter flights and more multi-locality in Germany and France may hinder participation in leisure and social activities.

However, no matter how much time they actually had for activities outside of work, many respondents felt they did not have the energy for it due to spending so much energy at work, with mobility and travel to various destinations on top of the actual service work.

It was the case for 68.4% of German participants with 43.9% strongly agreeing; and as much as 83.2% of French participants with 45.8% strongly agreeing, possibly because many have short flights to various destinations. It was the case for 57.5% of Canadian participants, with 32.1% strongly agreeing. Compared to other countries however, Canadian participants were not the most afflicted by lack of energy to participate in leisure activities.

Indeed, our qualitative study as well as other empirical studies (Sonnetag & Natter, 2004) have revealed that after a few days' pairing, flight attendants need recovery time from all the emotional energy spent onboard with the passengers and few are directly up to socializing. Similarly, 22.14 % of Canadian participants indicated that they had never felt in a situation to participate in leisure activities because of their job characteristics (mobility and time requirements), while it was the case of 33.9% of German participants and 37.7% of French participants.

5. Social support

In Canada, 75.4% of participants had the feeling of being supported by their family in exercising their professional responsibilities and tasks, given the requirements of their jobs, mainly multi-locality and mobility, which sometimes imply not returning home. The majority of Canadians (67.9%) felt supported in accomplishing household responsibilities and tasks. Men (69.8%) were a bit more likely to think so than women (67.1%). Compared to other countries, Canadians felt a bit more supported by their families but there were no major differences with the two other countries. A minority of Canadians did indicate that their family was not so comfortable with their work situation, the mobility and hours it implied outside of the home locality (14.1%). This situation contrasts to that of France where an important group reported so (34.5%). Canadians were also the most likely to strongly agree that their family was comfortable with their work situations (18.3%) compared to France (6.1%) and Germany (8.4%). However, Canadian women (17.2%) were less inclined to strongly agreeing with this statement than men (22.3 %).

Our qualitative results as well as the literature indicate that tensions often arise with the partner, especially when child care is involved (Ballard *et al.*, 2006) and one of the parents has to work outside the home city, and even abroad. Some jealousies or insecurities can be triggered with the flight attendants' being away in various localities, especially for many days in a row, which contrasts with traditional views about marital lifestyle. Stereotypes associated to the flight attendant lifestyle, misunderstandings regarding the schedules and mobility, levels of fatigue flight attendants face because of this mobility and difficulty to engage in socializing behaviors after pairings are all challenges to flight attendants' family and marital lives.

We also asked whether the purser had a role in the issue of reconciling work and family, but it did not appear as central. Most participants neither agreed nor disagreed with this question. There is

not much service directors can actually do to support flight attendants' work-life balance since they aren't supervisors and since they too change crews all the time. They can only provide an ear in case of difficult situations, which some interviewees did according to our qualitative results. Also, German service directors were prone to referring flight attendants to various company resources depending on their problem. This leads us to examine what resources are made available by the airlines to support their employees.

6. Organizational support to work-life balance

We asked respondents whether there were measures supporting work-life balance in their workplace. In Canada, 38.5% of participants reported their existence. This percentage was higher than in France (19.5%) and Germany (22.2%). In Canada participants were more likely to report the existence of measures or not having an opinion on the question than disagreeing. This contrasts with Germany and France where there were more respondents indicating a lack of measures than the opposite. In Canada, women were a bit more inclined to report the existence of such measures than men (39.4% vs. 35%). It thus seems that airline companies do not necessarily take the work-life issue into account, especially in France and Germany, where support measures appear to be lacking for the great majority of workers. From the interviews, we can say that flight attendants themselves consider that it is usually up to them to adapt, given the fact that multi-locality and mobility are an intrinsic characteristic of the work. Within the Canadian landscape, and in Quebec in particular, the discourse surrounding work-family balance issues has gained significant prominence in recent decades. This ongoing debate is underscored by the administration of many annual surveys dedicated to this matter. As a direct consequence, businesses have increasingly recognized the paramount importance of this facet, particularly within the backdrop of a persistent labor shortage that has characterized recent years. The prevailing scenario has propelled enterprises to seek out competitive edges within the realm of working conditions, in order to attract and retain a competent workforce. (Mathieu *et al.* 2023)

Conclusion

Cabin crew live different forms of mobility, and spend various lengths of time in different localities. Their diverse professional practices thus have specific relationships to space and time. Their working conditions with these mobilities in different places influence their family, couple and personal life in many ways, depending on their situations of life and of their characteristics (sex, age, country). We studied how work and life, or time outside of work, interacted in this specific job where space and time have very particular meanings and relations. We studied how resources (personal, familial and professional) also influence their professional experiences and contribute to alleviate certain constraints.

The number of legs and localities involved in a given Flight Duty Period (FDP), can be an important challenge for cabin crews. While the majority of flight attendants agreed that layovers are opportunities to spend time with colleagues, the fatigue levels and shortness of layovers at destination combined with the number of legs can imply that respondents are often not in the mood to socialize with the crew and mainly focus on recovering for the next flight.

Regarding work-life balance, work demands were more likely to interfere with family life than the contrary. The flight attendants reported that the requirements of their work in terms of mobility and working time interfered with their home and family life, and this was also put forward by many in the interviews we conducted in the different countries. The unpredictability of the schedule in the first years of one's career brings along a lot of child care issues for parents. Even though the flight attendants' schedule is flexible *per se*, a minority of respondents reported hav-

ing a flexible schedule, indicating that the flexibility is rather employer-driven than employee-driven. With the mobility and multi-locality issue, which is characteristic of the flight attendants' work, this represents an important challenge for cabin crew.

However employees' psychological health or stress levels did not seem to be a priority for airlines in the view of our participants.

Some 60% of flight attendants felt stressed and almost 50% reported being stressed to a maximum level. An important majority reported that they did not feel respected by their employer, especially considering their efforts and achievements. The same applies to pay. As a matter of fact, almost 80% of flight attendants perceived that their working conditions had deteriorated in the recent years. Participants were almost as inclined to thinking that their employment security was poor than thinking it was good. What is more, almost 80% of participants reported suffering from physical pains.

Despite the constraints of the experience of mobility and multi-locality, schedules as well as stress, aches and several disadvantages, the majority of the flight assistants like their work. Of course they wonder about the future of their work, considering the degradation of their working conditions, sometimes the lack of consideration from some passengers, as well as the competition from other modes of transportation (train, etc.). However, their multilocal mobilities are part of their motivation at work, with the positive effects of travelling precisely to different places or countries, and discovering the world and other cultures - which their work allows them to do to some extent. This is often the reason for having chosen this job, so the mobilities and multilocalities also have a positive dimension, even if sometimes difficult.

In this context of multi-locality work, the airline industry has constantly been adapting its flight arrangements, including the modulation of flight frequencies and the daily workload assigned to flight attendants, the duration of layovers and various other elements. It is worth noting that while certain disparities exist between countries, a prevailing sense of uniformity emerges, attributable to the international standards governing the airline industry. These standards engender analogous work conditions among companies, albeit with certain nuanced variations, primarily centered around flexibility options. Evidently, the three aforementioned contexts shed light on disparities in flexibility and the provision of work-family initiatives. Notably, it becomes apparent that European airline companies (as observed in France and Germany) may not prioritize the work-life issue to the same degree as their Canadian counterparts. In contrast to Canada, a discernible dearth of supportive measure surfaces for a substantial majority of workers. Furthermore, comparative data reveals a pronounced contrast in leisure time allocation between Canadian workers and those in France and Germany, as previously discussed. This discrepancy is perhaps rooted not exclusively in established standards and regulations, but also in the specifics of negotiations undertaken within each respective nation.

In Canada, the matter of work-family balance occupies a prominent place on the agenda, particularly within the province of Québec, where unions advocate fervently on this front. This proactive stance likely exerts an influence on the gamut of measures extended to workers, a facet that warrants a more comprehensive exploration in subsequent research endeavors.

Certainly, companies meticulously evaluate the repercussions of work-family measures or flexibility initiatives, considering not only their financial implications, but also their profound impact on the lives of flight attendants and civil aviation personnel. Beyond mere financial concerns, the quality of service stands as a pivotal consideration, inherently intertwined with the working conditions of personnel. These conditions, in turn, play a pivotal role in ensuring that these dedicated professionals approach their flight duties well-rested and prepared, thus directly contributing to the delivery of good service.

Naturally, our research is not exempt from limitations, a commonality shared by all research endeavors. Foremost amongst these constraints is a reliance on voluntary responses from personnel, which, while yielding a substantial volume of data, may not encapsulate a fully representative sample. Despite this, the robustness of our responses serves to partially mitigate this

limitation, although we remain optimistic about garnering the active engagement of companies to facilitate a more comprehensively representative study. Moreover, while we have elicited responses from several other countries, such as Italy, Portugal, and the Netherlands, these responses were not numerous enough to be analyzed. To address this, our forthcoming research will try to foster collaboration with companies in these other nations, thereby broadening the scope of our study to encompass a more diverse and representative range of responses.

Moving forward, our future research endeavors aspire to secure the participation of a wider array of companies, thereby forging a more comprehensive sample. Additionally, we endeavor to amplify our data collection efforts from other countries, striving to obtain a more complete international picture. Furthermore, our research will systematically delve into the contrasting circumstances of personnel contending with substantial distances in their multi-locality roles, juxtaposed against those who can conveniently return home at the end of each flight duty day. This comparative analysis aims to unravel potential variations in work-life experiences, thereby augmenting our understanding of this intricate domain.

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Appendix - Tables

Table 1. Maximum flight legs per FDP (Flight duty period)

Gender	Country	3 legs	4 legs	5 legs	6 legs	More than 6 legs	Not applicable/ Don't know	7 legs
Female	France	58,6%	6,1%	25,7%	5,5%	1,4%	2,5%	0,2%
	Germany	4,3%	3,2%	16,1%	73,1%	3,2%	0,0%	0,0%
	Canada	45,4%	21,9%	16,0%	9,0%	2,2%	0,0%	0,0%
	Total	40,4%	11,1%	19,8%	23,6%	2,1%	2,6%	0,4%
Male	France	53,6%	6,4%	29,3%	8,2%	0,7%	1,4%	0,4%
	Germany	4,3%	2,5%	13,7%	73,9%	5,0%	0,0%	0,6%
	Canada	39,8%	21,4%	22,3%	27,9%	2,8%	1,1%	0,4%
	Total	36,4%	8,1%	23,3%	27,9%	2,8%	1,1%	0,4%
Total	France	56,7%	6,3%	27,1%	6,5%	1,1%	2,1%	0,3%
	Germany	4,3%	3,0%	15,2%	73,4%	3,9%	0,0%	0,2%
	Canada	44,2%	21,8%	17,3%	9,1%	2,8%	4,0%	0,8%
	Total	39,1%	10,1%	21,0%	25,0%	2,3%	2,1%	0,4%

Table 2. Number of hours usually worked in a month

Gender	Country	Over 90 hours	More than 80h	Between 70h and 80h	Between 60h and 70h	Between 50h and 60h	Less than 50 hours
Female	France	0,5%	6,1%	46,6%	33,6%	10,9%	2,3%
	Germany	1,4%	24,0%	37,6%	12,9%	14,3%	9,7%
	Canada	10,7%	27,2%	49,1%	6,0%	1,2%	5,7%
	Total	4,4%	18,1%	45,3%	18,6%	8,3%	5,4%
Male	France	0,0%	5,0%	53,6%	32,9%	7,1%	1,4%
	Germany	3,7%	36,0%	52,2%	3,1%	3,7%	1,2%
	Canada	16,5%	39,8%	38,8%	1,0%	2,9%	1,0%
	Total	4,2%	20,8%	50,4%	18,0%	5,3%	1,3%
Total	France	0,3%	5,7%	49,3%	33,3%	9,4%	1,9%
	Germany	2,3%	28,4%	43,0%	9,3%	10,5%	6,6%
	Canada	11,9%	29,8%	47,0%	5,0%	1,6%	4,8%
	Total	4,3%	19,0%	46,9%	18,4%	7,3%	4,0%

Table 3. The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life

Gender	Country	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Female	France	0,5%	3,4%	6,4%	36,4%	53,4%
	Germany	0,7%	5,7%	19,0%	21,5%	53,0%
	Canada	1,7%	15,5%	20,4%	23,9%	38,4%
	Total	1,0%	8,3%	14,6%	28,2%	47,9%
Male	France	1,1%	3,6%	8,2%	36,8%	50,4%
	Germany	3,1%	5,6%	13,7%	26,7%	50,9%
	Canada	4,9%	11,7%	29,1%	20,4%	34,0%
	Total	2,4%	5,7%	13,8%	30,7%	47,4%
Total	France	0,7%	3,5%	7,1%	36,5%	52,2%
	Germany	1,6%	5,7%	17,0%	23,4%	52,3%
	Canada	2,4%	14,7%	22,2%	23,2%	37,5%
	Total	1,4%	7,5%	14,3%	29,0%	47,8%

Table 4. The demands of my home and family life interfere with my work

Gender	Country	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Female	France	19.40	28.80	20.30	14.00	17.60
	Germany	2.80	10.00	21.00	13.50	52.70
	Canada	13.40	31.10	32.50	8.60	14.40
Male	France	17.10	22.60	28.60	12.90	18.80
	Germany	4.30	8.60	21.00	16.70	49.40
	Canada	18.40	22.30	29.10	6.80	23.30

3T SECTION

3T SECTION



FUORI LUOGO READINGS

Daniela Moisa reads

Merla, L. & Nobels, B. (2022). *Deux «maisons», un «chez-soi» ? Expériences de vie de jeunes en hébergement égalitaire*, L'Harmattan.

En s'appuyant sur 21 études de cas d'adolescents belges de 12 à 16 ans, le livre *Deux «maisons», un «chez-soi» ? Expériences de vie de jeunes en hébergement égalitaire* de Bérengère Nobels et Laura Merla (L'Harmattan 2022) offre un portrait complexe des manières des adolescents de s'accommodent (ou pas) au mode de vie en hébergement égalitaire, c'est-à-dire du vécu en alternance entre le domicile maternel et paternel. En privilégiant le discours et l'expérience des jeunes au détriment de ceux des parents, les autrices font ressortir tout un monde à l'intérieur duquel les adolescents bricolent, déconstruisent et reconstruisent leur rapport aux deux maisons et aux espaces de transition, aux objets, à l'identité personnelle et familiale. Écrit dans un langage accessible combinant la description détaillée et l'analyse fine, le livre peut intéresser autant le monde académique qu'un public large touché (ou pas) par des situations de séparation et de garde partagée des enfants.

Le livre est structuré en huit chapitres. Après la présentation des portraits des enfants, il suit une réflexion théorique et méthodologique sur le concept de «chez-soi» comme clé d'analyse du vécu spatial, social et émotionnel des adolescents en hébergement égalitaire. En mobilisant des théories du *material culture* et de l'anthropologie de l'espace, les autrices avancent l'hypothèse selon laquelle «disposer de plusieurs espaces de vie peut potentiellement constituer une ressource, plutôt qu'un handicap, pour la construction de l'identité» (p. 18). Le chez-soi révèle ainsi les deux facettes du vécu des jeunes : la première est définie par des obstacles et des difficultés; la deuxième moins mise en évidence par des études similaires, qui illustre la capacité des jeunes à développer des compétences et de stratégies propres au mode de vie multilocal. Ainsi le vécu des sujets étudiés est sorti du cadre d'analyse habituel défini par l'expérience familiale «bonne» ou «mauvaise» afin d'être replacé dans une perspective de compréhension d'un mode de vie bicultural, différent de celui qui est conventionnel, représenté par l'appartenance à un seul domicile. Le deuxième chapitre propose une typologie du chez-soi sous la forme des «îles». Les comportements des adolescents dans les îles familiales sont analysés sous quatre angles : matériel (le rapport aux objets); spatial (le rapport à l'espace domestique et à l'espace de transition entre les deux îles); familial (les relations sociales avec les membres des deux familles); temporel (la gestion de la présente et de l'absence des jeunes). Le troisième chapitre développe d'une manière très détaillée l'expérience de mobilité entre les deux résidences, le «voyage entre les îles» et la manière dont cette expérience est vécue et intégrée dans l'évolution des jeunes. Plus qu'un déplacement d'un lieu à un autre, les analyses démontrent que le «voyage» a une contribution non négligeable sur la formation de chaque personnalité, sur l'acquisition de l'indépendance et de la maturité, sur l'adaptabilité du jeune dans la société. Contrairement au «non-lieu» de Marc Augé, concept défini par l'anthropologue comme flottant, instable, dépersonnalisé (1992), les lieux que le jeune fréquente lors de son «voyage» d'une île à une autre (le train, l'autobus, la rue, les voitures des parents) sont des «espaces-temps», symboles de refuge et de liberté, où le jeune a la possibilité de se recentrer, de se retrouver avec soi-même.

Les chapitres quatre et cinq surprennent les jeunes lors de l'intégration, voire la séparation des îles et la manière dont ils définissent et négocient leur place dans les deux familles. Ici, l'analyse des objets, de leur emplacement ou de leur mobilité est en fait un exercice herméneutique de décodage des relations sociales qui se font et se défont à chaque départ ou à chaque arrivée, des conduites spatiales dans l'alternance entre la présence et l'absence, de la manière dont les jeunes construisent leurs appartenances. L'idée qui ressort de l'ensemble des analyses est celle de l'instauration d'une relation active avec l'espace, de négociation continue : les îles ne sont pas de lieux, mais des cadres dans lesquels les adolescents évoluent, s'adaptent. L'analyse très fine de la pratique quotidienne révèle une diversité d'usages et de significations des objets : «objets-ombre», «objets en double», «objets-routine», «objet-en *stand-by*» ou «objets en stationnement» qui, à la fois mobiles et figés, ont un pouvoir d'*agency* (Miller 2005, car ils «aident les jeunes à développer leur identité» [Nobels et Merla, p. 98]. La conclusion des autrices est donc que les objets sont, avant tout, des instruments du quotidien permettant aux personnes étudiées d'ordonner un monde à part, de forger les habitudes et les routines, de créer un «ha-

biter multilocal » [p. 131]. Toutefois, Nobels et Merla soulignent que la construction des mondes dans la mobilité ne se fait pas sans difficulté, les objets pouvant être également des contraintes et des sources d'anxiété [oublier un objet dans l'autre famille, par exemple]. En plus des objets, les types d'espace-temps transitionnels [p. 115] tels que l'école, les transports en commun, les lieux d'activité extrascolaire) permettent aux jeunes d'« atténuer ou de gérer certaines frustrations » (p. 122), de se centrer et trouver les ressources pour affronter les réalités de chaque île.

Dans le sixième chapitre, l'analyse du chez-soi en hébergement égalitaire est menée sous l'angle de l'alternance présence/absence. Dans ce contexte, Nobels et Merla montrent comment certains objets appelés « mémoire » (p. 165) laissés dans des endroits précis ou un certain fauteuil toujours occupé par le jeune (168) font acte de présence. Autrement dit, l'objet révèle son pouvoir de représentation (Tilley 1991) d'une personne lorsque celle-ci est absente, phénomène largement étudié dans les études sur la migration et la mobilité en général (Moisa 2020). L'analyse des comportements des jeunes *in absentia* révèle un autre phénomène : le rôle que les téléphones portables jouent dans la construction du sentiment de l'appartenance et dans le renforcement des liens dans la mobilité.

Le septième chapitre propose une définition du chez-soi nommé « singulier pluriel ». Selon Nobel et Merla, le chez-soi des enfants en hébergement égalitaire a une double dimension : « personnelle », associée à l'espace physique; « familiale », définie par le lien social avec les membres des deux familles. La conclusion est que l'expérience de chaque lieu peut être différente en fonction de la prédominance d'une des deux dimensions mentionnées ci-dessus. Dans un endroit, les relations sociales peuvent être plus importantes que la qualité de l'espace et vice-versa. Dans les conclusions (Chapitre 8), les autrices proposent le concept « d'*habitus multilocal* » (p. 279) pour définir les comportements et les conduites des jeunes en hébergement égalitaire. Il s'agit « (...) d'un jeu constant de (re)négociation des rôles, places et territoires de chacun » (p. 280).

Le livre séduit par la description minutieuse qui accorde beaucoup d'importance aux discours, aux pratiques et aux comportements des jeunes concernés. Toutefois, une place plus significative donnée à la contextualisation socioéconomique des familles aurait enrichi l'analyse. Un autre bémol est le profil homogène des cas choisis : toutes des familles sont de classe moyenne, avec une situation relativement stable économiquement et socialement. L'intégration d'un échantillon plus varié, des jeunes des familles de classes plus pauvres et vulnérables par exemple, aurait généré un portrait plus nuancé. Bien que les autrices soulignent les limites de leur recherche, une explication plus poussée de leurs choix méthodologiques donnerait plus de crédibilité à l'étude. Dans la présentation des cas, l'impact des nouvelles technologies (pp. 61-63 par exemple) est beaucoup trop détaillé, le texte est parfois redondant. La partie sur les îles parentales où les informations et la description sont trop détaillées (pp. 38-76) mérite d'être réduite afin de donner plus de place aux analyses et aux interprétations.

Une dernière observation concerne les conclusions. Présentées sous le nom de Chapitre 8, les conclusions du livre sont très courtes (3 pages et demie), comparativement au texte. L'épuration des redondances dans les chapitres précédents permettrait de développer d'une manière substantielle les conclusions (jusqu'à 10 % du texte) et d'amener l'analyse à un niveau bien plus poussé. Par exemple, le concept d'« *habitus multilocal* » qui, selon nous, est central à l'étude est abordé trop rapidement, ce qui nous laisse sur notre faim. Transformer le Chapitre 8 en Conclusions tout simplement, développer l'analyse et faire ressortir davantage les idées clés donneraient plus de force et d'équilibre au livre.

Daniela Moisa

Université du Québec à Rimouski

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Marie-Kristin Döbler reads

Vendemmia, B. (2020). *Spaces for Highly Mobile People Emerging Practices of Mobility in Italy*, Routledge.

In "Spaces for highly mobile people" Bruna Vendemmia describes the "emerging practices of mobility in Italy". Travelling several hundred kilometres on a daily or weekly basis is presented as symptomatic of 'the modern world' marked by high-speed travel, information and communications technology and labour market induced flexibility. How spaces are appropriated and shaped by highly mobile people is empirically investigated and typified. Additionally, Vendemmia illustrates territorial side-effects of respective mobility practices. She depicts the (re-)design of spaces which support or enable intensive, above-average mobility and are reflected in the planning of cities and transportation.

Underlying elaborations are subdivided into six chapters framed by a foreword by Paola Pucci and an afterword by Vincent Kaufmann - and 'framing' not only refers to these supplementary chapters' positions, but also to their content. Pucci sets the scene by sketching the societal context (pp.xi) and the research state of the art (p.xii-xiv) in which Vendemmia's work is embedded. Kaufmann contextualises the study's findings and draws some more general conclusions for what is called mobility studies.

