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COMUNITÀ RURALE

Strategies for revitalising rural Italy

Dragana Gavrić

DIPLOMARBEIT

COMUNITÀ RURALE

Strategies for revitalising rural Italy

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ABSTRACT

The twenty-first century will be remembered for the fact that more people will live in the city than in the countryside. Migrations of people result in consequences that raise issues of identity, periphery and centre, decline and transformation of a territory. Italy, as the subject of this paper, records not only drastic population declines, but also drastic shrinking of villages and transition to cities. Its encounters with emigration and immigration particularly influenced the south of the country. Based on knowledge generated from analysing existing strategies that aimed to revitalise the rural areas, new prototypes and visions of fragments of spatial configuration are set up, which initiate transformations with the goal of a different way of living and working. This is done through mapping of resources, formulation and synthesis of results, a trip to the Apennines, empirical observations and conclusion through interviews with experts. The countryside is not seen as competition but as complementarity with cities. What can rural areas offer, how to improve the lives of local residents and attract new ones, and what kind of work can be created or shifted from the city to the village are key issues in this paper. Actions to reactivate abandoned spaces and revitalisation of villages through new modes of mobility, digital technology, new spatial configurations, affordable housing, new social cohesion provides a multi-layered vision between desire and pragmatism, complexity and unity, radical and traditional, individual and collective existence, temporary and permanent habitat.

ABSTRAKT

Das 21. Jahrhundert wird dadurch gekennzeichnet sein, dass mehr Menschen in der Stadt als auf dem Land leben werden. Die Migration von Menschen hat Folgen, die Fragen der Identität, der Peripherie und des Zentrums, des Niedergangs und der Transformation eines Gebiets aufwerfen. Italien, um das es in diesem Beitrag geht, verzeichnet nicht nur einen drastischen Bevölkerungsrückgang, sondern auch eine drastische Schrumpfung der Dörfer und den Übergang zu Städten. Die Auswirkungen von Auswanderung und Einwanderung betrafen vor allem den Süden des Landes. Ausgehend von den Erkenntnissen, die aus der Analyse bestehender Strategien zur Wiederbelebung der ländlichen Gebiete gewonnen wurden, werden neue Prototypen und Visionen von Fragmenten räumlicher Konfigurationen entwickelt, die Transformationen mit dem Ziel einer anderen Lebens- und Arbeitsweise einleiten. Dies geschieht durch die Mappierung von Ressourcen, die Formulierung und Synthese von Ergebnissen, eine Reise in die Apenninen, empirische Beobachtungen und Schlussfolgerungen durch Interviews mit Experten/innen. Der ländliche Raum wird nicht als Konkurrenz, sondern als Ergänzung zur Stadt gesehen. Was kann der ländliche Raum bieten, wie kann man das Leben der Einwohner/innen verbessern und neue Einwohner/innen anziehen, und welche Art von Arbeit kann geschaffen oder von der Stadt ins Dorf verlagert werden - das sind die Schlüsselthemen dieser Arbeit. Maßnahmen zur Reaktivierung verlassener Räume und zur Wiederbelebung von Dörfern durch neue Mobilitätsformen, digitale Technologie, neue räumliche Konfigurationen, bezahlbaren Wohnraum und neuen sozialen Zusammenhalt bieten eine vielschichtige Vision zwischen Wunsch und Pragmatismus, Komplexität und Einheit, Radikalität und Tradition, individueller und kollektiver Existenz, temporärem und dauerhaftem Lebensraum.

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INTRODUCTION

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Preface

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Twenty-first century will be remembered for the growth of the global economy, consumerism, private enterprises and climate change. A great focus lies on the expansion of cities, and thus a large shift of the population from rural to urban regions was recorded. The latest predictions by the United Nations (2018) say that the number of the world's population in urban areas will increase, from today's 55% to 68% by 2050. That means that 3/4 of population will end this century as totally urban species. However, little attention is paid to how the left 1/4 of population will live. The question that is raised is whether this is a final shift of the human population or there is a chance for a big twist again? The last event that shook and connected the whole planet was the corona virus. The pandemic that was spreading all over the world led to rethinking our daily life in cities, thinking and acting in order to redesign and adapt cities to the current situation. Our desire for wider spaces, for greener spaces led to

rural areas who got a central place during pandemic, because people started to reach places where they feel safe and move more freely. Our desire for the countryside is followed by a crisis in the cities. In order to understand the phenomenon of exodus from the countryside to the city, it is necessary to analyse the genesis of rural, to discover which revolutions had the greatest impact on humanity and on their way of life. There are four great revolutions that have significantly changed us and our lives: cognitive, agricultural, scientific and digital. Of these four terms, the one that immediately associates us with rural is agriculture. How did agriculture affect our lives? Why do people flee to the city? What has become the village? This work does not romanticise or glorify the village, but analyses existing problems and people's needs and sets a vision of how to give people the opportunity of a sustained life in the rural areas. We can't talk about any connection with nature in the city, that's what

the countryside always has the advantage of. The rural Italy was taken as the subject of the work, with a focus on the South of the country and its abandonment of hamlets and migration towards cities.

The term "Questione meridionale" or Southern question in Italy refers to the condition of that part of the country, which is in a major social-economic crisis of development, if we take into account the rest of the country. Used for the first time in 1873 by the radical Lombard deputy Antonio Billia, referring to the disastrous economic situation of the South in comparison to the other regions of united Italy, it is still used in common language today.

This paper will try to break down the barriers of this condition by proposing new tools in order to create new ways of doing business, communication, education, mobility and quality of life in rural Italy.

Methodology

The aim of this paper is to present and analyse the current state of rural regions, with the example of Italy. The research is based on statistics, the analysis of existing strategies in the rural areas, mapping potentials resources, formulating, synthesis of results, journey to the Appenines, observing from site empirically, interviews with architects and experts that have worked on projects regarding rural regions.

The chapter Towards rural will be addressed to how rural was created and how people lived, then the current situation in Italy, with a focus more on the rural world, analysis of migration flows in order to be able to show the multi-layered nature of leaving the countryside. In order to adapt new strategies, it is necessary to identify and understand the way of life and the current problems of the people who remained.

From the acquired knowledge, it is possible to come up with new solutions that could attract new residents. The first part is understanding the socio-economical context of the Italy and

demographical changes. The second part of the focus study is the analysis of the problems and identification of possible potentials. The third part is to present a possible solution through references, a possible new life model for rural areas is developed from this knowledge and experience. The generation of the symbiotic jobs, as well as finding the new balance between city and the countryside, will be the focus of the work. Meeting the needs of housing, work, living together and better living conditions, are the main challenges here. Questions of life in the countryside are also a political and economic topic. What needs to be done so the village gains the same value and importance and interest in life as the city? What is our role as an architect in this? In order to clarify the topic and the acquired knowledge, the content is presented through a combination of texts, images, drawings, diagrams and graphs, open questions. Through conversations, own observation and experience on the trip, comprehensive knowledge was generated.

TOWARDS RURAL

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Revolutions

Yuval Noah Harari, author of the book *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (2014) explaining the short history of humanity, divides them into four parts: the cognitive revolution, the agrarian revolution, the unification of human kind and the scientific revolution. In addition to the three revolutions that significantly influenced our way of life, we will also add the digital revolution. Digital technology is increasingly escalating and intertwining with our daily lives, fundamentally changing how we live and how we work together. The cognitive revolution that began 70,000 years ago gave Homo Sapiens the ability to separate Homo Sapiens from all other species by allowing them to begin communicating and networking with other Sapiens. The next revolution that occurred 50,000 years after the cognitive revolution introduced us to a nomadic life by cultivating plants and raising animals. Doing agriculture led to the creation of the first spatial configurations and the establishment of trade

networks. Harari emphasises that the way of life brought to us by agriculture was not at all easy, because unlike the nomadic life, where we hunted one day out of three and gathered for a few hours a day, doing agriculture we worked much more and did not get a better life with it.

“Agricultural Revolution left farmers with lives generally more difficult and less satisfying than those of foragers. Hunter-gatherers spent their time in more stimulating and varied ways, and were less in danger of starvation and disease. The Agricultural Revolution certainly enlarged the sum total of food at the disposal of humankind, but the extra food did not translate into a better diet or more leisure. Rather, it translated into population explosions and pampered elites. The average farmer worked harder than the average forager, and got a worse diet in return. The Agricultural Revolution was history’s biggest fraud.”

Diamond, 1997, cited in Harari, 2014, p.135

This is the beginning of rural society and villages, which is an important point for this work. The focus of the work lies in establishing new connections in the countryside and creating a new rural society. We are not talking about a new revolution, but revolutions serve us to understand the birth of village. The focus of this work is a re-birth of the village.

"Farming enabled civilisation, yet it also divided society into two mutually dependent communities whose outlooks were worlds apart. The partnership between city and country was always to some extent antagonistic."

Steel, 2020, p.320

The third revolution started 500 years ago and it was the revolution of science. The communication network between people expands. The beginning of the industrial revolution led to progress and demographic

growth in cities. The number of people and food supplied to the economy and politics of states indicated the value of urban production. The expansion of urban regions has affected the drastic change of rural areas; More and more peasants lost their jobs, people began to leave rural areas in search of work.

"Until the Scientific Revolution most human cultures did not believe in progress. They thought the golden age was in the past, and that the world was stagnant, if not deteriorating. Strict adherence to the wisdom of the ages might perhaps bring back the good old times, and human ingenuity might conceivably improve this or that facet of daily life. However, it was considered impossible for human know-how to overcome the world's fundamental problems."

Harari, 2014, p.429

Questioning the rural-urban relation

The most basic definition of a village is that it is a place opposite to a city. When we think of the village, our first thoughts are the homeland, wilderness, agriculture, but also a lack of what a city offers - more opportunities for employment, better access to public services.

In the book *Rural* (2010) Michael Wood examines how relevant the idea of rural is today. He emphasizes that the division between rural and urban is rooted historically through geography and our culture. Rural connections referred to food sources, wilderness, a place of misery, or a primitive place in need of modernization such as a city has. Although we cannot feel our connection with the countryside because we are too integrated in our urban lives, there is an important role of rural regions on which we depend. As Carolyn Steel in her Book *Sitopia* (2020) says: It's food. Carolyn Steel's view is that the connection between the city and the countryside is an urban paradox, because cities have always relied on the countryside for food. The city of London, which she takes into consideration, has agricultural land a hundred times larger than the area of the city itself. She concludes that cities need a village, that the village is an urban structure that

is, a freeway outside the city limits that exists at the behest of the latter.

"We currently cultivate 1.6 billion hectares of farmland, an area equivalent in size to South America, and keep an area roughly double that size under permanent pasture, which is a heck of a lot of farm to bring indoors."

FAO, 2021, cited in Steel, 2020, p.301

Rural problems today

The main problem of rural regions is that they are facing a circle of decline. It is made up of low population density, aging, outmigration, lack of jobs or fewer jobs, lack of business creation, lack of public services and lack of infrastructure.

"The countryside is nine eight percent of the world's surface and fifty percent of mankind lives there. But our preoccupation with cities creates a situation comparable to the beginning of the eighteenth century when vast areas of the world were described on maps as terra incognita. Today, the terra incognita is the countryside. The emptying of the countryside is having a more drastic impact than the

intensification of the city. While the city becomes more it-self, the countryside is transforming into something new: an arena for industrialised nostalgia side by side with total control of the landscape, new patterns of seasonal migration, massive subsidies and incentives, data storage, digital farming, species "homogenisation, genetic experimentation... It would be difficult to write such a radical inventory of the city. It shows that the supposed dialectical opposition of urban growth and rural decline might be true when you look at population proportions, but not at the actual size of infrastructure or built substance."

Carlow, 2016, p.431-432

One of the important aspects that the village lacks is public services. Public services are all municipal and communal services of general interest, which should provide essential needs and goods for every citizen. This includes energy, clear water supply, waste disposal, transport services, telecommunications. The political scene is focused on cities and their development, overshadowing the countryside, letting them occupy marginalised or abandoned places. The idea of building the network of different services regionally could be used as the new concept of creating service

spaces. The method of suspension of the spatial fragmentation into the independent municipalities has to stop in order to act regionally. Christopher Alexander criticised it as early as in 1966 with his statement "The city is not the tree" of urban structures based on hierarchical and fragmented planning, which have no interrelationship or overlap, as bad examples of spatial structures. Centralisation of places as an approach to definition creates too many of the same services and places in one region, where the inefficiency of any service can occur.

In the book Raumpioniere in ländlichen Regionen (2013) Oswalt P. and Faber K. mentioned the term passive renovation, which refers to closed schools and cultural institutions, abandoned local transport stops and train stations, empty shops. The main reason is the progressive depopulation of rural regions worldwide with simultaneous growth in urban agglomerations.

“Maintaining the status quo is not an option, since the lower the population density, the higher the cost of public services until they can no longer be financed. But the becoming less cannot be understood as a mere reduction of what is already there. Rather, becoming less requires renewal and modernisation. Less is different. For example, every second school is closed due to a declining number of students and local public transport is restricted at the same time, the distance to school becomes unreasonably longer.”

Faber and Oswald, 2013, p.7



Fig.1 Exploring the rural

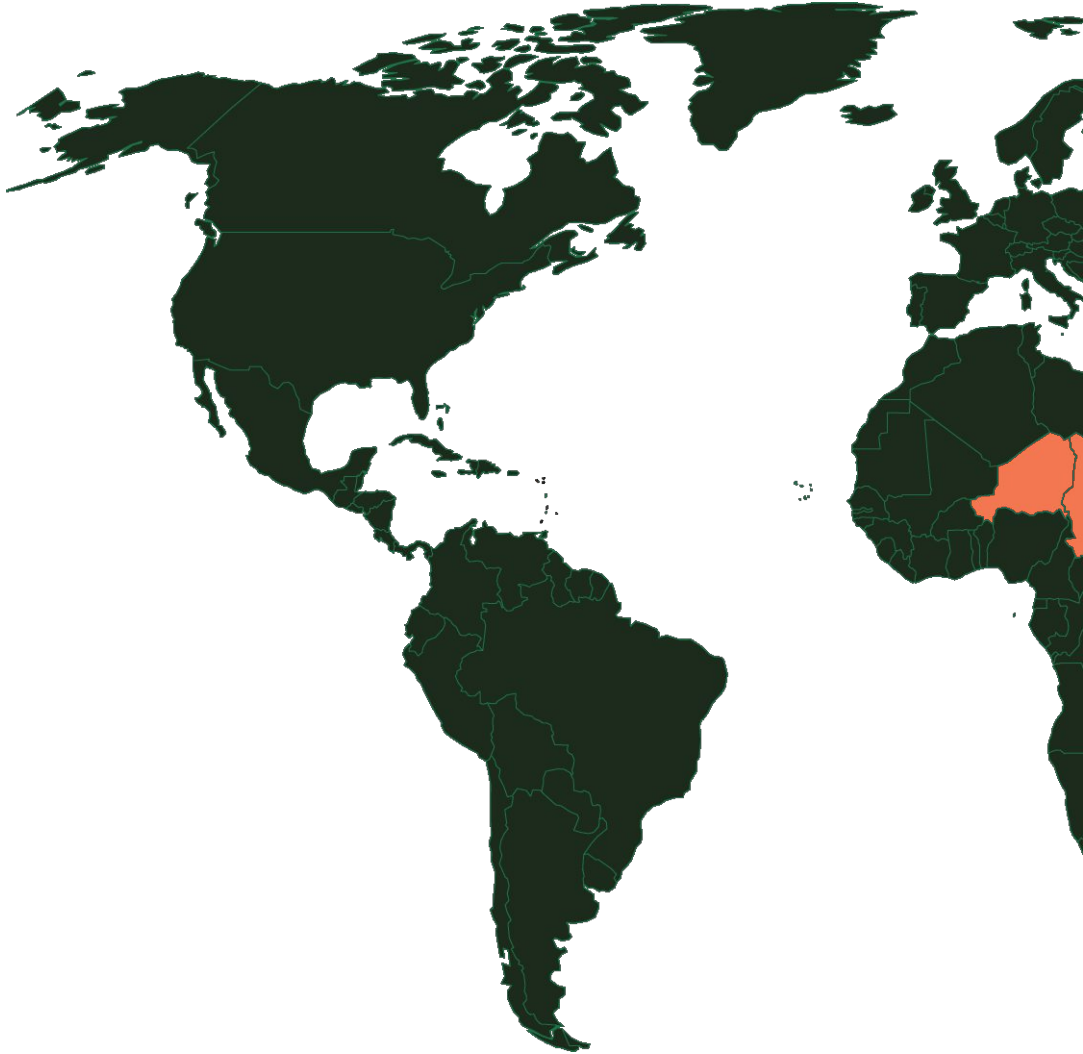


Fig.2 Village road

RURAL URBAN



10,84% 86,1%



"What will be remembered about the twenty-first century, more that anything else except perhaps the migration of the rural population from agricultural life and into cities. We will en

Saunders,

Fig.3 2050 Predictions of the urban-rural ratio



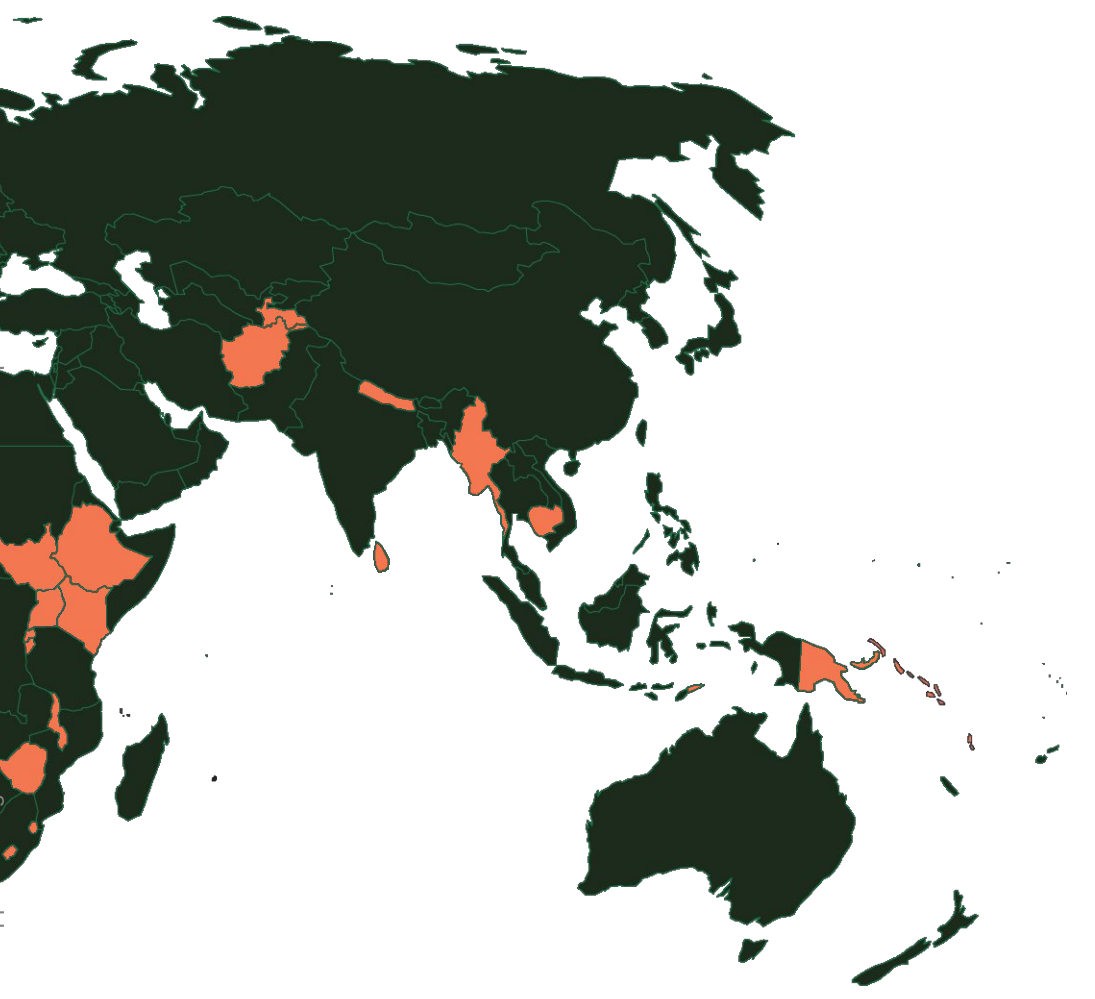
6%

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... effects of a changing climate, is the great, and final shift of human population, out of rural, and 21st century as a whole urban species."

2010, p.11



IN CONVERSATION WITH...

MARIO FESTA

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Architect
President of Rural Design for the Regeneration of Territories

82030 San Lorenzello, Italy
<https://www.ruraldesignweek.com>



Fig.4 Mario Festa

DG: You were born and grew up in San Lorenzello, a small town in the Province of Benevento, with more than 2000 inhabitants. After the studies of architecture in Rome you worked in Berlin and then you came back to San Lorenzello. What motivated you to return to your home town?

MF: The return to my country was traumatic. When you go away, what binds you to your childhood places are only memories, you realise that you have changed and the others too. So you only have a sort of emotional geography that binds you to your places and

you also discover that these places are now close to you. In the meantime, the world has also changed, globalisation and the digital world have made traditional borders fluid, generating an incessant flow of people, information and culture. The traditional barriers between the centre and the periphery have fallen and the territory tends to transform itself into a single system made up of variously extended and dense areas. From how you can guess, I think this applies to everyone, once we have set out on the journey, we can no longer return to the same place we started from and we always need to meet others in which to see ourselves. After all, we are all travelers!

DG: For several years you have been active in the research and development of various interdisciplinary projects in the interior Italy, from coordinating projects Azione-Matese (2002-2006) and also creating the Rural design platform. How did you come about to begin working in the rural Italy in the first place?

MF: For several years, from the University in Rome onwards, I lived in a city, which for a young man coming from a small town in Southern Italy was and is the highest aspiration. Then over the years we begin to understand the

value of these territories that today they call marginal areas, inland areas, rural areas as a legacy of backwardness and so on. In the meantime, many things are changing: the world has globalised, the transformations that have taken place, especially by man, have provoked and continue to cause what is called the great environmental and climatic crisis of the planet. Our profession of architects, which deals with "living", is in some way responsible for the crisis we are experiencing. The link with my country has never been interrupted, indeed with the passing of the years it has become more assiduous until I decide to return there. The challenge of refuting, rethinking the idea of a certain "modernity", from which this contrast between "city vs. countryside" arises, has become the subject of my research, which distinguishes our work. Our first job was Action Matese, at that time in the early 2000s, I was living in South Tyrol. During my holidays in the South, I fell in love with a small town in the Matese Regional Park, an appendage of the southern Apennine mountain range, the country of Gallo Matese. This territory was and still is one of the most marginal areas of the Campania Region, characterised by a long history of emigration, especially towards the United States. Together with some friends we

met in Berlin, and the network of people scattered around Europe, we thought about starting a project that would take care of some countries in this area. More than a project, a set of actions that activated a process of involvement of the local population.

DG: What was the approach in this project?

MF: The tool or “device” that we thought of using was to create workshops of Environmental Art in which the people involved in the place, together with the artists, created in symbiosis, works of which they also became the custodians. I made this premise because from the limits of this project, the need arose to think of something that had a greater impact on the local economy and that was sustainable, indeed that would allow a certain liveability not only to people but to the entire environmental ecosystem. We began to ask ourselves how to develop an economy that could create jobs and at the same time respect the natural environment in which they found themselves, how to improve the liveability conditions of the territory not only for the people, but also for the other living beings who inhabited it. By liveability we mean the different ways of emerging a sustainable balance between

man, environment and economic resources. Sustainability today is a particularly slippery and dangerous concept: it is highly satisfying and, if combined with the word development however the concept of development implies, by its very nature, the disturbance of an equilibrium. So the concept of development needs to be rethought by associating it with that of “growth” especially within a system in which man is only a part of the complex system in which he finds himself.

DG: How did you address the landscape within the territory?

MF: So rethinking the rural and mountain world was the first intuition. Then how to be able to approach this almost archaic world, but with an archive of knowledge and knowledge by now almost forgotten and to be able to translate it into our contemporaneity, was the consequent reflection. Furthermore, these territories are located outside any authority or institution that can guarantee appropriate and multidisciplinary research to try to rebuild the now abandoned economies. “Recently the Lebanese artist Akram Zaatari suggested that the landscape is the absolute archive”. It is here that memories, and not just human ones, are deposited archive that is not always easy to

read and interpret but which contains fundamental information to support our existence.

DG: Is there a nostalgia in the concept of the returning to the rural?

MF: It is not a question of returning to a romantic notion of roots and authenticity, but of radically reworking the current circumstances and conditions to bring out a different connotation also of the idea of rural landscape. No longer a place detached from the city, rural spaces, even in the deep south of the world, are traced in the electromagnetic maps of telephone and digital networks and participate in the global dimension of the widespread metropolis. Not even a place to approach and colonise as a subordinate projection of the city. The rural landscape as a living manifestation of that archive made up of layers of memories and knowledge, of species and biodiversity, becomes an instrument for the creation of knowledge, of new material and immaterial productions.

DG: You were part of the projects Cairano 7x. What was your role in the project Cairano 7x? What were the challenges? What happened

beyond your expectations? What did you learn or conclude after working on this project?

MF: This is yet another story made up of more or less casual encounters. I had read by chance a beautiful article by the poet and "landscape scientist" Franco Arminio, which had intrigued me very much. As soon as I got back to the South the first person I called was him. And he was the only one who welcomed me by inviting me to collaborate with his association "the Provisional Community", a sort of "situationist" association that went around the countries implementing poetic actions. The "Cairano 7X" project was born from our meeting and the legacy of Action-Matese. The opportunity was given by Franco Dragone, one of the most internationally known entertainers, a native of Cairano who emigrated as a child with his parents to Belgium, his father found work as a miner in one of the coal areas of Belgium. Dragone financed us the "Cairano 7X" festival which lasted two editions, 2009 and 2010.

The festival lasted 7 days in which writers, artists, filmmakers, artisans and so on, participated with the idea of re-inhabiting Cairano through a different, non-traditional way, given that the town had depopulated, the number of the inhabitants of Cairano was about 300 people.

Living in Cairano then became an adventure. Not only because it was a country less and less populated and perched in Irpinia, where you have to decide to go, but above all because living in this place implies subverting the geometries of marginalisation and reformulating the concept of centrality. The initiative tried to place the earth as the first centre, with respect to which we are all on the margins and, with this perspective, where we are all on the outskirts of the world, to promote through the events of Cairano 7x as a new centre, planted like a meteorite in the Irpinia of the east, a south facing south, a country overlooking a sea of grass, the Lucanian hills, the high nests of meridian thought. The inhabitants, the artists, the visitors were thus faced with a soberly festive town. Many doors reopened, whoever stopped telling his stories would go back to telling them, talking, smiling. The experience of a new alliance with things, animals, plants, buildings, squares, streets. As far as my experience is concerned, I can say that we were having a wonderful experience, as if we were re-founding a new community, we were all involved, there were no rivalries, no competitions, it really seemed to witness the birth of a utopian community.

DG: What was the goal of the Cairano 7x?

MF: The goal of Cairano7x was the "Festival of Air and Beauty" in trying to make Cairano a habitable place, for the inhabitants of today, for those who worked on the event, for those who came as spectators and who became protagonists. Cairano7x was a multi-event that lasted a week, starting with the longest day of the year. A country in motion for 7 days, a centre that welcomed and collected, a large workshop with workshops divided into 7 themes, which wound along a path of 7 stations which were then the topical places of Cairano, from the entrance-library to the caves of Calvary to the cliff of the Castle. Cairano 7x was not supposed to be the simple proposition of events packaged elsewhere, but sprouted within the practices of everyday living. Through surveys and direct actions, Cairano 7x tried to investigate how the relationship with the territory had changed, what the real local needs were, and an attempt was made to rework the images of the places and their desirable uses that could promote recognition and aggregation. In fact, living in Cairano involved subverting the images of the country, those of those who always lived there and those of those who lived there temporarily. The goal then started to fertilise the imagination and promote the construction of new images

starting from widespread reception practices and laboratory initiatives coagulated into an event that was to be the engine of a renewed experience. The poet and “landscape scientist” Franco Arminio was its artistic director. Cairano was thus a place of intertwining, the capital of the borders. Each art, each person leaned on the edge of himself, stood in the balance, listening to other arts, other people. Pilgrim artists who came to a country that became the sanctuary of a new religion, the religion of clemency. Young and old, peasants and actors, musicians, sculptors, poets, architects, pilgrims and residents, artisans, all united to make a serene objection to the existing.

DG: What happens after 7 festive days in Cairano?

MF: There are still attempts to continue to make Cairano become a center of art and culture, but the vision is very artificial, and it is not just a question of saving a small town from depopulation. Generally these events are impromptu, very often these places are used as almost metaphysical scenarios, where locals just observe with curiosity at first, then become indifferent. The problem is that there is often a lack of cultural mediation work and a strategy

for involving the local community. So these events, once the novelty phase has been overcome, slowly run out, but above all they leave no traces of their passage. But the fundamental problem is the lack of an integral vision of the territory, it is not by saving a country that the problems of a territory are solved. It would be necessary to get out of an anthropocentric and urban vision, to apply an ecosystem approach to the territory.

DG: A period of great change, such as the pandemic in 2020, has led people to rethink where and how they want to live, and many of them have turned to the countryside. What can rural Italy offer regarding new forms of living and working?

MF: The idea of landscape as nature shaped by the distance of contemplation is replaced by that of landscape as a continuous project, where one is forced to work in nature as in a laboratory: where to experiment, even through the forms of living, different codes of their own travel and inhabit the world. It is no coincidence that the demand for landscape that is felt in contemporary society reflects, despite many contradictions, the need to regain contact with places and to re-inhabit the earth, rediscovering

its identity values (natural and cultural), respecting and enhancing its diversity. Even the urgency of a reorganisation of human life starting from the satisfaction of basic needs (such as, for example, the protection of health, psychological well-being, food and environmental safety, the need to generate new employment areas) supports the demand for landscape. That is felt in contemporary society. A demand that can dangerously decline towards nostalgic regurgitation and distrust of the future or represent a unique opportunity for a cultural reinvention and productive reorganisation of the territory. Demand for landscape, sustainable balance, liveability, are the foundations for the development of a new concept of "value of the territory". Precisely because compliance with these foundations is partly non-negotiable, a new potential "value" follows, which can also be perceived by traditional market economies. The rural areas with its network of villages could thus become the complex space that encompasses the multiplicity of anthropic and environmental resources, characterised by territorial specificities, in which mutation and innovation generate new languages and places of living responding to the aspirations of the new liquid company.

DG: In your opinion, what is the future of rural areas?

MF: We know that close to the Europe of big cities, in rural and mountain enclaves today, opposite realities coexist: technology and tradition, inertia and desire for innovation, environments that have remained unchanged and intrusions of new objects, artefacts, technologies, But also the desire for a new decor, the construction of a new community, social and productive innovation. The phenomenon involves vast mountain and rural areas of Europe: fragile ecosystems with an uncertain economic structure are pursuing a radical mutation in the shadow of media attention focused on cities or their romantic perception as "enchanted" places. It is these spaces that today "call" and lead to a cultural change that involves a rethinking of the concepts of nature and culture and brings to the role of the landscape and the sense of living. In this new configuration open to stories, to memories, to the possibilities that arrive from elsewhere and emerge among us, identity cannot be experienced as something already given and realised but instead it becomes an opening, a continuous elaboration towards the future.

San Lorenzello, 2022

IN CONVERSATION WITH...

Wouter Haspeslagh

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Fig.5 Wouter Haspeslagh

DG: The rural area of Italy, or Inner Italy, is faced with many challenges, such as: aging, unemployment, lack of new business, lack of public services, poor infrastructural connections, closed railway stations in certain municipalities, and as a result, we have a declining population and an exodus, especially of young people

from the countryside. How can we use mobility as a tool to change the status quo in the countryside?

WH: Historically, the flows of all those things on the earth's surface have always been very important. Most cities were built at the cross

roads of different flows: merchant routes, rivers, ports... Constantinople flourished at the intersection between east and west. Rome became a metropolis thanks to its access to food over the Mediterranean Sea (transporting food over land was very slow and fresh products would spoil). Part of why New York became so big is because of its position at the mouth of the Hudson, and all industrial products from around the Great Lakes would pass by on their way to the rest of the world. The countryside on the other hand, is historically known as an area of origin, of produce: the land that provides the food and material that flow to the cities. It's not the crossroad or destination, it's much more the origin. Also today, we should keep in mind what the meaning of countryside and city is. With intensification and industrialisation of agriculture just to name one thing, maybe both tried to pursue too much the same goals over the years. Perhaps their beauty and relevance are in what makes them different. The solutions that have value in an urban context do not per se make sense on the countryside. Their nature is different. There is one fundamental change that has huge impact on the countryside's possibilities, though. While all flows and mobilities for millennia were linked to physical carriers, that hard link disappeared. Through

telecommunication systems that make use of satellites, cell phone networks, and Wi-Fi, we move data and ideas without a physical carrier. In search to attract more young people, many picturesque Italian towns are investing a lot in super-fast Internet, bringing non-physical mobility to these places. Of course, one cannot live through the Internet alone. The countryside indeed poses a major challenge for our physical mobility system, especially to organise affordable public transport.

DG: The challenges faced by rural Italy, especially mountain areas, are the long distance from urban areas, disconnection between neighbouring towns, reduced public services due to maintenance costs, so people are forced to have a car. However, not all residents are able to drive or afford a car. How can rural mobility be organised between villages (distance between 10 and 20km) so that people can achieve communication among villages?

WH: Telecommunications are becoming less of an issue, but physical mobility is still a problem in remote areas. I think that part of your question can be phrased differently. People are not per se forced to have a car, but they might indeed

be forced to use one. That's a big difference. Cars are not very adapted to our current ideal of urban contexts, but we must admit they still excel in low-populated areas for current lack of better solutions. The problems they cause in an urban environment are less pungent on the countryside: traffic jams and parking are not really an issue, and their polluting factor can partially be mitigated by using renewable energy resources that are plentiful on the countryside. In public transport, the most expensive component is usually the driver. For remote areas characterised by long distances and very low ridership, the game might not be worth the candle. It's the classic chicken vs egg problem: there should be enough demand to justify public transport, but there should be enough public transport to have a useful service that increases demand. It's never black or white though: local bus lines making losses still create jobs in areas that need them, and thus are a tool against rural poverty. Probably the real solutions will come from the fact that boundaries previously associated with public and private transport are increasingly fading. Private transport is no longer per definition individual and public transport is no longer per definition collective. Therein also lies a big opportunity for further diversification: we're

heading to a myriad of coexisting solutions that each fulfill a specific role. All types of vehicles can be shared in local communities. They can be provided by an operator, but also be shared peer-to-peer. Digital platforms can lower the thresholds, even between individuals, and take care of acquiring vehicles, payments, assistance, legal aspects, insurance...

DG: Digitalisation and automatisisation are big topics also in the context of mobility, but they seem very far from the rural world. How can we react now? How can we also use the already existing infrastructure?

WH: In a more remote future, autonomous vehicles are feasible. Apart from eliminating the cost of a driver, and thus making public transport cheaper, its advantage would also be that the frequency of a service can be altered, to the point that vehicles can be used on demand. This comes in useful for the elderly, but statistics show that an increasing part of younger people are less willing to obtain a driver's license. But let it be clear: technologically we're still far away from that on public roads in mixed traffic. About a decade ago, when a global wave of interest in autonomous cars peaked, we researched possibilities to bypass the shortcomings of such

technology, while already making use of its benefits. The solution is in reducing complexity. Busy roads with mixed traffic still require too much computing power of the advanced algorithms to process all data. That can be mitigated by moving much slower, like we've seen in pedestrian areas, with vehicles not going much faster than a walking pace, or with autonomous parking, where a car drives the last couple of meters by itself. It also can be mitigated by creating a less complex environment. The highway is such an example, and it's not a coincidence that the most advanced available cars on the market today are already capable of driving autonomously there. Another example of a less complex environment are railways. Our studio's Railpod project expresses the possibilities of that line of thought. The main idea is to tap into the negative spiral of high operational costs, low demand, decrease in frequency, leading to discontinuing railroad service in rural Italy. But the tracks and stations that once embodied the railway system are still there. Reusing that infrastructure, we designed little autonomous electric trains that are very cheap to operate. They can transport people as well as goods. The result is an economically feasible service, even in rural areas. The stations are often in a

prime location in the village, and by generating a new flow and meaning for them, they would regain their lost social centrality, with the possibility to expand to different activities. The interesting thing we found out only afterwards is that there is as much an interest from people going from city to countryside using this type of mobility as vice versa, leading to more visitors and life in rural areas, and generating more income from tourism.

DG: There is an example from Cairano, a small village with 300 citizens in the Province of Avellino in Campania, where a small truck once a week comes into the village and supplies the residents with fresh fruits and vegetables. Can this actually serve as an example for us to think about mobile infrastructure? Which services can become mobile, and what are the advantages and disadvantages of such a system?

WH: This goes back to some general principles at the heart of why mobility even exists. We do not live in a vacuum and need essentials to survive. We're happy to move ourselves to obtain some things but expect other things to come to us. Covid was a huge boost in pushing the boundaries for what used to be socially

acceptable in terms of delivery. E-commerce and delivery services went through the roof. While we saw some decrease afterwards, the general acceptance is here to stay. When talking about mobile infrastructures we should keep in mind that stuff doesn't move by itself: it consumes energy. It is very important to keep this in mind too, and not only design solutions from a user's perspective. In essence, good solutions keep a balance between matter and meaning. Sometimes it's better to industrialize an activity or transport, because doing so will reduce our carbon footprint. In your example, it probably makes more sense for a little van to come to a village once a week than every citizen having to drive to the distant supermarket.

DG: What are the crucial tools for organising mobility services?

WH: When thinking strictly about mobility services with the scope to move people around, Jarrett Walker is quite interesting. In his book "Human Transit", he writes about principles to keep in mind when organising human transit. He lists seven crucial elements of a useful mobility service. In a nutshell, a useful service takes me where I want to go and does that when I want to go there. It should be a good means use of

my money as well as my time: that means it's either a short travel time, or the travel time is useful to me. Furthermore, it should respect me, it should be a service I can trust and rely on, and it should give me the freedom to change my plans. This last one means it's there whenever and wherever I need it, but also that I can figure out how the system works and can remember it. These things reflect human nature but then need to be translated into several technical aspects of transport, such as stops and stations, connectivity, frequency, speed, reliability, ticket prices, and so on.

When thinking about other types of mobility services, of course other parameters might be at play. While not being the only important factor to keep in mind, the human experience for sure has a value to play in every type of service, and thus is a good starting point.

DG: Good transport connections also depend on large corporations and the type of business. In 2021, 7.3 million Italians will work from home, which also affects the different organisation of mobility. If the future of work potentially focuses more on remote work, how can this be seen as an opportunity for rural areas? However, this type of change also requires a change in mobility services because people maybe will

want to travel more in their free time.

WH: Broadband Internet for sure could be one of the enablers for telework in rural areas. Of course, that doesn't count for all professions. Many jobs, especially the ones requiring little education, still require physical activity. Having access to the Internet will not change that.

I'm not sure how that relates to the use of free time and traveling. Maybe people with lower incomes tend to travel less, and less far. We all heard stories from a century ago about farmers whose entire lives were lived within a single village. They never left, not even a day. I'm not sure how that would translate to today, probably those mindsets belong to a begone past. The clearly expressed goal of providing Internet in villages is to attract high profiles with high incomes that they can spend locally. Probably those people also are more mobile in their free time, yes.

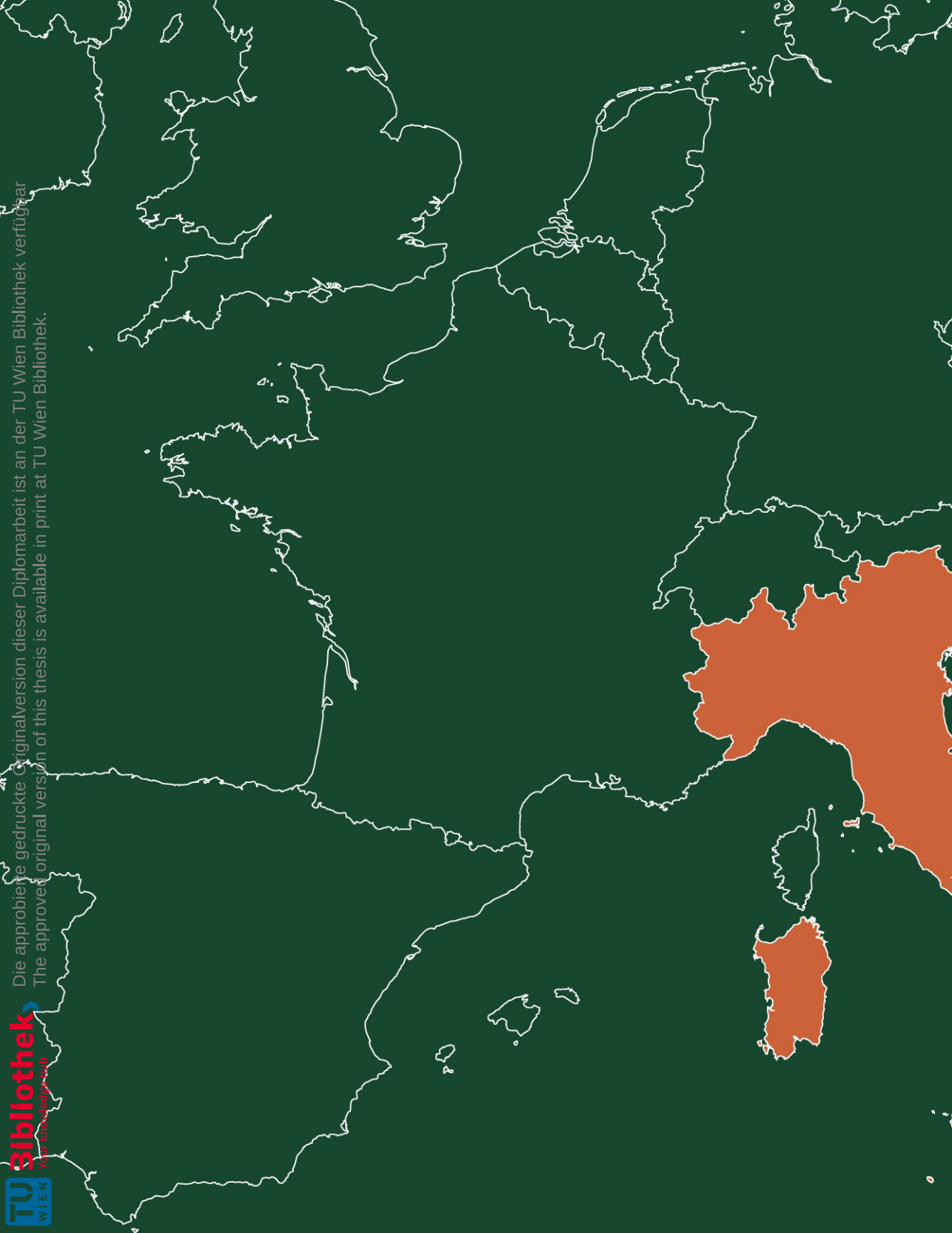
DG: Good connections sometimes depend a lot on tourism in Italy. The most attractive places, especially near the coast, get faster access to mobility services. But on the other hand, we also have attractive mobility, which can become a sightseeing thing, like a cable car in Italy. What do people find attractive about mobility? Is it important to people?