Vendemmia's own text starts with an introduction which briefly touches upon the (interrelated) effects of societal, economic and technological changes. These include women's increased participation in the labour market, reconfigurations of family structures, the transformation of working patterns, increased job insecurity due to economic upheaval, developments in information and communications technology (ICT) and the expansion of high-speed travel. As in Pucci's foreword (p. xi), these changes are presented as the sources of the emerging mobility practices studied (p. xv). Besides commuting long distances, these practices are characterised by 'reversibility'. Thanks to communication and transport technology, people are thought to be able to inhabit or to be present in different places "simultaneously" (p.xvi). Rather than being required to migrate or relocate for the sake of employment at the expense of closeness to families, partners or friends, they could have both - job and social relationships (p.xvi).

In Chapter one, Vendemmia places herself in the field of theory. She distances herself from traditional approaches which are said to be guided by discipline-specific interests, to fragment the phenomenon into sub-areas and to consider only isolated aspects. Contrary to that, Vendemmia claims to adopt an interdisciplinary perspective formalised as "mobility studies" (p.1). Drawing on ideas from geography, sociology, traffic engineering and others is said to promise more holistic pictures and more comprehensive explanations (pp.3) of the "fundamental social process" (p.1): mobility. Additionally, mobility is addressed in the plural (p.2). It is claimed that this makes mobility studies suitable for studying mobilities' complexity, dynamic and network-like appearance (p.xvii). This captures the plurality of travelling 'things' (people, personal belongings, goods, information, ideas etc.), the various scales of time (from daily commuting to irreversible migration) and space (from local to the global) as well as the interrelation of different people and life domains (pp.1).

Against this backdrop, Vendemmia repeats her remarks about socio-technological changes (i.e., more working women, (required) flexibility on the labour market, ICT and high-speed travel), but this time draws a more differentiated picture. She writes that new opportunities and new constraints are associated with the new mobility practices (p.6). While it could be interesting to read more about drawbacks or hurdles for simultaneously inhabiting different places or about people with less choice, lower willingness to be mobile or fewer resources required for such a lifestyle, 'constraints' are only briefly mentioned. Instead, Vendemmia moves on and details what she means by "reversible practices of mobility" (p.7). Accordingly, this concept captures three things: firstly, movements' cyclical nature, i.e., people sooner or later come back to their point

of departure, secondly, places' relative stability, i.e., places are assumed neither to change notably during people's absence nor to be affected by people's mobility, and finally, technologically aided opportunities to (re)connect with distant places and people. Considered together, this is thought to reconfigure mobile people's individual functional and activity space, and to nullify the relevance of geographical distances.

While this first chapter distinguishes 'traditional' and 'new' *theoretical* approaches to mobility, chapter two starts with a demarcation of 'traditional' and 'new' *methodologies*. Traditionally, mobility is quantitatively investigated, e.g., in reference to official administrative data, numbers about travellers or statistics about commuted kilometres. Respective descriptions operate primarily on a macro level. This neither reveals the reasons for being mobile, the experience of being on the move (p. 10) nor enables explanations. The latter is perceived to require profound understanding of emerging mobility practices, thus, qualitative investigations. Consequently, Vendemmia conducts semi-structured interviews with 11 highly mobile people (p.12), makes travel along participant observations with eight of them (p.16), and uses two kinds of maps. Firstly, she asks her research subjects to draw on touristic city maps what they do where in the cities they frequent regularly. Secondly, she develops analytical maps based on the coded interview transcripts and her observations (pp.17). Thus, there is a rich set of data which enables deep insights into the mobile lives of a certain group of people. While Vendemmia mentions typical limitations of qualitative approaches - e.g., results' generalisability (p.23) and researchers' involvement (p.24) - it would be very good to read something more about her study's particular limitations. Especially the specificity of the sample could have been more reflected: they are all "highly skilled workers, with good accessibility and inclination to mobility" (p.13). Without belonging to a mobile elite (p.1), all interviewed people are well connected to the Italian high-speed train lines, financially well-off and, therefore, can afford using available services. Furthermore, even if some of them do not have a partner or children or open-ended employment contracts (p.34), all of them appear to be 'established'. Discussing these points would enhance readers' estimation of the societal significance or impact of the people studied, as well as the study's scope and applicability. Such elaborations could be part of chapter three which presents background information on "mobility in the Italian context" (p.25) including data on "changes in socio-economic structure" (pp.25), the high-speed railway (pp.27) and the "cities involved in the research" (pp.29).

Chapter four turns to the heart of the research: it aims at carving out "different profiles behind being mobile" (p.35). For this, Vendemmia briefly sketches each case. This means, she gives short information on interviewees' residence and living conditions, occupation and family status as well as their means and rhythms of travel. The case studies' titles state the name of the research subject and what seems to be regarded as its main characteristic, e.g., "mobility between job opportunity and personal relations" (p.46), "shuttle because of job insecurity" (p.36) or "between high mobility and strong moorings" (p.46). Benevolent readers can recognise these titles as implicit reference to aforementioned societal, economic and technological changes.

The cases' verbal depiction are accompanied by maps which visualise the respective persons' "activities space" (pp.38). However, the black/white printing and the small size of the graphics makes it rather difficult to distinguish grey graduations and patterns, thus, to decipher the maps' details. Furthermore, it is primarily left to the reader to interpret the maps because verbal references are very general, brief and lack direct links and are, therefore, easily overlooked (p.47). This neither does justice to the maps' informative value nor to the effort that has been put into their development. Some more explanations and concrete elaborations about the maps would enhance their expressiveness.

The analytical maps that readers encounter some pages later are self-explanatory and, therefore, truly serve the purpose of illustration: they depict the "three profiles of territorial relations" (p.48) identified by Vendemmia. Accordingly, some of the interviewees "inhabit an extended space" (profile A), while others primarily commute between two places dedicated to family and

work respectively (profile B) or clearly identify one place as 'home' which is supplemented by functional spaces (profile C). These profiles are elaborated in the next section about the (changing) "rhythm of the city" (p.50). Underlying are the interdependences of presence and absence, mobility and immobility, cyclic and linear as well as personal and social temporalities. In these respects, Vendemmia recognises gender differences (pp.51). Especially in couples with children, male mobility is observed to be enabled by female immobility, i.e., mothers manage the household and care for the children. From a social scientific point of view this appears as a 'teaser': it would be very beneficial to read more about possible differences and inequalities related to these patterns. For instance, it is easily imaginable that opportunities to choose to be (im)mobile and effects of related (in)flexibilities are unevenly distributed, resulting in gender differentiated career chances or dependencies. However, despite the proclaimed interdisciplinary approach's emphasis on mobilities' inherent relationality, Vendemmia proceeds in her role as architect and urban designer and asks: "what spaces for highly mobile people?" (p.54).

Answers to this question are sought with various emphasis in chapter five. Trains and railway stations, for example, get special attention. Depending on specific, current needs, people appropriate them as places to work, socialise, relax or to do (online) shopping. Thus, they serve different purposes for different users at different times. Spaces have gained multiple and more complex meanings. This has begun to affect the design of train stations and carriages. Vendemmia elaborates on this point with a specific focus on the creation of public and private places. At least for social scientists, it would be interesting to read more about related processes of in-/exclusion and distinction. Certainly, Vendemmia mentions the need to possess the required resources to access and use certain services. Furthermore, her own empirical data does not reveal, e.g., effects of non-accessibility and how much more stressful high mobility is without conveniences and comfort the interviewees can afford. Consulting existing literature might enable to draw broader pictures, reflect about the sample and to contextualise the mobility patterns of those people studied. Respective references could be, for instance, research conducted at airports. Approached with a focus on spatial planning or architecture or from the perspective of socio-geographers or sociologists they, for example, discuss the limited access for different classes of travellers, and theorise the impacts of respective divisions into public, semi-public and private spaces. This could be integrated in the discussion Vendemmia proceeds with: the "rising demand for more hybrid urban typologies and services" (p.66). In this regard, she voices some criticism on "projects on mobility". The diagnosed tendency "to focus only on public transport policies" and daytime mobility (p.67) is thought to result in a neglect of private spaces and time, the interrelationship of different life domains (pp.1) and - one could add - the interdependency of different people's presence and absence in certain places, i.e., their (im)mobilities. Vendemmia further depicts the underlying inclination to traditional ideas, such as clearly separated spaces, as obstacles for the development of a more adequate understanding and design of spaces for highly mobile people. With only a few recently emerging exceptions, the blurring of boundaries between work and leisure, public and private spaces or the fluid, dynamic designation of places is said not to be recognised. However, Vendemmia observes the (increasing) demand for 'modern workspaces': offices which can be used flexibly for work, leisure, job-related and private meetings, or public and private places enabling remote working (p.68).

In addition to changing requirements for office buildings and private housing, urban planning faces transformed residential patterns. There is a (raising) demand for furnished apartments available for a short time, shared use of accommodations or temporary inhabitation (p.69). Related descriptions of altered work/living patterns, consequences for city planning and positive effects, e.g., in the form of reduced traffic are very instructive. Nevertheless, there could be some critical words about drawbacks: the labour market requires flexibility and some companies do not provide offices any longer. Thus, not all choose to be mobile or work remotely, but at least some are forced to, and those who cannot be mobile due to private or personal constraints or lack a working space at home, face at least severe challenges for participating 'successfully' in

the labour market. Moreover, there are certainly people who would like to be 'highly mobile' and to practice 'reversible mobility', but, for example, travel prices or times or the lack of corporeal resource to be 'always on the move' force them to migrate, to relocate, to opt for alternative modes of long- and short-term mobility or to 'opt out'. Considering different dimensions of social divisions or viewing high mobility as a fragile system, i.e., to pay attention to the network-like character or relationality of high mobility and highly mobile people's lives, would deepen the analysis. Combined with a reflection about the homogeneity of the studied sample could boost the findings' value, sharpen the mobility profiles and the conclusions to be drawn for transport and city planning discussed throughout the rest of the book.

Summing up the research in chapter six, Vendemmia highlights the value of the qualitative method employed and the mix of tools used. She claims to contribute to an interdisciplinary theoretical debate about emerging mobility practices. Accordingly, the research adds empirical insights to the concept of 'reversible mobility', and contests at least "two common ideas about mobility" (p.73), the first one was also one of Vendemmia's own points of departure: mobility was presented as a matter of choice (p.xvi) and related to "new opportunities" (p.6), but is now regarded to be a "basic need" (p.73). Secondly, the case studies are taken to indicate that mobility "has to do with everyday behaviours" rather than being a simple consequence of technological development (p.73). Furthermore, spaces are affected by and affect people's mobility practices, and spaces are considered as reversible, too (p.74). Presenting territorial relations identified for either of the aforementioned profiles A/B/C presents a bridge towards the questions raised for future research and design agenda on mobility spaces (p.75). These circle primarily around matters of administration and the distinction between private and public spaces. The former is linked to questions of collaboration among transport companies, the execution of citizenship rights, access to health care etc. Implicitly, the latter emphasises once again a praxeological point of view and calls for a stronger recognition of users: their practices rather than designers determine on an everyday basis the meaning of space.

In the following afterword, Kaufmann closes the argumentation Pucci's foreword has begun. Accordingly, daily lives are becoming more complex and spread across wider territories; flexibility and mobility in the context of work often go hand in hand. How and why we are mobile as individuals or groups and what is mobile (people, objects, jobs, ideas etc.) is increasingly multiple. Thus, new patterns of mobility require new concepts and modes of study (p.79). Kaufmann asserts that Bruna Vendemmia contributed to this emerging interdisciplinary research project as she provided an analysis of emerging mobility patterns (p.80) and depicted that and how mobility has become a structuring dimension and a driving force itself (p.77).

Vendemmia, indeed, conducts an interesting study with potential. However, the book "Spaces for highly mobile people" is primarily a description of a few people's daily mobility practices. Analytical depth is only achieved sporadically, and explanatory potential is only occasionally developed. Nevertheless, Vendemmia gives some detailed insights based on the qualitative data: readers can follow the interviewees commuting between Milano, Rome, Venice etc., get to know their reasons and motivations for being mobile, and appropriations of spaces. In sum, this certainly sheds some new light on spaces, mobilities and mobility practices, and, for sure, contributes to the geographical research into transport and mobility - the focus of the series in which the book is published - and urban studies or city planning. Thus, "Spaces for highly mobile people. Emerging practices of mobility in Italy." is quite close to practical matters and, therefore, encourages more substantial theorising and methodological reflection. Additionally, it serves as entertaining reading for those who, like me, commute several hundred kilometres at least weekly in most often poorly equipped trains between their places of work and long for power outlets, wifi, and other elements contributing to comfort.

Brunella Fiore *reads*

Hiitola, J., Turtiainen, K., Gruber, S., & Tiilikainen, M. (Eds.). (2020). *Family Life in Transition: Borders, Transnational Mobility, and Welfare Society in Nordic Countries*. Routledge.

"Family Life in Transition: Borders, Transnational Mobility, and Welfare Society in Nordic Countries" is a highly informative and comprehensive book that delves into the complexities of family life in the Nordic countries amidst transitions and transnational mobility. Written by Johanna Hiitola, Kati Turtiainen, Sabine Gruber, and Marja Tiilikainen, this book offers an interdisciplinary perspective by incorporating family sociology, migration studies, and social policies to analyze the evolving challenges faced by families in this geographic area.

One of the remarkable aspects of this book is its exploration of the intricate connection between transnational mobility and the welfare system in the Nordic countries. By examining how the mobility of families across borders influences and is influenced by the social policies of the Nordic countries, renowned for their robust welfare systems and support for families, the authors offer a unique perspective on the impact of borders and mobility on family life. In doing so, they shed light on both the opportunities and challenges that arise from these dynamics.

Furthermore, the book takes a comprehensive approach to the concept of family, encompassing various family forms and kinship relationships. It goes beyond traditional notions of family by delving into the experiences of migrant families, cross-border workers, and binational couples. By doing so, it challenges existing assumptions and expands our understanding of the diverse ways in which people establish and maintain family ties in the Nordic countries.

The research presented in this book is built upon a solid theoretical and methodological foundation. The authors combine empirical data and qualitative analysis to provide readers with a comprehensive overview of the issues at hand. Moreover, by incorporating personal family life stories, the book offers a human touch that engages the reader and enhances their understanding of the topics discussed.

In the introduction, by Kati Turtiainen, Johanna Hiitola, Sabine Gruber, and Marja Tiilikainen, the review sets the stage by highlighting the changing welfare state in Nordic countries and its implications for racialized families. It emphasizes the impact of borders, both physical and ideological, on migrant families and their experiences. The review acknowledges the historical and policy differences among Nordic countries regarding immigration and integration and introduces the multidisciplinary approach and ethical considerations employed in the book.

The text "Decoupling spheres of belonging in the Nordic welfare states" by Valtteri Vähä-Savo explores the challenges faced by the Nordic welfare states in maintaining their image of exceptionalism and solidarity. It discusses the impact of neoliberalism, austerity measures, and migration on the concept of belonging within these nations. The chapter argues that the traditional coupling of citizenship, nation, and population in the Nordic countries is becoming undone, necessitating a reimagining of new ways of belonging.

Part 1 - Welfare State and Service includes a review delving into various aspects of welfare state and service in the Nordic countries, with a specific focus on migrant parents and families. It consists of several chapters that explore different dimensions of this topic, shedding light on the challenges, experiences, and initiatives undertaken in these countries.

Chapter 3, by Beret Bråten, Kristina Gustafsson and Silje Sønsterudbråten, focuses on parenting programs in Norway and Sweden that are specially designed for migrant parents. The programs aim to provide support and assistance to these parents in raising their children while safeguarding them from potential harm. The text raises questions about the legitimacy of public authorities intervening in parenting practices when targeting migrant parents. It critically analyzes the goals of these programs, the transitions they aim to promote, and the methods employed to

achieve these transitions. It also acknowledges the delicate balance welfare states must strike between offering guidance and support and avoiding potential disciplinary measures or cultural biases.

Moving on to Chapter 4 by Tuuli Miettunen, the text explores the experiences of urban Sámi families in Finland who reside outside their traditional homeland. These families face the challenge of preserving and passing on their cultural identity and languages to future generations. The chapter highlights the administrative border that separates the traditional Sámi homeland from other areas in Finland, leading to varying levels of cultural rights and support. Despite the endangerment of Sámi languages, the study reveals a growing movement to revitalize and preserve them. It emphasizes the significance of language preservation in maintaining cultural connections and portrays the challenges faced by Sámi families in navigating this bordering.

Chapter 5, by Sabine Gruber, delves into the historical and current practices of foster care in Sweden, with a specific focus on migrant children and families. The author addresses the problematic history of relocating and separating children from ethnic minority and indigenous communities from their homes and families. It sheds light on the dominance of Swedish families in the recruitment of foster families and the lack of diversity in ethnic backgrounds. The chapter also explores social workers' perspectives on integration and the exclusion of migrant families from becoming foster families. It highlights the challenges faced by migrant children in preserving their cultural and linguistic identities within the foster care system.

In Chapter 6, by Marit Aure and Darius Daukšas, the authors discuss the fear experienced by Lithuanian migrants in Norway towards the Norwegian Child Welfare Services (NCWS). Through interviews with Lithuanian parents, the study reveals concerns about potential separation from their children by the NCWS. The authors analyze the cultural dynamics and societal factors contributing to this fear, emphasizing the need to address cultural particularism while recognizing the importance of cultural factors. This chapter sheds light on the complexities of migrant experiences and their impact on family life.

The final part, with Chapter 7, by Minna Zechner and Tiina Tiilikka, focuses on Finnish migrant mothers living outside of Finland and explores their understanding of good motherhood in their new countries of residence. By analyzing blog texts written by these mothers, the authors examine how they navigate and negotiate societal norms and values related to parenting and motherhood. The study identifies three main themes: parenthood on the societal level, parental decision-making, and the division of labor within the family and society. It illuminates the challenges faced by migrant mothers in adapting to and reconciling multiple cultural norms and expectations in their mothering practices.

The second part of the volume, "Transnational Families", offers a comprehensive exploration of various aspects of transnational family dynamics, including cross-border commuting, transnational care, everyday life in rural border areas, and forced family separation. These chapters provide valuable insights into the complexities and challenges faced by individuals and families in transnational contexts, contributing to a deeper understanding of migration and its effects on family life.

Chapter 8 of "Transnational Families" by Keiu Telve examines the transnational commuting of Estonian men between Estonia and Finland for work purposes. Telve's qualitative research challenges the perception of cross-border commuting as a temporary pattern by revealing its long-term and multi-generational nature. The study emphasizes the influence of migration stories and network migration on the younger generation's decision to work abroad. Additionally, the research explores the tensions and differing perspectives between older and younger generations regarding working abroad, offering valuable insights into the dynamics of transnational families.

In Chapter 9, Charlotte Melander, Oksana Shmulyar Gréen, and Ingrid Höjer focus on transnational care arrangements in families of Central and Eastern European migrants working in Sweden. The authors highlight the significance of trust and reciprocity in establishing and main-

taining transnational care for children residing in the home country. They argue that care triangles and the relationships within them are influenced by family dynamics, gender roles, and the quality of trust and reciprocity. By conducting qualitative interviews with mothers and fathers in transnational families from Poland, Romania, and Latvia, the chapter provides a diverse understanding of care practices and the negotiation of trust and reciprocity. This research emphasizes the need for a nuanced perspective on care arrangements in migrant families.

Chapter 10 delves into the everyday lives of Russian-speaking migrants in Eastern Finland and their family dynamics in the "Everyday Transnational Russian-Finnish Family Relations in a Finnish Rural Border Area." The authors explore the challenges faced by these families, such as long distances, changes in family roles, and bureaucratic obstacles. The study highlights the importance of informal care within transnational families and emphasizes the influence of borders and places of origin on family experiences. By shedding light on the complexities of everyday life for these families in a rural border area, this chapter provides valuable insights into their realities.

Chapter 11 by Leinonen and Pellander examines the relationship between temporality and everyday security in the lives of separated refugee families. The authors discuss the involuntary family separation faced by migrants due to stricter family reunification policies in receiving countries, including Finland. They argue that the extended separation caused by immigration legislation and administrative obstacles can be considered a form of administrative violence against refugee families. By conducting in-depth interviews with refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia who have applied for family reunification in Finland, the authors highlight the emotional and temporal dimensions of waiting for reunification and the profound sense of insecurity experienced by refugees. This chapter sheds light on the multifaceted impact of forced family separation on refugees' well-being and everyday lives, emphasizing the challenges and emotional distress faced by separated families.

Part 3 of the book provides a comprehensive and illuminating exploration of the complexities of enacting citizenship and respectable parenthood within racialized migrant families. The chapters offer valuable empirical insights and contribute to the existing literature on migration, identity, and family dynamics. The diverse perspectives presented in this section deepen our understanding of the challenges and possibilities faced by migrant families in the Nordic countries.

In Chapter 12, Marja Tiilikainen focuses on Finnish Somali fathers and their efforts to maintain their cultural heritage while adapting to Finnish society. The chapter highlights the changes in Somali fatherhood roles and emphasizes the significance of transnational spaces in shaping their experiences. Tiilikainen's study sheds light on the complexities of fatherhood within the Finnish diaspora.

Chapter 13, by Marta Padovan-Özdemir and Barbara Noel Day, explores the dynamics of school-home collaboration for migrant families in Denmark. The chapter challenges deficit-based perspectives and examines how migrant parents enact citizenship through their participation in school activities. By emphasizing the importance of empowering collaborations between educators and parents, this chapter advocates for recognizing diverse forms of respectable parenting as acts of citizenship.

Zeinab Karimi's Chapter 14 investigates the struggles of Iranian migrant parents in constructing a respectable identity in Finland. The concept of "khanevadehye mohtaram" illuminates the challenges faced by these parents, emphasizing the intersectionality of gender, class, and migration in defining parental respectability. The chapter contributes to the understanding of parenthood in migrant families and provides nuanced insights into the complexities of identity construction.

Chapter 15 by Camilla Nordberg examines newcomer mothering and its relationship to acts of citizenship within migrant incorporation. The chapter reveals how newcomer women navigate the challenges of citizenship, motherhood, and self-identity. By employing techniques of mothering as acts of citizenship, these women assert their agency within societal structures. The chapter offers valuable insights into the dynamics of migrant integration and the significance of everyday practices in shaping citizenship experiences.

Finally, Chapter 16 explores the experiences of Afghan refugee families in Finland. The authors, Johanna Hiitola, Kati Turtiainen, and Jaana Vuori, investigate the concept of agency within the family sphere and highlight the challenges faced by these families, particularly in terms of precarious residency status. The chapter sheds light on the enduring struggles and suffering of family members, emphasizing the need for ethical considerations and reciprocal benefits for participants and communities.

"Family Life in Transition" is essential reading for anyone interested in family dynamics, migration, and social policies in the Nordic countries. The book provides a rich and detailed perspective on how transnational mobility influences families and how welfare systems respond to these challenges. It serves as a significant contribution to the field of family sociology and offers valuable insights for future studies and debates.

Brunella Fiore

University of Milano-Bicocca



FUORI LUOGO MEETING

Exploring Multilocality: Family Transformations, Belonging, and the Challenges of Mobility - Interview with Laura Merla

Laura Merla is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Interdisciplinary Research Centre on Families and Sexualities (CIRFASE) at the Catholic University of Louvain, and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia.

QUESTION: *Although originally inspired by sociological reflections on behaviors in contemporary flexible and individualized society (Beck, 1992; Bauman, 2000; Sennett, 2011), the debate on multi-localism, and the use of the term, is often attributed to the field of the social geography, in particular thanks to the work by Weichhart (2015). Is this a possible description of its origins? How would you define multi-localism and how did you get involved into this field of studies?*

ANSWER: It was the Swiss sociologist Cédric Duchêne-Lacroix that first introduced me to the concept of multilocality, back in 2013, at a conference on “Family life in the age of migration and mobility”. At the time, my work focused on transnational families and the way in which members of these families maintain a sense of belonging through the exchange of care across geographical borders. In collaboration with anthropologist Loretta Baldassar (UWA) and sociologist Majella Kilkey (University of Sheffield), I examined the forms that different types of support might take as they circulate across borders, as well as the structural factors that make it easier or harder for transnational family members to participate in these flows. This work was part of a research programme I was conducting at the UCLouvain that analysed - and still analyses today - contemporary family transformations in the context of distance and geographical mobility. Listening Cédric talk about multilocality, multilocal residentiality, and multilocal living, I realized that a whole field of research, mainly rooted in social geography and the sociology of space, had also developed conceptual tools that were very useful to examine the question of belonging and the practices deployed by families in a context of distance and mobility - this time, mainly within state borders. While the field of study of transnational families - which is mainly rooted in migrations studies - tends to emphasise what happens across borders, between ‘here’ and ‘there’, while recognising the importance of situating these dynamics within local contexts, the study of multilocality focuses more on questions of local anchoring, territoriality and territorial appropriation, and the effects of these multiple anchorings on feelings of belonging. For me, one of the central questions posed by multilocality concerns the ability to “make do” with multiple territorial anchors and to create stability and continuity in this context. Two metaphors are particularly inspiring in this respect. The first one is the archipelago. Duchêne-Lacroix uses it to characterise multilocal families (a “family archipelago” includes all the living quarters of family members), and to designate the fact that, through processes of appropriation, distant living spaces can be apprehended as forming a whole in the experience of individuals (through a process of “archipelisation of living spaces”). In both cases, the archipelago metaphor emphasizes issues of spatiality and territoriality, while at the same time challenging the often-heard idea that family life, when it unfolds in multiple places and through episodes of separation and intermittent co-presence, is necessarily fragmented and deconstructing. The second one is the choreography of co-existence, which Duchêne-Lacroix borrows from time-geography. It refers to the delicate work of synchronisation that family members engage in to deal with the logistical challenges associated with multilocality. This conceptualization of family life across distance (which shows that families can do ‘with’ distance rather than ‘in spite of it’) strongly resonates with my own approach, which consists in de-constructing normative conceptions inspired by a

¹ Simone Caiello, Università degli Studi di Milano - Bicocca, simone.caiello@unimib.it, ORCID: 0000-0001-8641-1406; Marco Alberio, Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna, marco.alberio2@unibo.it, ORCID: 0000-0002-7713-9639; Tino Schlinzig, ETH Wohnforum - ETH CASE, Zurich, Switzerland, schlinzig@arch.ethz.ch, ORCID: 0009-0008-9534-9657.

traditional - and, I would dare say, conservative and outdated - vision of families that demonizes distance, mobility, and separation.

QUESTION: *How are you working on the topic in this period? What are the most interesting aspects to be addressed on the base of your research experience?*

ANSWER: I was very keen to build bridges between transnational and multilocal studies, and to do so, I decided to put transnational family studies a little bit to the side and design a research project on post-divorce multilocal families, called 'MobileKids'. Thanks to an ERC Starting grant, I explored during the last six years how children who grow up in shared physical custody arrangements (SPC) after a parental separation appropriate this multilocal mode of living and potentially develop new forms of habitus. SPC is a living arrangement where children reside alternatively (equally or nearly equally) in their mother's and their father's dwellings. My research focused mainly on Belgian children (a field study was also carried out in Italy from a slightly different angle and is currently being analysed) because SPC is strongly supported by Belgian family law and concerns around 1 in 3 children in post-divorce families. Parental divorce and separation are also important phenomena in Belgium, where only 60% of children grow up in classical nuclear families. Together with Bérengère Nobels, my doctoral student, I explored children's sense of home and the practices they develop to appropriate their own mobility, to manage the logistics involved in constantly transitioning between homes, to anchor themselves in each dwelling and negotiate the family relationships that unfold in each site, and to maintain a presence during their absence. Our main results have been published in 2022 in the book *"Deux maisons, un chez-soi. Expériences de vie de jeunes en hébergement égalitaire"* (Academia-L'Harmattan) and an English adaptation of the book is forthcoming in 2024 at Bristol University Press under the title *"Belonging and belongings. Children sense of home in shared custody arrangements"*.

In this work, we apply Duchêne-Lacroix' archipelago metaphor to the family configurations we study and envision each dwelling as an island with its own material and relational characteristics. The dwellings and their material environment can be very different from each other, as are the people that inhabit them, and the norms and values that prevail, and we analyse how children navigate within, and between, their two islands. The boundaries that parents draw between these islands can be more or less watertight or open, and we also show how young people sometimes circumvent these boundaries or put boundaries where there are none. It is difficult to summarise the contributions of this work here, but I would say in particular that this research has shown the crucial role that materiality plays in the lives of multi-local children, such as their personal effects, which they use to anchor themselves in places and/or to create stability in movement. Children also use the space and materiality of their living environment to negotiate their family relationships and their place in the family. More broadly, our research shows that children apprehend their two dwellings as connected and forming a whole in their experience. At the same time, the way children feel at home on each island can be different, while being complementary, depending on whether it is based on material (linked, for example, to the configuration of the premises), personal (having the opportunity to create your own cocoon), and/or relational dimensions.

QUESTION: *What are the current gaps in the research on Multi-locality? What could the Social Sciences contribute in the development of the field and are there interrelations to other fields already developed and to be further deepened or, on the other hand, some that should be built that are lacking?*

ANSWER: My knowledge of the field of study of multilocality is fairly limited, in the sense that I have mobilised the multilocal approach to study a very specific subject, that of family relationships in a context of geographical mobility. From this perspective, I would say that a lot still needs to be done to bring together transnational and multilocal family studies. In 2021 I coordinated with my MobileKids team a special issue of the journal *Recherches sociologiques et anthropologiques* entitled 'Family transformations and residential mobilities: the challenges of 'doing family' in, and through, space'. We brought together scholars from transnational and multilocality studies, and tried to identify in the introduction to the SI common lines of thinking,

based on their concrete empirical work. Several extremely rich common themes emerged. These include a) the multiplicity of affiliations and reference frames that people must deal with and the practices they adopt to navigate between these different frames and create continuity in their life experiences, b) the various forms of co-presence that people engage in to maintain a sense of belonging across space and time, their potentials, and their limitations, and c) the power relations that structure the relationship between family and space in a transnational/multilocal context. Brought together, these works highlight that “doing family” in a transnational/multilocal context requires the acquisition of particular skills, of ways of being in the world, that shape a specific habitus. I call this a “multilocal habitus”, drawing on the concept of transnational habitus and extending it to encompass multilocal families in all their diversity (thus considering that transnational families represent a form of multilocal family). A multilocal habitus “constitutes sets of potentially contradictory habits, patterns and dispositions, constructed in a multilocal family context. They are shaped by the experience of multiple referential frameworks and help social actors navigating between and dealing with them. They also help to define the contours of family and family inclusion at local and global levels - “here”, “there”, and “in-between” - through various forms of co-presence, and multisensorial, symbolic, virtual and material practices, which produce common knowledge and experiences » (Merla *et al.*, 2021). Much remains to be done to understand how family socialization works in practice to help children forge this habitus, what specific resources are needed, and how inequalities operate in this context. In this respect, I think it is vital to take an interest in the situation of young people who grow up in a violent environment - whether this violence is intra-familial, institutional or linked to a geopolitical context.

QUESTION: *What are the future social developments that could make it necessary to initiate further research? And what is the potential role, also in term of third mission, of the academia on that?*

ANSWER: For me, the climate crisis and the ecological transition that goes with it pose major challenges for people who live a multilocal lifestyle. Transnational family studies emerged in a world where travel had become much more accessible, to the point that regular visits ‘home’ were taken-for-granted for many families - although strong inequalities remained between those who had the legal documents and the financial/social/time resources to travel regularly, and those who didn’t. Tomorrow, these inequalities will dramatically increase. Air travel will become a luxury that few will be able to afford. We had a glimpse during the Covid crisis of the terrible consequences of restricting travel for transnational families. The Covid crisis also revealed the limits of technology for maintaining satisfactory relationships at a distance. As researchers, we have a fundamental role to play in the face of the changes that are coming. It is vital that we analyze in depth the way in which they unfold and impact on people, paying particular attention to the potential increase in social inequalities. We also have a responsibility to use our expertise to alert policymakers to the effects of the measures that will be considered.

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FUORI LUOGO CONTRIBUTIONS

Pursuing Urban Liveability with Nature-Based Solutions: a Multi-Faceted Strategy towards Sustainability²

Introduction

The widespread consequences of human activity's impact on the ecosystem require cities to reflect on new ways to build more liveable futures. One contemporary concern is environmental fragility, which will lead a general loss of well-being, health, and economic opportunities. After decades of urban growth and in the face of critical phenomena such as global warming, today, rising attention is given to the planning of liveability in cities (Pacione, 1990).

The concept of urban liveability became popular during the Eighties in conjunction with growing alarm about the environmental crisis, and it became a key word used to attract investment in the global competition among cities (Kashef, 2016). It is often connected with a city's capacity to meet inhabitants' needs and desires for the well-being and a high quality of life (Martino *et al.*, 2021) and establish a bond with residents based on their attitudes, behaviours, and lived experiences (Bedi *et al.*, 2023). Liveability is related to a variety of domains, including clean water and air; high-quality educational, health and social services; infrastructure; employment opportunities; culture, leisure and entertainment; civic participation; public spaces; and green areas. Indeed, a liveable environment integrates material and social parameters, requiring a multi- and transdisciplinary approach. The tangible and intangible dimensions of liveability also imply a cultural interpretation, one anchored in local values and associated with human perceptions. According to Chazal (2010), it embraces the fulfilment of personal life desires and collective aspirations. Chazal (*ibidem*) also focusses on the interesting and prolific conceptual shift that ties liveability to sustainability, identifying the latter as an ecological restraint to the pursuit of those desires and aspirations. However, this category continues to challenge definition, as do measurement and evaluation, precisely because it is inherently changing and contextual (Leach *et al.*, 2017).

Liveability is often defined as a subset of sustainability with an intimately local character and as specifically related to a short- and medium-term horizon. According to Ruth and Franklin (2014, p. 4), liveability «is about the 'now' or 'about to be'. It also tends to be about the 'here'». Gough (2015) defines "liveable sustainability" as the logical and practical connection between local urgencies for liveability and wider purposes for a sustainable future. Based on the author's considerations, the results of liveability seem opening and preparatory to wider sustainability outcomes. Both deal with desirable futures but act in different temporal and spatial dimensions, although they do so in complementary ways. However, as Newton (2012) remarks, there is no obvious liveability-sustainability nexus: embracing both components in strategic cities must include place-based attributes, the quality of the urban environment, high resilience performance, eco-efficient infrastructure, innovative new technology platforms and formal and informal network to increase citizens participation.

Sustainability, resilience, adaptability and liveability have become recurring mantra in a fluid, unpredictable and fragmented society such as ours. Climate change, environmental disasters and the loss of biodiversity are responsible for reducing liveability in cities. In consequence of this complexity administrators at all levels are called to face a wide array of socio-ecological challenges which raise questions about the results of the anthropic pressure on the ecosystem, a theme explored within the current Anthropocene narratives (Lidskog, Waterton, 2016; Block, 2022). According to Folke *et al.* (2021), environmental issue demands a transformative change based on technologies and social innovations embracing the idea that people have to collaborate with the biosphere to solve current ecological matters. In addressing the local costs of

1 Silvia De Nardis, Sapienza University of Rome, silvia.denardis@uniroma1.it; ORCID: 0000-0001-6364-7598.

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the environmental crisis, from extreme atmospheric events to heat islands to food and water insecurity, some city leaders are attempting to give nature back its space. The main challenge here is to balance environmental, social, economic and institutional aspects of that return. The need is to rethink the traditional human-nature dichotomy in favour of their deep connections (Nelson *et al.*, 2020). This process is part of a vision in environmental theory that conceptualises the co-evolutionary relation between nature and society (Lidskog, Waterton, 2016), considering this tie as a complex, evolving socio-natural assemblage (Bowden, 2017).

The revival of green approaches in city-making includes nature-based solutions (NBSs), which are progressively seen as levers of innovation that can tackle pressing societal issues, environmental challenges and create value in production chains (Faivre *et al.*, 2017). According to Kashaf (2016), to be liveability-oriented, a planning strategy directed at safeguarding nature must examine the material and immaterial components of demands from the social, financial and environmental worlds. Moreover, recent studies believe that the current discourse on ecosystem challenges widens new horizons for research into social innovation. According to Olsson *et al.* (2017), restoring the balance and relations between people and the planet is required by working with integrated solutions (*bricolage* in the authors' words) that address innovations from the perspective of socio-ecological systems. This parameter seems to be taken into account by some contemporary theories of NBSs, which are especially targeted at embracing the tripartite approach to sustainability.

Based on these assumptions, this paper theoretically explores NBSs as drivers of reduced urban vulnerability and increased sustainability in cities. On one hand, it highlights how these actions go beyond the sectorial approach to include at the same time environmental, social, economic and institutional components, thus contributing to urban liveability. On the other hand, it examines the role of the co-design and co-management processes of self-produced NBSs, with the aim of better understanding these strategies' innovative potential. According to Wickenberg *et al.* (2021), there is a need to understand *how* green solutions are carried out. In their opinion, better analytical and operational results could be achieved through collaboration and co-creation of knowledge. In summary, this research concerns if and under what conditions a *process* of creating liveable and vibrant urban environments through NBSs can allow positive change towards sustainability.

On these bases, the paper deepens the case of the UPPER project, an NBS co-design initiative promoted by the city of Latina, Italy. The experience carries out a collaborative approach to NBS implementation, integrating NBSs into innovative services in business and education. To fulfil this aim, UPPER experiments with the creation of urban productive parks in vacant and underutilised land while engaging civil society to foster social cohesion, ecosystems recovery and economic development. The analysis focusses on the process that led to the project's emerging community of practice, highlighting its results, including the strengths and weaknesses of this collective and multistakeholder path.

1. The Role of Nature-Based Solutions for Enhancing Liveability in Cities

As is well known, faced with the challenges of climate change, cities are looking for adaptation and mitigation strategies to manage ongoing impacts (World Bank, 2008; European Commission, 2013). NBSs are proposed as effective tools through which to meet this need, even if, according to Seddon *et al.* (2021), they cannot be considered as an alternative to the prompt abandonment of fossil fuels. However, this concept goes beyond greenness by including social, economic, and institutional features. That is also why the European Environment Agency (2021) identifies it as an umbrella term with which to describe a multipurpose strategy via which to approach climate-change-adaptation and disaster-risk-reduction initiatives in both urban and rural areas.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature's definition, NBSs appear as interventions or tools that preserve and revitalise ecosystems while helping to address the deep-seated needs of society in an adaptive way for the prosperity and health of all living organisms (Cohen-Shacham *et al.*, 2016). European Commission (2022) identifies them as actions inspired, supported or copied by nature and resilient to change. They include reforestation, the restoration of wetlands, rain gardens, pocket parks, green roofs and urban gardens. The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEP, 2022, p. 2) describes NBSs as actions to protect, conserve and restore the various elements of the environment, using and managing them in a sustainable way, delivering widespread benefits. Generally, NBSs are intended to be forms of socio-ecological-technical innovation used to face collective issues and address sustainable urban development (Xie *et al.*, 2022). Due to their adaptive ability to meet challenges, interest in this field is constantly increasing. In fact, a growing number of local place-based trials are emerging in Europe and beyond. Global and EU policy frameworks recognise the role of NBSs in meeting the objectives of sustainable development (European Commission, 2022; UNEP, 2022), and a significant effort is being made in practice (e.g., ProGIreg and URBiNAT), as well as in networking and the sharing of knowledge (e.g., Network Nature and OPPLA). European Green Deal (European Commission, 2019) and the new EU biodiversity strategy for 2030 (European Commission, 2020) are supported by NBSs under the motto "innovating with nature".

That attention is paid because NBSs are associated to diversified ecosystem services in terms of regulation, provision and culture (Pereira, Barò, 2022). These services may derive from green spaces and bodies of water in and around cities and, together with social and economic services, can contribute to fostering a liveable environment (Ruth, Franklin, 2014). According to Raymond *et al.* (2017), they provide some side advantages, including improved desirability, safety and quality of a place, and the creation of green sector employment opportunities. Therefore, the multipurpose character of NBSs is expressed in providing ecosystem services, which can be defined as the benefits that nature offers to human well-being (Faivre *et al.*, 2017). However, the notion of ecosystem service can result troublesome. Some critical views suggest that NBSs are mostly treated as instruments in a technocratic and engineering city-making, incorporating the modern human disposition to control nature (Herrmann-Pillath *et al.*, 2022). Rather, we need to reconnect humans with the multiplicity of other species and ecosystems they depend on (Maller, 2021). Against these issues, adopting a relational approach (*ibidem*), NBSs seem to emerge as a potentially effective formula via which sustainability and liveability reinforce one another. Indeed, NBSs can act on material and tangible dimensions, such as water security (Cassin *et al.*, 2021) and food system efficiency (Keesstra *et al.*, 2023), while fostering public health, wellness and social cohesion. Moreover, as argued by Sturiale *et al.* (2023), green infrastructures are becoming increasingly recognised by citizens as efficient solutions with which to improve the quality of the air, aesthetics, happiness and psychological and physical health. Green and blue infrastructures are chosen by local communities, instead of those that are grey, for the sake of a wide range of benefits that include reduced aesthetic and environmental impacts, the wide involvement of stakeholders and advantages in terms of construction and maintenance costs.

However, as Pereira and Barò (2022) argue, NBSs can also provide ecosystem disservices, such as plant allergies, poisoning or unpleasant smells; trade-offs, such as risen water consumption, wildfire risk and related management costs; and implementation barriers, including political motivations, a lack of knowledge, a lack of time and workload. NBSs can present different ecological, economic, and social costs. The "green gentrification" concept, for example, emerges when green interventions produce residential islands favoured by an environmental advantage, excluding lower-income people (Anguelovski *et al.*, 2019). The development of gardens and parks increases the attractiveness of a neighbourhood but can represent a mechanism of expulsion and the loss or weakening of identities, voices and practices. Moreover, according to Bell *et al.* (2014), individual agency can affect when and why different people use green spaces, as well as how they use them. These researchers analyse the influence of life contexts and personal orientations

towards nature in determining the perception and experience of green spaces. In addition, as previously mentioned, NBSs have been accused of anthropocentrism where a hierarchical view of human needs is adopted with respect to those of other species and ecosystems (Maller, 2021). In summary, we cannot imagine an absolute correlation between green solutions and sustainability without considering path dependency and the wide range of features that define human quality of life and the quality of non-human habitat. A multi-faceted strategy is needed to capture liveability and sustainability attributes through NBSs.

2. Co-creating Liveable Urban Futures: What if Green Solutions Encounter Social Innovation?

Green solutions' ability to meet collective urban challenges (Almenar *et al.*, 2021) leads us to consider their connections with social innovation. On one hand, social innovation is associated to the topic of societal needs satisfaction (Murray *et al.*, 2010). On the other hand, an innovation's "social" component is represented by a diversified array of collective values correlated with solidarity, responsibility and inclusion (BEPA, 2014). Ziegler *et al.*'s (2022) approach to social innovation for biodiversity considers the former to be a civic action intended to change practices and thus address unsustainability, framing it as a positive change that can be derived from local pilot trials or be policy driven. The recent literature suggests the strengthening of that correlation when green solutions are designed, developed and managed by communities, together with institutions, scientists, researchers and profit and non-profit organisations. Generally, Balian *et al.* (2016) suggest the value of using green solutions for social innovation and *vice versa*, meaning the integration of new economic, social, educational, and nature-based approaches to create co-benefits by adopting holistic/systemic and transdisciplinary processes.

The increasing public attention paid to the city's re-naturalisation (Bauduceau *et al.*, 2015) is even more taken into account in order to maximise social ties' added value in fragile settings or changing times. Scholarship in this field highlights the crucial role of collaboration between diversified players, such as institutions, the third sector, businesses, academia and citizens. The co-design processes value is widely recognised, while a growing emphasis is placed on what Rhodes *et al.* (2022) call "translation consultant" actors. These are intermediators between stakeholders interested in social innovation, and they act as focal points for the communication, explanation and connection of interests. This collaborative approach is also in line with Moulart *et al.*'s (2013) idea of using social innovation to improve social relations and community empowerment without embracing neoliberal drifts. Frantzeskaki (2019) highlights some lessons regarding NBSs implementation in cities. In her opinion, NBSs require trust in the local government, the testing process, diversity and learning from social innovation. They must also be aesthetically attractive to people and create new green urban commons. Moreover, NBSs call for a collaborative governance and an inclusive narrative and should be replicable in the long term.

In summary, multiple, complementary and interdependent innovations seem to be needed to achieve concrete results in terms of systemic transformations. Sometimes, NBSs initiatives demonstrate their positive impact, as proved by some community urban gardens/farming acting for well-being and food production (Spijker, Parra, 2017), or some cooperative forest-based social enterprises aimed at personal subsistence and environmental protection (Lawrence *et al.*, 2020). Nevertheless, NBSs applications can produce paradoxical or unfair results in terms of costs and benefits for the society, producing trade-offs in sustainability aims. They may become a discursive tool by encouraging forms of nature's neoliberalisation (Kotsila *et al.*, 2021) or reproduce geographical inequalities across territories and countries (Cooper *et al.*, 2024). Moreover, as Castellar *et al.* (2024) affirm, transversal barriers such as technological complexity, lack of skilled staff and awareness of NBSs as valid options continue to negatively affect NBSs' applicability. In authors' study, initiatives in information, education and governance are described as strategic

choices enhancing sustainability. Additionally, according to Kabisch *et al.* (2016), multi-stakeholder and integrated governance approaches need to be reinforced as well.