WH: The attractiveness of the solution is very important; even if it is not enjoyable or beautiful, people will not use it. You would be surprised at how many people buy a specific car not because it makes sense on paper, but simply because they think it's beautiful. That's an important lesson to keep in mind when trying to provoke a modal shift and convince people to leave their cars behind in favour of different mobility solutions. If you want to change the behaviour of people, if you want to make them use your solution, the first step is to seduce them. Car designers know this very well and are masters of that skill. Unfortunately, it's less common for designers of public transport to focus on that. They tend to lose themselves in numbers and calculations. Luckily, it's slowly changing, and we're also playing an active role in that. The transdisciplinary mobility design master programme that I coordinate at the European Design Institute is focusing also on these aspects. Slowly, we're creating a new generation of designers that will be capable of coming up with incredible mobility solutions from which we'll all benefit as a society.

Turin, 2022

WHY ITALY?

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Fig.6 European context

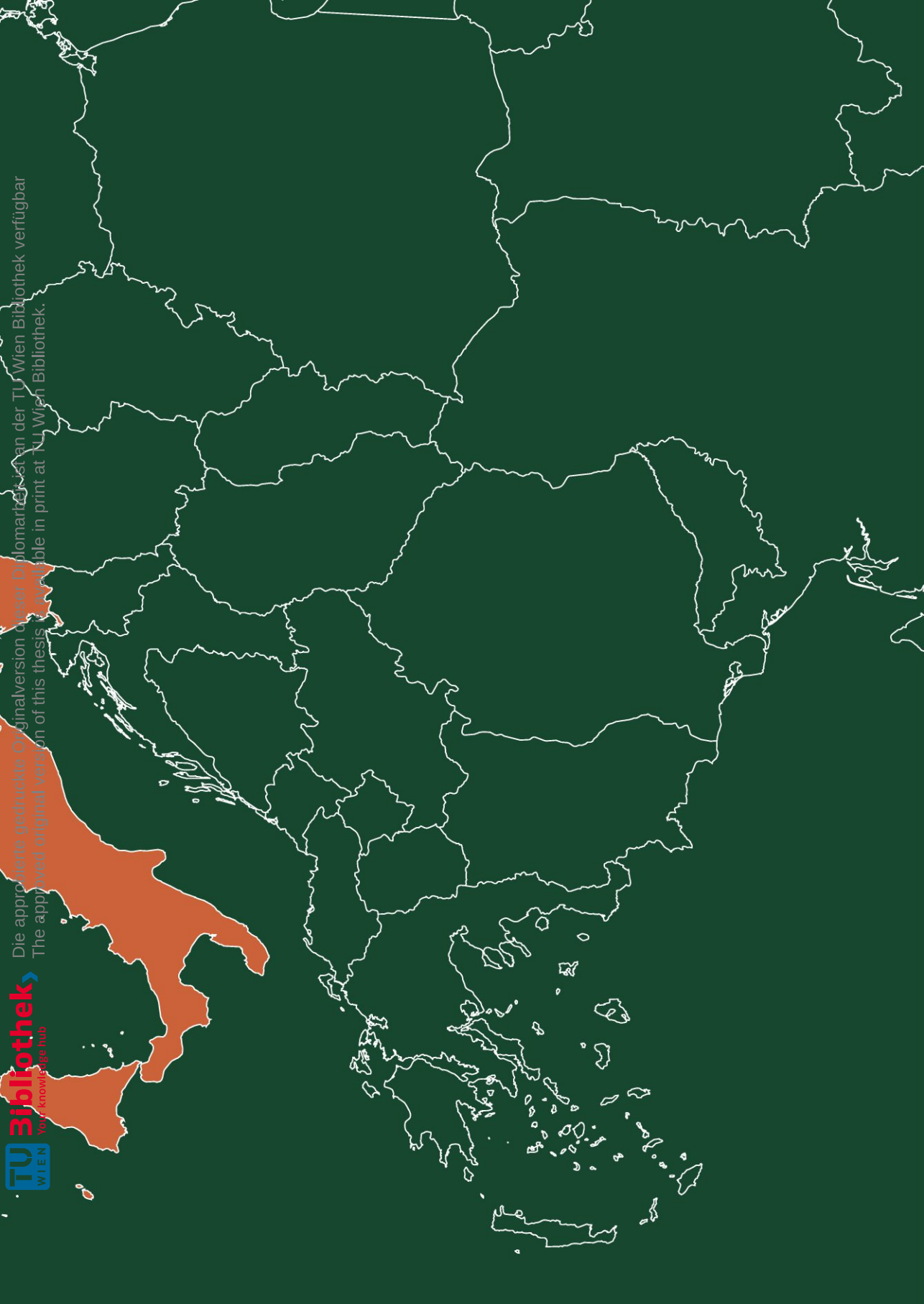




Fig.7 Satellite imagery of Italy

41.6% HILLS

35.2% MOUNTAINS

23.2% PLAIN¹

5 MACROREGIONS

20 REGIONS

83 PROVINCES

14 METROPOLITAN CITIES

7914 MUNICIPALITIES (COMUNI)²

¹ Eurydice, 2023

² Kössler and Morandell, 2021

Status quo

"Italy's population is currently decreasing at a rate of 0.15%, making it the fastest shrinking country in the world."³

Rural Italy possesses cultural heritage, with its uniqueness and diversification of the landscape. Italy has nearly 20,000 ghost towns that are totally or partly abandoned, the locals having fled due to mix of factors.⁴ Harsh living conditions, seismic territory, unemployment, lack of education, led to massive emigration flows triggered by the appeal of a better life in larger cities have all contributed to the abandoned villages. Italy has 7,914 municipalities, of which 5,500 are villages with a fewer number than 5,000 inhabitants.⁵

³ World Population Prospects, 2022

⁴ Marchetti, 2015

⁵ Hughes, 2021

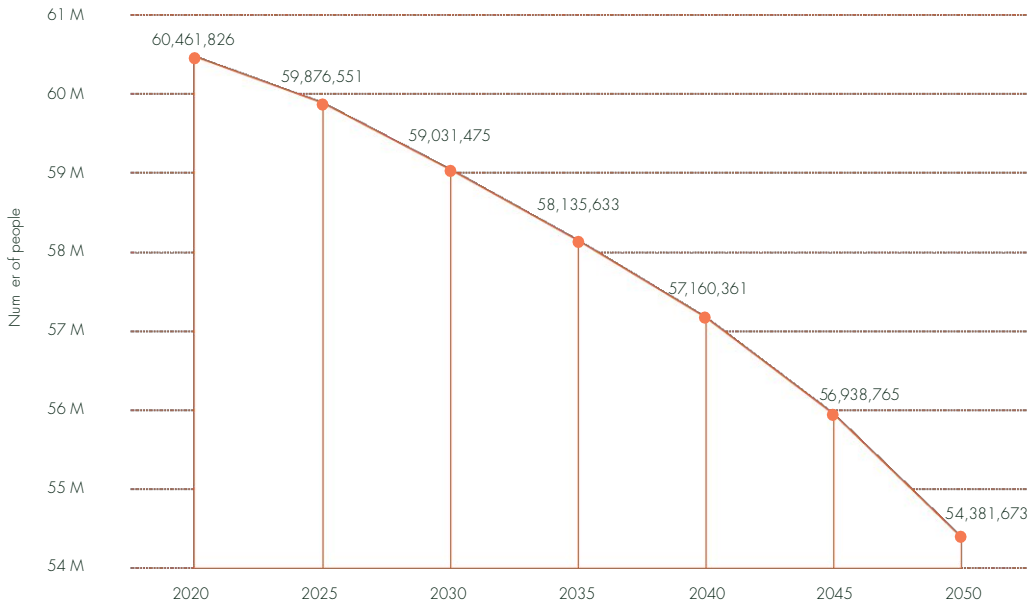


Fig.8 Rapid population decline

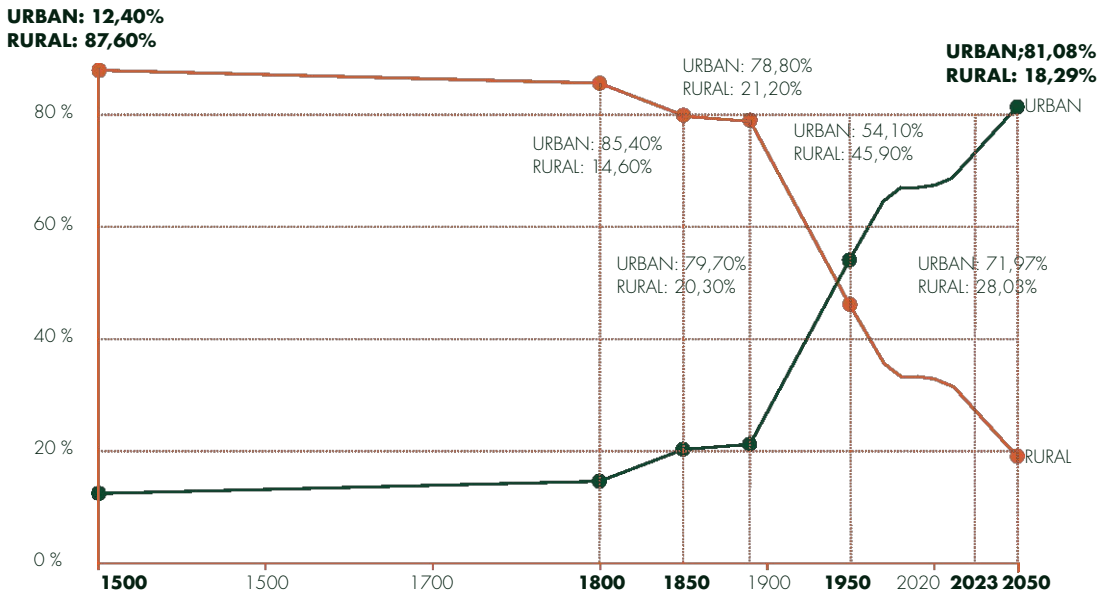


Fig.9 Urban-rural population ratio

In the future we will witness the drop in the Italian population, while the number of elderly will simultaneously increase and families will have a significantly fewer number of members.⁶



Fig.10 Young and elderly in ration 1 to 3

Although there will be a growing number of households from 25.7 in 2020 to 26.6 million in 2040 the number of members per household will decrease.⁷

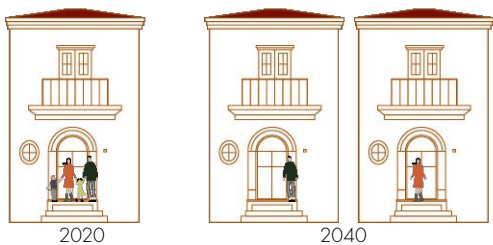


Fig.11 The number of members per household

⁶ Istat, 2021
⁷ Ibid.
⁸ Ibid.



Fig.12 Decline in the working-age population

One in four families will also have a family in 2040, and more than one in five will remain without children. This will be followed by the rise of people living alone too, from 8.6 million in 2020 to 10.3 million in 2040. A sharp decline in the working age population will also be recorded: individuals between the age of 15 and 64 will drop from 63.8% to 53.3% in 2040.⁸

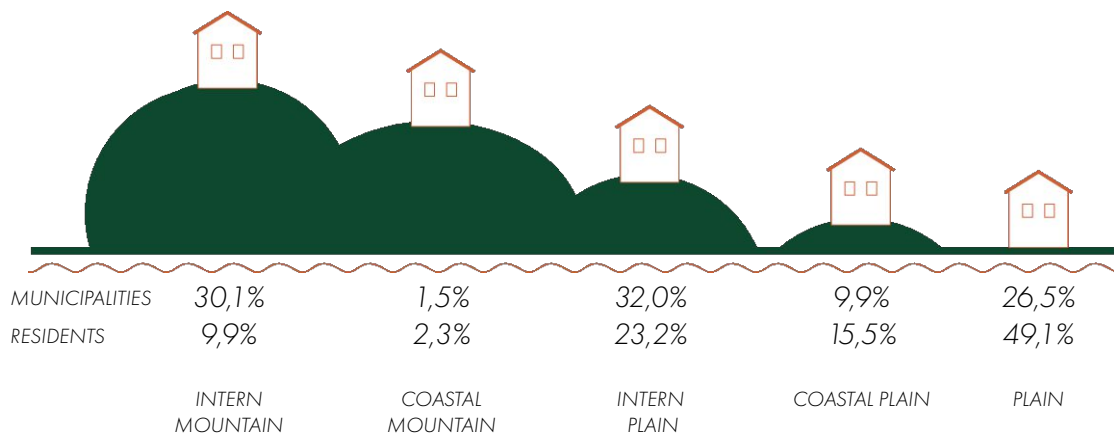


Fig.13 The demographic distribution of the mountain territories

Inner Areas

The inner Italy or other Italy or remote Italy, is the rural part of the country that is facing issues including migrations to the urban areas or out of country, declining population or low population density, aging, unemployment and lack of business and their creation, lack of access to education, lack of public services, long travel distance to service centres, and digital illiteracy. Service centres include secondary schools, specialist hospitals or railway stations. What puts these regions in the background is their distance from these service centres. It takes between 40 and 75 minutes, sometimes more, to reach them, unlike regions with good systems in Italy, whose distance is 20 minutes. The Apennines stretch through the middle of the Italian peninsula causing tectonic activities of high seismic risk. This led to severe catastrophes, where in addition to a large number of victims, people's houses collapsed and they had to find another place to live.

This all resulted in the structural changes in economy and demography. A number of questions is raised, including rural and urban, migration and its consequences, territory and landscape, periphery and centre, shrinking and transformation, new identities of towns, micro economy, cohesion of local and new relations. While each village possesses certain resources, the common resource is the beauty of the landscape, the good air quality, the isolation of urban sprawl, the social capital, and the spacious connections in old towns. However, there is no perfect and quick solution to the problem of shrinking villages. Observing the rural area as a canvas for experimentation, as Rem Koolhaas in his book *Countryside, Report* (2020) emphasises is a big process, and it raises questions about freedom, how and where we want to live.



Fig.14 View over the Apennines

"Inner Areas" are fragile territories, far away from main centres of supply of essential services and too often abandoned to themselves. They stretch over 60% of the national surface, and host 52% of Italian municipalities and 22% of its population."

Agenzia per la Coesione Territoriale, 2021

Borgo, paese, villaggio

In Italian refers to small size rural settlement.⁹

Hilltop village

Settlements that were built upon hills for defensive purposes, surrounded by thick defensive walls, steep embankments, or cliffs which provided natural defences for their earliest inhabitants.¹⁰

Remote areas, Inner Areas or Other Italy

An isolated rural area from urban centres, often in mountainous areas affected by depopulation.

Questione meridionale

Southern question In Italy refers to a series of problems that have existed in this part of the country since 1861 or the Italian Unification, which are related to the social-economical underdevelopment compared to the rest of the country.¹¹