Changes in social and public practices can be driven and stimulated by NBSs. Adams *et al.* (2023) define them as actions with comprehensive advantages, encouraging profound changes in terms of urban planning and governance. Citizens' participation, civic engagement and community social innovation represent key components. As Nassauer (2011) argues, there is a "care effect" that can occur for both the home and the planet, stimulating a process of change that could affect global scale transforming values and institutions where small actions are contagious from person to person within social networks and through the web. While it provides a concrete path to liveability, multi-actor social innovation surrounding green practices represents a stimulating field of experimentation concerning sustainability transitions (Markard *et al.*, 2012). The aim is to understand the mechanisms via which to activate an inclusive NBS mainstreaming process through the development of collaborative forms of social and public innovation (Sørensen, Torfing, 2013). There is an open debate regarding how achieve concrete results in terms of sustainable transitions, and a promising argument in this regard suggests the need for collaboration and co-designing at a local scale (Nevens *et al.*, 2013).

3. Methodology

The paper focuses on the contribution that NBSs make to urban living, approaching reflection on the long-term impacts that the application of these solutions produces in terms of urban sustainability.

The research addresses the following questions:

- What is the contribution of NBSs to urban liveability?
- How do NBSs stimulate social innovation processes at a local scale?
- Can NBSs encourage cities to act for a sustainable transition?

At the heart of this analysis, there is the consciousness of liveability's defining and measurable limits (Leach *et al.*, 2017). To face this difficulty, the present paper adopts a qualitative, inductive and case-oriented approach to better understand the concept of liveability as it relates to NBSs in urban areas. Here, liveability is linked to the meeting of social needs and, relating to NBSs, to the activation of local and public-oriented social innovation processes.

This explorative research uses a qualitative content analysis (QCA) that includes, in its coding framework, three main domains derived from NBSs' initial theoretical setting: i) liveability; ii) social innovation and iii) sustainable transitions. This method is chosen because it is systematic, flexible and context-conscious and it allows us to reduce the data, including material generated by the researcher or derived from other sources that require some degree of interpretation (Schreier, 2012). This paper presents the results of a qualitative research based on a review of scientific literature and a QCA which draws upon: public sources and documents (e.g. UPPER project website, newsletters, social media channels narratives, working papers, and policy documents); secondary data (e.g. Istat, UPPER's data such as users stories and assessment reports); five semi-structured interviews with key actors involved in the selected case study (from June 2023 to August 2023), using a non-casual method of selecting participants by contacting those who were informed about the process (members of the project's partner associations and local government)³; on-site visits during the project life, where interventions to be implemented were foreseen (three urban productive parks and eight demonstrative sites), informal discussions during the project's final public event with significant stakeholders, including promoters, both technical and political public administrators, academics, practitioners, associations and citizens. Regarding the empirical and case-related factors, the research investigates the following:

3 Interviews were conducted in-person; one of those was via e-mail and telephone.

- How does the project strive to meet citizens' and participants' needs?
- Does the project contribute to changes with respect to sustainability?
- What sensitive components are affected by the project and can potentially drive change?

The study investigates whether, in the analysed experience, there are connections between adopted green solutions and opportunities to improve the urban living environment by observing the achieved results and questioning participants' experience. The strengths and weakness of the implemented strategy, along with opportunities, lessons learned and open research scenarios are considered. The interest is embedded in identifying the key relationships at the local project scale (based on the liveability-social innovations-sustainability nexus) and new perspectives emerging from the community of practice based on the experience. This research then explores the enabling conditions through which the project embraces horizons of changes in policies, governance and practices, creating a path for sustainable transitions.

4. The Case of UPPER in the City of Latina

The UPPER (Urban productive parks for the development of NBS-related technologies and services) project (2019-2023), has been carried out by the Municipality of Latina, with contributions from the European Regional Development Fund under the Urban Innovative Actions initiative⁴. It consists of a public-private partnership focused on the urban regeneration of abandoned and degraded areas using self-produced NBSs addressing environmental and social issues, as well as pursuing economic and governance objectives.

Latina is a medium-sized Italian city in the Lazio region, and it has over 120,000 inhabitants. Born at the beginning of the Twentieth century as part of the reclamation plan of the fascist regime, it has experienced exponential demographic and urban growth because of the associated agricultural production, economic development and improved living conditions. This "city without walls" is representative of the wide expansion encouraged by its radial plan, which led to residential agglomerations, with some areas of the suburban type (Landini, 1974). The intense building development of the postwar period helped consolidate the urban growth that has recently delivered new dormitory neighbourhoods.

The urban challenges addressed by the project include rapid urbanisation, the limited availability of public and accessible green areas per inhabitant (12.6 m² per person, with a national average of 31.1 m² per person; Istat, 2016); a fragile ecosystem of canals and rivers facing pollution and hydrogeological risks and extreme weather events, such as sudden heat waves and flooding. The project also faces a high concentration of the unemployed and inactive, with youth unemployment at 43%; brain drain to other regions, with 70% of graduates leaving the province; the illegal exploitation of immigration and the social exclusion of both minorities and vulnerable people. The lack of public economic resources, the fragmented coordination between public and private actors and the dispersion of specialist skills are other critical factors identified by the municipality.

Bases on these issues, UPPER's activities focus on the regeneration of degraded areas that combine greenness with productive, social and educational services. The pathway taken by the UPPER project is developed within four thematic fields: environment, well-being, participation and development.

The first strategic field-*environment*-concerns the regeneration of green areas as part of developing three urban productive parks, specifically multifunctional public green areas dedicated to the production of NBSs, together with social care, jobs creation, training, education, sports, creativity, and entertainment. It also includes eight demonstrative sites for testing natural solutions and experimenting with self-produced services.

⁴ <https://www.upperlatina.eu/>.

The identified urban productive parks are as follows:

- UPP1 - Campo Boario: located in a popular area at the northern periphery of Latina, it is planned to host a municipal nursery that will be open to the public and a centre providing orientation and support to new businesses in the green sector (NBS Business Information Point);
- UPP2 - Area Mercato: placed southeast of the city, it is devoted to educational, sports, recreational, social and health services, including remunerative services, based on contact with nature to increase the psycho-physical well-being of citizens;
- UPP3 - Foce Verde: situated along the coast, this area is devoted to renaturation and the cultivation of vegetation with phyto-depurative functions.

The demonstrative sites distributed throughout the city perform diverse functions that include the consolidation of canal embankments and their filtration function, the planting of new plant species that work against pollutants from road surfaces, combatting the increase in temperature and the purification of air and soil. The digital platform UPPER ENGIE, which is composed of air quality sensors and air-pollutant and weather parameters, returns real-time environmental data for each demonstrative site.

The second area-*well-being*-aims to meet social and public health challenges, such as inactivity, social isolation, sedentary lifestyles and a lack of time spent outdoors. It consists of a free program of socio-educational activities based on contact with nature. An initiative called UPPER SEEDS co-designs NBSs with local schools and inhabitants. Among the added services, there are cultivation and sale of trees and plants to be used as NBSs to address or prevent specific environmental problems; cleaning and maintenance and restoration services for gardens, parks and riverbanks. The initiative also includes edutainment, outdoor services, children's activities, the collection of garden and recycling waste for agricultural or industrial use, open-air social work services for the elderly and people with mental and physical disabilities and cultural initiatives.

The third field-*development*-is the UPPER JOBS training and work programme devoted to combatting the high rate of youth unemployment, the illegal exploitation of migrants and the social exclusion of ethnic minorities and vulnerable people. It draws up a course to train operators who are able not only to maintain the greenspaces but also manage the park through reception, environmental education and communication services. The programme provides guidance and qualified supervision for vulnerable applicants.

The fourth field-*participation*-is represented by the UPPER CITY LAB, a social platform based on co-design workshops (e.g. questionnaires, collective and self-mapping, urban walks, role-playing games, world cafes, roundtables, online interactions). The WHiP platform also allows citizens to interact with the project by enriching its database with information derived from experience. The project's co-design procedure also contains the Collaboration Pact tool, an emerging model in Italy based on the horizontal relationship between citizens and administrators in the common management of the city⁵.

In summary, UPPER represents the ambition of transform the challenge of green infrastructure maintenance into an opportunity for job inclusion, well-being, participation and space liveability for citizens. However, the pandemic emergency, the increase in construction costs and the changing of government at a local level have slowed down the process, extending the time needed for these works.

5. Findings and discussion

The project strategy is based on the interdependency between environmental, economic, institutional and social dimensions in an NBS-based experiment, giving rise to interesting results in terms of urban liveability and sustainability.

5 For more information on the Collaboration Pacts: <https://www.labsus.org/>.

This research firstly asked how the UPPER project strives to meet citizens' and participants' needs. This issue is initially explored looking at the urban productive parks that emerge as social inclusion incubators reducing work inactivity by implementing green jobs. The professional internship fostered by the UPPER JOBS platform is oriented in that direction, also stimulating hope for the future, as one of training beneficiary affirms⁶:

«the project was for me a positive experience, it gave me a purpose and hope that you can go on. I feel like I'm doing something socially useful. On a personal level it has given me so many tools to move forward in life at times when it is so difficult» (UPPER user's story on project's website).

The same consideration involves the community laboratories carried out in some city's green-spaces that resulted as enablers of social cohesion, sense of belonging to the places and personal gratification and responsibility. For example, teachers involved in the environmental education project with schools reported that the children had become autonomous in picking up garden items and that caring for garden and animals had become a priority to be accomplished collaboratively before entering the classroom. Furthermore, in discussing the data collected on the project's social impact, the UPPER SEEDS' referent reports an improvement in participants' opinions on liveability after the activities. As she argues:

«the challenge was to increase psycho-physical well-being, social relations and inclusion, the perceived quality of urban green spaces, as well as the practice of healthy lifestyles thanks to public greenery. The dimension on which there has been a positive impact of greater intensity for citizens regards the 'spatial well-being' [...] citizens have expressed very positive assessments compared to having 'revalued the square'» (interview).

Moreover, UPPER project works in terms of complementary with existing local energies and in listening to the needs of active citizenship responding to a collective need to participate in the public sphere and influence decision-making. In fact, the project successfully connects with previous citizens' spontaneous initiatives. Special attention is paid the Canal of the Middle Waters (Canale delle Acque Medie), a long waterway that involves five peripheral neighbourhoods facing hydraulic risks and anthropic pressure. It represents an extraordinary green and blue infrastructure that, embracing the north-south trajectory of the city, forms an ecological connection between the coast and the mountains. A grassroots movement of more than eighteen social entities, the PUAM Latina Committee (Comitato Pro Parco Urbano Acque Medie) began a canal-care initiative in 2020. In 2022, some results of the intensive process of political and civic reappropriation were integrated into the UPPER's co-planning activities. This fruitful correspondence emerged from the voice of one PUAM-Committee activist:

«we had already started. Perhaps they saw that the city and citizens were moving spontaneously. There was this interesting part of participation and also of consideration: a strategic line carried out by the University that matches that spontaneously requested by the citizens» (interview).

In this way, UPPER Latina seems to have catalysed existing dynamics, knowledge and relationships. It has launched a multistakeholder arena based on people-private-public-partnerships, which can help increase the long-term sustainability of the implemented nature-based infrastructures.

Secondly, this research asked whether the project contributes to changes in terms of sustainability. In this regard, it should be noted that emerging NBSs were planned in parallel with the studies for the strategic plan of the city and the territory of Latina (Budoni, 2022), which was commissioned by the municipality and completed by the university which is project partner. At the same time, green solutions and practices experienced in the European project are combined in the Integrated Plan of Activities and Organisation 2022-2024, which cites them under the program-

⁶ 15 people experienced a successful job placement path as green operators.

matic line “Green revolution and ecological transition”. Together with the use of Collaborative Pacts, these dynamics show an emerging new narrative anchored at an idea of sustainable future and progress towards changes in the city’s normative, planning and organisational aspects. At the same time, the experience has pointed out some criticalities. One of the referents for the municipality’s political body during the project reported both strengths and weaknesses:

«We have made a contribution especially in terms of attention at the city level, because the city has begun to reflect on these issues [...]. Something has changed and a bit of involvement there was but it was slow to start, slow to be digested and I see that the participation of the city in the management of green spaces is not always easy» (interview).

The Municipality recognises that its weakness in working transversally between the internal sectoral articulations has partially compromised the optimisation of the activity’s execution. As regards the negative events intervened, Alberto Budoni, the academic partner’s referent, affirms as follows:

«Unfortunately, the project has had a difficult journey and many of its objectives have not been achieved. There were three main external factors that negatively affected it: the pandemic, which greatly hampered interaction with places and people and led to the European headquarters accepting the one-year extension [...]; the war in Ukraine that led to a very strong increase in raw material costs and made the planned budgets inadequate [...]; the presence of an external commissioner at the municipal administration level that had promoted the project, for more than seven months and in the final phase of the work, where the capacity of policy makers to engage stakeholders was most needed» (UPPER Working Paper n. 4).

The exposed valuable and critical matters highlight the usefulness and need of strengthening the existing socio-institutional paths via multi-actor alliances and an active citizenship that is already sensitive to environmental issues and public interventions. Thirdly, this research asked which sensitive components are affected by the project determining possible changes towards sustainability. In order to answer this question, it explores the three main analytical domains faced in the literature review - *liveability*, *social innovation* and *sustainable transitions* - identifying for each domain key components and related project’s activities (see Table 1).

Analysed domains	Domains’ key component	Related project’ activities	Main theoretical references
Liveability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green jobs and economic creation; - Better quality of environment; - Increasing the well-being of citizens; - Active citizen participation and good governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Urban productive parks; - Demonstrative sites; - UPPER ENGIE and WHiP; - NBS Business Information Point (UPP1); - UPPER JOBS; - UPPER SEEDS; - Co-design workshops; - People-private-public partnership. 	Ruth, Franklin (2014); Faivre <i>et al.</i> (2017); Bedi <i>et al.</i> (2023); Martino <i>et al.</i> (2021).
Social innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Satisfaction of unmet social needs; - Solidarity, responsibility and inclusion; - Creation of synergies with other initiatives, players and existing projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tested solutions to floods and heat islands, youth unemployment, exploitation and social exclusion of minorities; - PUAM Committee’s collaborative path; UPPER CITY LAB and WHiP. 	Murray <i>et al.</i> (2010); BEPA (2014); Rhodes <i>et al.</i> (2022).
Sustainable transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Processes and outcomes fostering urban resilience and sustainability; - Change in policies, governance and practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Place-based, multi-level and multi-purpose solutions (see Canal of the Middle Waters case); - Collaboration Pacts; - Studies for the strategic plan and Integrated Plan 2022-2024. 	Frantzeskaki (2019); Adams <i>et al.</i> (2023).

Table 1. Project’s contribution to the liveability, innovations and sustainable-transitions domains
Source: Author’s elaboration

The project seems to have laid the groundwork for the preparation phase for sustainable changes to begin. The window of opportunity that UPPER has opened incorporates some past innovations reinforcing their value, such as the use of collaborative governance tools. At the same time, it introduces some new features, such as monitoring systems that remain in the city (see the ENGIE and WHiP platform). The analysed initiative demonstrates its place-based and multi-directional nature, acting both on governance procedures and the community sphere. Finally, the project represents an interesting experiment in which the predominant dynamics are the result of mixed players. However, it is necessary to observe the city's ability to learn from failures and understand how many features of the project will root in the future.

A prospective survey could investigate the project's long-term impact; the citizens' consciousness of the green values; the social, ecological, and economic outcomes in terms of liveability and the added results in terms of NBS mainstreaming. A quali-quantitative approach to NBS study and implementation appears to be needed to better understand the liveability-sustainability nexus on the local scale, with the aim of discovering the value of community and place-based projects. Experimentation with co-produced knowledge and collaborative methods is also an interesting field of analysis.

Conclusion

This research shows the potential of NBSs to positively affect urban liveability by strengthening the possibility of achieving sustainability objectives. It also highlights various ways in which social innovation can be explored to understand its link with transformations in society. Generally, the focus on the multi-faceted strategy explored in this paper is an attempt to highlight the several contributions to practical usability provided by NBSs at the city level.

Nevertheless, NBSs must be integrated into urban planning and policies and implemented by using open and flexible governance to deal with critical issues, such as inequalities, unemployment and social exclusion. According to Wickenberg *et al.* (2021), the capacity of each city to develop structures and platforms for experimentation is what truly matters. Due to the uncertainty, mutability and complexity of local ecosystems, as well as the multiple green approaches available, NBSs require adaptive management, in which goals and actions are adapted to ongoing ecological and social changes (Nesshöver *et al.*, 2017).

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The Flâneur-as-Researcher. An Autoethnography²

Introduction

The *flâneur* is a french expression specifically outlined by the poet Charles Baudelaire (1857) and later codified by Walter Benjamin (1982), representing the character capable of getting lost in the city in order to grasp its *genius loci*. Since its inception in the Nineteenth century, Benjamin has never clearly defined the figure of the flâneur, limiting himself to associating it with a series of situations and behaviors. In particular, Baudelaire referred to flâneurs such as “those independent, intense and impartial spirits, who elude easy linguistic definitions”. Nowadays trying to define the flâneur precisely is challenging, and in some cases, it can even contradict the very concept of the flâneur itself. In fact, the flâneur is a “very obscure thing” that cannot be defined exhaustively, except as a kind of “tautology”: the flâneur is the individual who dedicates itself to flânerie, and flânerie is the activity of the flâneur (Tester, 1994, p. 7). For this reason, the flâneur is a character with deep historical roots that has piqued the interest of numerous academics through the centuries, especially impressionist sociologists. The flâneur thus assumes the position of a privileged connoisseur not easily classifiable, who can be identified in different figures who share some similarities with its profile. Although the idea of the flâneur is mainly associated with poets, artists and intellectuals who wander around the city with the intention of interpreting it, the practice of flânerie actually involves a wide variety of individuals who inhabit the urban environment, including social researchers as ethnographers (Nuvolati, 2013).

1. The flâneur from the object to the subject of sociological analysis

Sociological literature has found bold connections between the flâneur and other categories, albeit debatable and partial. As the protagonist of wandering, the flâneur finds itself, according to Nuvolati’s grouping (2013, p. 43), in hippies, the homeless, out-of-town students, waiting prostitutes, dog owners walking around, and other categories of people, divided respectively into three sections: marginality, elites, originality and provocation. The resemblance to the figure of the flâneur can therefore be traced in the evolution of the different life stories, influenced by personal choices or predefined in part by social class, family or other vectors of inequality. It is therefore necessary to identify how people try to lead personalized lives, maintaining a resistance against the homogenization and monotony of routine that characterize today’s daily life. The flâneur is therefore a subject of great interest to sociological scholars, as it offers the opportunity to explore themes such as alienation, loneliness, urban perception, and cultural resistance through the lens of a literary figure who continues to stimulate our imagination and critical thinking. In addition, the evolution of the concept of flâneur in the contemporary context, with the advent of technology and social media, raises new challenges and relevant questions for social research, highlighting how the flâneur can still be a relevant figure in the analysis of social and cultural dynamics in modern cities. The flâneur “has walked into the pages of the commonplace” (Tester, 1994, p. 1), as the modern city described by Baudelaire has been transformed into a “heterogeneous, mobile, aleatory, kinetic and cinematic” megalopolis, making the figure of the flâneur stereotyped, and therefore outdated and obsolete (Cocco, 2017, p. 64). The figure and the activity attached to it appear again in the attempts of social and cultural commentators to control the nature and implications of the conditions of modernity and postmodernity. The flâneur, in fact, is found in the “frequent singular” (Turnaturi, 2003, p. 31): a character who

1 Giacomo Gaggiassi, University of Turin, giacomo.gaggiassi@edu.unito.it.

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emerged from literature, as a single case who, however, was never singular, because it instructed us on a single member already typed, on a single member that we have frequently already seen or already intuited, even without having conceptualized it. The famous writer George Perec (1989), an “involuntary sociologist” following Turnaturi’s thought, suggests to find our own anthropology, which will speak of us, as it seeks the stranger, that is, everything that we have long plundered from others: no longer the exotic, but the “endotic” (Perec, 1989, p. 10). In this regard, anthropology can be described as a “science of remnants”, and “ethnography is therefore characterized by its attention to detail”, i.e. the ability to identify in the microcosm what can escape in the macrocosm (Capello, 2020, p. 126). The sociologist is therefore the one who deciphers this “concrete grammar” (Tacussel, 1995; quoted in Shin, 2014), whose behaviors provide the syntax and affirm the style. Creating a sociological approach based on the aesthetic aspect of social life makes it possible to overcome the limits of positivism and to examine social reality in a more sensitive way, using literature as an indicator of the sensitivity of an era. This approach requires a dionysian form of knowledge, according to Maffesoli (1996; cited in Shin, 2014), which is able to map the complexity of uncertainty, chance, disorder, effervescence, the tragic and the non-rational. All of these elements are an integral part of the human experience, although they are uncontrollable and unpredictable and difficult to understand with traditional research approaches. To talk about us, about that “endotic” dimension, therefore narratives are necessary. “Literature and sociology share the same object of study: to make sense of reality” [...] “As social scientists, we need someone to tell us a story. The data we collect must presuppose, at least implicitly, a *homo loquens*, a subject who speaks to us about themselves and the world” (Longo, 2017, p. 76). It is therefore possible to deduce that the social role of the flâneur is contradictory, just like its practice itself, and its resistance to modernity is equally ambivalent. Consequently, the flâneur “cannot have a social role, in the sense attributed to this term by functionalist sociology. It cannot have a role - if not anomalous, atypical, unusual - because it is by definition a nonconformist individual. The social role is based on expectations, while the flâneur makes about unpredictability its *raison d’être*” (Campa, 2015, p. 170). Following the analysis of Leeuwen (2019), the first obstacle that emerges in this scenario is that the flâneur, considered as an allegorical figure, tends to be defined according to its gender, social class and race. As a matter of fact, the flâneur is consistently represented as an aristocratic white man. The methodological question that raises is whether it is possible to interpret the flâneur as a “position” or “role” that in principle can be occupied by anyone, regardless of sex or gender, skin color, whether residing in the countryside or living abroad. This is a general challenge in the allegorical approach, but it becomes particularly complex when one tries to interpret the flâneur as a symbol of moral cosmopolitanism based on values of universal respect and equality. The flâneur, as a human figure, has never existed as a separate entity: the flâneur is no longer, or perhaps never has been, just a man. In fact, it has been found in women, who renounced the purely domestic role attributed by nineteenth-century society, thus leading to the birth of the term “flâneuse” (Carrera, 2022). This evolution even leads to the term “choraster”, in which “chora” represents a space situated between being and becoming, which refers to Plato’s philosophy. This figure questions herself even more deeply and constitutes a feminine alternative to more traditional tourism practices (Nuvolati, 2013, p. 40). In post-modern society, it is possible to conceive individuals living in “liquid” modernity (Bauman, 1991) in a fluid identity that, unlike in the modern era, in which the main issue was to construct an identity and stabilize it, “it is now necessary to avoid any kind of fixation” (Shin, 2014, p. 70). It is no longer just about the possibility of choosing a gender identity (in terms of sexual orientation), nor about the simple pluralism of identities. We go further, embracing the indeterminism of identity, in a continuous metamorphosis that sees the constant passage from one figure to another. This concept implies a kind of “permanent revolution” à la Trotsky (1930), not so much in the social structure, but rather in the individual self. Every idea of stability of being is abolished, and all existential certainty vanishes. In this context, “the flâneur is transformed into a living representation of a society in which traditional conventions lose meaning, finding

themselves immersed in a continuous change, in a flow of events, life and intensity" (Shin, 2014, p. 70). Such a rebellious figure, in constant opposition to mass consumerist practices; and in particular to the homologation, to the uniformity of the norm imposed by society, facilitates the construction of new discursive and identity spaces beyond the single dichotomous (Mieli, 1977). In an attempt to find out who the flâneur actually is, Nuvolati (2013, p.) states that the figure of the flâneur is only an archetype, as he argues that there are different intensities of predispositions to flânerie in each individual. A latent dimension, which, based on my subjectivity, I define as queer. In fact, queerness is "performative because it is not simply a being but a doing for and toward the future. Queerness is essentially about the rejection of a here and now and an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world" (Muñoz, 2009, p. 1), just like the practice of flânerie itself. Indeed, it is a "choice to live on the margins, to want to become a stranger", through the questioning of a critical reflection on oneself and the experience of duality between an individual self and a collective self, "between the one who pulls the strings and the puppet who dances on the stage of life" (Shin, 2014, p. 134), conforming to the heterosexual norm. Flânerie is thus "a form of silent resistance to the norm, to evidence, to the submission of thought" (*ibidem*). For this particular reason, I propose a third term, in addition to the "flâneur" referring usually to the male and "flâneuse" to the female individual, i.e. the term "flânqueer", to include all the potential flâneurs with no explicit difference in term of in sex, gender and/or orientation.³