⁹ Smart Ostana 2020 , p.310

¹⁰ Wikimedia Foundation, 2022

¹¹ Cabrone, 2021, p.533

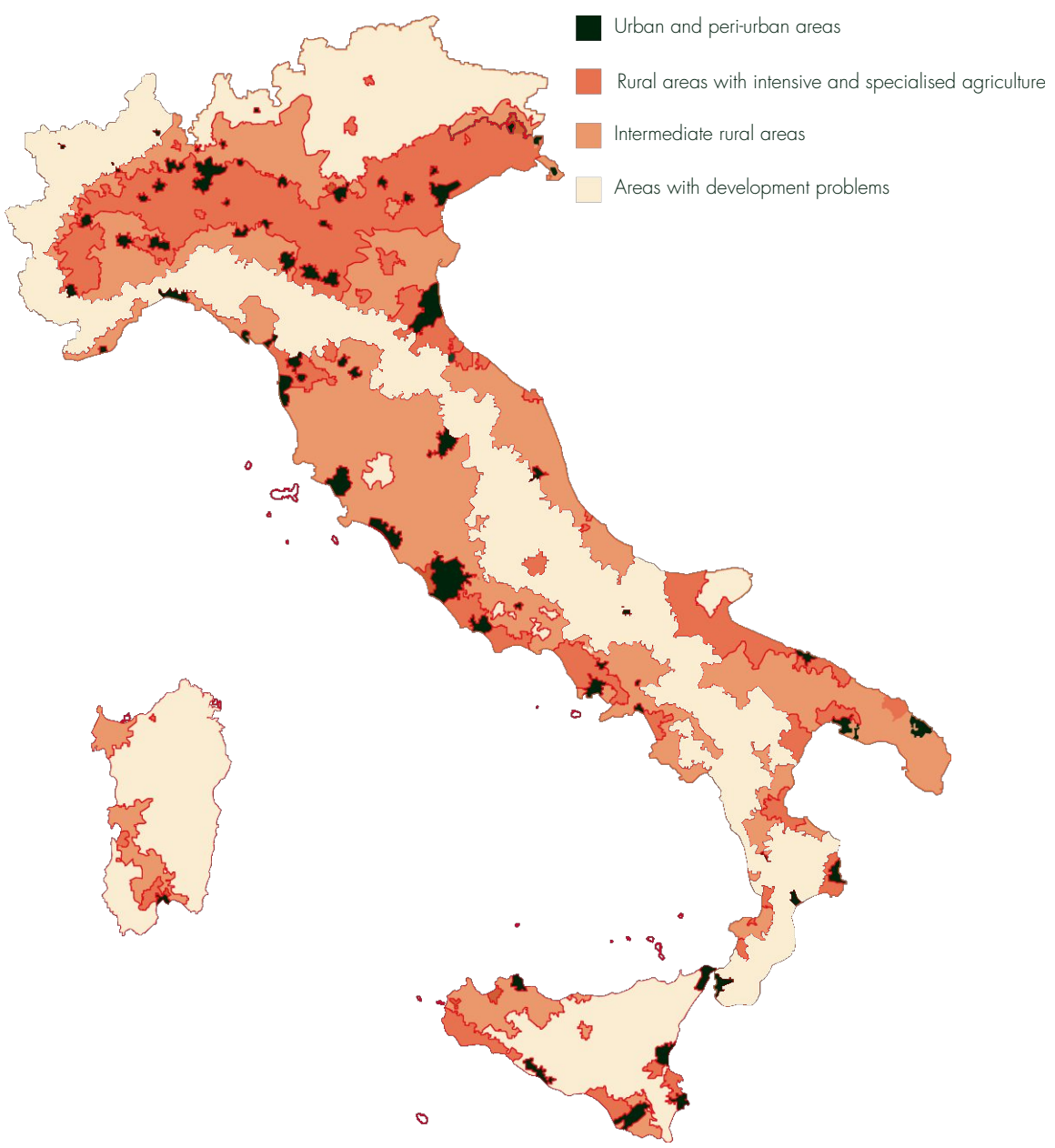


Fig.15 Calitri, Campania



Fig.16 Zungoli, Campania

Fig.17 Rural areas



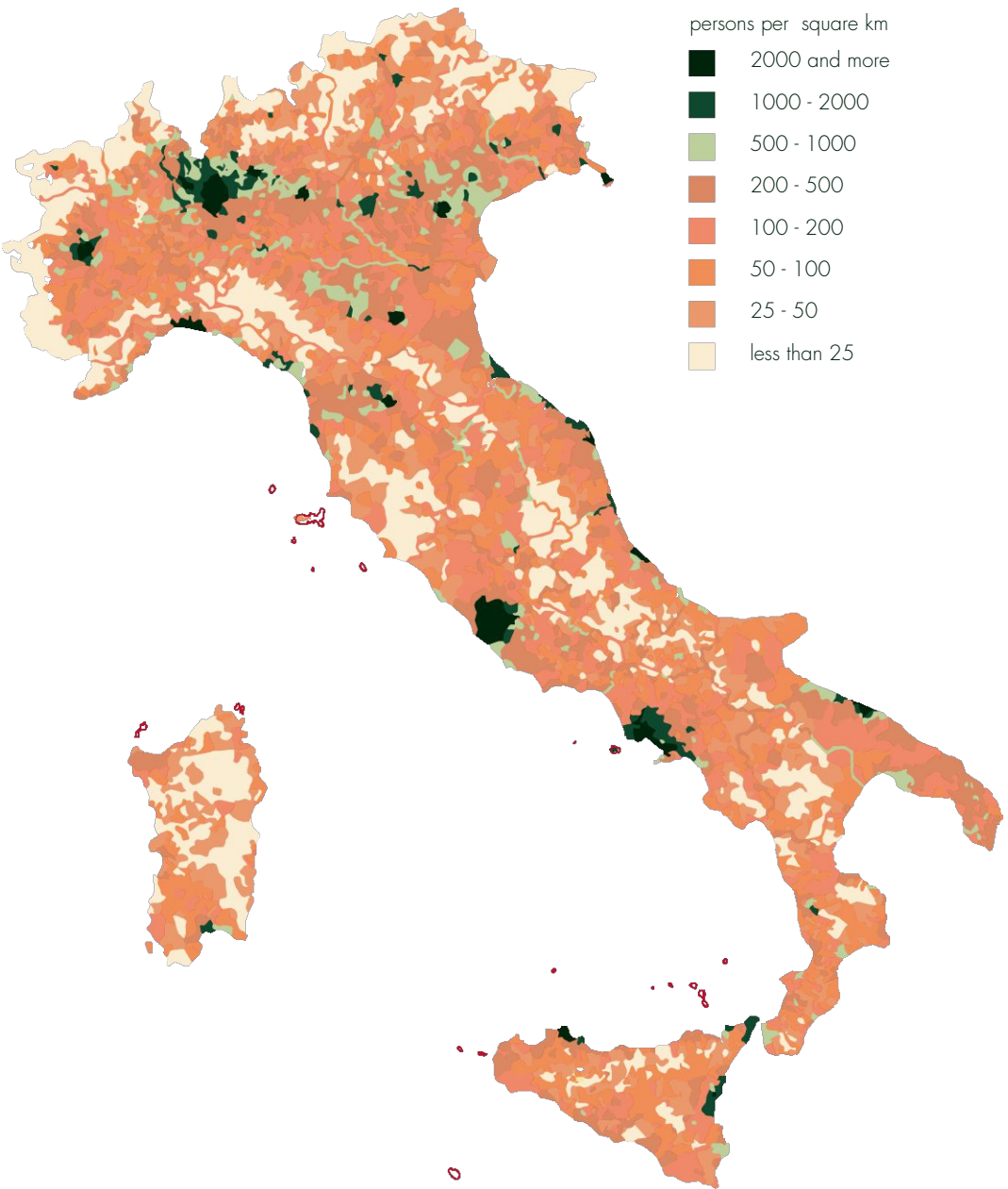


Fig.18 Population density

Fig.19 Landscape



Fig.20 Climate zones

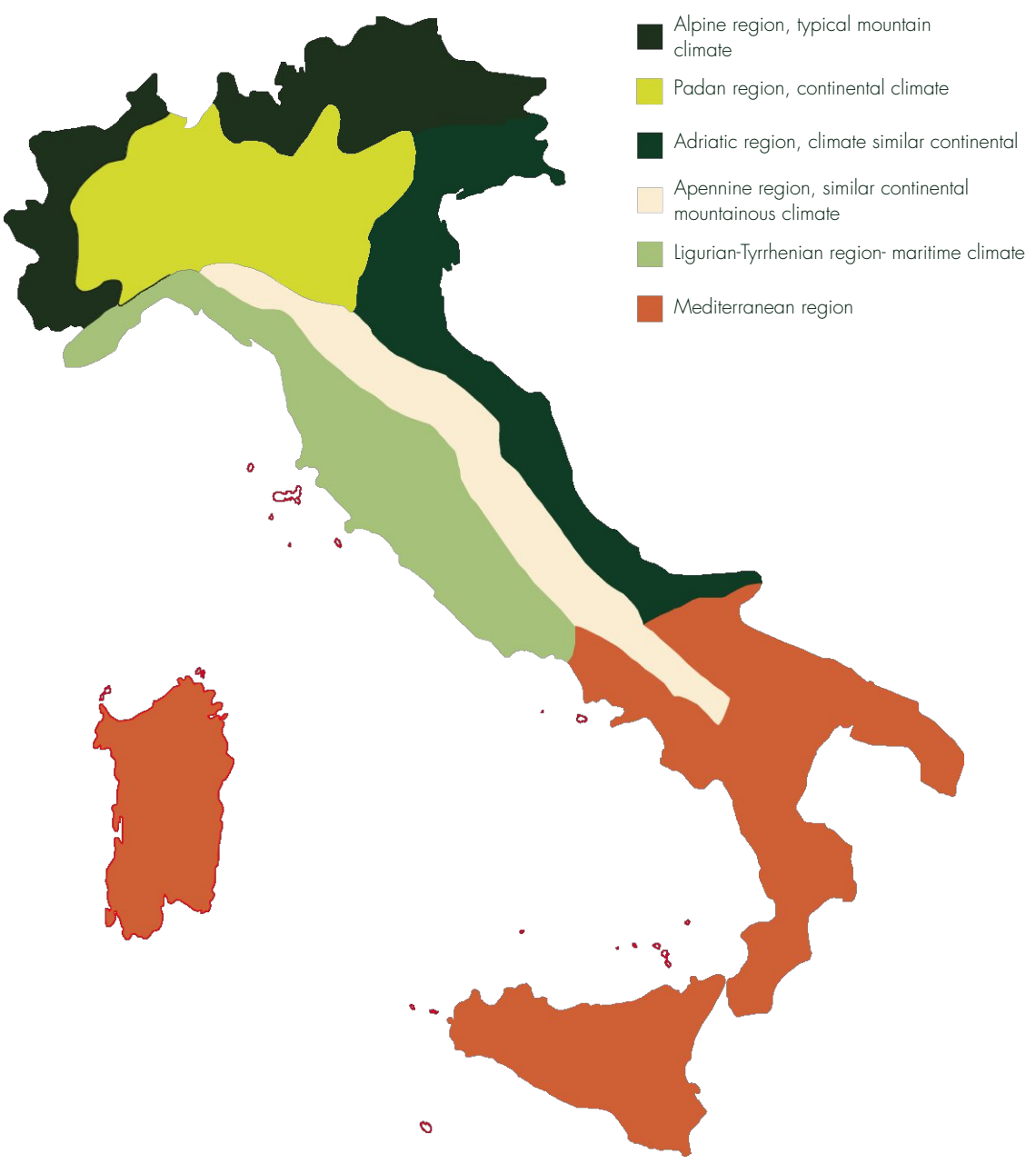




Fig.21 Train connections



Fig.22 Ghost villages

*“La mia terra,
la mia terra muore,
ma nessuno sente questo grido,
nessuno ha pietà per la mia terra.”*

Pasquale Stiso



Fig.23 Cairano, Campania



Fig.24 Cairano, Campania

MIGRATION FLOWS

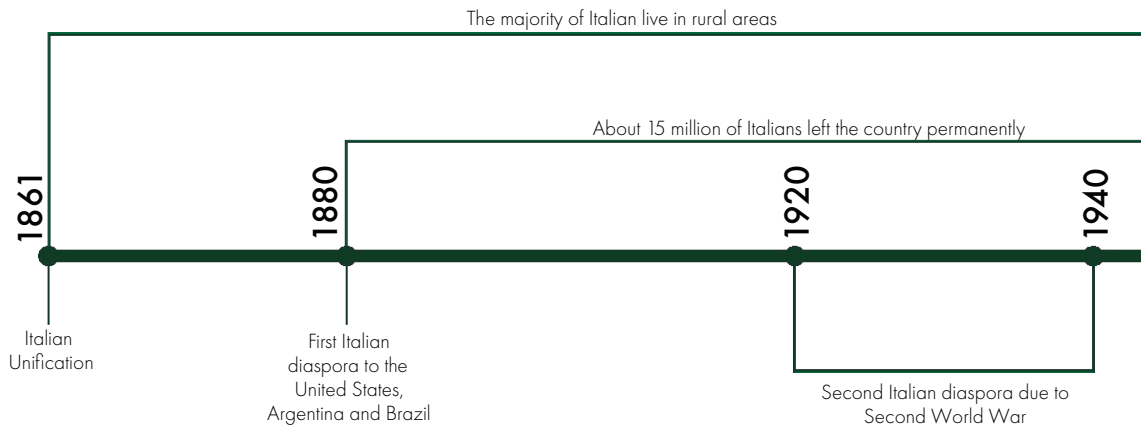
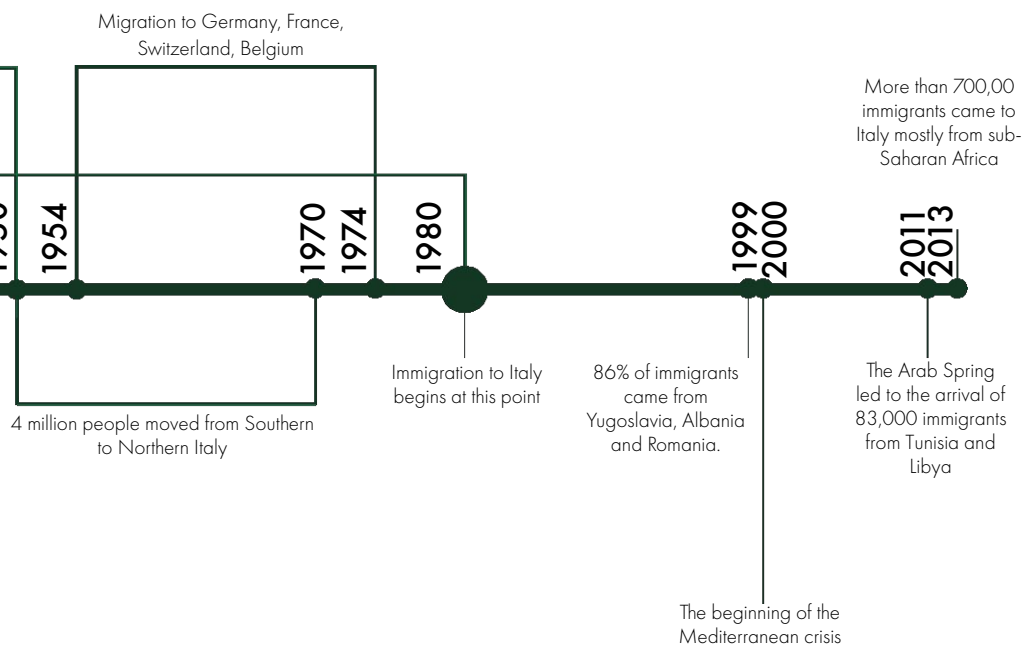


Fig.25 Emigration and Immigration timeline



Emigration of Italians

Leaving one's habitat in search for better life conditions is something that characterises most species, including ours. Searching for better economic possibilities has resulted in migration shifts in the whole world and Italy was not an exception to it. Italian emigration can be seen in three periods. The first, after Italian Unification, precisely between 1876-1914 due to the difficulties in the economic development during which 14 million people emigrated; the second period between 1915-1945 and the third one "renewed migration" 1946-1976. During the course of one century, 52% of Italians migrated to Europe, 44% to America (90% of which went to the USA), 2% to Africa and 1,5% per to Australia.¹² The first migration, between 1876 and 1914 can be described as the beginning of the chained migration towards the cities the consequences of which can still be

seen in numbers. One of the reasons is the start of the economic development of Italy, especially the northern part at the end of the 19th century. A triangle of sudden industrial growth Genoa-Milan-Turin was formed and the rural population begins to move to the cities.

"Gaetano Salvemini (1963) identified the emigration in the early 1900s as an integral component of la questione meridionale (the southern question)."

Cohen, 1995, p.119

While the northern part of the Italy economically flourished, the South Italy did not develop in the same manner. The issue of the south is reflected in the different economic and cultural progress from the rest of the country which resulted in a very high unemployment rate.

"The agriculture of the south was dependent on one or two crops and was dominated by large landowners who tolerated the existence of small marginal peasant properties. Small

¹² Cohen, 1995, p.114

¹³ Zimmermann, 2005, p.304

landowners seeking out a marginal existence provided a reserve labour force for the large estates, keeping wages depressed. Meanwhile industrial activity remained at an artisanal level subordinate to agriculture. In sum, a dominant class of landowners with aristocratic pretensions defended its privileged position, investing its capital in land or government securities rather than agricultural improvements or industry. Southern agriculture remained wedded to archaic forms of land tenure, crops and techniques, resulting in low productivity and exploitation of the peasantry. In this backwardness lay the root cause of southern poverty and mass emigration."

Cohen, 1995, p.119

Since large landowners enjoyed much better benefits from the state and grew economically, small landowners left the south out of desperation because they weren't able to deal with these hardships. Meanwhile, the police

and state suppressed many rebellions in the south. Whether it was poverty or suppression of uprisings that led to people moving, it is impossible to determine exactly which misery prompted them to do so. During the first migration there was an average of 3.4 million emigrants per decade.¹³

The boom of industry was not only accompanied by a large influx of people from countryside to the cities, from south to the northwest, but also from mountainous areas to the lower ones, followed by economic progress.

"These economic changes also produced a curious phenomenon, especially in the district around Biella in Piedmont, in which emigration and immigration occurred simultaneously as immigrants from yet more marginal zones came in to take the places of those who were departing."

Ramella, 1991, cited in Cohen, 1995, p. 119

The same problem continued in the second half of the 20th century. The issue of the south and the economic development of the 60s and 70s in Italy are happening in parallel. A rash industrial port development of the county attracted massive young population, especially those from the south, to leave the rural hill towns and move to the urban areas.

"In 1967, per capita income in the north was twice as high as in the south. By the 1970s, Milan, Turin and other cities had entire districts populated by the meridionali (southerners), living under the most adverse conditions, doing jobs northerners disdained and subject to racial prejudice. The southerners became internal emigrants in their own country."

Cohen, 1995, p.121

Until the 1970s, about 26 million Italians emigrated, which is the highest registered number of emigrants of any country in history.

Zimmermann (2005) quoted that 3/4 Italian emigrants were male, 80% working age between 15 and 45 years, 35% agricultural workers, 40% common labourers, and 25% artisans. He concludes that overseas and

European migrations were "temporary movements of rural males to industrial jobs". Most Italian who emigrated from the North Italy went to European countries, while those from the South of Italy were more attracted to the overseas migration.

“Migration is a one way trip. There is no ‘home’ to go back to. ”

Hall, 1998

Immigration to Italy

Italy's migration flows also underwent significant changes in the 1970s. There was a decrease in Italians leaving their country, but Eastern European immigrants were coming towards Italy. Italian immigrants were attracted to the country in the 1970s after the northern part of the country archived an economic boom. While the migrations of Italians from the 70's onwards were low on average, never reaching 7%, by the end of the 90's situation changed drastically. Until that point most immigrants were coming from Eastern European countries such as Albania, former Yugoslavia, Romania. However the legalisation procedures have resulted in far bigger numbers of immigrants from Asian and African backgrounds, resulting in 86% of the total number of immigrants.

5.2 million
Foreigners in 2022 in Italy¹⁴

552,187
Asylum applications submitted in Italy from
2013-2020¹⁵

485,075
Accepted asylum applications submitted in
Italy 2012-2020¹⁶

77,480
Rejected asylum applications in Italy
From 2012-2020¹⁷

¹⁴ Statista, 2023, Foreign population living in Italy

¹⁵ Statista, 2023, Refugee in Italy, p.10

¹⁶ Ibid. p.11

¹⁷ Ibid. p.12

"The number of foreign residents increased from 143,838 in 1970 to about 300,000 in 1980, and by the mid 1980s it had reached half a million (1985). In the 1990s, the foreign population increased further and workers were most concentrated."

Zimmerman, 2005, p.316

What kind of job do immigrants have?

As a result of the low level of education of immigrants, as well as the huge differences in the Italian education system compared to the country from which they come, they occupied mostly jobs that are based on manual labour.

During the 1990s, the northeast area is the one

which increased its inflows most, especially for Eastern European immigrants, but also for Africans. The north-east is more appealing in many aspects. First, there is an excess demand of labour. The industrial and service structure is dominated by small firms in which labour legislation is less strict, and it allows an employment relationship which is more flexible and more favourable to the immigrants, who care less for employment stability and higher wages. This resulted not only in new influx of immigrants in the major cities, but as well as migration of Italians from the undeveloped, isolated villages. While the north centres had around 59.8% of immigrants, central area had around 22.3% and the south had marginal 11.2%.¹⁸ Here the consequence of redistributing of countries wealth into several centres shows, besides immigration of foreign people, a migration of local dwellers to bigger cities. Immigration in the south gained its importance with the beginning of Arab spring.

¹⁸ Zimmermann, 2005, p.316-318

Arrivals by sea

A long coastline in the Mediterranean Sea and its geographic location have made Italy an attractive and popular country or transit point for migrants across the sea, especially from North Africa and Middle East. The Arab Spring began in Tunisia in 2010 with the revolutionary idea of abolishing the government regime, establishing democracy, human rights, and economic freedom. The changes affecting the north of Africa also affected the frequency and mass of migration flows to the countries of the European Union. According to the Statista in the period between 2014 and 2021, 864,799 immigrants arrived by sea to Italy. Sea arrivals originate mainly from Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2016 21 % of all arrivals originated from Nigeria, followed by Eritrea (11%), Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and The Gambia (each accounting for 7% of the total). Libya remains the primary departure country for sea arrivals to Italy.

864,799

Number of immigrants who arrived by sea
In Italy from 2014 to 2021¹⁹

730

Number of smugglers arrested in relation
to migrants arrivals between 2017 and
2021²⁰

25,716

Number of recorded deaths of migrants
in the Mediterranean Sea from 2014 to
2021²¹

¹⁹ Statista, 2023, Migration routes, p.13

²⁰ Ibid. p.14

²¹ Ibid. p.25



Fig.26 Migrants arriving at Lampedusa in 2007



Fig.27 Migrants on the boat in 2015

Lampedusa

Lampedusa is the island, which is located in the Mediterranean Sea, to the south of Sicily and north of Tunisia, it has become known as the first port of entry for migrants into Europe. Due to the huge influx of people many of them entered illegally. The infrastructure capacity in Lampedusa was inadequate to accommodate the large number of people who arrived there.

Illegal immigrants

The reasons for irregular stay in the country are different - from those who have arrived irregularly, those whose visa has expired, individuals who arrived regularly but then became irregular or who have been refused asylum, including others who have sought international protection and whose claims have been dismissed. Economic situation in European countries is another cause of immigration. Human smuggling across the sea was a consequence of very weak border controls at the country's entrance. Migrants' integration into society was also impacted by the changing and unstable political scene.

The influx of immigrants caused political disagreements between the right and the left in the 1990s. Although Italy introduced the polices since 1980s, they were not clear enough, giving not enough opportunities in terms of education and employment, and basic public services, because they were also not same for all the regions and resulted in the social and economic exclusion of the immigrants. A bad economic situation or war force migrants to leave their home country, and they don't have the opportunity to return, so they are forced to do jobs that unfortunately involve labour exploitation, marginalisation, or illegal status. As a result of Italy's inability to handle such an influx of people, reception centres struggled to provide services, laws weren't clear and control measures at the border failed, resulting in illegal immigration. Majority of them came from Eastern Europe and Northern Africa (Morocco, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Eritrea). From 1986 till 2020 Italy introduced five immigration policies but the problem with Italian government is that they see an immigrant as a foreigner, not as a legal person, and they rely on charity organisations to handle the problem.