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, therefore, there is a completion of a cycle: after trying in vain to place this elusive figure in the social system, the sociologists realize that they are talking about themselves, their role, or at least their possible role, thus concluding that "*le flâneur, c'est moi*" (Campa, 2015, p. 170). The focus is therefore no longer on the flâneur's distant and objective gaze on the city, but on its emergence as an artificer: by coming out into the open, the flâneur manifest and express its own subjectivity, becoming the "other" individual, indulging its stimuli and reworking them, to enrich itself and its audience. The flâneur can therefore be "a writer, a poet, an artist, a journalist but also the sociologists themselves who, in their exploration, indulge in personal considerations with respect to what they see" (Nuvolati, 2013, p. 146). Nuvolati thus describes the transition from the flâneur as a mere observer of urban reality; thanks to its supreme art of knowing how to look without being seen and, at the same time, without being caught looking, to the flâneur as the author of the same scene which is observing. This last condition is therefore indispensable for the flâneur to constitute itself as an integral part of the lived experience, by making use of the "virtue of the chameleon" (Shin, 2014), being capable to observe reality not only from the outside, but also from inside it. With regard to this reflection, the new "flâneur-as-researcher" (Stehle, 2008; quoted in Rizk & Birioukov, 2017) is both an "insider" member of the urban space, located in a familiar context and aware of the meaning of the path crossed, and an "outsider" subject, able to interpret the stranger, through a privileged lens, namely that of the researcher. The position of the researcher is therefore in relation to the scope and objects/subjects of the research, that is never completely placed inside or outside, neither as an outsider nor as an insider member. We, as social researchers, find ourselves in the "space of betweenness" [...] since "we are always, at some level, somewhere, negotiating various degrees and kinds of difference- be they based on gender, age, class, ethnicity, "race", sexuality, and so on. Betweenness thus implies that we are never "outsiders" or "insiders" in any absolute sense" (Natz, 1994, p. 57). It is important to highlight the fact that we can never help but interact with "others" who are distinct and different from us; the difference is an essential aspect of all social interactions, implying that we are constantly in an intermediate position or negotiating between the worlds of 'me' and 'not-me'. Not just a space but a condition for the researcher, who adapts to it and to the situations that take place in the space itself, being in a position of dialogue between context and social actors.

3 I intend to emphasize that, for ease of reference, I primarily utilize the term "flâneur" referring to it as an archetype, never as an individual regarding gender, sex or race.

Emphasizing the subjectivity present in the flâneur and the relative impartiality of its interpretations, Nuvolati (2006, p. 130) proceeds to state that “this critical function can be entrusted to the wide range of qualitative scientific methods that can be used in sociological research, [...] but also to the flâneur’s inspiration, intuitions, and sensitivity”. Thus, art, literature, flânerie and all other elements contribute to the function of research and criticism together with the social sciences, without hierarchies, representing different fields that at the moment have limited interactions with each other. Sociology is “also a form of art, and if we forget this, we run the risk of losing the science, finding ourselves with a sandheap empiricism or methodological narcissism, each as far from science as art is from billboard advertisements” (Nisbet, 1962, p. 67). No longer the sociology of flânerie but the sociology with flânerie, in which the latter can be added to the toolbox of innovative methods available to those engaged in research. Although Nuvolati proposed the contradiction on the flâneur as the object and subject of sociological analysis, he then expresses the limits of his own reflection, by presenting it more as a trajectory in development than just a simple observation.

2. The autoethnography as a method to investigate on being flâneur and its doing.

By tracing the multiple oxymorons that characterize the profile of the contemporary flâneur, it is possible to find the placing itself both as an object and as a subject of sociological analysis (Nuvolati, 2013), just as it is typical of autoethnography. Autoethnography is a particular type of qualitative research approach, defined as a “research approach and writing style that aims to systematically examine and describe (graphy) personal experiences (auto) in order to understand the cultural experiences (ethno) in which they are inserted” (Ellis, Carolyn, Tony E. Adams, Arthur P. Bochner, 2011; see also Gariglio and Ellis 2018, Gariglio 2018). This is how Ellis (1999, p. 671) herself expresses the autoethnographic approach: “I begin with my personal life [...] By exploring a specific life, I hope to understand a way of life”. A person who practices autoethnography thus interviews cultural members, participates in and observes cultural events and rituals, examines members’ ways of speaking and relating, analyzes cultural artifacts, and places significant value on the use of personal experience. However, the use of personal experience does not imply that the autoethnographers can only tell their own story. Rather, the autoethnographers must be able to distance themselves from their own personal experiences in order to reflect on them. This approach has taken shape within the field of ethnographic research since at least the 1970s, when it began to progressively merge with other disciplines, in particular with autobiography, literature and aesthetic philosophy (Gariglio, 2018, p. 2).

I’m one of those people who perceive themselves as being flâneur, while reading Nuvolati’s works. For this reason, in my master sociology thesis, once I conceived flânerie as a way to implement research practice, I decided to talk about myself and my experience, seeking to investigate how the flâneur emerges and its related distinctive features. In particular, in addition to expressing how the practice of flânerie is discussed and lived, and therefore what flânerie means, I intended to focus on who exactly is the person practicing it, i.e. the flâneur itself. To achieve this goal, I reflected on my own experience, particularly focusing on my period of time in Paris as Erasmus+ student, through the elaboration of autoethnography in an attempt to identify the flâneur’s identity, a facet inherent within my own personality. By taking up Campa’s already mentioned expression, *le flâneur, c’est moi*, seeking to “explain” a phenomenon already previously “described” (Martinotti, 1993, p. 141; quoted in Turnati, 2003), I decided to incorporate the concept of flânerie into an empirical investigation. In particular, I initially asked myself: when and how does a flâneur manifest itself? How does a flâneur or the flânerie practice affect not only oneself but also others? Also, what added value can I provide myself to make my experience as a flâneur more accessible?

As articulated by Allen-Collinson, "at the heart of autoethnography, for me, is that ever shifting focus between levels: from the macro, wide sociological angle on socio-cultural framework, to the micro, zoom focus on the embedded self" (Adams, 2013, p. 579). From this point of view, I therefore intend to highlight the passage of the *flânerie* from a macroscopic phenomenon, as a mere practice, to a microscopic phenomenon: a territorial exploration that also refers to the very existence of those who practice it. This is in an attempt to make this suspension, this waiting a productive moment, in order to be able to justify in the eyes of the community, but also to myself, my strolling, in order to represent new forms of learning, starting from my own experience. My thesis research allowed me to conceive myself as a "being" *flâneur* and, at the same time, to conceive "its doing", identifying a methodological metaphor of the social researcher: a reading that is not radically different, but deeper than doing ethnography. This reflection extends in particular to the practices of "measuring" the different methods used to make ethnography. In fact, the *flâneur's* approach distinguishes the more radical and analytical positivist ethnographies of the nineteenth-century period, compared to the less rigid evocative (auto)ethnography. The characteristic isotopic function of the *flâneur*, a being "other" than the environment in which one relates, like the figure of the foreigner identified by Alfred Schütz, reveals itself as central to ethnographic practice. An attitude of strong identity claim in the conformist society which, however, is going to be lost, due to time constraints attributable to the hegemonic neoliberal model. The temporal dimension, in relation to the physical and spatial dimension of "being in places", clearly modifies the approach and the vision of the lived experience. It is now widely recognized today that the field of study of ethnography is often not simply a representation of reality, but rather a construction of the ethnologists themselves. In the process of creating their own field of research, ethnologists contribute to the development of their theories (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1988; Köstlin 1996; quoted in Meloni, 2015). Acknowledging this potential in contemporary research means taking a reflective approach and carefully considering the relationship between the observer and what is observed. This principle of reflective autoethnography identifies narration as a privileged means of understanding oneself and others (Chang, 2008, p. 33; quoted in Meloni, 2015). In ethnographic research "the observer is intrinsically involved in the very act of observing. [...] It's what I've elsewhere called "living-with," a "technique" that discouraged me from even taking notes on the spot, let alone abandoning the use of the tape recorder. Life as a method. It is its application that makes it possible to draw up the retrospective ethnographic accounts we have been talking about" (Piasere, 2002, p. 142; quoted in Meloni, 2015). The autoethnographic approach therefore represents a balance between investigation and narration, between the ethnographic method and the biographical narration. In this context, the *flâneur* becomes a "storyteller", who seeks to translate their own experience and perspective into a narrative that goes even further, expanding narrative possibilities to create a narrative that provides elements of analysis and cultural products. By recounting one's study in an autobiographical way, it reinserts itself within the field of study as an essential component of research: the knowledge that emerges is closely linked to one's personal experience (Gaias, 2020). The *flâneur* thus presents itself as a living metaphor, a "metaphor of the postmodern strategy generated by the horror of being tied and fixed" (Bauman, 1996, p. 24), particularly suitable for describing and making autoethnography understood by analogy and difference. In this case, autoethnography is a compelling method to methodologically validate *flânerie* practices, i.e. exploring the lived experiences of the city, deepening its complexities together with the interweaving of personal and collective narratives.

The use of autoethnography to narrate the experience as a *flâneur* is a unique approach to study and to understand one's own experiences within the context of urban life or any other lived environment. In fact, the autoethnographic method lends itself "as a template for studying controversial and not easily accessed phenomena" (Adams, 2011, p. 178), such as the *flânerie*, with regard to the contradictions mentioned above. My autoethnography has therefore intended to illustrate, show, suggest, give an account to readers of the conditions and vicissitudes that

a subject who self-identifies as the flâneur - or rather, flâneur like myself - faces, referring to my experience in Paris. This shows how the "sense of a place" and the "sense of belonging" are crucial in reference both to problems of a literary and sociological nature, and to questions concerning the nature of identity and the place occupied in society. Moreover, since autoethnography as a qualitative research method allows us to identify a series of nuances of a given topic, such as flânerie, which could not be grasped otherwise, this approach was essential to give an account above all of my experiential and subjective dimension to enrich the aspects previously observed. By telling my story, I decided to focus in particular on what my experience really was, what it still was to the day I was writing, although the Erasmus program was over and I was still in Paris. Reflecting on what I imagined at first, resorting to memory, questioning myself about the reason for my choices and the ways - "why do I do this?", "how do I do it?" - in addition to my past experiences that I have passed, by giving space also to the similar experiences of other people and/or characters, in which I have seen myself, through literature and related art forms, such as song lyrics. It was therefore essential to consider the inclusion of my own spatiality within my research that goes beyond the concept of proxemics: the experience of being in places without any apparent purpose, or the activity of flânerie itself, is central to ethnographic practice as an instinct. In particular, I let myself be guided by the questions about "who am I and what am I like?", also thinking about what I have chosen to do, to see, and what I have chosen not to do, not to see. Once I had established my own position in the physical and discursive space of research, it was also necessary to question myself about the method, the "how" of research, and therefore about the "whys of research", in relation to my own presence in the field, which in this case coincided with my daily life. In particular, the empirical question of my thesis focused on a more reflective approach, based on the schützian common sense, on the "world of everyday life" that constitutes the condition of "the foreigner". A radical otherness that is becoming less and less radical, in order to be able to interact with other methods, such as the similar approach of Natali's itinerant soliloquy (2016). In a continuous repositioning in front of others and in front of myself, what I did as a storyteller was to mix the experience of the field with that of the autobiographical and narrative writing of the research itself. An experience that becomes the writing of the experience: a sort of meta-writing that reveals itself in the course of life and reflection on its flow. An activity of flânerie that at first is denied in the act of also becoming research, therefore not just a mere account of what I have done and observed, but an articulated and reflective reflection partly confused and without a common thread, as life itself. For this reason, in my case autoethnography presents itself as an adequate approach, perhaps even ideal, because it allows me to combine scientific reflection with my subjective experience of personal reorganization of the relationship with the space I have crossed. The attempt to position oneself in front of the self and the space in which one moves leads back to analytical tools, such as autoethnography, which are now also widely used in contemporary social geography (Gaias, 2020).

As I have personally experienced, writing autoethnography requires a combination of research, storytelling, and self-reflection skills. In this form of writing, there are no hard and fast rules to follow. The crucial element, but also the main challenge that presented itself to me, was to be able to find a balance between the narration of my personal experiences together with a critical analysis of the subject under study. This balance has also involved setting boundaries during my personal "flanering" process, as both object and subject of research. In order to understand the subjective meaning that is attributed to the experience of flânerie, narratives are in fact a way of organizing, interpreting, giving sense and meaning. Storytelling is a social practice that incorporates narrative knowledge derived from experience situated in specific contexts. Narratives are a powerful tool since they help organize the world from the narrator's point of view, offering connections and interpretive patterns. These patterns serve to reaffirm and construct the narrator's identity within a larger narrative that takes context into account. Stories cannot be understood separately, but must be contextualized, as they are part of a narrative landscape constructed by various subjects, objects, and events of the narrator's social world (Clandinin, Connelly, 2000).

Attention is thus placed not only on what is said, but also on how it is said: and it is precisely this “how” - the how it happens, the sense of action - “that makes literature a very rich source. But there will never be an explicit explanation of meaning, nor interpretative categories of meaning. It is the reader, the critic, the scholar who gives meaning to what they read every time they encounter the text. The meaning is born every time from that encounter” (Turnaturi, 2003, p. 77). In particular, I’ve chosen to refer to Adams’ (2011) text, “Narrative the Closet. An Autoethnography of Same-Sex Attraction”, whose main objective of this autoethnography is to provide a thick description of the “closet”, i.e. the metaphorical space that a homosexual person passes through and experiences. I have tried, therefore, to propose the same definition with regard to the flâneur as a metaphor itself, embodied by me in the first person, in relation to the phases and significant moments that I have experienced. In particular, as the author uses autoethnography to develop his experience of coming-out, narrating the closet of a homosexual person and the phases associated with it, I made use of this narrative as an example to make it my own, about my flâneuse life path. Adams (2011) examined the characteristics of three significant moments experienced by people with same-sex attraction in relation to this metaphorical space, namely: “learning the closet”, in which the first familiarity with the concept occurs; “living in the closet”, i.e. the period in which a person privately acknowledges same-sex attraction but publicly denies its existence through words and actions; and “coming out of the closet”, the moment when a person decides to reveal their same-sex attraction to others. I have therefore chosen to structure my autoethnography around two main phases that I have experienced myself, and which involve the figure of the flâneur in the first person. Since the flânerie is “a moment in which one first experiences a rupture with oneself and then an experience of mixing with others” (Shin, 2014, p. 31) the first part therefore describes this moment of “the disruption of the self”, in which I tried to express the factors and implications of how I experienced this phase, which was painful at first and then turned out to be creative. From this first rupture I then come to “blending with others”, the second part of my research application, in which I express my experience in a new social fusion. Moreover, since the profile of the flâneur is trapped in contradictions, these ones are made possible by certain conditions that I have identified in my autoethnography, analogous to what Adams did. This was mainly achieved through the analysis of Shin and Nuvolati’s research, together with the characteristics and premises partly already discussed previously. These conditions have been fulfilled allowing to manifest myself as a flâneur. In addition, Adams’ different narratives are separated by a square dot (□) which, in addition to punctuating his narration, I discovered giving a linearity to the non-linearity typical of flânerie, thus conceiving writing itself as a form of errancy. This is the reason I adopted this same way to represent the narratives to indicate changes between my themes - changes between time and space, experiences and people. As the author then, I compressed a significant amount of time into the text and made decisions about the “emphasis, tone, syntax” and “diction” of my writing (Mandel, 1968, p. 218; quoted in Adams, 2011, p. 167). I, in turn, employed different writing techniques to express the themes I chose. In particular, I chose to use a collage of texts: my own experiences, the experiences of others, media-mediated representations, audiovisual texts, poems, existing research to create a “layered account” (Ronai, 1995, 1996; *ibidem*). By doing so, I implemented the production of those “frequent singulars”, where “each researcher can find, according to their sensitivity, their theoretical approach, their novels that best suit them” (Turnaturi, 2003, p. 12). These elements constitute part of the flânerie itself, which I feel I have experienced, as they have allowed me to give voice to my emotions, which I admit at that moment I didn’t fully know how to express. Writing a diary to keep track of the field notes, helped me in this too, to feel what I felt in relation to what I was experiencing. In particular, I used the first-person voice to tell a story, stories that I personally experienced. I did this to present an intimate, immediate, and engaging account of a situation (Caulley, 2008, p. 442; quoted in Adams, 2011). Sometimes I’ve used the third-person voice to establish the context of an interaction, report my findings, and present what others do, say, or write. This is in an attempt to be able to actively involve readers, together with the author,

in the experience, so that there is no distancing from an event. Through the use of conversations, I showed events that seemed emotionally intense. Show “brings readers into the scene” to “have an experience” evocatively (Ellis, 2004: 142; *ibidem*). In contrast, “telling” positions readers at a distance, provides an overview of a situation rather than an evocative experience of it, and uses a description that lacks the immediacy of dialogue and sensory involvement. I recounted events that seemed fragmented and emotionally empty, where intellect took priority over emotion (*ibidem*).

Moreover, I did not intend to focus my study only on myself but especially on me to reflect on social and sociological issues, methods. Although it characterizes the flâneur as such, by doing so this approach allowed me to go beyond a mere self-centered dimension which aims to constitute an anomalous but interesting attempt of social research. I have therefore chosen to collect and include in my narrative some testimonies of other people who identify themselves as flâneurs or similar, as they are the only ones capable of documenting this particular form of relationship and analysis of reality in order to grasp its dimension. A real triumph of the flânerie, “the flâneur spied by the flâneur” (Nuvolati, 2006, p. 107). I then reflected on my experience and documented conversations I had with other people with similar vicissitudes to mine, about the themes that emerged during my reflections, and then also opened up to the issues that emerged from their own. By doing so, I followed what I previously explained, that as social scientists we need someone to tell us a story: stories allow us to give meaning to our data, where the researcher implicitly reflects on which story can offer the best interpretation of their data. This is “a risk that must nevertheless be taken” because “the story has the ability to illuminate aspects of data of which we would otherwise not be aware, in any case, the disjunction produced by imposition generates an internal dialectic in which the story illuminates data and data modify the story, until, at least so it is hoped, in the end, something coherent, something readable and, which is perhaps the most important thing, something interesting is processed” (Davis, 1974; quoted in Longo, 2017, p. 77). Through the use of autoethnographic interviews, I sought to understand the personal experiences and perspectives of the study subjects, gathering additional data on their own experiences, reflections and personal stories through interviews conducted on themselves or collaborating with other researchers to do so. The aim was to gain an intimate understanding of individual perspectives and personal experience within a wider research context. This aspect is part of my first fundamental question that I asked myself, which is who were the people who could be associated with the figure of the flâneur, identifying them among those who show a natural curiosity in exploring the world outside their birth place or geographic origin. In the context of my autoethnographic research, ethics based on relationships with participants has in fact been a fundamental element, leading me to reflect on several issues that have influenced my work. Another question I asked myself was about who has the right to share their story, recognizing the importance of not assuming that my worldview is identical to that of others. Striving to cultivate a deep respect for the perspectives of others, I then focused on broader questions related to the common challenges faced by the participants, such as the moments arising from the “crossing of the border” (Nuvolati, 2013). This aspect also refers to my personal relationships with the participants, recognizing that these dynamics can become an integral part of my research. This raised the question of the performativity of relationships, given that the same interactions with participants can be profoundly influenced by the research itself. This approach made it possible to establish a less asymmetrical interaction with the respondents, as I gave them the freedom to express themselves and share what they intend to, without being tied to fixed or specific questions. This has created a freer climate of exchange, inviting people to tell their personal experiences and stories, as *homo loquens*.

Conclusion and limitations of research

The unique approach of the *flâneurist* investigation in the contemporary urban context has so far been used only by a few researchers, to the point that, although I found Nuvolati's careful analysis far-sighted and revealing for my research, his studies are focusing more on the identification of methodological problems regarding the activity of flânerie in sociological research, rather than in their resolution. The very limit of the ethnographic approach is found in the objectification of an experience that filters through the relationships between bodies: and this is why it is plausible to define the practice of flânerie as a unique methodological metaphor for qualitative research. This is particularly relevant as it can be compared to a form of ethnography that is, at the same time, reflective and retrospective: it is in fact a matter of conceiving ethnography as an open path, never excessively structured, sometimes characterized by absolute freedom, in the waiting for events to unfold in the interaction between the researchers and their interlocutor. In this regard, it's important to mention the concept of "serendipity", the ability to wait for the unexpected, a predisposition of the ethnographer towards it. Occasional discoveries based on intuitions can prove fundamental for the progress of one's research, as they often derive from fortuitous encounters and situations (Fabietti, 2012; quoted in Meloni, 2015). Soukup (2012) has also pointed out in his research how, in a world that in many ways appears full of illusions and surreal visions, the flânerie represents a valuable tool for ethnographic observation. This methodological approach thus highlights the processes of individual meaning-building in postmodern culture and responds to the need for an "ethnology of solitude" (Augé, 2003; cited in Soukup, 2012).

Talking about "the narrowness of the real Paris in which each individual lives, within a geographical area whose radius is extremely small", I do believe it is important to emphasize that I did not and have not experienced Paris in its totality: mine is therefore an experience that filters to the notion of common sense by saying "I have experienced Paris and therefore I know", without being fully aware of the limitations that this entails. The fact of living in a space, occupying it in a specific position and following certain paths, is not simply an objective matter, but depends on subjective conditions in which intentional representations come into play. Consequently, to live does not mean to be in "the" world in general, but to live in a particular way "a" world, which has specifically appropriated itself at the same time as one's own appropriation of it. I then spoke of this personal world, which I made "my own" in a specific and intentional way. In this case, the spatial field of research turns out to be vague, not precisely defined. It is impossible to completely isolate the vagueness or limitation of a space, considering that the spatial field of research depends primarily on the starting point (Debord, 2006).