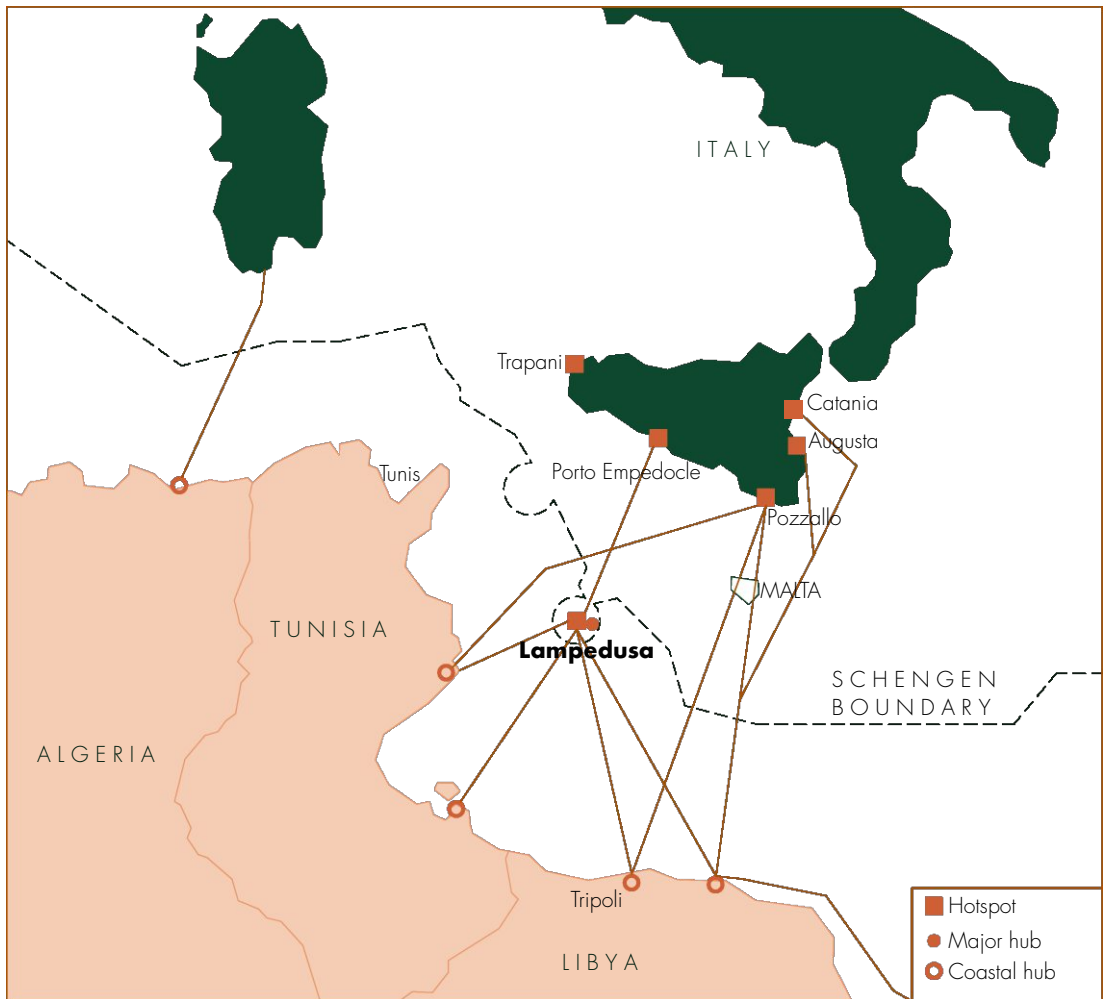


Fig.28 Migration routes

Immigration polices

It took 10 years for the first law to be enacted after immigrants arrived in Italy. As a result of the Immigration Law 1998 or Law 943, the legal conditions for foreign workers were regulated, granting amnesty or regulating the illegal status of migrants into a legal one. Two years later, in 1990, the Martelli Law defined and controlled immigration. They established an administration for refusal, and different visa types included not just work visas but also study visas, medical visas, or family visas. Turco-Napolitan law separates irregular migration from regular migration. When people arrive in the country, they are accommodated in a temporary residence centre. Bossi-Fini introduced even stricter measures in 2002, increased penalties, and limited family reunification. Because immigrants were considered a threat under the Pacchetto Sicurezza laws, immigration controls were strengthened, deportation was easier, and immigrants were denied access to public services. Illegal immigration has become a crime since then. It created new centres for irregular migrants who are waiting to return to their countries as a result of the Minniti-Orlando

law. As each successive law was passed, the measures became more and more rigorous, but a policy based on collective support and humanity is still lacking. Italy still views immigration as a permanent emergency rather than part of its national system.²²

System of Protection

The Sprar-Protection System for Asylum seekers and Refugees is responsible for the process of social and economic integration of asylum seekers and refugees, which includes finding employment, permanent housing, social integration, access to public services, and all-inclusive approaches to gain independence in the new country. The regulation of immigration arrivals remains a complex issue due to difficulties with the Italian bureaucracy and problems with immigration entries. According to the Statista, Italians' opinions about migrants are different, around 50% of the population think that are the risk for the economy and another half think that they could be a resource for Italy.²³ In the light of the entire migration history of Italians, it can be clearly noticed that Italians do not provide solidarity support to newcomers to the country, although they have been in the same economic and social situation for 115 years.

²² Immigration Policies in Italy, n.d.

²³ Statista, 2023, Contrasting opinions and distorted perceptions

250,940

People illegally from third country nationals
in Italy from
2012-2020²⁴

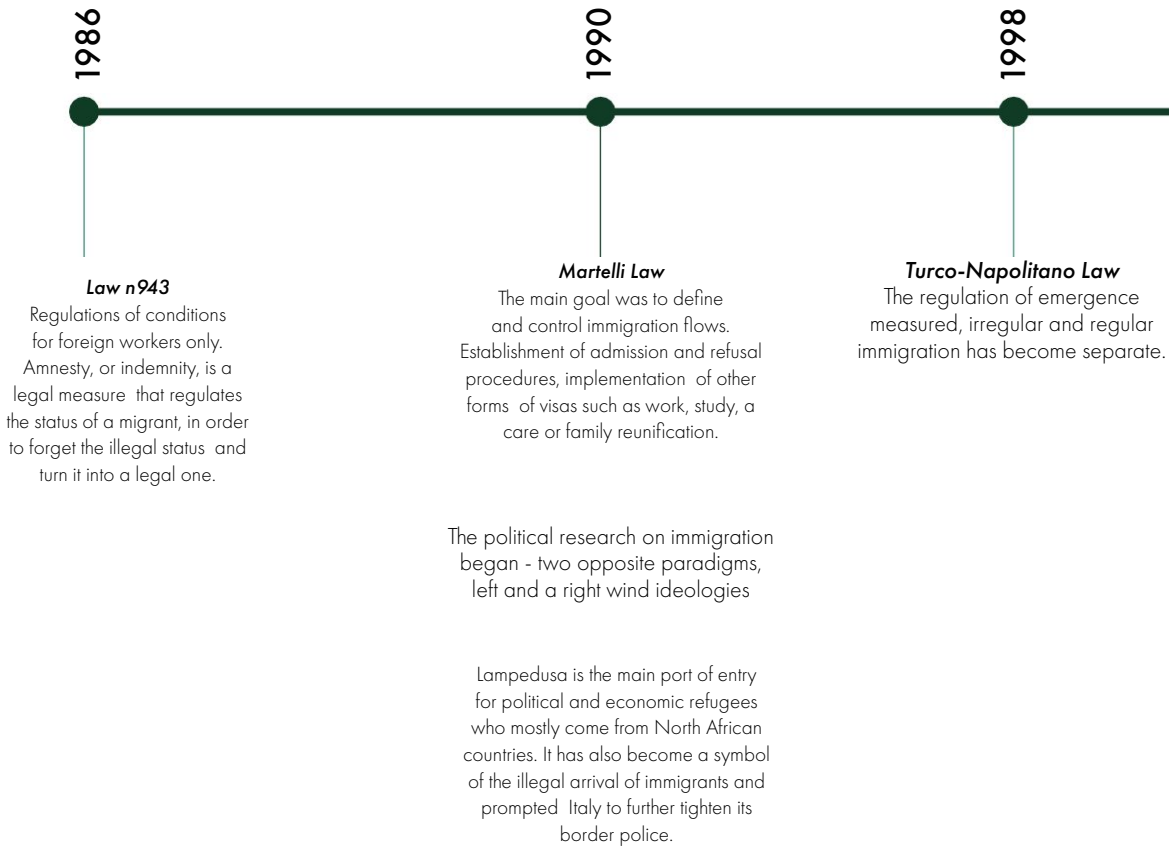
31,230

People illegally from third country nationals
enforced to leave Italy from
2014-2020²⁵

²⁴ Statista, 2023, Migration routes, p.17

²⁵ Ibid. p.18

Fig.29 Immigration policies



2002

2009

2017

2023

Pacchetto Sicurezza Laq

Focused on security and public order issues, with the aim to show how the presence of immigrants threatened the daily life of Italian citizens. The CPT was transformed into the CIE (Center for Identification and Expulsion. Illegal immigration becomes a crime.

Minniti-Orlando Law

Streamlined procedures for the expulsion or irregular migrant through the creation of a new network of centers/organizations for these dedicated Permanent Repatriation Centre (Cprs) to hold irregular migrants waiting to be returned to their county of origin

People have been coming there for more than twenty years, but none of the Italian governments managed it with humanity, pragmatism, and respect for refugees' s rights. As a result of the characteristics of the Italian migration policy, it is evident that there is no political intention to address migration as a part of the national system, rather than as a permanent emergency.

Bossi-Fini Law

The strictest immigration measures. Immigration is not considered an international policy or geopolitical issue, but a problem of public order. The law introduced the possibility of rejecting boats that were still in the extraterritorial sea.

SPRAR

The protection system of asylum seeker and refugees was created

Labor exploitation and mafia links

Southern Italy is bordered by the Ionian Sea in the south, Adriatic Sea in the east and Tyrrhenian Sea in the west. This micro region includes the regions of Basilicata, Campania, Calabria, Apulia, Molise, as well the islands of Sicily and Sardinia, which is also known as Italia Meridionale or Mezzogiorno. South Italy is associated with poverty, illiteracy, migration, illegal work and crime for years. Every region in the south of Italy is under a strong influence of different criminal clans. Migrant flows that were irregular and uncontrolled led to illegal residence, which led to illegal employment. Many migrants working in the agricultural sector are exploited at work due to the fact that they are unable to return to their home countries. The Italian government remains blind and doesn't address the issue of workplace exploitation and worker protection for migrants.

²⁶ Morcellini and others(2009), as cited in Amnesty international, 2012, p.17

“

“Abuses by gang-masters illegally employing workers in exploitative working conditions, a phenomenon known as caporalato and sometimes linked to mafia-type criminal organisations, are particularly widespread not only in agriculture, but also in the construction sector.”

Amnesty international 2017, p.23

The public debate on immigration in Italy has been characterised by stigmatisation and xenophobia, with the government linking immigration control to public security, while immigrants have been exploited in agricultural sector.²⁶ The problem of migrant work in agricultural sector is seen as labour exploitation, violation, minimum wages, delay of payment or long working hours.

“No migrant worker or member of his or her family shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

OHCR, 1990



Fig.30 Italy's main criminal organisations

Rosarno case and Tendapoli

Rosarno is one of the towns in Calabria that is not only famous for citrus fruits, but it became public in 2010 after a violent conflict between migrants and locals, and the story of the exploitation of migrants in the agricultural sector is unfolding there. Migrants' statements say that they work in very bad working conditions, in terms of the relationship between the amount of money paid and the number of hours. Usually the owners of orange plantations are connected to criminal clans. Just as the mafia is involved in illegal work on construction sites, so in Calabria the mafia is involved in the exploitation of workers, who are paid less than Italians for the same work.

"In Rosarno we were working from morning to night, picking oranges, for 25 euros a day; but we had to pay 5 euros for transport, so we had only 20 euros left. There were some abandoned factories where one would build a shelter with some cardboard – one was called the Ghana ghetto. That day [i.e. the day of the clashes, 7/8 January 2010] we decided to go and buy something in town. Some boys were shot by Italians. We decided to do a demonstration about that, because that was

27 Andresen, 2017

not the first time. That's where all the problems started. There were fights between blacks and whites. But we did not want to fight the Italians; we wanted to go to the Commune [the local administration]. No Italian would pick oranges for 25 euros." a Ghanaian migrant worker

Amnesty international 2012, p.22

"In January 2010 I was in Rosarno to pick oranges. We were living in an old disused factory. A Sudanese man was the "capo dei ner [the gang-master]. He used to take us to the countryside at 5 in the morning, 20-25 people. Each of us had to give him 5 euros a day. We were working from 6 in the morning to 6 in the evening, every day of the week, for 20 euros a day [1.65 euros an hour]. We could not take breaks, not even for eating. We used to eat the oranges on the trees."

Amnesty international 2012, p.21-22

The Tendopoli is a tent city in Rosarno, and was supposed to provide temporary housing for seasonal workers from Nigeria, Ghana, and Mali, but since the Italian government did not provide adequate support, it has become their permanent residence. This accommodation provides very poor living conditions, from unhygienic conditions to violence by locals.²⁷



Fig. 31, 32 Living conditions in Tendopoli

RURAL STRATEGIES

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RIACE MODEL

The program of welcoming and integration the refugees and migrants



Fig.33, 34 Panorama of Riace

Commune: Riace

Province: Reggio Calabria

Region: Calabria

Area: 16.24 km²

Elevation: 300m

Population 2,342 ²⁸

Riace is the small municipality located in the Province of Calabria in South Italy. There are two parts of Riace, a medieval town known as Riace Borgo, situated between the Serra mountains and an informal seaside settlements known as Riace Marina, built alongside the Ionian Sea shore in the late 70's due to rough mountain rural conditions. As many other hilltop Apennines towns in Italy, Riace is also affected by depopulation, lack of services, unemployment, aging. With 2,469 inhabitants in 1921 Riace's population peaked, where residents lived from agriculture, olive-growing, viticulture. Population declined to 2,331 inhabitants in 1951, followed by a rapid decline after that.²⁹ Many people migrated to more developed parts of North Italy or abroad in the search for employment and better life conditions. Riace has experienced a process of depopulation, the stronger influence of corruption and mafia, which led this place deeper into the economic and social decline.

²⁸ Istat, 2021

²⁹ Istat, 2012



Fig.35 Position of the Calabria region



Fig.36 Position of Borgo Superiore and Marina

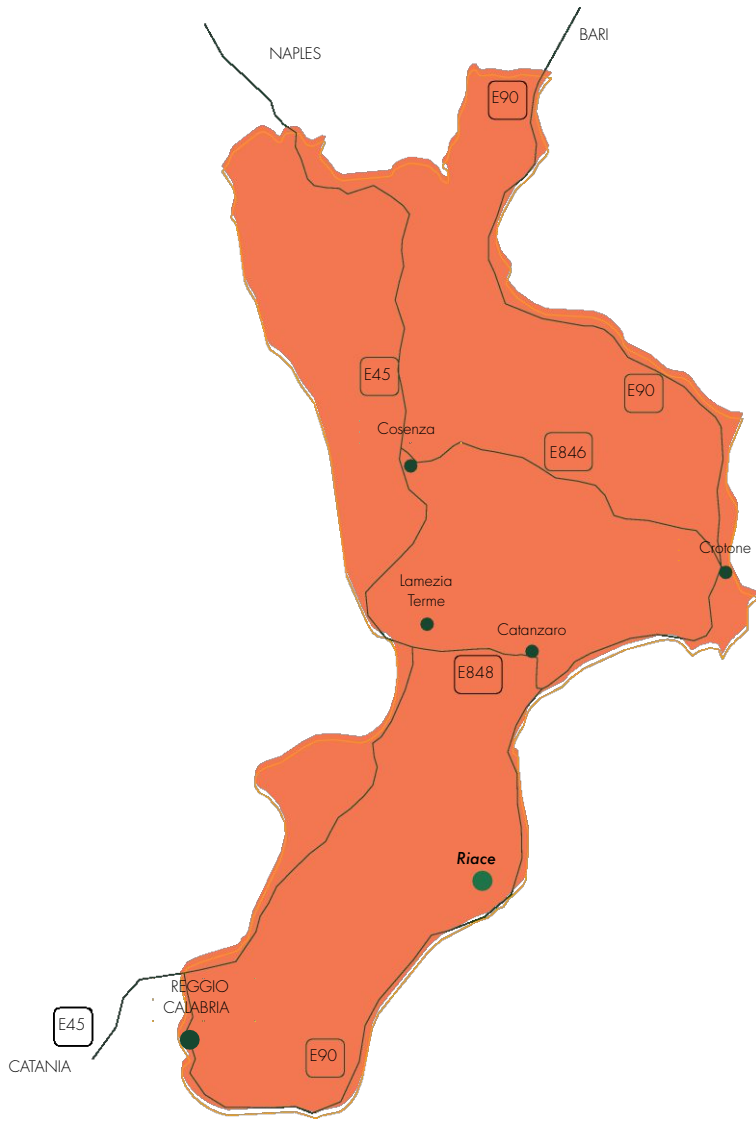


Fig.37 Riace in Calabria



Fig.38 Old Town of Riace



Vision of the model

Riace model is the program of welcoming and integration of the refugees and migrants into the local community based on hospitality and solidarity. The importance of this model lies in awakening the responsibility of society, providing solidarity towards someone who left their homeland by accepting them as part of their community. This is not only a successful model of immigrant integration and the creation of a welcoming atmosphere, but also a strategy for the revitalisation of villages that have been affected by depopulation and economic underdevelopment for years. Riace could serve as the prototype integration model, but as an opportunity to give a new life into the rural areas. Creating new businesses, job opportunities, development of the infrastructure, new services could also help to attract more and new people into these areas, creating a sustainable population growth. The influx of the new people, based on the local resources and maybe brining the new one would also help

to revitalise local economy, and give a boost to the whole area. Economic growth lead to improved quality of life for people in those areas and make them more attractive place to work and live in the rural areas.

“For many inhabitants, the village is not a thing of the past; it became a space of rediscovery of societal practices long submerged by the market economy and its demands, and in particular, a space of experimentation with alternative life models and possible future scenarios for dissatisfied urbanities who could work from there, and only occasionally go to town.”

Koolhaas, 2020, p.47

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Fig.39 New Identity of Riace





Fig.40, 41, 42, 43 Everyday of locals and refugees

Domenico Lucano

The mayor of Riace from 2004-2018, declared by American Magazine in 2010 as the most influential leader among 50 others, the same year announced in global competition by City Mayors Foundation as 3rd best mayor in the world. With a change of political climate, he got arrested and got first instance prison sentence of 13 years for white-collar crime such as fraud, employment, forgery and abuse of office. Aware of migration and the decreasing number of possibilities to stay in Riace, and on the other hand the increasing influx of refugees, Domenico Lucano as mayor accepted the refugees who came, as new residents of Riace, refurbishing houses with them, opening schools, reopening local shops, creating socio-economical ways of survival of a village in the south of Italy.

"I don't care about wealth, I don't care if my citizens are richer, or if now they can buy a car and go on holiday. What I care is that now they can stay here, have a life here..."

They are not forced anymore to go away. For a place like this, what we are doing is totally revolutionary: people now can choose, can have a job that is not to break your back in the fields, to be an underpaid worker on tourist seasonal jobs, or to be an industrial worker in northern Italy's cities. Now this territory is not spoiled anymore."

Nicosia, 2019, p.5

According to Lucano, since his appointment as the Mayor, twenty years ago, the Municipality of Riace in southern Italy, hosted more than 6,000 immigrants from 20 countries worldwide.



Fig.44 Domenico Lucano with a little refugee girl



Fig.45 Sculpture representing the multicultural community

Political conflict between left and right wing

A big turning point happened when the right wing won the elections. The political switch from leftist to the right wing in Riace and their attitude to immigrants has turned down the Riace model and led the village again in the process of the exodus. Leftist consider the act of mayor arrest unjustified. The right side considers immigrants as a threat. They won the elections and proclaimed anti-immigration program. Leader of the political party the League has the slogan "Italian first"- Basta Islam. The mayor, who came in the place of Lucano, Antonio Trifoli, stopped the refugee program. Since then, many people have moved out of the Riace, local shops have been closed since then again, and the economy has stalled.

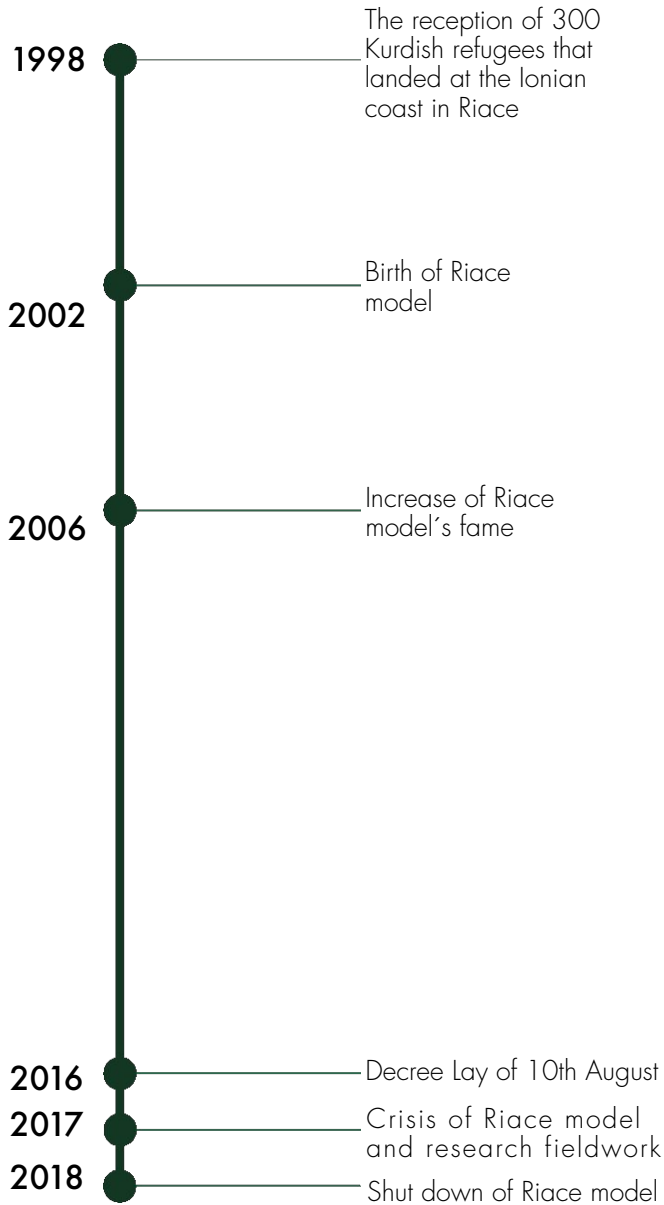


Fig.46 Timeline of Riace model

Conclusion

This project is a combination of refugee acceptance and the revitalisation of a village according to the bottom-up principle. The settlement and restoration of ruined houses that were inhabited through the town and not decentralised were positive aspects of this strategy. The population grew with a shared responsibility for the development of the same territory with local resources. A strong message of solidarity arose from the identification of local residents with refugees through the common history of migration. Riace already had a good state of local infrastructure and public services. This model gave birth to financial autonomy, i.e. the development of local money due to delayed government payments. Model itself attracted a lot of tourists who wanted to see this phenomenon of accepting refugees. Although the influx of population created new jobs, schools, and renewed trades and knowledge exchange, still, immigrants could not choose jobs according to their experiences, and in

most cases were limited in time while the state fund lasted. This created greater dissatisfaction, inequality, further migration to the north and illegal work. Although the model was largely mostly self-organised, it depended on the state fund. This strategy had a focus on the growth of the economy, taking solidarity with migrants as the biggest asset, but nobody actually took into account their mental health and cultural barriers. Riace is located in the province of Calabria, which is synonymous with the mafia. The possibility of mafia interference in the lives and future of refugees has already been noted. The complicated and unregulated bureaucracy of migrants created new conflicts between national and local municipalities. The conflict is based on a deep-rooted misunderstanding of the socio-spatial characteristics and uniqueness of the Italian territories. Also, this model awakened the disagreement of the left and the right with the way of the reception of refugees.

ALBERGO DIFFUSO

New model of hospitality

Vision of the model

The Albergo Diffuso or diffused or scattered hotel is network of existing houses that are close to each other in the centre of the old town. The parallel between the traditional hotel and the scattered hotels is that the corridors in the traditional hotel have been replaced by the narrow streets of the old city. It represents the hospitality culture and relationship that communities have in typical Italian rural hamlet.

Thus, some houses become a reception desk, serve as common areas or an information desk, while others become hotel rooms.

Private units are located about 200m apart and common areas include a restaurant, a reception, a bar. Hotel management is based on the unique business model: local culture, local social ties, and authentic surroundings.

Employed staff contains 75.8% of the local people and 24.2% other staff Target users are as follows: 54.8 % couples, 33.8% families, 3.2% seniors, 6.1% athletes and others 2.1%.³⁰



Fig.47 Positions of 78 Albergo Diffuso



Fig.48 The difference between traditional and scattered hotel

³⁰ Villani, Dall'Ara, 2015 p.173/176

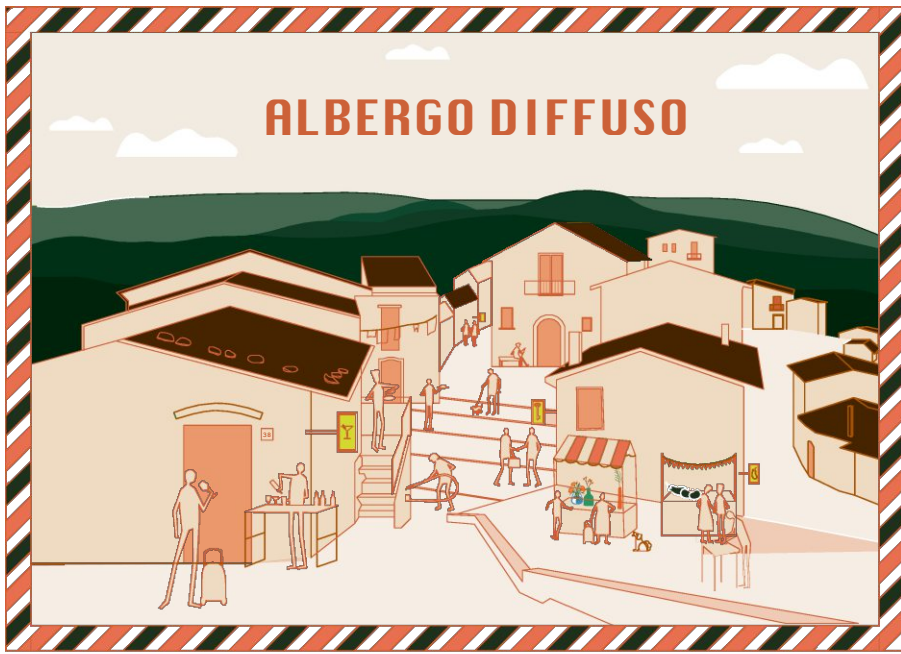


Fig.49 Postcard from the Albergo Diffuso in Cairano

The protagonist

Giancarlo Dall'Ara, an Italian hotel marketing (planning) consultant, developed this concept in the early 1980s as a way to revitalise community ties in Frulli Venezia Giulia, which were threatened by a ghost town scenario. In Italy, over 76 hotels certified as Albergo Diffuso are implementing this strategy of revitalising dead local economies.³¹

Under the premise that Albergo Diffuso (further in text as AD), which means scattered or diffused hotel, should not only be a “hotel that has not been built”, or a “sustainable” hotel, but a driving force in the creation of new networks between local municipalities using local resources.³² During the research journey Giancarlo Dall'Ara had to explore two different paths: the first one which analysed the basic elements and requisites of one that are necessary to realise the concept of AD, while

the second path required the design of a new model of tourism in the context of AD, not only the adaptation of the hotel industry that already existed. The main goal of this research was to design a new model that will draw inspiration from Italian history and hospitality, as well as the way of life in Italy itself - an authentic Italian experience. Already well-known international models such as Portuguese Pousadas, American Cluster Inns, and the Japanese Ryokan model were helpful. Each of these models included an authentic point of view, as well as a unique philosophy and service.

“An Albergo Diffuso is three things at a time. It is a unique hospitality concept, different from the popular ones, like hotels or Resorts; it was born to develop tourism in hamlets and old town centres without changing their characteristics. It does not require any building, just organising what is already there.”

Dall'Ara, p.6

³¹ ADI, n.d.

³² Dall'Ara, 2019

Giancarlo Dall'Ara states that unlike 90% of cases where houses are only inhabited for 2 or 3 months of the year, Albergo Diffuso functions throughout the year. This model is not just a mere connection of uninhabited houses in one place. It is an integral part of the tourist development of the territory and as a philosophy it opposes the standard models of tourism and hospitality. The philosophy of this model is the philosophy of the horizontal way of life that is typical in Italian towns. And unlike the "vertical" way of functioning in hotels in cities, this model develops "horizontally" through the place, without disturbing the existing equilibrium. In these hotels, guests are not isolated, but become part of the local community. A scattered hotel gives the guest a sense of a belonging to local society and that he becomes a temporary resident of a place rather than just a tourist. Experiencing the local experience is also accompanied by the initiation and rediscovery of local cuisine,

traditions, local skills, events, and staying next door to locals. With this model, unused houses are turned into potential rooms that will come to life again through the new interest of tourists, and give local residents the opportunity to look at their everyday life differently and become aware of its value heritage and to create new job opportunities for the place. This model entered the international scene in 2009. In the following year, they received media attention from the New York Times and recognition at the World Travel Market in London, which raised the popularity of this concept. In 2011, the small town of San Vincenti in Croatian Istria decided to host the seminar. Due to great interest from countries such as Ireland, Serbia, France, Albania, Slovakia, the Alberghi Diffusi International Association was created. Since 2013, collaboration with Japan has also developed, where writers Megumi Nakahashi published the book Alberghi Diffusi with a selection of 20 places.



Fig.50 Panorama of Santo Stefano di Sessanio



Fig.51 Landscape prospect from the village

Commune: Santo Stefano di Sessanio

Province: L'Aquila (AQ)

Region: Abruzzo

Area: 33.14km²

Elevation: 1,250m

Population: 117³³

Santo Stefano di Sessanio is the ancient hilltop village in the Province of L'Aquila, in the region of Abruzzo in southern Italy. Small commune in the Apennines, situated in the Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga National Park, sits adjacent to the high plain of Campo Imperatore, 1,250m above sea level. The village is surrounded by fortified walls, which surround the houses, streets and squares. In the past the village experienced the same fate as other rural places in Italy, transition from village to city, in pursue for work, and as a result the city began to die. This Italian hamlet is just 2 hours by car from Rome (154km distance) is the part of the Italy's prettiest villages.³⁴



Fig.52 Position of the Abruzzo region

³³ Istat n.d.

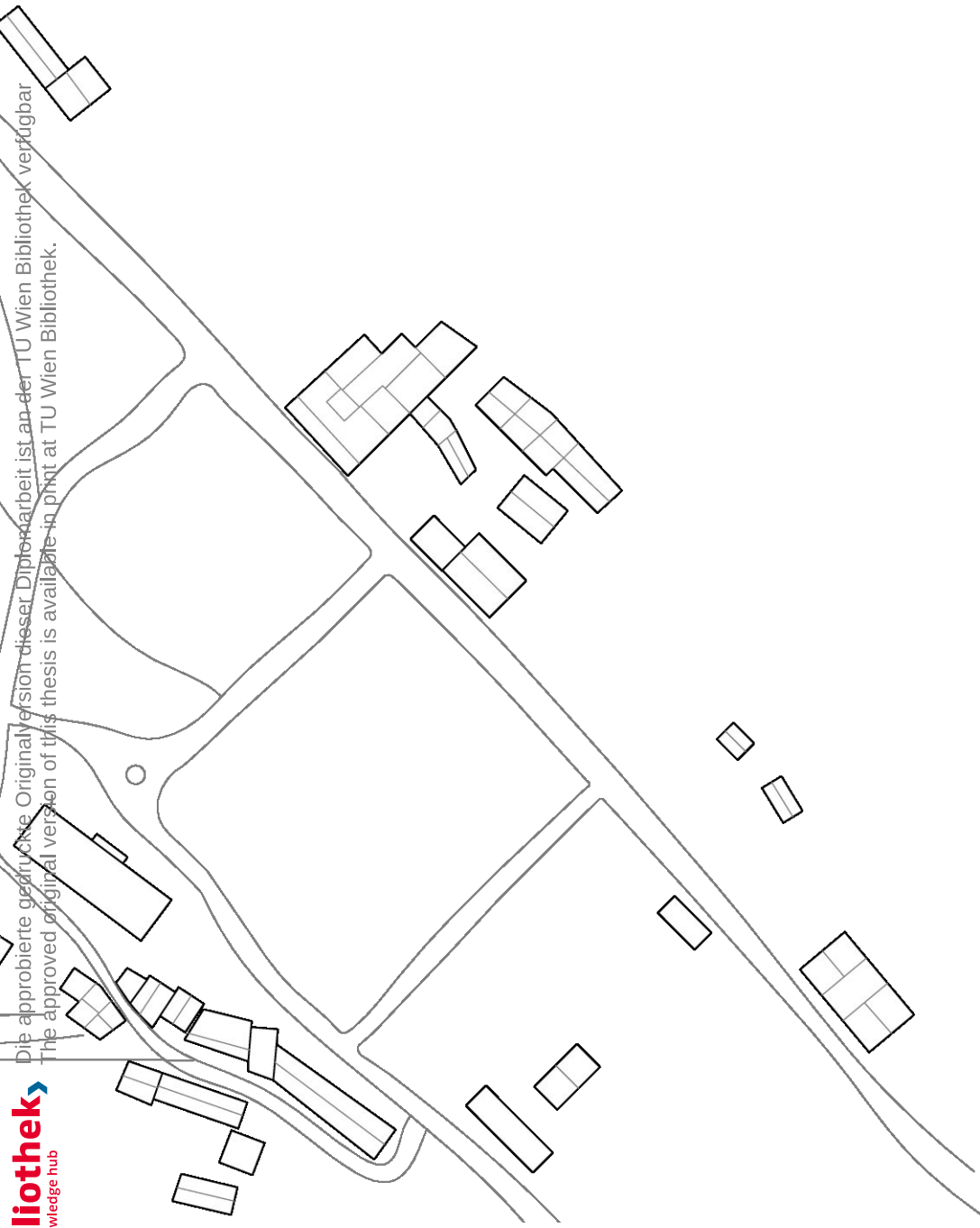
³⁴ I Borghi Più belli D'Italia, 2023



Fig.53 Santo Stefano di Sessanio in Abruzzo



Fig.54 Albergo Diffuso in the village



New identity of the place

Like many other small villages in Italy, this place was seeking for a new life. The crucial visit in 1994 and turning point for destiny of Santo Stefano di Sessanio was a visit of a rich Italian businessman Daniele Kihlgren, of Swedish origin, who fascinated by the beauty of this hamlet decided to bring this village in life by buying some houses and turn them into the Albergo Diffuso. He used the Albergo Diffuso model turning an old Italian village into a touristic hotspot. Daniele Kihlgren stresses that the restoration of Santo Stefano di Sessanio is based on the preservation of territorial identities, local culture by using recycled materials for village restoration in order to represent the authentic life of the people of the Abruzzo mountains. In the process, the older locals played an important role, as he states, who, in cooperation with the Museo della Genti d'Abruzzio, conducted research on the way of life of their ancestors.



Fig.55 Interior of the hotel room

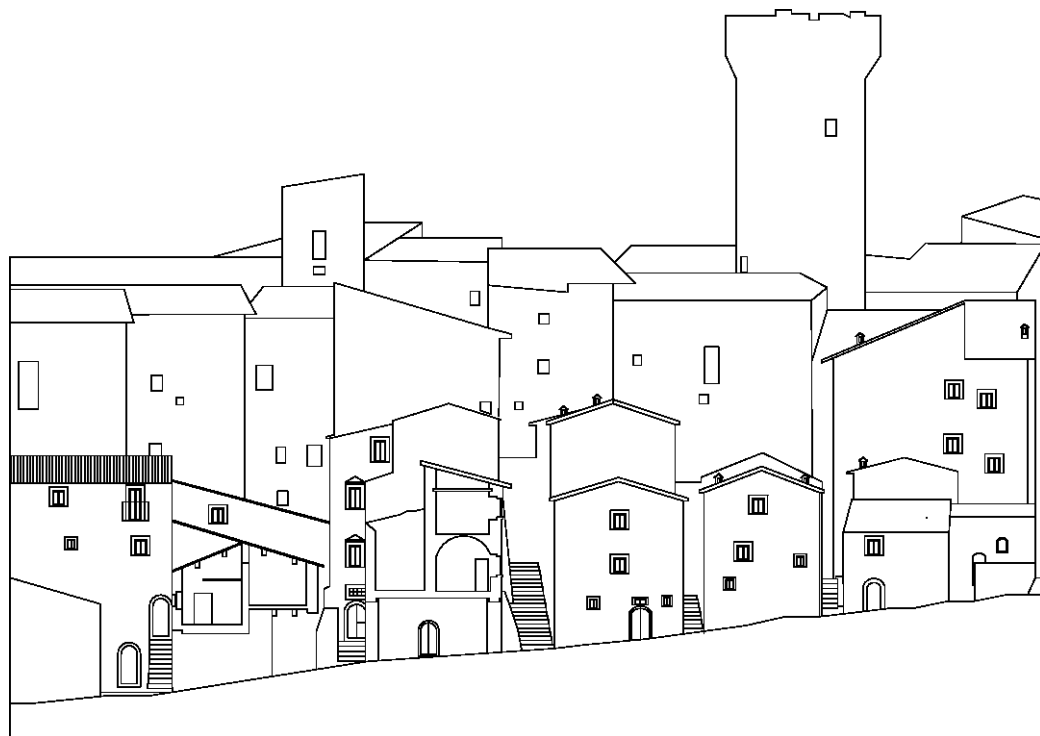


Fig.56 Section through the Albergo Diffuso

Authenticity of hotel rooms

The interior design of the private rooms is inspired by the paintings of the Swiss linguist Paul Scheuermeier, from the 20th century, using hand-made furniture, native objects from museums, antique and traditional local materials. Furthermore, they managed to transform Grotte-cave like spaces carved into rock-into authentic accommodation spaces. There are 30 rooms, which includes classic and superior rooms, suite and executive suite, with additional 3 meeting rooms. The cost of a stay in the Santo Stefano di Sessanio Albergo Diffuso varies, depending on the type of room and services required and time. The starting prices at the end of May for one person, including only breakfast were: from €162 if you choose Classic rooms (Classic - 25m², king-size bed or twin beds and a bathroom with shower), starting price from €207-252 for Superior room (35m², very spacious and comfortable, this room has a king-size bed and a bathroom with shower or bathtub. Some superior rooms

can have a fireplace), and for Suite (50m², Suites are two-story townhouses and have a room with king-size bed, living-room and a bathroom with shower or bathtub. Some Suites have a balcony and fireplace.) Starting price is from €272.

“Using the original identity stamp which runs through every aspect of the project it stays respectfully true to the culture and customs of its ancestors. Our brand and style recreates the traditions of a medieval village from how the villagers lived their lives to the food they ate and the crafts they practiced along with the skills they possessed.”

Sextantio, 2023



Fig.57, 58 Archaic soul of the rooms

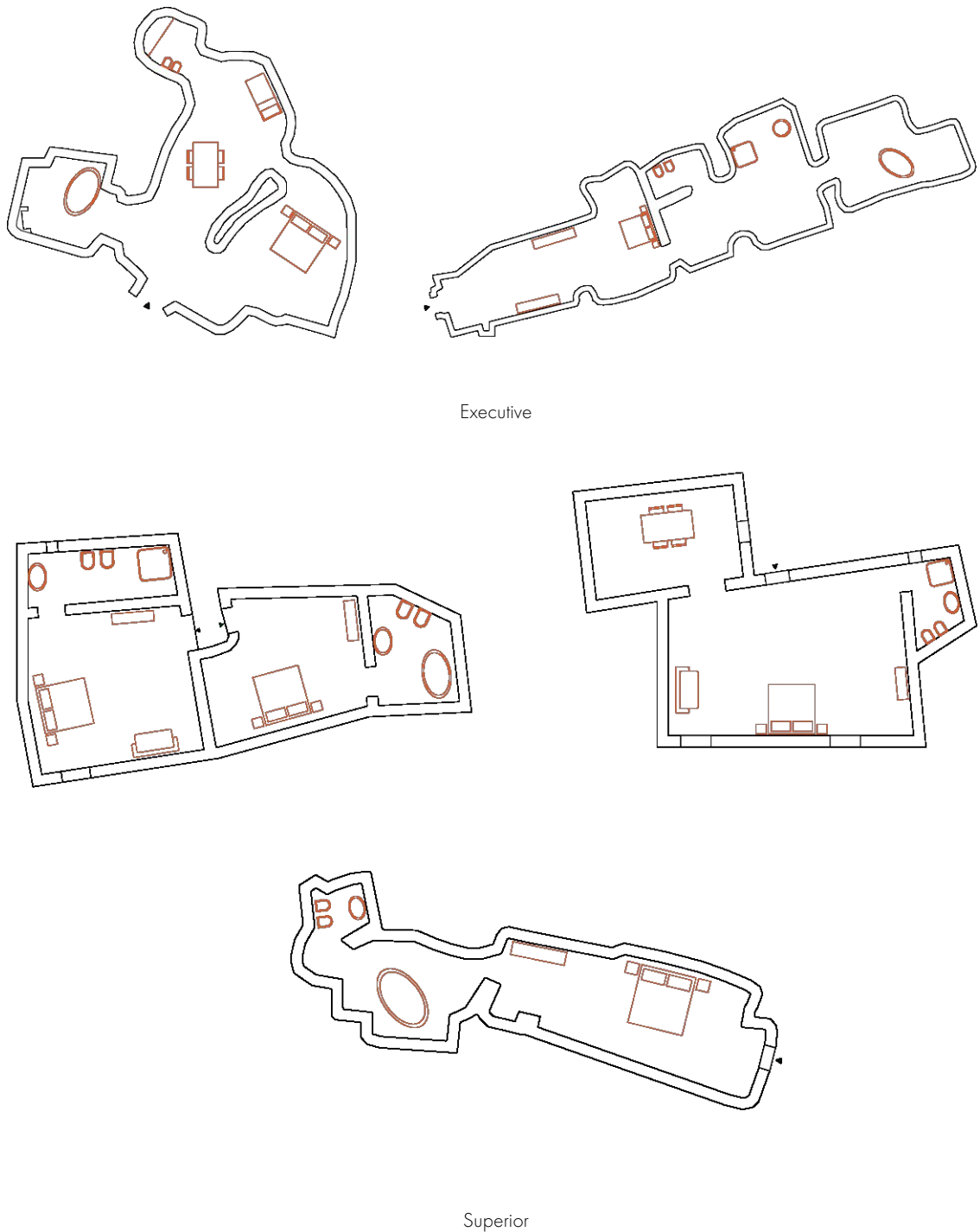
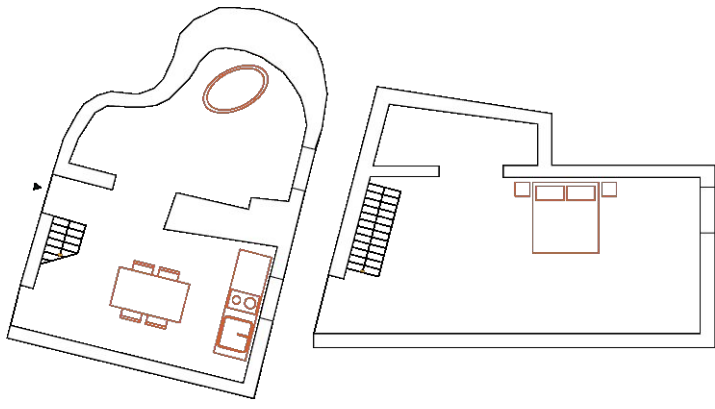
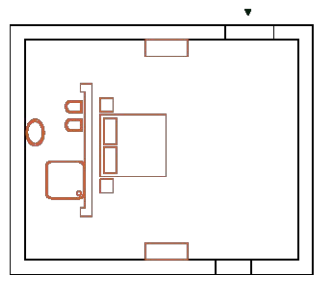
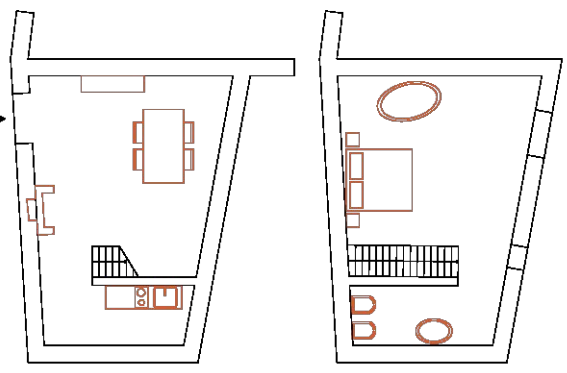


Fig.59 Variety of the hotel rooms



Executive



Standard

A neighbouring piece of land was purchased for the purpose of starting a traditional manufacturing business. A number of shops dealing with traditional skills, such as weaving, are being opened, displaying traditional tools. As part of their services, they offer cooking classes, bread-making classes, weaving and wool dyeing classes, soap making classes, pastries, art craft workshops, horseback riding, a business centre, car rental service, babysitting and medical calls, as well as hiking and walking tours throughout the National Park and Monti della Lag on request. As new residents, who are part of the project are a group of musicians who live there, who hold concerts for guests. The most valuable aspect of staying in this village is the experience it provides, which they emphasise as their greatest virtue, namely getting to know the village's authenticity, which they achieved through restoring the village, preserving the cultural heritage and the historical village as a whole. This village's scenic location also evokes a rural atmosphere.