The flâneur experience can be fruitful, as in the end the individual "will come out matured, as an adult, will have important elements to elaborate through narrative forms and to leave to those who cannot afford the same test" - such as autoethnography, in my case - "In this perspective, the territory takes on a new guise, shedding its more physical clothes to become the map of our emotions" (Nuvolati, 2013, p. 22). In this sense, flânerie is to be understood as an experience towards adulthood, tracing in particular the oxymoronic characteristic of the flâneur as *puer* and *senex*. The fusion of these two metaphorical figures of psychoanalytic matrix remains a constitutive feature of the flâneur, which is able, from time to time, to summarize the primordial yearning for discovery, in the most instinctive forms in which it manifests itself, with the courage of research and interpretative wisdom (*ibidem*, p. 4). For this reason, autoethnography allowed me to validate my experience as a flâneur, a topic that is not entirely excluded in traditional social scientific investigations since it has been recently redefined, along with other eminently qualitative themes, in favour of the perspectives of administrative sociology. Autoethnography has made it possible to interpret and illustrate traditional concepts of the social sciences, making

4 P. H. Chombart de Lauwe, "Paris et l'agglomération parisienne", 1952; quoted in Debord, Œuvres. Quarto, 2006

them accessible to those who are not familiar with the field, raising questions that otherwise would never have been asked. As a researcher, if I want to avoid projecting my assumptions of the social world into others, through my predefined measurements and investigations, I think it is necessary to learn from the subjects themselves, by listening to them. A well-crafted autoethnography can therefore represent a valuable contribution to the researchers authentically interested in the human condition, as well as to their audience. The result is a text that considers the aesthetic and textual aspect, characterized by a considerable emotional charge. A text that therefore questions the disciplinary "normometer" (Borghi, 2020, p. 18), in an attempt to redefine the dominant binary logic.

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The Meaning of Work: Life Stories and Career Trajectories of Ukrainian Women from the Domestic and Home-Care Sector to the Third Sector²

Introduction

The almost exclusive inclusion of the female migration in the domestic and home-care sector (hereafter abbreviated, d.h.c.s.) has global dimensions (Andall, 2000; Anderson, 2000; Lutz, 2008). In Italy, immigrants have higher employment rates than in Central-Northern Europe but are pushed down in occupational hierarchies (Fullin & Reyneri, 2013; IDOS, 2022). In order to enhance the migrant women agency, this research aims to investigate those work trajectories characterized by the exit from the «domestic work trap» (Fullin & Vercelloni, 2009, p. 433) and, therefore, the refusal to conform to the process of adapting preferences (Elster, 1983) and to the penalizing opportunities imposed by the labour market. The research, therefore, aims to understand which factors, both personal and contextual, push and allow to female foreign workers to exit from the d.h.c.s. and the meanings attributed to the new employment especially in relation to the previous job situation. In the specific case of our research, the career trajectories are those of long-term resident Ukrainian female workers and take place in the unprecedented scenario represented by the growing demand for linguistic and cultural mediators in the Neapolitan third sector (hereafter abbreviated, t.s.) linked to needs of people fleeing the Ukrainian conflict.

The ultimate aim is to understand if the trajectory of escape from the d.h.c.s, occurred with the transition in the t.s., is perceived as “vertical” career promotion and for which significant aspects. This paper is structured as follows. The first paragraph examines the literature on the career trajectories of the immigrant population, also in relation to the mechanisms that make the occupational segregation of immigrant women in the d.h.c.s. both a structural factor of the insertion of foreign female into the Italian labour market and a reason for the invisibility - social and sociological - of those workers (Sòrgoni, 2000).

The second paragraph introduces the research design and the biographical-narrative method used because this approach offers the possibility to penetrate the individual-system relationship providing tools capable of identifying the connections of meaning between the two levels (Rosenthal, 1993). The difficulties of accessing alternative occupational fields and the consequent career paths do not take shape in a social vacuum; they are influenced, on one hand, of the social actor’s biographical experience and therefore are conditioned by multiple personal aspects such as family, the network, the educational/training path, and the objectives of the migration project, on the other hand, they are influenced by structural processes and contextual constraints such as, for example, the traditional demand for labour in the d.h.c.s. or migration policies, power relations, and the effects of the entire social, political, and cultural environment in which the migratory experience takes shape (Sayad, 1999).

The third paragraph presents the context in which the women interviewed live, considering both the entrenched presence of the Ukrainian community in the Naples area and the significant arrival of Ukrainian refugees generated by the war.

The fourth paragraph moves on to the analysis of the empirical material that develops along the three functions served by work: material, expressive, and socialization (Semenza, 2022). From these functions we propose the hermeneutic interpretation of the meanings embedded in the

1 Giuseppe Gargiulo, University of Naples Federico II, giuseppe.gargiulo2@unina.it; ORCID: 0009-0003-2492-1293.
Emanuele Scognamiglio, Univ. of Naples Federico II, emanuele.scognamiglio@unina.it; ORCID: 0000-0002-9627-3657.
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transition from one job to another, and in doing so, the factor related to the evolution of migration projects also taken into account. Starting from the three functions, the interviewees make sense of work, weighing the meanings attributed to them. The attributed meaning that prevails in terms of subjective relevance becomes a selecting principle that guides the sense of work choices and the purposes of profit between the material and symbolic plane. In other words, people's work choices do not respond solely to criteria of a strictly economic nature, and economic and non-economic motivations are deeply intertwined.

In the conclusions, some reflections are developed on the possibility that a vertical career promotion has been achieved. At a certain point in the migratory experience, on one hand, and in the work experience, on the other, and due to the occurrence of specific events and preconditions, the measure of meanings attributed to work changes. From the moment in which the meaning of work places greater importance through strategic motivations on its expressive function and socialization, then the main advantage (pursued and) obtained by moving from the role of caregiver and/or housekeeper to that of social worker lies in the symbolic profit hidden in the greater social recognition of the new role, recognized as a social prestige symbol (Goffman, 1967), a driving force of emancipation for oneself and one's family.

1. The invisibility of foreign female workers

Emigration entails a downward social mobility, from which it is not easy to recover (Fullin & Reyneri, 2013, *op. cit.*). Following Ambrosini (2020), there is a substantial difference between the desired professional trajectory and the actual one: in the intentions of their projects, the professional trajectory imagined in the societies of arrival would draw a sort of "U" outlined in two phases. In the first phase, despite the relative qualification in the society of origin, jobs from the "3D" are accepted (Benach *et. al.*, 2010): even if they are dirty, dangerous and degrading/demanding, they would still represent a step forward compared to the starting situation. On the other hand, it is this initially accepted condition of inequality that substantiates the instrumental relationship between receiving economic systems, native workers, and foreign workers.

Subsequently, in the second phase, the achievement of a better occupational position is hoped for. In fact, however, most often, the trajectory takes an "L shape" in which social descent, almost certain, is followed by entrapment in the lower positions of the occupational systems: inequality becomes institutionalized compared to local workers considering the preclusion from work improvements as natural and obvious. As scarce as they are, the opportunities for recovery concern almost exclusively the male component and are limited to the segment of manual labour or, at most, to the transition to self-employment (Fellini & Guetto, 2019).

Specifically, regarding the female component, in Italy and more generally in Mediterranean countries, the demand for female labour in the d.h.c.s is very much in line with the familistic welfare model (Esping-Andersen, 2000), which has fuelled a demand for labour that finds its answer in the foreign female workforce (Ambrosini, 2014). Furthermore, Italian migration policies have encouraged this phenomenon through increasingly large quotas reserved for domestic workers and caregivers within regularisation programmes and flow decrees (Ambrosini & Triandafyllidou, 2011).

Regarding the Italian situation, the literature specifically dealing with immigrant workers in the d.h.c.s. is scarce considering the very high number of workers and the duration of the phenomenon (Gissi, 2018). From Cvajner (2012), the Ukrainian migrant women perceive their life in Italy as degrading, their work is stressful and undignified. They continuously endeavour to define their current condition as accidental and temporary and to assert their right to a better future (Cvajner 2012). More generally these women give meaning to the process of devaluation by viewing it as an interlude in their life and as a sacrifice that serves to improve their families'

upward social mobility (Vianello 2014). Moreover, the studies that have focused on the exit from d.h.c.s are even more rare (Ambrosini, 2013).

The only path of career promotion that emerges from studies on the subject is the horizontal one, and essentially, the transition from a fixed employment as a caregiver and/or family assistant to a part-time housekeeper: «a step forward in terms of work-life balance, with the overcoming of the most constraining and emotionally stressful aspects of cohabitation» (Ambrosini, 2020, p. 160, *op. cit.*).

In conclusion, the peculiar condition for the female component involved in the d.h.c.s. is invisibility (Solari, 2010), as it is inherent in the type of activity. On one hand, indeed, the domestic work makes them invisible except of the household they work for; this condition can therefore partially explain the scarcity of studies on the issue. On the other hand, there is a sociological invisibility due to the narrow definition of work as an economic exchange that takes place in the public sphere. In fact, the domestic sphere has been considered marginal and unproductive for a long time. Since female labour is often located within the private sphere, not only has unpaid domestic work not been recognized as real work but, by extension, productive activities that take place in the home have also been denied the qualification of work (Glenn, 2004).

2. Methodology

The individualization process linked to post-wage society has made it clear that the experiential dimension of the individual appears less influenced by the social structures in which they are embedded, leading to an expansion of possible alternatives in the construction of biographical paths (Castel, 1995). For a long time the application of the biographical method was limited to studies on marginality and social exclusion, in the current scenario instead the range of this approach extends to the interpretation of those social phenomena that take shape in the folds and choices made in various segments of human biography, such as the transition to adulthood or the construction of career paths (Berteaux, 1984; Cangiano, 2023). The reconstruction of life stories can be particularly useful to understand strategic motivations when scenario changes occur that impact on the paths taken by the subjects and their identities (Spanò, 2007): in our case we refer both to the evolution of migration project and the indirect impact on the labour market of the Ukrainian conflict. Similarly, it should be emphasized how in modern societies the life project has acquired an intrinsic value and finds in the labour market the primary vector for its realization and as such is perceived as the organizing principle of this project (Berger *et al.*, 1983).

The choices related to the methodological framework and research strategy, from case selection to the techniques used, were dictated by social and occupational invisibility that characterizes the paths of female migrant workers in the d.h.c.s. as mentioned above. For this reason and considering a phenomenon that is unprecedented - at least within the neapolitan context - a decision was made to prioritize substantive representativeness over statistical representativeness. The biographical approach, through life stories, provided the opportunity to shed light a posteriori on the meaning given by the interviewees to their work experiences at the time of the events narrated but also on the meanings assigned at the time of narration (Rosenthal, 2004) in relation to the context of their current life and in light of the work achievements reached. The research is based on 10 biographical interviews, conducted between autumn 2022 and winter 2023, with long-term resident Ukrainian women in Naples³, that are currently employed in the t.s. but with significant work experience in the d.h.c.s.

Using a "snowball" sampling approach, we identified several Ukrainian social workers participating in a cultural mediator training course organized by third sector organizations to support

3 The interviewees provided their informed consent, and their privacy and anonymity are fully protected.

the refugee emergency response to the war⁴. This approach proved effective for accessing a difficult-to-reach population and yielded in-depth information.

Following the methodological proposal by Rosenthal (1993, *op. cit.*), initially, the interviewees were encouraged to share their life stories and their changes in the career path (opening question - main narration). Subsequently, we asked participants to elaborate on certain spontaneously mentioned events and details, using memory-stimulating questions rather than explanatory ones ("internal questions"). After then, issues not yet explored have been introduced as the family unit established in Italy, the educational paths of the children and future aspirations ("external questions").

The interviews lasted an average of about one hour and thirty minutes and were conducted in university settings, deliberately avoiding places such as homes or offices where the women live and work. The ten life stories involved Ukrainian women aged between 35 and 46 years, resident in Italy from a minimum of 9 years to a maximum of 25 years.⁵ Another element they have in common is the presence in the territory of children born or raised in Italy. Finally, it should be emphasized that the interviewees differ to their relationship with domestic work: although employed as social workers, some of them still remain in it.

3. The Ukrainian presence in Naples

The Neapolitan context is particularly important due to a series of peculiarities concerning the characteristics of Ukrainian migration and the support policies for refugees activated since March 2022. First and foremost, the Ukrainian population in the metropolitan area of the capital city of Campania is very significant. Even before the conflict, Naples was the Italian province with the highest number of Ukrainian residents, about 20.000; further, the Ukrainian community is the largest among those present in the area (16,4% of the total foreign residents in the city) (ISTAT, 2022). The strong gender bias, with a predominantly female component, amounting to 75.14% (*ibidem*), should also be highlighted for research purposes.

The arrival of Ukrainian people in the Naples area began at the end of the Nineties, with socio-demographic characteristics and perspectives that were unprecedented compared to previous migration models or those from other origins (De Filippo & Strozza, 2015). In the early years, Ukrainian migration was already composed almost exclusively of women, who in 2003 accounted for 90% of the total (ISTAT, 2005). They were mostly adults (over 40 years old) who often left their loved ones in their country of origin (De Filippo *et al.*, 2010). With the surge of Ukrainian migration, Naples was no longer a mere place of transit towards the North-Italy or other European regions. Unlike older migration models, Ukrainian migration seems to immediately stand out for a perspective of greater permanence. The Ukrainian migration experience in the Campania capital has highlighted with extreme clarity the characteristics of the typical migration models of the countries of the Mediterranean area in the post-Fordist era, namely a recent and mass immigration, insertion into the secondary segment of the labour market, sustainability

4 The reference is particularly to the organizations involved in the FAMI project named «YALLA! Social Community Services», started in 2020 and led by the Municipality of Naples. The general objective of the project was to improve the efficiency level of the municipality's social care services system in response to the needs of Third Country nationals. The Municipality, as the lead partner, decided to focus a part of the originally planned interventions on a more specific users, consequently generating an urgent co-optation of equally specific workforce, which found its answer precisely in Ukrainian mediators and social workers. The services offered covered a wide range of needs: linguistic mediation, housing integration support, access to health services, school integration for adults and minors, legal advice, job orientation and search, Italian language courses, counselling service, distribution of essential goods, recreational workshops that were quite transversal to all the realities involved.

5 In Ukraine, the ten interviewees achieved various educational qualifications: one earned a professional diploma, one a technical diploma in accounting, six obtained teaching diplomas and two holds a degree (psychology and Russian and Ukrainian language and literature). In Italy, all of them completed lower secondary education and obtained a high school diploma.

of the cost of living, a migration policy characterized by the absence of entry possibilities and periodic regularization measures (Schmoll, 2006).

The dynamics narrated are fundamental to understanding the processes generated by the significant influx of Ukrainian refugees recorded since the Russian invasion. Since February 2022, over 10,000 temporary residence permits have been issued by the Naples Police Headquarters to Ukrainian refugees (the second city in Italy in terms of no. of permits issued to Ukrainians) (Protezione Civile, 2024). Such a high influx was also facilitated by the presence of compatriots: according to data made available by UNHCR (2023), for 70% of the Ukrainian refugees arriving in Naples, the choice of the city to migrate to was based on being able to count on family and friends already residing in the territory. As a result, part of the housing needs was absorbed by the network of compatriots, but at the same time, new and diverse forms of reception were activated compared to what is usually provided for asylum seekers, with the direct involvement of the Diocese of Naples, the Municipality, private foundations and individual citizens. In terms of services to refugees, this has resulted in support interventions that are not only limited to the traditional prepared structures, as happens in reception centres for non-Ukrainian asylum seekers but are redistributed in an integrated manner among all the organizations and associations that deal with the migration phenomena at the territorial level. The sudden and unexpected demand for services and assistance related to the flow of Ukrainian refugees has consequently generated an urgent need of workforce that found an answer precisely in Ukrainian women. As an illustrative and non exhaustive example of the sudden need for linguistic-cultural mediation, it is worth mentioning the approximately 2.500 school enrolments of Ukrainian refugee students in the period between March and May 2022 alone (MIUR, 2022). The same level of need and complexity can be extended to unaccompanied foreign minors: 43% of the UAMs present in Naples are Ukrainian, considering that in the previous year Ukraine did not even appear among the top 20 countries of origin for this specific category (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2022).

4. Between old and new occupations

Exploring work trajectories on the transition from d.h.c.s. to t.s., subjective references about meanings and sense of work are situated within its two its dimensions evoked: material (section 4.1.) and symbolic (section. 4.2.).

As regards the first dimension, we referred to aspects that the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) qualifies as essential to define decent work conditions as contracts and remuneration; working time; well-being at work (Lugo, 2007).

As regards the second dimension, we referred to the other two work functions: expressive and socialization function. The expressive function refers to the fact that working not only means benefiting from a wage but also serves as a means of self-realization to one's intelligence, creativity, competence, and self-esteem; while the socialization function refers to the idea that through work individuals learn to cooperate, share rules, codes of behaviour, and values due to it is intended as a means to develop solidarity forms and collective identities.

Lastly, it is useful to repeat here that effects of migratory projects evolution on life and work paths will be considered.

4.1. Material dimension of work

As noted in other studies, Ukrainian migrant women typically view their move to Italy as a «short interlude» (Vianello, 2014, p. 89) in their life, intended to optimize earnings before returning home to rebuild their lives; this perspective is also reflected in our research findings.

Upon arrival in Italy, interviewees were also well aware that the labour market access would be

within the domestic and home care sector and particularly in co-residence situation due to the structural convergence between demand and supply of labour (Ambrosini, 2006; Fullin & Vercelloni, 2009; Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993). Narrating the first work experience, traditional disadvantages emerged as reported in literature (Redini *et al.*, 2020). First of all, psychophysical health issues have been relevant topic: while on one hand, workload and tasks performed result in physical complications, on the other hand, daily micro-interactions, constant contact with illness, often inappropriate requests from the assisted persons and their families, and moral compromises bring forth situations of emotional distress. Moreover, the blurred boundary between working hours and non-working hours becomes a recurring issue due to round-the-clock work performances. Cohabitation further diminishes personal space and time, placing workers in a continuous negotiation situation of the daily life management.

A commonly overlooked aspect comes up consistently: the extremely disadvantageous conditions were instrumentally accepted also in view of the promise by employers to participate in the subsequent regularisation, and thus in the perspective of regularizing both residence status in Italy and thus the contractual condition. Regularisation programmes have been the mainstay of Italian migration policies for more than two decades (Pastore *et al.* 2013). The possibility to recourse for periodic regularisation programmes has generated a system of expectations upon which both immigrants without regular residence permits and employers could build plausible projects.

Upon obtaining regular residence permit, a horizontal promotion from caregiver to housekeeper occurred and working conditions improved: interviewees sign their first contracts and earn more by diversifying employers. Moreover, greater maneuver both space and time to planning their lives also opened up and the consequences are familiar reconfiguration with family reunifications, new marriages, birth of children. The migration project changes and the hypothesis of returning to the country of origin as soon as possible is stretched out in time. From this point on, the problematization of domestic work begins and they identify learning as a tool to facilitate the search for more qualifying jobs given the awareness that domestic work cannot be extended beyond a certain age due to purely physiological reasons:

«Many Ukrainian women got to a certain age now; elderly workers that can't do physical work as before, but they can't study anymore. I meet many people suffering from arthritis, herniated discs, and it becomes hard to work in old age. Unfortunately, they cannot restart studying longer to change things. I just thought that social work as language and cultural mediator has not age limit and so even if you're old, you can always earn. That's why I sacrifice to study again». L.

After achieving the high school diploma, they looked for further training opportunities to expand their options beyond domestic work. They turned to courses provided by the t.s., due to the growing demand for linguistic and cultural mediators to assist the population fleeing the Ukrainian conflict. From this point in the interviews, the reflections on type of tasks performed related to new social work lose the burden of anguish: the references to physical fatigue that marked the description of care work dissolved. The usefulness of new tasks is emphasized now whereas before it was a dimension completely excluded in the narrative of domestic work in which the figure of the caregiver is only mentioned in relation to problematic consequences it determines.

Above all, the role of school mediator has positive impact due to it goes beyond facilitating communication, but it based on an interpretation of the situation contributing to making it understandable in sensemaking process (Weick, 1995):

«The child does not understand what the teacher says and often cries because maybe in Ukraine he was such a good student and he feels bad here. My task is also to explain that it's normal, encourage this child who feels in difficulty, maybe even provide a little psychological support, then [my task] is to help

communication between teachers and parents. Yeah, teachers were very happy, they said they couldn't do better without mediator» S.

However, the issue of the lack of adequate and continuous training which goes beyond the baggage of practical knowledge acquired during the "migrant career" is relevant:

«We do mediation because we went through it too and we have a lot of experience with the residence permit, with many documents needed to see a doctor, to obtain residency, and all those things that we have already experienced and we are good at, we can show where to go because it's not easy». Sv.

Although Italian regulatory text on figure of mediators (article 40 of Law no. 40/1998) mentioned two central elements as both common ethnic-cultural belonging and sharing of the migratory experience in our country, however legal expertise is essential. As stated by Quassoli and Colombo (2012), the interaction between public service operator and foreign citizen takes place through an asymmetric communication flow and within a binding regulatory framework often taken for granted on the basis of tacit assumptions of common sense but which are not actually such for migrant users.

«When you are not very prepared, if you don't know the law well and give some wrong advice, that person could come and say "you ruined my life". So, there are risks [...] Now I already know some things but I am not yet well trained on everything and, in my opinion, this is not good. We need a law course, I'm not saying the whole law, but at least understand to react in one case or another; instead, today we are better at communicating with people, we do more as interpreters». O.

It is necessary that mediators acquire technical and specific competence in immigration law and administrative practices through targeted training allowing to deal with situations with greater serenity and more self-confidence. Decidedly most controversial issue concern contract type and remuneration. As literature highlighted, in Italy the welfare mix has had effect on working conditions of third sector operators: low wages and strong job instability increased (Busso & Gargiulo, 2016; Dorigatti, 2017; Gori *et al.*, 2014). In particular, contracting-out processes have increased the job insecurity and the use of non-standard employment contracts resulted to a lack of recognition of "indirect" working hours (Baines, 2004). On-demand style contracts generated remuneration uncertainty due to working hours undefined for all interviewees. Currently, the ongoing war in Ukraine and the consequent high demand for mediation alleviate some of these critical issues («We work a lot, we have many requests, I don't think was possible all this without the war» L.), but doubts about the future persist:

«I don't think you can live with this job [...] job is when you have a permanent contract for me [...] it's unstable work and this therefore prevents me from achieving my plan to get a mortgage». Z.

The remuneration issue has been linked to meet the requirements of family: in fact, social work opportunity has been seized by means of specific economic conditions. For some of them, the family income mostly provided by partner is one of those conditions:

«All the professional searches that a woman like me wanted to do and could do are been possible because my husband could pay house rent and buy food with his salary, and so I could work a little less in the last few months to attend training courses and also because if you are always working, you don't have much time to focus on anything else, so practically one of the couple was sacrificed, because it was his job - working ten, eleven hours a day - to give me some time». Z.

For others of them, the diversification of income is necessary or with continuing with domestic work as housekeeper or whit other works started next to social work such as tourist guides and office secretaries.

4.2. Symbolic dimension of work

The positive aspect derived from the emphasis on the health dimension of the activity performed as nurses engaged in such a socially valued activity as caring for the elderly and the sick has diminished over time in the context of family caregiving. Just think that a neologism like "badante" entered Italian legislation: it explains a lot the foreigners integration processes into Italian labour market and how the otherness - ethnic, national, cultural, and even gender - constitutes an effective escape route to justify the inclusion in decidedly inferiorizing positions. The extract from the account of Z. explains how labelling mechanisms perpetuate stereotypes and thus tend to steer migrants towards employment opportunities considered socially suitable for them: in the pursuit of different work that could offer her better employment conditions, employment opportunities requiring knowledge of "body techniques" (Glenn, 2004, p. 198, *op. cit.*) are once again proposed:

«When I started looking for work beyond domestic sector, I naturally asked my employers, and answer was: "here we don't have work, you know?! I see you very well as health care assistant (HCA)...yeah, you would be a perfect HCA!" ».

The advice given to Z. embodies the "Trimurti" (Campani, 2003; Brettel & Simon, 1986) of characters - race, gender, class - that define women immigrant role in receiving societies: in fact, she would see herself as a "qualified caregiver" (Z.) in this role as reductive and devaluing connotations of the role (Toniolo Piva, 2002) would persist despite the qualification. Despite the awareness that economic subsistence is primarily guaranteed through other income as seen above, however, there is a strong desire to identify alternative paths starting from development and valorisation of the skills and competencies possessed: the expressive dimension of work comes into play now in its function of self-realization. Social work in this sense endows them with a professionalism never recognized before.

«The work that most reflects me is mediator, because in Ukraine, I worked as a teacher and so I worked with children and parents, just in a slightly different way [...] I do mediation here [...] I like other my work [as domestic worker] because I earn money that way, but you feel like you're in a cage, you can't do what you like, whereas this work, yes, I really like it: if possible, I would prefer to be a mediator in the future». I.

An upward career trajectory seems to be emerging for all finally.

«I attended a course as cultural mediator, then I collaborated as school mediator at, and now I have been promoted: I'm already responsible of linguistic-cultural mediation agency, I'm the one who organizes all mediations: the fact that I studied and that I am also a teacher helped me» T.

Even when the current work experience in the social sector is not perceived as fully satisfying and fulfilling, it still represents a stepping stone for professional trajectories different from domestic work. This is the case of O., for whom the element of educational background in the country of origin appears to be crucial: the specific skills of a professional qualification (as a hairdresser, a job never performed in Ukraine or Italy). O. acknowledges the fundamental value of the experience in the world of associations especially in terms of empowerment:

«I am glad to have joined this project, another perspective on what you can do, another type of work you can do, another type of life where you are not just a foreigner and you can only do servitude, you can also do something different».

However, her experience as a mediator leads to definitive and complete awareness of new paths to be traced with greater confidence («Now I want to get a license to drive a bus, I recently got my driver's license to drive a car, I like driving» O.).

The third work function of socialization has been connected to social inclusion: the network inside broader community resulting now repeatedly emerges from the interviews («I really like this job: you go out and see people» I.), and Z.'s reflection appears particularly relevant:

«I really don't know anything about Italians' lives, because there was work and home, home and work. I realize now that my integration is not going well because I don't have Italian friends in my circle, I don't know why this question never occurred to me before. So now I'm thinking about how to also expand this life experience in Italy with Italians».

The salient point of this statement lies in noting that only now - thanks to work trajectories - Z. problematizes that she did not ask herself the question before: probably, Z. now feels that, in a situation of interaction in the presence of "mixed contacts" (Goffman, 1967, *op. cit.*), she would face the feeling of being "under the spotlight" - typical of those who bear a stigmatizing attribute - with less discomfort as a bearer of social information of opposite sign, compared to the inferiorising one, coming from the renewed professional identity.

Finally, from the perspective of the interviewed women, the added value that the work trajectories bring seems to impact over a long-time span in attempting to pursue strategies for social mobility of family status, particularly regarding their children. With the shift from temporary immigrations to lasting settlements, Bastenier and Dassetto (1990) noted that family reunifications, birth of children and their schooling increase the relationships with the institutions of the receiving society through a process of progressive citizenship that fosters the development of interactions and the turning point of interethnic relationships. However, for the same reasons, families become aware of their minority status, now settled in a context different from that of the society of origin. Furthermore, the paradox of integration between parents and children, (Wrench *et al.*, 1992) is formed: it is based on the tension felt by the second generations between the marginal social image closely linked to humble occupations of their parents and the acculturation to lifestyles and representations of occupational hierarchies acquired through socialization in the context of receiving societies. In other words, there is a dissonance between the implicitly successful "cultural" socialization and socioeconomic exclusion for the new generations: while parents often remained relatively invisible, engaged in occupations with few national workers, children project themselves toward a much wider range of opportunities, coveted even by natives, thus exposing themselves to situations where racism and discrimination are more likely encountered. Upon these considerations, the work trajectories appear to be a strategy to reduce intergenerational dissonance, at least in terms of social recognition.

«All these little pushes that I am giving to myself are not really for me, but I have to understand how he [her son] has to live in this European world ... a world unknown to me ... the vision is not the same as in my country and so I would like him to have a student life with a complete educational qualification because I believe in education and I believe that a person establishes themselves through studies both personally and professionally». Z.

The awareness on phenomenon of "blocked opportunities" emerges from the words of this mother. It is reverberated on children of immigrants: the new generations can compensate for migrant status restrictions through higher qualifications despite they are more exposed to structural and social obstacles (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). Therefore, interviewees wish to their children to have educational and training credentials obtained in contexts that recognize their achievements and value them as future workers (unlike what happened for themselves).

Evolution of the migration project	Career trajectory	Material dimension of work			Symbolic dimension of work	
		Material Function			Expressive function	Socialization function
		Work Conditions (decent work)				
		Contracts and remuneration	Working time	Well-being at work		
Short-term migration project, single migrant actor and absence of residence permit	Work situation in domestic and home-care sector	In a co-residence situation (caregiver): absence of contract and possibility to optimize earnings	Continuous cycle (difficulty in distinguishing between work and non-work time)	Repeated references to continuous conditions of physical/psychological stress	Degrading of personal and professional identity (fusion between ethnic stereotype and gender stereotype)	Limited circle of contacts (compatriots and employers)
Uncertain migration project; partner reunification or new marriages; obtaining a residence permit through regularization programmes		In a part-time work situation (housekeepers): non-standard contractual forms and diversified remuneration (differentiation of employers)	Part-time (better management of work schedules)	Continuous references to long-term physical complications		
Definitive migration project and reunification (or birth) of children	Work situation in third sector	Non-standard contracts, poor remuneration (differentiation of jobs and/or reliance on the husband for family support)	Fragmented (based on "on-call mediations")	Absence of explicit references to physical and psychological issues	Enhancement of personal and professional identity (re-actualization of previous skills and recognition of the usefulness of the work)	Expansion of contacts with the broader community
				Stress generated by lack of specific training		
		Negative value				
		Positive value				

Tab.1: Summarizing table on subjective value on career trajectory considering the work functions and the evolution of the migration project. (Authors: Gargiulo & Scognamiglio)

Conclusions, work as a prestige symbol

If the labour market is both primary vector and organizing principle to realize life project in modern societies, then it is important to identify strategic motivations that women interviewed have pursued to promote their social and work mobility.

The first one refers to the issue of educational qualifications: interviewees are excluded from most qualified segments of the labour demand also due to the impossibility of validating in Italy educational credentials acquired in their home country, and consequently of being able to use the related professional skills. It must be noted that the professional figure of cultural mediator does not require specific or mandatory qualifications, except for the high school diploma.

Mainly for these reasons, these women are attracted by the opportunity to fill the professional figure of cultural mediator since it allows them to valorise, even if in part, the professional skills acquired in their home country (mainly as teachers).

Similarly, and this is the second strategic motivation, they see in these roles the possibility of recovering their previous experience in accessing services acquired firsthand as migrants, and therefore they see the opportunity to put into value specific skills learned not in the workplace or in training but experientially on their own skin. The third one is related to the strictly economic aspect and it is linked to the possibility of ensuring enough household income by means of partner's salary or diversification jobs and remunerations. Last but not least, the fourth one is related to the issue of symbolic profit (Bourdieu, 1998): It is linked to professional status and job

quality as well as to the possibility of reducing intergenerational dissonance with children and, more generally, increasing social recognition.

Following Bourdieu (1996), there is a “the twofold truth of labour”: There is an objective truth and a subjective truth. If the objective truth refers to the case where the worker expects nothing from work other than their remuneration, the subjective truth refers to the case where individual investment in work leads to finding an intrinsic interest that cannot be compared to the mere acquisition of income.

The subjective meaning for the female component of immigration lies in individual emancipation achieved through economic independence; and it is so until the moment when the comparison is with the society of origin and as long as the migratory project is imagined as short-term and when they have not started a family and children are not born. The subjective meaning changes when the migratory project changes and both families are created and children are born. Both the meanings attributed to work functions and the renewed sense of the overall career aim to have an impact in the long term through a willingness that can be identified in all interviews, namely that the work trajectories could reverberates not only in terms of economic subsistence (individual and family), not only in terms of professional fulfilment, but also and above all on the symbolic level of recognition in the dimension of social representation.

The terms with which institutional language identifies migrants are not neutral and convey expectations of behaviour and, sometimes, legitimize exclusion and social marginality of this specific segments of population, especially in the labour market. The dialectic between person and role as well as between being and doing, is socially imposed and regulated in interaction rituals: thus, the transition from the role of caregiver and/or housekeeper to the role of social worker is felt as a prestige symbol (Goffman, 2018, p. 68) because it allows for a more recognized social projection of the self.

Into dynamics of social recognition, the dialectic between self and hetero recognition for these women revolves around the current job demand for social worker generated by Ukrainian conflict.

This labour demand seems to be structured around ambiguous conditions: the first, the “capitalization” of both informal and lived experience in the face of inadequate training delivered, and the second, the “capitalization” of skills derived from qualifications held in the face of legal non-recognition. If the profits on labour demand side appear ambiguous, on the other hand those on labour supply side are still too fragile both in terms of material dimension and symbolic dimension.

As regards the material dimension, although they have formal contracts, these are non-standard - on-demand - and therefore the remuneration is inadequate to guarantee not only economic subsistence for the family but also protections, rights, and long-term investments (e.g., mortgage), as we have seen. The women interviewed need to or diversify jobs - some as tour guides, some as office secretaries, and some even derive part of their income still as housekeepers - or having to rely on the partner’s income for family support. However, there is also the advantage of not having to engage in physically demanding work. As regards the symbolic dimension, the symbolic profit achievable by the new occupation becomes a selecting principle that guides the sense of work choices: as a means of both self-realization, and social inclusion and above all family empowerment and social mobility for children. Therefore, in response to our research question, we can conclude that the work trajectory is perceived as vertical promotion precisely because it maximises symbolic profit. In other words, the symbolic profit justifies and motivates the perception of job and social mobility. However, it seems to us that it is fragile because it relies on a presumably temporary job demand: either in the case, strongly desired by all, of the end of the war or in the case of “normalization” of the services offered by third sector (even in the event that conflict continued), what will become of these new professionals?

In conclusion, this paper is focused on the visibility of female foreign workers and its exit from domestic work drawing attention to a phenomenon unprecedented among studies on this the-

me. This research shows that after the era called «the exile of older women to Italy» by Solari (2010, p. 217), new motivations emerged to try to go beyond the invisibility of labour domestic spaces. The Ukrainian migrant women perceive their life in Italy as degrading, their work is stressful and undignified. Consequently, they seek to dilute the social stigma, rejecting the idea of home as a woman's place and so presenting positive images of their selves and claiming respect from a variety of audiences (Tolstokorova 2016). This process may facilitate the transformations of bodily and physical image of females as well as gendered evolution of their self-identity. It is not just a mere transition from one job to another, but rather a potential social metamorphosis (Castel, 1995, *op. cit.*), as we have seen. However, the freedom of movement in the public sphere transformed the empowerment from a decided benefit into new forms of exploitation and over-exploitation at the "visible" working.

It would be interesting to delve on medium or long term (in relation to the course of the conflict) how and if both work trajectories and the social inclusion processes will evolve. This could be achieved by combining the biographical approach (also extending it in number) with an ethnographic study within third sector associations to observe social relations in which these new mediator figures are involved.

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New Organizational Responses, Innovations and Social Impacts of Covid-19 on Third Sector organizations in Campania Region²

Introduction

Based on the results of the Norisc-19 project, this article represents an innovative response to the challenges imposed by COVID-19 on third-sector entities in the Campania Region in the south of Italy. This work presents some of the findings from a broader research project - founded by Prof. Gabriella Punziano and developed by an interdisciplinary group that includes general sociology, business organization, and demo-ethnoanthropology. The objective of Norisc-19 research is to highlight the organizational responses and innovations introduced by Third Sector organizations (TSOs) in response to the exogenous and endogenous factors that impacted the social context of the Campania Region during the pandemic, also due to the implementation of Italian Third Sector Reform begun at national level in 2016 and not completed yet (Campedelli, 2018; Psaroudakis, 2021). The term TSO is used here to refer not only to entities formally registered within the RUNTS (as established by Art. 4 of the Code of the Third Sector), but to all realities that - in this transition phase, in which the Registry was still poorly implemented - recognized themselves as such and could aspire to fall into the category entirely.

The pandemic has influenced the ability of Third Sector organizations to maintain closeness and relationships with their public, modifying their practices and tools and generating new types of needs in the short and medium term, which this research seeks to identify to help the sector through policy directions that are consistent with supporting those new, emerging needs. The Norisc-19 research, indeed, proposes an examination of the social impact and reactive strategies implemented by TSOs during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the health emergency has shown a national (and regional) welfare system in great difficulty (Ascoli & Campedelli, 2021), underlining the centrality of those organizations in supporting national welfare in a phase of great difficulty such as that caused by the pandemic, focusing on the analysis of the needs of those resilient realities.

The analysis focuses on the Campania Region's third-sector organizations, which were influenced by the third-sector reform. The choice to analyze the specific case of this Region is due to its high concentration of Third Sector entities, which worked intensely to address social hardship and support the most vulnerable during the economic and social crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Norisc-19 analyzes the role of the Third Sector organizations in the Campania Region, where ISTAT recorded a very high growth rate of this kind of organization (+7.2% from 2016 to 2017). These organizations - operating in a context already characterized by socioeconomic and structural weaknesses - have demonstrated significant capacity for innovation and resilience. TSO has shown significant social and economic relevance, contributing to the development of social and general interest services and counteracting the employment effects of the crisis that began in 2008.

The Norisc-19 project also aims to explore organizations' adaptation to digitalization. It recognizes the importance of transforming technological innovation into social innovation by investigating how the pandemic has accelerated the need for new organizational models, including those that favor co-decision and sharing on issues of public relevance.

1 Gabriella Punziano, University of Naples Federico II, mail: gabriella.punziano@unina.it; ORCID: 0000-0001-8783-2712
Suania Acampa, University of Naples Federico II, mail: suania.acampa@unina.it; ORCID: 0000-0003-3315-6231
Rosa Sorrentino, University of Bologna, mail: rosa.sorrentino@unibo.it; ORCID: 0000-0002-3927-6309

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The project is based on a Mixed Methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Amaturio and Punziano, 2016; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner, 2007) that aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the Third Sector's needs and responses to the pandemic, producing helpful knowledge for improving future management and governance systems. Also, this project aims to formulate policy proposals based on local experience, both as best practices and examples of failure, to address the challenges posed by the pandemic and regulatory changes.

Below are returned (in line with Figure 1): the research design (paragraph 1); the theoretical-normative framework (paragraph 2); the mapping of TSOs in the Campania Region (paragraph 3); the web survey submitted to the mapped TSOs (paragraph 4); the in-depth interviews administered to privileged witnesses (paragraph 5), proposing, in the Conclusions, the integrated reflections that emerged through the different lines of investigation conducted.

1. Research design

The project is structured as a meta-disciplinary action research which finds its natural expression in what has been widely defined as the "third approach" in social research, the Mixed Methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Amaturio and Punziano, 2016; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007), characterized by a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques, including statistical-geographical, ethnographic analysis, exploratory interviews, field observation, and documentary analysis. The basic approach is critical realism (Bhaskar, 1978), aiming to direct intervention on the reality investigated by increasing the awareness of the subjects and organizations involved in full compliance with the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2007).

The mixed approach implemented in the Norisc-19 research aims to provide an in-depth understanding of TSO's needs and responses to the pandemic and to produce useful knowledge for improving future management and governance systems. Furthermore, the project aims to formulate *policy proposals* based on local experience, both as best practices and examples of failure, to address the challenges posed by the pandemic and regulatory changes.

The Norisc-19 project was built on two investigative paths and structured into six distinct phases, each of which required the implementation of targeted strategies for the collection of empirical data (figure 1). Despite its sequential nature, the literature review also required careful planning, involving fields such as sociology, anthropology and organization. A regulatory framework was needed to define the state of the art of studies, considering the regulatory changes in the Third Sector over the last decade, particularly up to the Reformation.

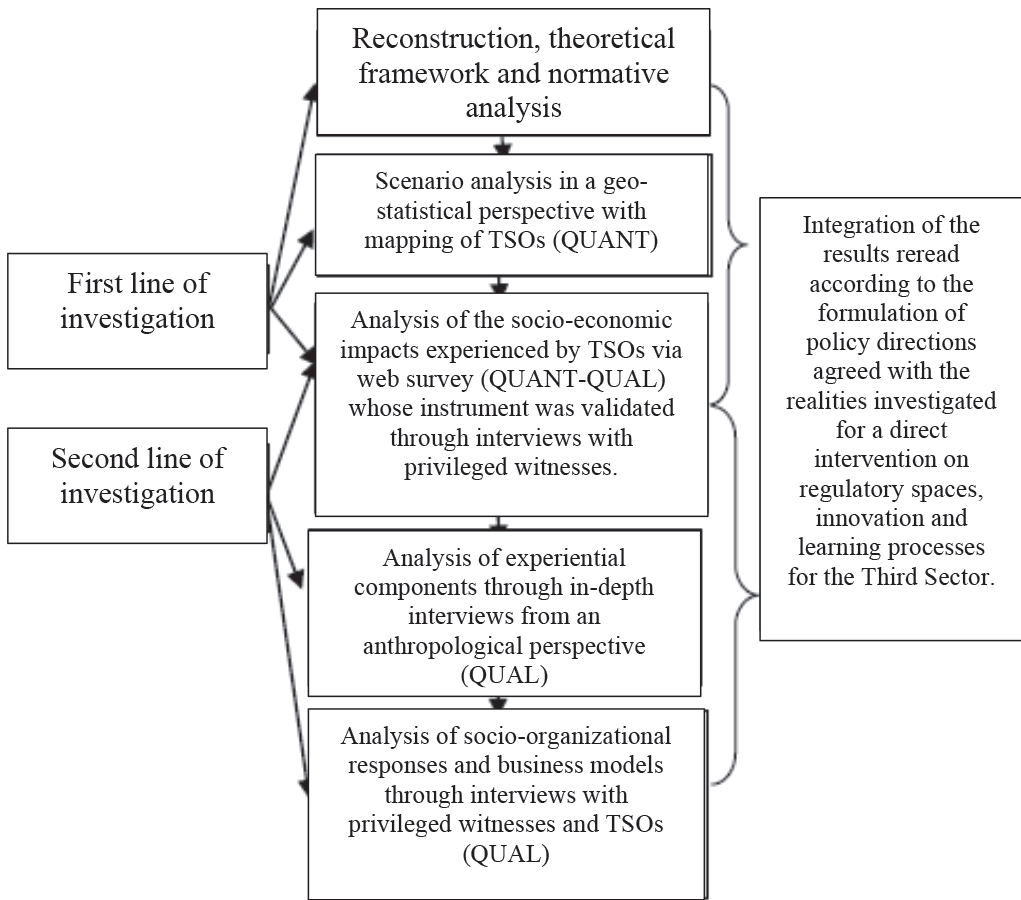


Figure 1: Conceptual map of the two phases that make up the Norisc-19 research.

The project was therefore divided into two main phases: the first is aimed at recovering the knowledge gaps regarding the national and regional TS and focuses on the recognition of the scenario and the social impacts experienced by the TSOs through a socio-anthropological analysis of a jointly statistical-geographical on secondary sources (mapping of the Campania TSO); and an ethnographic analysis, with exploratory and in-depth interviews. Furthermore, an accurate regulatory reconstruction is integrated; however, the second focuses on analyzing the socio-economic and organizational impacts and the organizational and strategic responses developed, also considering the influence of the local and national governance processes designed to deal with the pandemic. To implement this objective, a narrative approach was administered in in-depth interviews with privileged witnesses administered to the entities involved, as well as a careful documentary analysis relating to the dynamics developed during the double regulatory and pandemic transition phase. By these two lines of investigation, six research steps were articulated, briefly illustrated in Figure 1.

The six operational phases, which are transversal to each other, have produced important results in understanding the double transition to which the TSO is subject (Figure 2).

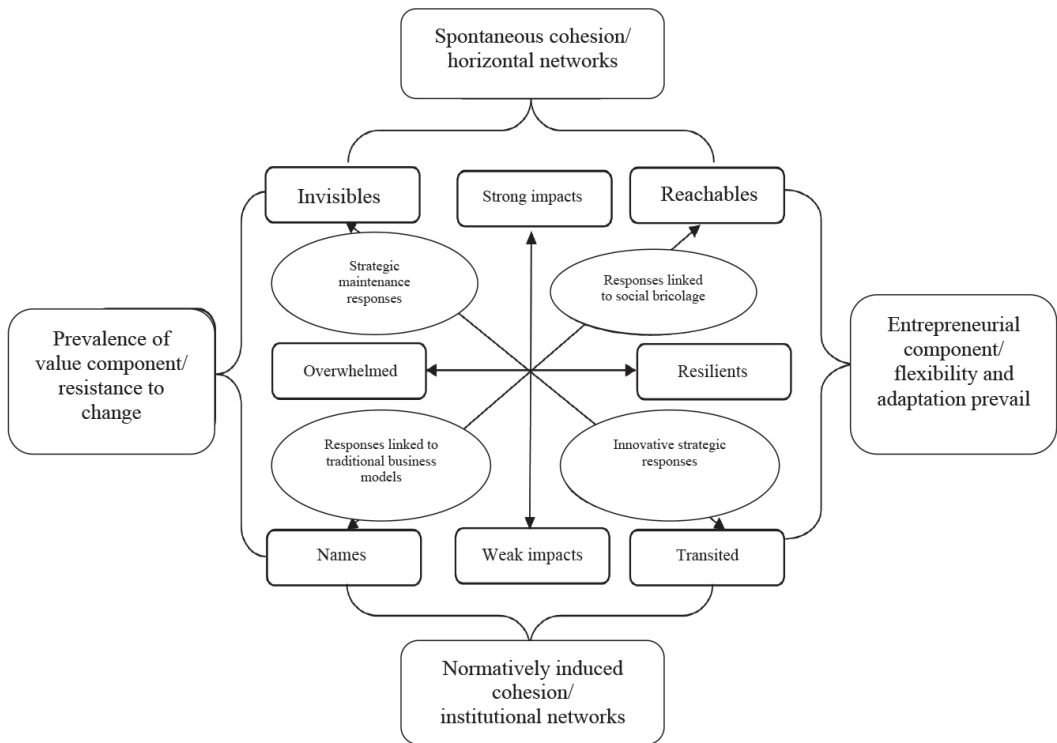


Figure 2: General classification scheme of emerging dimensions.