Fig.60 Street as a hotel hallway

Conclusion

The strategy of Albergo Diffuso focuses on a new model of hospitality and the economic prosperity of the place. The good side of the model is the restoration of abandoned housing in a sustainable way and with great attention to the cultural and architectural heritage of the historic city. Different social groups; locals, tourists and workers could create new social connections and share an authentic life experience. The model generates new job opportunities, increase in local employment. Setting this strategy can attract new entrepreneurs for developing new business, so infrastructure and service can be improved through development of business network, improving at the same time the quality of life in local communities. However, the different needs of guests and locals can create misunderstandings, such as noise and uproar. Compared to the conventional hotel industry, this model requires much more management and maintenance precisely because of the

scattering of facilities, which results in diseconomy and price increase for all involved. As a result, successful models of Albergo Diffuso have become or are becoming luxury tourism. Ultimately, this model can produce mass tourism in one place, while other places remain unnoticed and neglected. In this model, many regulations were not specified, such as the supply of local products, whereby this model focused more on tourism and exploitation of the territory and not on the development of other branches of the economy. This strategy needs also high maintenance and innovation in marketing and in service. The development of territory cannot only be focused on the touristic needs, but the needs of the local community cannot be neglected. Permanent residents should care about development of territory, because they are ones that live all the time there. Although roughly 10.2 % of the Italy's GDP is generated through tourism³⁵ we have to pay attention to the scale of the tourism in

³⁵ Statista, 2023, Share of travel and tourism's total contribution to GDP in Italy

one village, because we cannot turn rural areas into the mass tourism, which is encountered in Venice today for example- but rather carefully preserve the entire rural equilibrium. Although the initiation and centralisation of one place can also activate the places around that point, thinking about decentralisation as the idea of connecting all these small places, which do not see each other as competition but as symbiotic system.

TELEMATIC VILLAGE

A place for the remote workers



Fig.61 Panorama of Colletta di Castelbianco



Fig.62 Spatial configuration

Commune: Colletta di Castelbianco

Province: Savona

Region: Liguria

Colletta di Castelbianco is a small village in the Province of Liguria in Italy. The commune is located 75km west from the city of Genoa. The village itself extends about 300km along the top of a hill at the foot of the Apennines. It lies next to the old road that starts from Albenga on the coast, following the valley of Pennavaira and goes to the mountains of Orem in Piedmont. The origins of the settlement date to thirteenth century, but there is no exact evidence of how the village originated. It was believed to have been the place of merchants who exchange goods during the crossing through Liguria and Piedmont.



Fig.63 Position of the Liguria region

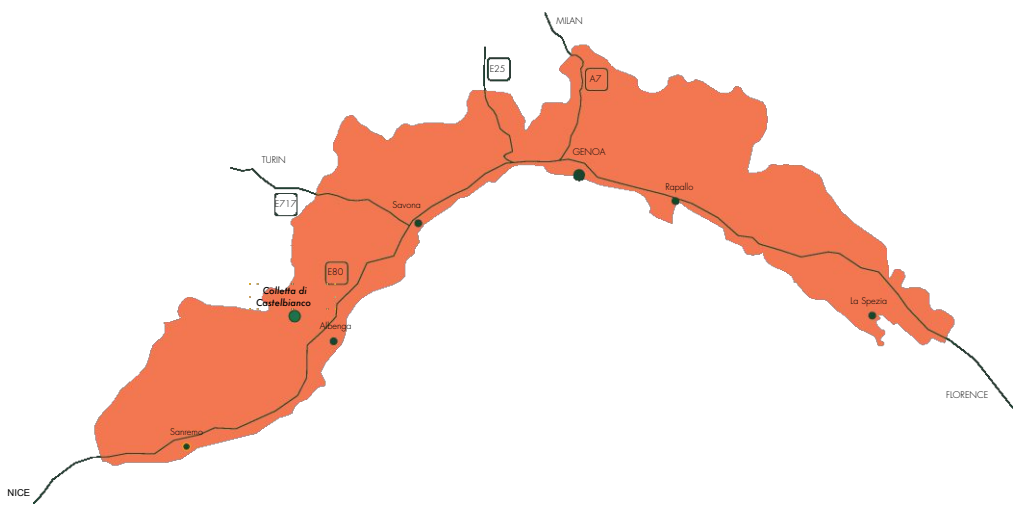


Fig.64 Position of Colletta di Castelbianco in Liguria

Vision of the model

The village began to be abandoned with the development of a new road network, so merchants began to avoid the village. But after two hundred years this completely abandoned place began to gain a new identity. The idea came from investor Ricotta from Alessandria, who saw the potential of this place in an unusual way in Italy. He believed that this place could not be just a new seasonal tourist place/resort, due to brutal nature and short distance from the sea, so he came up with another idea to make this place into the telematic village and dedicated it to White Eagles. White Eagles are people who work by themselves, today know as remote workers. This type of work ethic wasn't popular in Italy. It is obvious that it can be concluded that target users were foreigners.

This place should serve for people who need escape from the hectic city life, who do not mind isolation, who want reconnection with

nature, but at the same time stay in touch with work and urban life thanks to electronic information. Some of the White Eagles were the foreigners from England, Denmark, Norway. Ricotta emphasizes that the reconstruction of the village was not enough, but that they needed a winning idea. They got inspiration from Silicon Valley, to wire up the village and thus creating the telematic village. Telematics is the branch of information technology which deals with the long distance transmission of computerised information.³⁶

³⁶ Oxford Dictionary of English

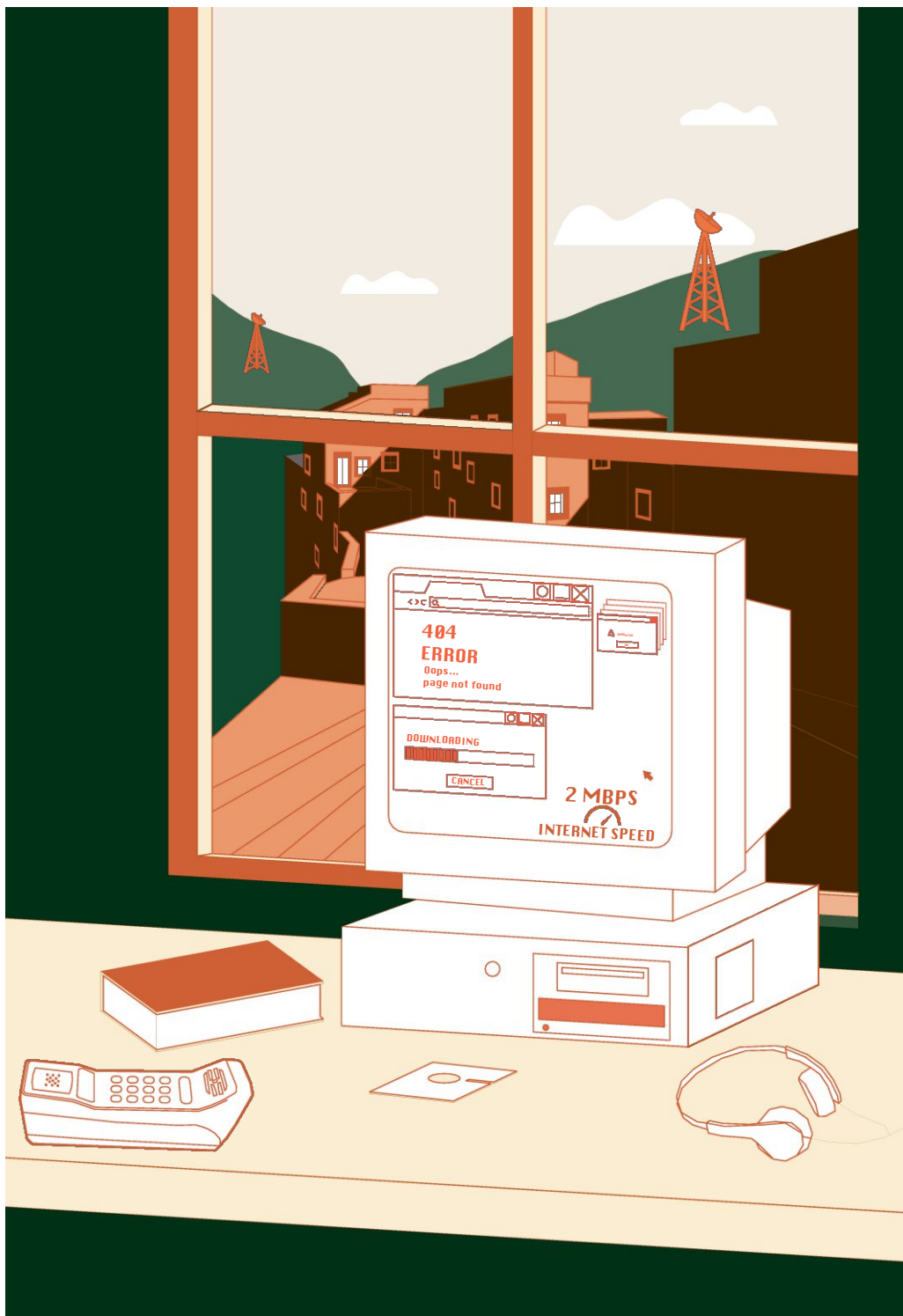


Fig.65 Working space of a White Eagle



Fig.66 Old town scenes



Fig.67 Vicinity of the wilderness



Fig.68 Elevation of the village



Fig.69 Scenic view



Fig.70 Restored spatial composition

Reconstruction of the village

In order to restore the village, the investors called an Italian architect who was well-known at the time. The main task was to find the appropriate architectural language for the reconstruction of village, but also to satisfy the modern technological infrastructure. It was necessary to develop a system that meets the need of permanent or longer stay, not touristic or temporary space.

“When I started to study this place of course I was not completely confident, because it was isolated, and because I am an urbanite and do not immediately understand places which do not have life inside them. But what interested me was the fabric. It is something which is absolutely woven together, and it had a series of qualities which I’m looking for in other situations.”

De Carlo, 2004, p.4

For the architect, the architectural analysis of this medieval city was important, or finding the

genetic code, as he called it. He was looking in the spaces for the common element, patterns, language to identify the place and to create a new interpretation based on this. From this analysis he concludes that inside the outside spaces have the same size and quality.

“There is no discontinuity. You move out of the built space into the open space, and it is the same. The difference, of course, is that it is open; but the size, the way it makes an enclosure around you, is exactly the same — you have exactly the same feeling.”

De Carlo, 2004, p.4

He emphasis is on the fact that streets and objects intertwine with each other, building strong connection with each other. Spatial qualities is something which can be learned from these ancient settlements. Intense connection between spaces, between public and private, produce unexpected places for the socialisation, but also for the action.



Fig.71 Supporting elements of a narrow street

Understanding the inner space

In the past, on the ground floor, due to high humidity, it was not suitable for living, so they kept animals there, and on the upper floor they lived with an exit to the rood terrace where they actually kept plants or some other drying materials. The architect used the metaphor of the crustacean and vertebrate to thematise the architecture of the village. For him the crustacean is Colletta, based on the fluidity of the spaces. The tool for understanding these places is the looking at the cross section

The selection of materials, which were small pieces of local stone, which they used to build the interior and exterior spaces, could not allow spaces wider than 4 meters.

"You see it immediately in the stairs, which are full of imagination because they have to do unpredictable things in order to get to one point from the other."

De Carlo, 2004, p.6

The hidden potential in the sections of the village architecture is visible in the numerous possibilities of connecting space, flexibility, addictiveness and bringing together different spatial volumes. The fluidity of space is achieved by connecting spaces in different directions: horizontally, vertically, oblique, connected by stairs.

"I discovered I could connect everything if I gave up some of the dogmas normally related to the composition of a plan. I found it was possible to enter a space from many different directions, and also to give it different, but interchangeable uses. Why does the toilet have to be small and the living room large? Who decided that? In this context, it actually didn't matter."