2. Setting the scene: theoretical and regulatory framework

The first phase carried out in the Norisc-19 project is that of the theoretical framework, provided by the very recent studies and research on the issue that span the different disciplines involved (Collins, Florin and Renn, 2020; Dodds *et al.*, 2020; Huang, 2020; Janssen & van der Voort, 2020; Karaseva, 2020; Moon, 2020; Rajan *et al.*, 2020; Sebastiani, Massa and Riboli, 2020; Taddeo, 2020; Taghrir, 2020) and the reworking of local *governance aspects* starting from the *regulatory analysis* of directives, provisions and measures adopted by the Campania Region by adopting a regulatory approach. In this perspective, particular reference was made to two events of incalculable transformative importance, such as the Pandemic and the Reform of the Third Sector. An endogenous phenomenon such as the Reform of the Third Sector (delegation law 106/2016) - despite its limits and the slowness that is characterizing its implementation - arrives at the moment in which society seems to be ready to recognize the TS all the relevance and weight invested in supporting the public sphere, deploying useful tools to reorganize its actors and discipline; on the other hand, an unexpected and exogenous event such as the Coronavirus pandemic takes over, making the centrality that non-profits play in supporting local welfare even more evident. Reform and pandemic therefore constitute the two phenomena - one endogenous, the other exogenous - which have acted globally on the Italian Third Sector, changing its composition and characteristics and highlighting its fragilities and adaptive capacities, resilience and potential. The Reform - in its attempt at a regulatory, fiscal and management reorganization of the TS - has, in fact, put not only the legislator, but also the associations themselves and the

community face to face with the underlying complexities that animate the solidarity vocation of the private social sector. The multitude of different actors, the diversification of the objectives set and individual characteristics, the peculiarities (and difficulties) deriving from the territorial dimension and the adaptive needs of the subjects are just some of the complexities that accompany the framework of the TS and its needs, at the same time making it problematic to identify the current state of implementation of the Reform and the possible adjustments to be subjected to it. The pandemic, on the other hand, has helped to highlight how the Italian non-profit sector is populated by dynamic and resilient entities, capable of responding promptly to the emerging needs of citizens. But, at the same time, it appears to require significant attention from the institutions, especially in a historical moment like the current one in which, on the one hand, it is necessary to honor the burdens and guidelines established by the Reform for its completion; while on the other, the inputs, innovations and critical issues that emerged following the pandemic are collected and systematized, which contribute to sparking reflections on the "blind spots" of the Reform itself.

3. Scenario analysis

The second step of the project involved the implementation of a scenario analysis through the construction of a *mapping of the TSO* in the Campania Region, aimed at understanding the dimensions of the regional TS, the structural characteristics (type of entities and activities) and socio-economic (also on a territorial basis) related to them, as well as the adaptation to the dictates of the Reform, concerning registration in the RUNTS. This step has been a crucial phase within the project, given mainly the structural invisibility of TSO: in fact, TSO are difficult to identify and localize on the territory due to the absence of unique and updated sources; also, it is difficult to understand what specific activities they perform and the users they involve. The lack of adequate tools to build a global knowledge on the TSO (active in each geographical area) was, therefore, the first obstacle the research faced in exploring and understanding TSO in Campania Region. To overcome the *bias* statistical-geographical knowledge generated by the absence of a pre-existing mapping and the failure to implement - in the research phase - the RUNTS, the mapping of the Campania TSO is conceived as a tool capable of identifying as many organizations as possible operating in the Region, defining the characteristics at the same time. But the mapping also ends up acquiring - from a broader perspective - a much more significant role, bringing to light the complexities that still today - seven years after the beginning of the Third Sector Reform - pervade the complex world of private social.

The work carried out can be summarized in two main steps: a first step, which involved the construction of a list of TSO through the implementation of pre-existing sources (RUNTS, regional and provincial registers, CONI register, sectoral digital platforms); and a second step, which allowed - once the lists had been created - the verification of the latter through the network, a fundamental step to define both the information necessary to frame their identity (for example, in addition to the personal-geographical information, also the area of intervention), than to verify those already present such as names, addresses and contacts. In phase of theoretical reflection, it has been possible to reconstruct the existence of nine main legal forms of TSO, finding evidence of five (APS, Social Enterprises/Cooperatives, Philanthropic Institutions, ODV, ONLUS). In addition - starting from collecting essential information relating to each TSO - it has been possible to identify a few prevailing fields of activity in which these entities operate. Such categorization was built *ex post*, as illustrated in Table 1. The need to create these categorizations stems from the absence - both in literature and through the tools used, such as RUNTS and other registers - of a shared classification criterion, which would allow researchers to understand and record the legal form and the type of activity carried out by each organization.

SECTOR OF ACTIVITY	AV	BN	CE	NA	SA	TOT
ART/MUSIC/CULTURE	2	13	19	126	45	205
GENERAL SOCIAL ASSISTENCE	12	112	240	80	316	760
(PROFESIONAL O EDUCATIONAL) TRAINING	3	15	55	58	44	175
RESEARCH	1	3	9	22	8	43
CIVIL PROTECTION	0	4	4	13	15	36
SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE	1	8	26	30	26	91
SUPPORT TO THIRD SECTOR	0	0	0	3	0	3
SUPPORT TO WOMEN	0	0	3	15	2	20
SUPPORT TO FAMILIES	1	2	1	13	6	23
SUPPORT FOR DISADVANTAGED CATEGORIES (women, elderly, migrants, disabled, LGBT, victims)	3	17	22	37	22	101
INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT	2	2	0	13	6	23
SPORT	2	27	37	408	82	556
PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT	1	40	8	35	9	93
SUPPORT TO ANIMALS	4	3	8	12	3	30
SOCIAL-HEALTH ASSISTANCE	9	35	89	129	122	384
SUPPORT FOR DISABLED CITIZENS (drug addicts, ex-prisoners, people in difficulty, prisoners)	0	0	9	20	11	40
PROTECTION OF CITIZENS' RIGHTS	0	9	12	22	11	54
NOT AVAILABLE	332	63	184	240	145	963
TOTAL	373	353	726	1276	873	3601

Table 1: Prevailing sectors of activity of the mapped entities

Despite the efforts made by the research group to reconstruct the population made up of the TSO active in the Campania Region in the most complete and detailed way possible, it is necessary to point out that the mapping only aims to obtain an exhaustive and all-encompassing census. Instead, the tool was created with the aim of inclusiveness, with the reconstruction and contemporary analysis of a complex and partly invisible reality, with whose peculiarities it was possible - thanks to the mapping process - to compare directly. As it is, in fact, likely to observe from the results of the mapping carried out, the number of entities identified up to March 2022 (the deadline for closing the survey work) constitute only a small percentage of the total number of entities in Campania that were registered with the RUNTS as of March of 2023. Furthermore, if we take into account that not everyone has yet formalized (or otherwise intends to formalize) their registration in the register and that they frequently experience a condition of true invisibility both concerning the institutions, online and on the territory, one can well understand how the creation of a tool like the one presented here does not have the ambition of reconstructing the entire population of the Campania TSO, but instead of reconstructing the statistical dimension as accurately as possible through the available tools - geographical of the phenomenon, attempting - at the very act of reconstruction - a more in-depth understanding.

Considering these reflections, we refer to the complex of realities mapped as the "accessible population", i.e. the total of the realities that it was possible to identify in the Campania region through the illustrated sources. This accessible population amounts to 3,601 entities, divided as follows based on the province they belong to:

- Avellino: 373 institutions;
- Benevento: 353 entities;
- Caserta: 726 institutions;
- Naples: 1276 entities;
- Salerno: 873 institutions.

4. Web survey

The development of a comprehensive *web survey on the entities surveyed to answer the questions: What are the main characteristics of the cases investigated? What are the characterizations regarding the organization, structure, operational people, and recipients of the offer? What is the state of health of Third Sector entities in the aftermath of the first year and a half of the pandemic?*

What were the main changes, reactions, responses, and opinions expressed? What role has digital played, and which tools between internal and sector governance have had decisive influences for better or worse? Through an online survey based on 67 questions divided into ten categories, various aspects of organizations were explored, including structure, identity, economy, communication, networks, impacts of the pandemic, and future visions.

The survey instrument was subjected to an initial validation with comparison through preliminary interviews with privileged witnesses and only after that was it released for detection. 6.24% of the entities contactable via e-mail responded to the survey (183 out of approximately 2,962 entities).

The most received responses reflect the regional demographic distribution: Naples (47%), Salerno (20%), Caserta (13%), Benevento and Avellino (10%). Among the most common activities of the responding institutions are educational (74%), personal assistance (53%), and cultural heritage conservation (48%), followed by awareness campaigns (45%). During the pandemic, 33% of organizations questioned suspended activities, with the most significant impacts on education and training (25%), culture (18%) and recreational activities (13%). New initiatives in personal and business assistance (22%) and social and health assistance (9%) have emerged. 23% of organizations have suffered drops in revenue, with events suspended (67%), projects interrupted (45%) and donations reduced (33%). Institutional and fundraising activities were also affected (in 44% and 41% of cases), while management and administration remained stable (47% and 37%). After the lockdown, maintaining staff (50%) and dealing with fixed costs (47%) and for the continuity of services (48%) was burdensome.

The organizations responded with the reorganization of the production model, diversification of revenue sources (57%), investments in fundraising (53%), expansion of the volunteer base (51%), and increase in commercial activities (24%). A digital redesign was noted with a focus on digital content (49%), video conferencing and distance learning (44%) and online fundraising (20%). Management skills (43%), professional skills (29%) and in managing relations with the public administration (15%) have become crucial in the post-pandemic phase.

A notable aspect in evaluating the Third Sector (TS) is the ability to adapt and transform in the face of recent changes. The factor analysis brought to light two latent dimensions through which to look at the effects of the double transition: "Resilience", as defined by Carrosio (2020) and "Impacts". From the intersection of these two dimensions, four profiles of entities emerge that they stand out in the way they have addressed the pandemic crisis.

The first, "Overwhelmed," which includes 18.2% of institutions, is characterized by its vulnerability and the strong impact of the pandemic, with an inability to react or relaunch their activities. These entities are mainly in the cultural and sports sectors and often do not yet comply with current regulations. Therefore, they continue to operate under a preferential tax regime and in a hidden manner. The second profile, "Persistent," concerns 33.3% of institutions that have suffered a minor impact of the pandemic, sometimes even a positive one, especially in the social and healthcare sectors. The third profile, "Fragile," which includes 18.5% of institutions, has suffered devastating impacts in all areas, from management to financing, leading to a complete interruption of activities during the lockdown. These institutions, mainly in the cultural and training sectors, have suffered significant economic losses and are opting to resort to the PNRR for recovery. Finally, the "Resilient" profile, representing 30% of institutions, showed notable resistance and strong adaptability. These entities have maintained or improved digital communi-

cation and administrative activities, often leveraging digitalization as a crisis response tool. Most of these entities are registered with RUNTS, marking compliance with current regulations, allowing them to establish relationships with the public administration for services of public interest. Thus, digital and association networks have notably impacted TSOs, especially in response to the dual transition. Regarding networks, 85% of the responding institutions participate in association networks, with 59% in informal networks. Following the lockdown, there was an intensification of existing relationships and the creation of new partnerships (43%) to support various institutional aspects (55%), fundraising (23%), and marketing and communication activities (13%). These dynamics were also influenced by the TS reform, which emphasized the need to build networks to access resources, opportunities and incentives. Institutional actors such as Municipalities, Regions, Schools, Universities, Local Health Authorities and Dioceses, and organizations such as Confcooperative, play a key role in this scenario. The centrality of digital marks a real paradigm shift: many entities have had to face the challenge of redesigning their activities and coordinations from a digital perspective, both for the offer of products and services and for fundraising. However, this often rushed and pandemic-related digitalization has highlighted the lack of internal skills, making investing in digital difficult, especially in a period of financial uncertainty for institutions.

As reported in Punziano et al., (2023) this analysis highlights the triple role of digital: as a means of disseminating information, as a mirror of the regulatory transition and as an indicator of the ability of TSO to adapt to changes. The objective is, therefore, not to limit ourselves to responding to the contingency of the pandemic but to develop a systemic strategy supported by national and international actors to promote digitalization as a tool for reducing inequalities and defining positive futures. The Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), with a budget of around 48 billion euros, plays a key role in this process, supporting the sector in digitalisation and innovation to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of institutions.

The growing importance of digital in the Third Sector therefore emerges as a fundamental aspect for the future of the sector. This element was at the center of the qualitative insights conducted through detailed interviews, both from an anthropological and organizational-managerial point of view, highlighting the crucial role that digital has had and will continue to have in shaping the possible future developments of TS.

5. In-depth interviews

Previous research phases helped the identification of particularly emblematic realities on which to carry out a fourth step of research: *qualitative insights with ethnographic field observation and in-depth interviews* (Alon et al., 2020; Beaunoyer, Dupéré and Guitton, 2020; Bowleg, 2020; Patel et al., 2020) analyzed with narrative approach, to delve into the results that emerged from the previous phases and collect qualitative details on the regulatory transition experience established for the regulation of the sector (therefore an expected element of transformation) and on the pandemic experience (as a completely unexpected element to which it was necessary to respond with processes that were not prefigured or established in coins) as well as on the organizational choices made. The administration of *interviews with privileged witnesses* of the sector under investigation aimed at *discussing the emerging socio-organizational responses and co-constructing policy directions in a concerted manner* (Zollo et al., 2016; Bartik et al., 2020; Borzaga, 2020; Consiglio and D' Isanto, 2020) calibrated on the contextual specificities functional to redirect not only the problematic regulatory transition and the very contents of the Reform but also to show functional elements in the long term for the recovery of particularly difficult situations to be established as *best practices*.

More specifically about the anthropological perspective of the research, the objective of the interviews was to explore the experience of the pandemic, the lockdown, and the reform of

the private social sector in Campania through the in-depth analysis of twenty-one testimonies of the representatives of the TS, needed to critically highlight (Dubois, 2009, 2014) the themes that are repeated albeit with different nuances and declinations within the various interviews. The division of the interview outline into thematic blocks made it possible to investigate these dimensions more closely and through different points of view.

The testimonies collected can represent a cross-section of the experience of the private social sector, first and foremost in Campania and, consequently, some aspects of the Italian one (Ferrera, 2006; Ascoli, 2011; Ferrera, Fargion and Jessoula, 2012; Ranci & Pavolini, 2015). One of the most relevant elements that emerged in the interviews was the emotional impact of the pandemic transition, often considered more important than the economic one, to counter which maintaining the internal cohesion of the institutions was fundamental. The efforts made for cohesion have sometimes expressed the desire to assist with the risks of the virus, strengthening the narrative of a heroic and altruistic TS. Another central theme that emerged is networks, a fundamental element for the correct functioning of the Italian TS. On the contrary, the relationship with the institutions emerges as marked by numerous bureaucratic inefficiencies, particularly the critical issues inherent to the TS Reform. It started in 2016 and is still ongoing; it has implemented a regulatory transition process to streamline decision-making processes and the distribution of resources in the Italian TS; however, this Reform is affected by various problems that risk creating more obstacles than solutions, such as the slowness of bureaucratic processes, the lack of clear guidelines, the need to request assistance from expensive professional figures, the incompetence of public operators and the lack of greater recognition of the formal role of the TS. Finally, the most relevant aspect among those investigated concerns the adoption and application of digital tools, the so-called "digital transition". It is a process that affected the TS before the pandemic; however, COVID-19 and related containment measures have represented a strong push for the adoption of digital devices themselves. In some cases, digital has represented the perfect solution to the limits of forced social isolation, allowing organizations not to interrupt the performance of their activities. However, by its very nature and vocation, TS is oriented towards human co-presence, so this aspect cannot be resolved entirely digitally. For this reason, institutions have had to find emerging and innovative solutions to combine with digital tools. From this process, the narrative of "reinventing oneself" is born, of changing the promotion methods and activities. Covid-19 has brought the TS's tension towards dynamism and flexibility to its extremes while simultaneously allowing social and organizational innovation processes to emerge. From a more strictly organizational point of view, the analysis of the interviews brings to light the role of TSOs as social innovators: they operate as *bricoleurs*, adopting frugal solutions with limited capital and using their resources (Komatsu *et al.*, 2016). As social innovators, they go beyond the boundaries of existing models, organizations, and networks, mutually reinforcing their value propositions and business models. The results of this research are consistent with the studies of Canestrino *et al.* (2019), Gustafsson and Lazzaro (2021), and Stanojev and Gustafsson (2021) in the contextualization of business model innovation in the Third Sector.

These results lead us to think about an important aspect. If social enterprises lose their bricoleur soul, they risk no longer being able to generate social innovation in the long term because they risk losing sight of the social component, shifting the axis too much towards profit. We find consistency in this statement in other studies in creative and cultural contexts (e.g. Pearse and Peterlin, 2019; Gustafsson & Lazzaro, 2021), in which the innovative business model adopted contextually incorporates elements of sustainability and social innovation. Furthermore, they would suffer negative consequences regarding their connection to their local communities. The empirical study then contributes to the academic debate, offering new elements to the existing literature on social bricolage, innovative business models, and social innovation.

Therefore, the testimonies collected, if it is true that they refer to the territory of the Campania Region with its specificities, can, however, in other more general aspects, be partly more broadly evocative of the complex reality of the Italian TS bodies, although not sufficient to repre-

sent those associations that, for various reasons, decide not to declare themselves. On the other hand, in the absence of similar broad and multidisciplinary studies on Campania, this project represents a first attempt at an in-depth and systematized analysis of such a complex reality.

Conclusions

The analysis of the results that emerged in the different phases of the investigation highlights that, despite the objective of the Reform to redefine and reorganize the Third Sector, recognizing its socio-economic importance, its full implementation and the consequent impact on the actors and the environment are still limited. The complexity encountered during the mapping of Campania's Third Sector Organization (TSO) and the effects of the pandemic, as revealed by the interviews, showed a diversity in the characteristics and structures of the various realities, influencing their ability to adapt to the directives of the Reform. Three key elements are identified for classifying TSOs: first, the opposition between TSOs that adhere to the Reform and those that remain "invisible"; second, the distinction between recognizable and active TSOs versus those that are nominal but not reachable; third, the difference between entities that reflect local socio-cultural problems and those that are oriented towards activities different from the local context. The third phase of the investigation highlights that some TSOs have suffered heavily from the effects of the pandemic, while others have demonstrated resilience and innovation, becoming models of best practice. Strategies adopted include production reorganization and the adoption of digital ways of working. PNNR funds are considered vital resources for expanding activities and improving the territorial presence of institutions. Furthermore, solid institutional ties have often made a difference in managing the pandemic crisis. However, competition for limited resources has created tensions among TSOs. In the fourth phase, the anthropological analysis explored themes such as ideology, the relationship between operators and beneficiaries, and the rigidity of public administrations, highlighting the emotional impact of the pandemic and the centrality of values in the Third Sector. Collaboration networks between entities and institutions have been fundamental despite the bureaucratic inefficiencies. Finally, the fifth phase focused attention on organizations that were well rooted in the territory, highlighting how collaboration and social innovation helped to face the crisis. TSO business model innovation, in response to the post-pandemic context and regulatory transitions, aims to combine social and economic aspects, underlining the importance of a long-term entrepreneurial perspective

Figure 2 effectively represents the synthesis process, where the intersection of the main factors identified through a broad recognition of the salient results emerging from the various analyses allows us to articulate the definitions of specific forms of response. This scheme illustrates four distinct models of reaction, highlighting how the actors of the Campania Third Sector, and not only, position themselves and act in this context.

It is evident that, depending on certain prevailing conditions, TSO reactions to external events vary based on structural and symbolic factors, influencing the performance and future prospects of the institution and the sector. In detail, in the lower left quadrant of Figure 2 are the responses linked to traditional business models, characterized by a strong value component and a resistance to change. These models prevail in less-defined institutions, which adapt based on institutional networks and available opportunities. Even with less intense impacts from the pandemic, these entities expressed a feeling of being overwhelmed.

In the upper left quadrant, we find the maintenance responses, where, despite a value component and resistance to change, the decisive influence comes from being inserted into horizontal networks and from resorting to spontaneous cohesion and mutual help. Despite feeling overwhelmed, these entities respond to the significant impacts of the pandemic by trying to maintain their position, albeit informally, often due to their small size and limited internal capabilities.

Responses linked to social bricolage, positioned in the upper right quadrant, emerge in entities with a marked entrepreneurial orientation, flexible and adaptive, capable of systemic resilience in response to substantial pandemic impacts, supported by internal cohesion and solid links with other local authorities. In the lower right quadrant, we find innovative strategic responses provided by entities with a strong entrepreneurial component, flexibility, available resources, and internal capabilities, which have facilitated a painless regulatory transition supported by remarkable resilience and propensity for change. These institutions have experienced limited pandemic impacts, often thanks partly to their membership and effective use of institutional networks. Despite being complex and not exhaustible in a few lines, these reflections offer clear indications for future policies. The analysis suggests focusing on facilitating the regulatory transition, the institutionalization of networks, the development of an entrepreneurial culture with a social basis, and the principles of regulatory-contextual harmonization, crucial elements for decision-makers and policymakers who intend to influence and guide the processes in this sector. The work concludes with an opening from the closing conference “Open Challenges for the Third Sector: Regulatory and Social Impacts, New Organizational Responses and Social Innovation Between Reform and COVID-19”, held in Naples on 30 and 31 March 2023. The event aimed to present the results of the NORISC-19 Project “Nuove risposte organizzative, innovazioni e impatti sociali del Covid-19 sul Terzo Settore in Campania/New Organizational Responses, Innovations and Social impacts of Covid-19 on Third Sector in Campania Region” research project, co-financed by Federico II University of Naples, and to co-construct the results and emerging policy directions. The conference also aimed at developing a debate on a larger scale, involving various actors and disciplines to address central issues such as the value of data for the Third Sector, the methodological challenges in integrating interdisciplinary reflections with policymakers and subjects of inquiry, and regulatory, social, organizational and strategic transformations in the sector. This approach has allowed us to define a future research agenda for studying the Third Sector in light of the exogenous and endogenous transformations experienced.

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