De Carlo, 2004, p.6-7

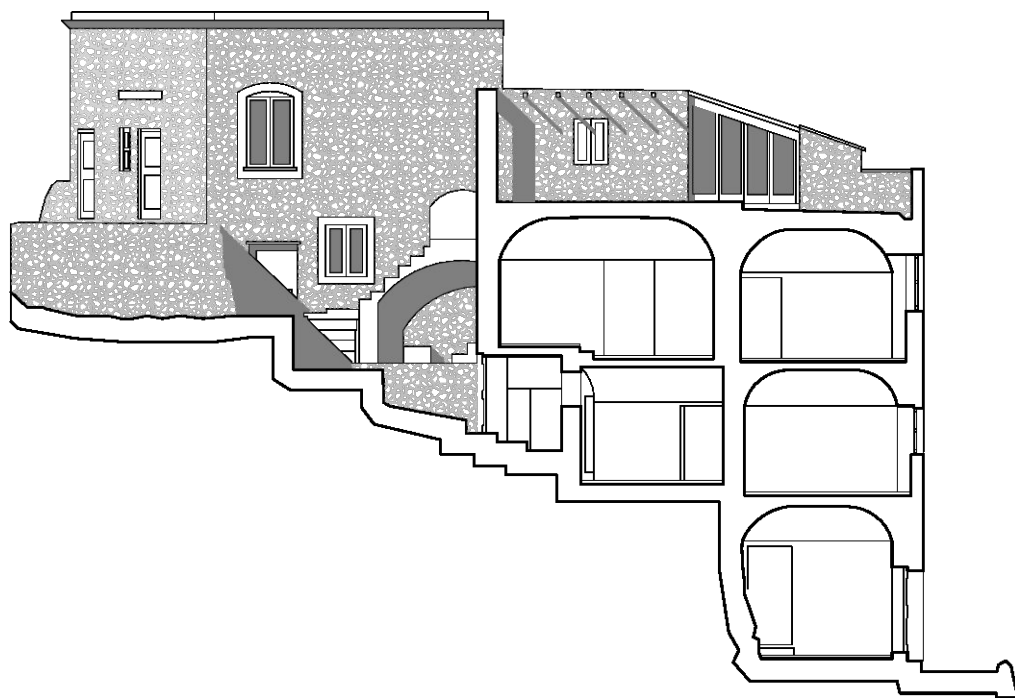


Fig.72 Fragment of the village

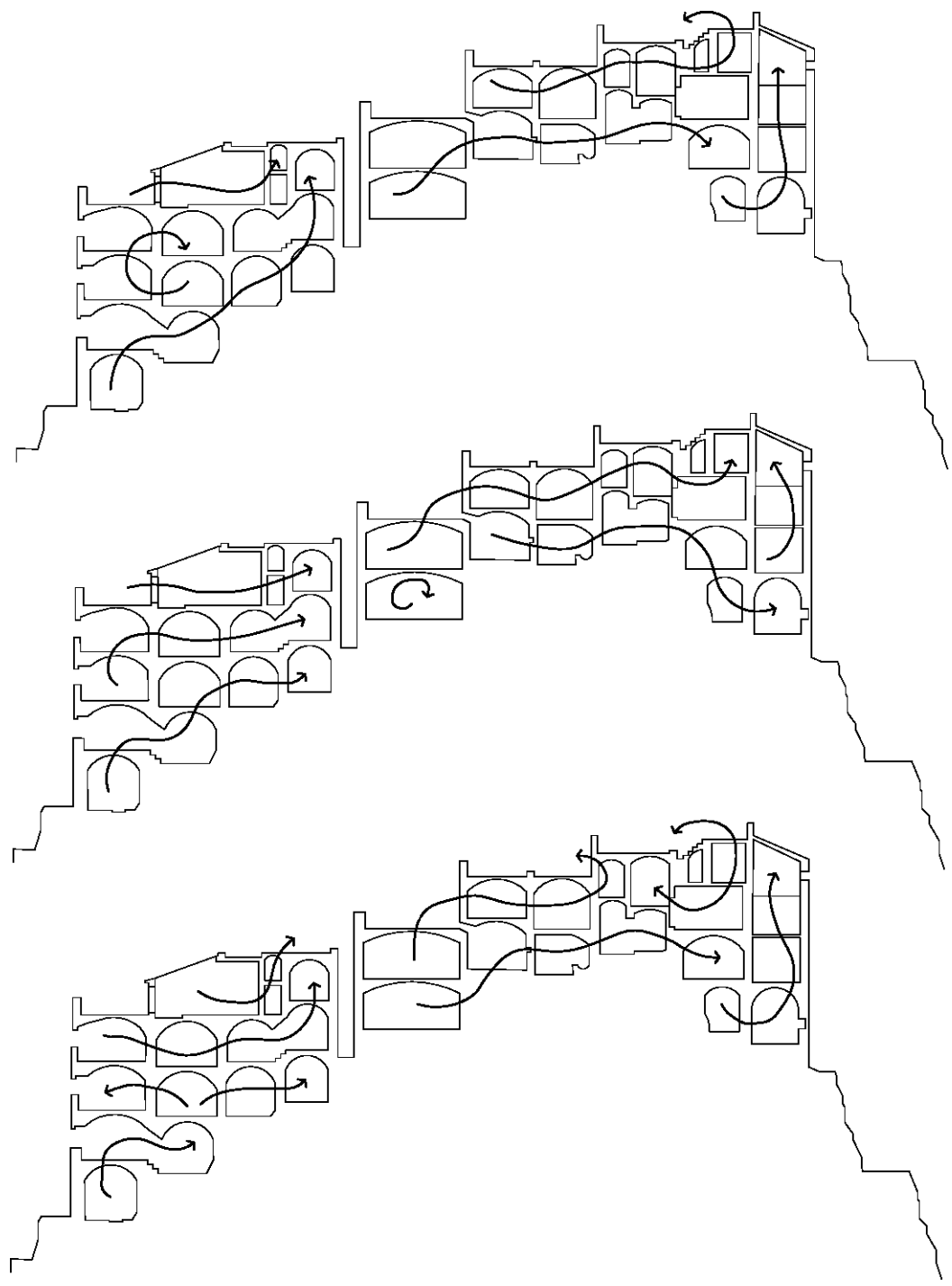
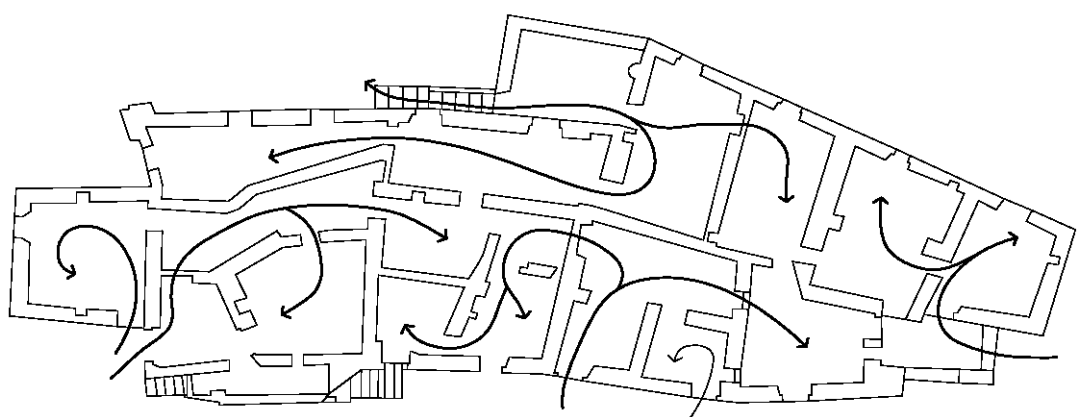
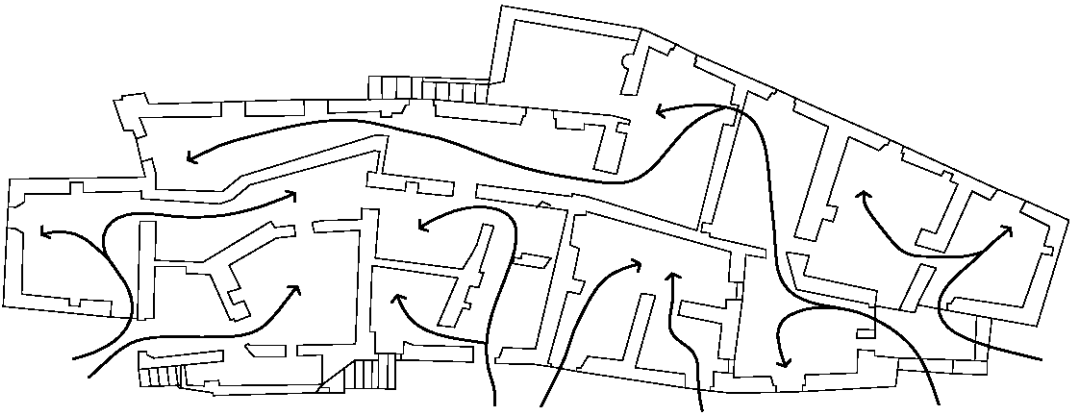
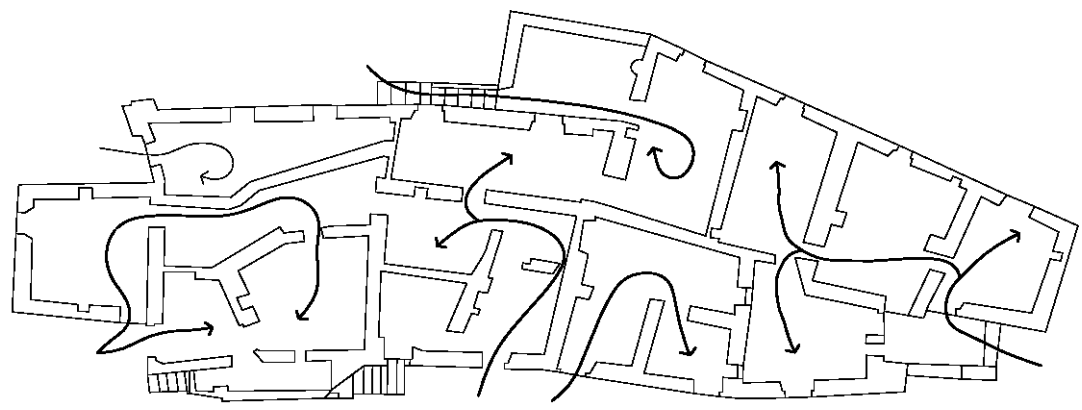


Fig.73 Spatial continuity



Authentic elements

The important element of the inner spaces are the stairs. By observing the village panorama, the characteristic white window frames on the façade can be noticed, giving the distinctive appearance. All windows have a white plaster frame. They are analysed by architect and mapped according to a diagram, which created a system of different dimensions, but very similar proportions.

“A window is also a very delicate point in a house. It is a place where you have a transition from internal space to external. It is a dramatic point – something which gives you pleasure, and also fear, depending on the circumstances. So it has to be underlined as important.”

De Carlo, 2004, p.7

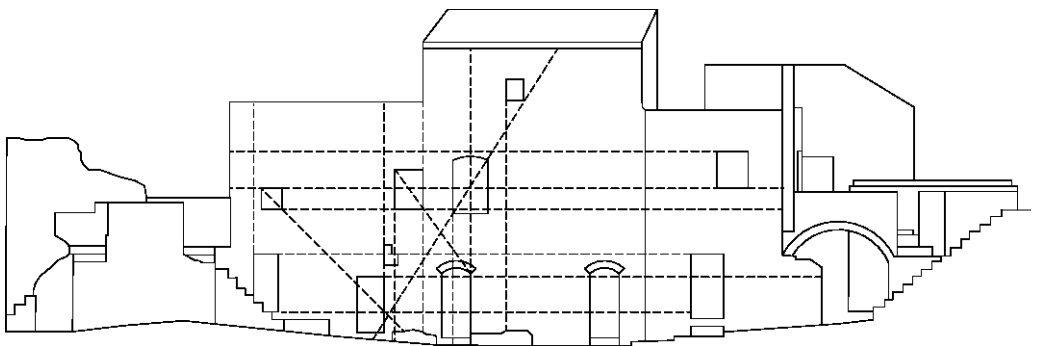


Fig.74 Diagrammatic analysis of window proportions



Fig.75 Authentic window frames

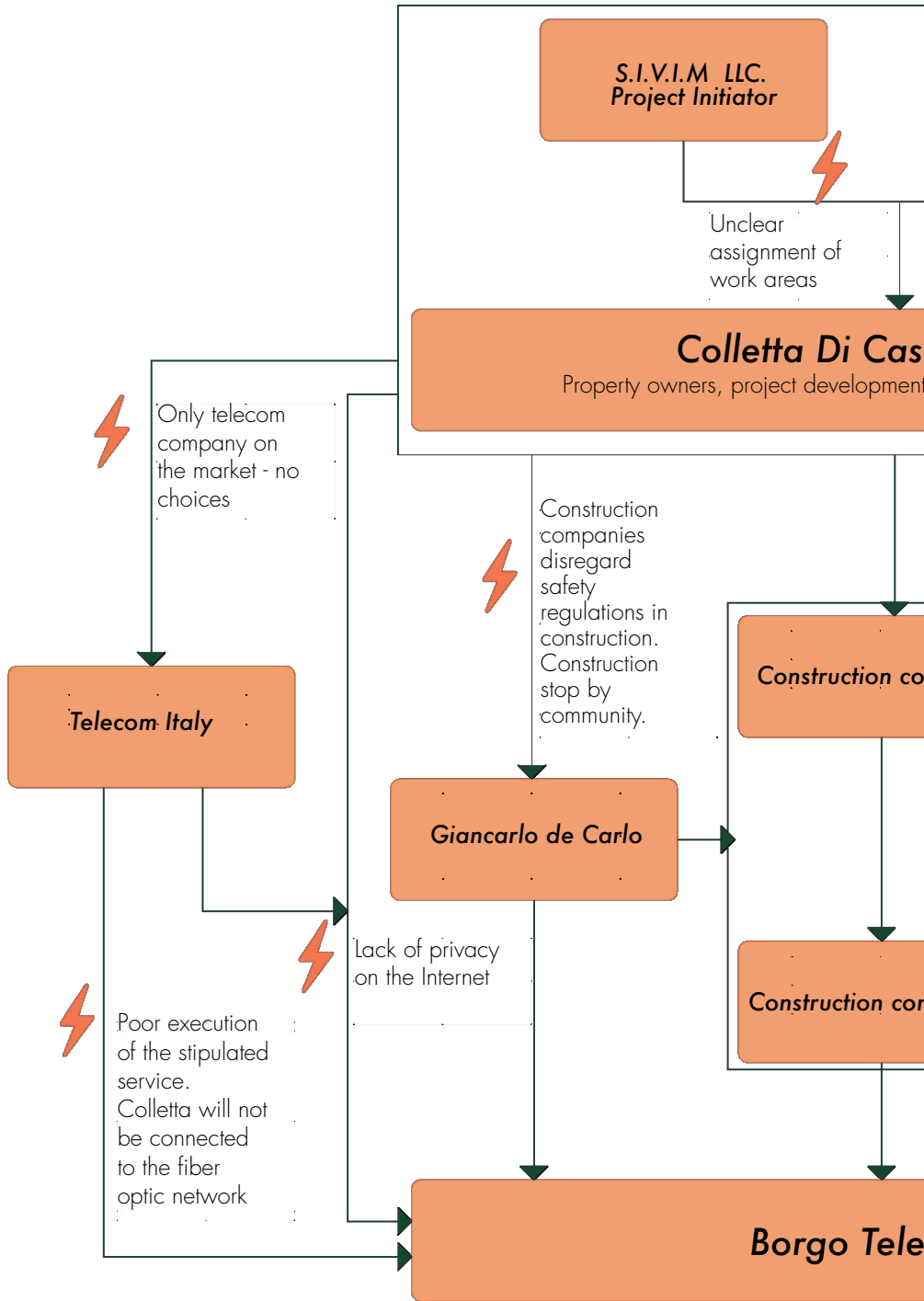
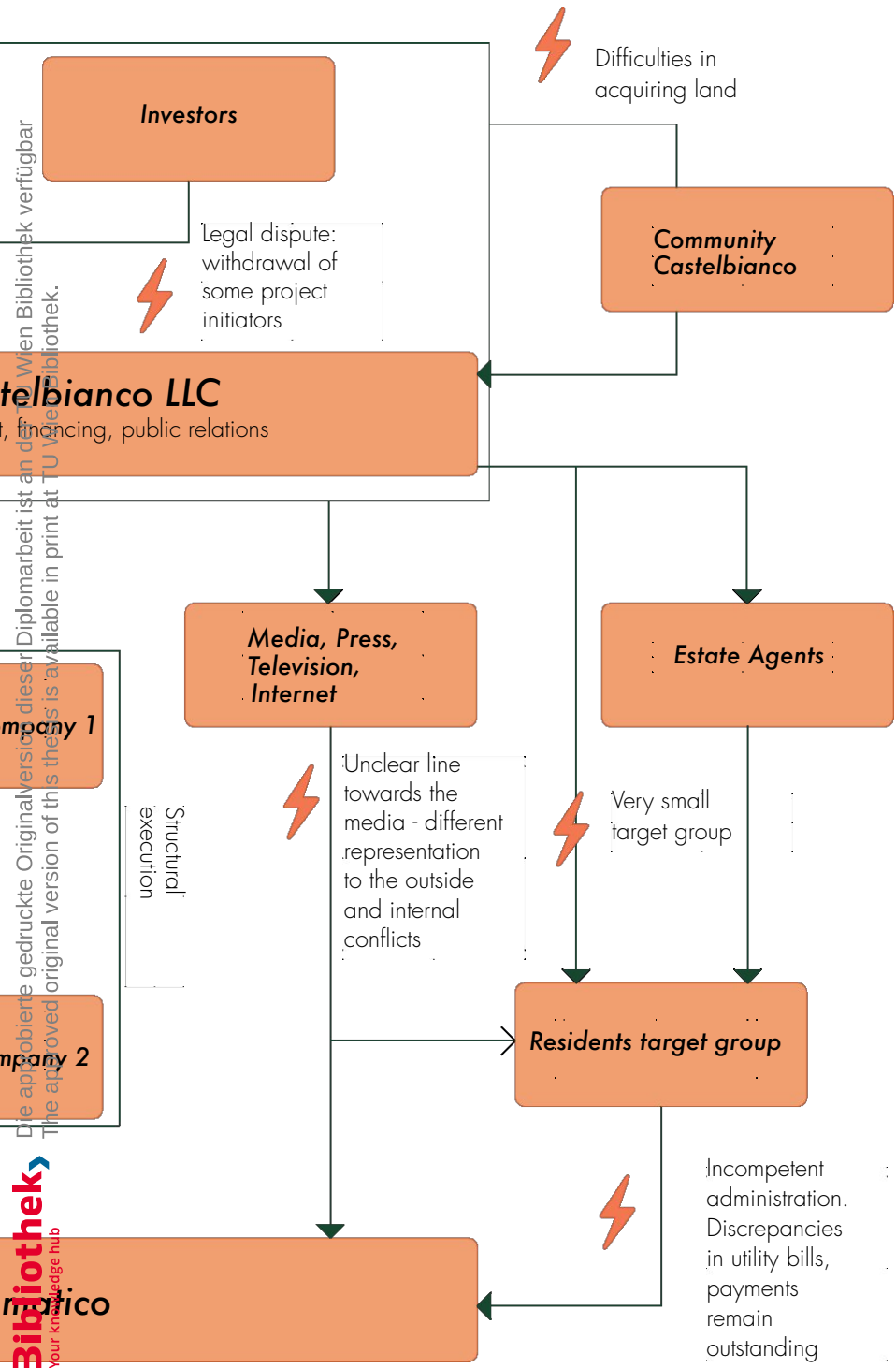


Fig.76 Project participants and conflicts



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1974

Establishing the word Internet

Robert Kahn and Vinton Cerf created A protocol for Packet Network Communication, the groundwork for TCP/IP.

1986

Computer infrastructure

The National Science Foundation network was discovered and they were engaged in the development of computer infrastructure and network services.

1989

WWW

Internet goes mainstream by inventing the Wide Web by Tim Berners-Lee.

1993

Web Browser

The first web browser NCSA Mosaic 1.0 is available in public.

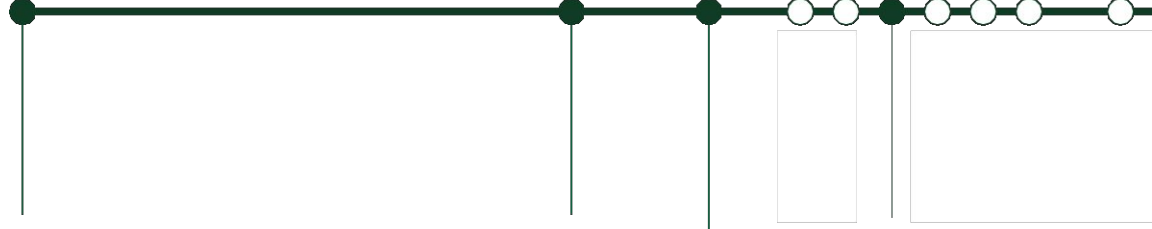
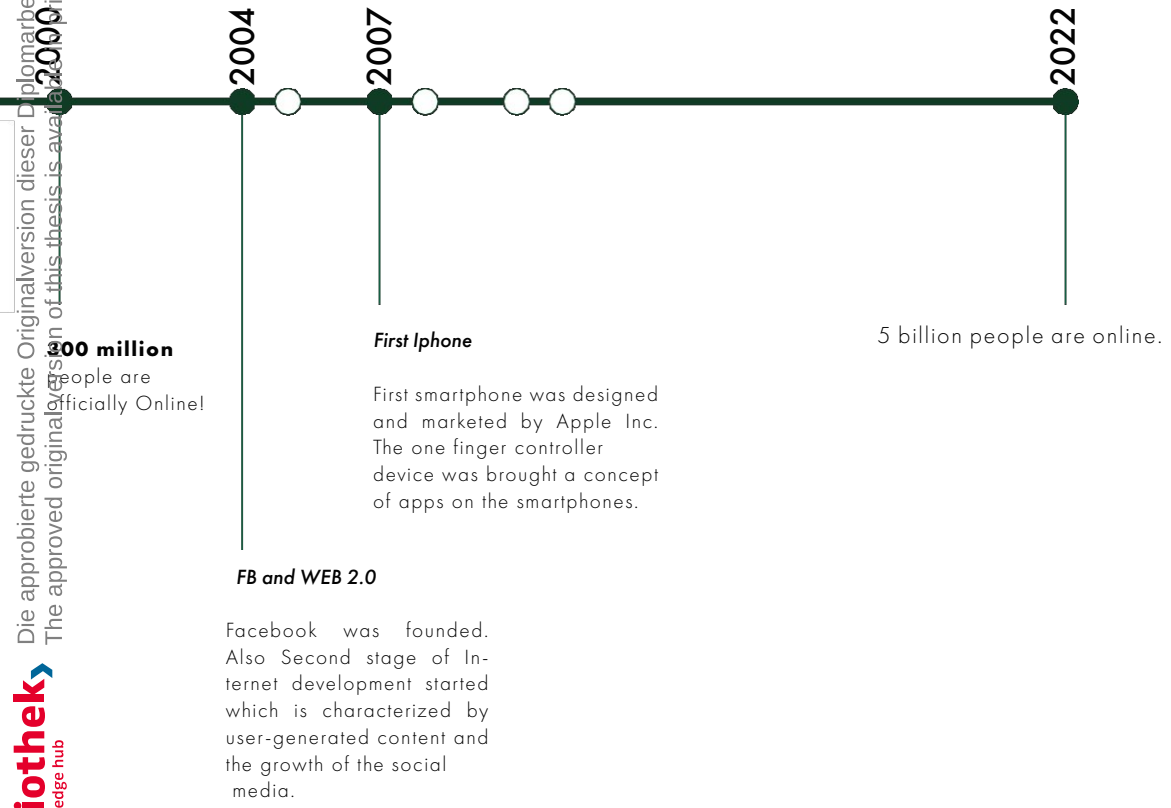


Fig.77 Timeline of the Internet development



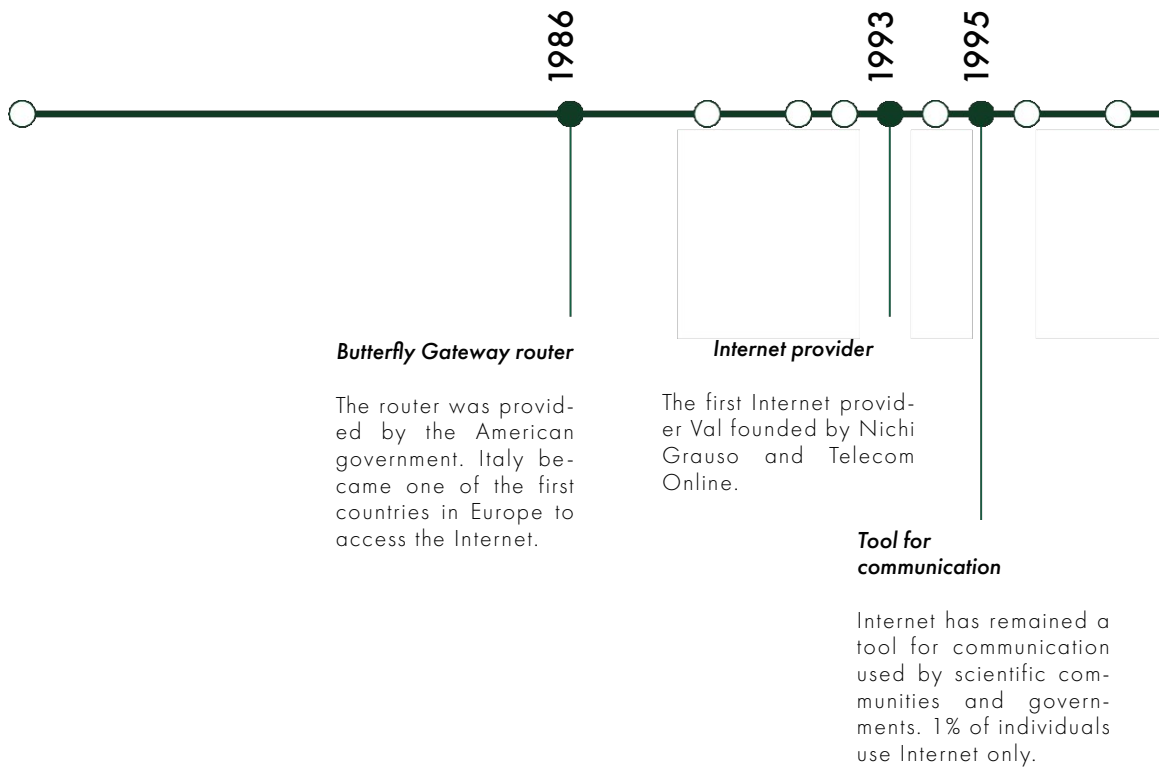


Fig.78 Timeline of the Internet development in Italy

Internet usage is growing
 33% of individuals use the Internet in Italy.

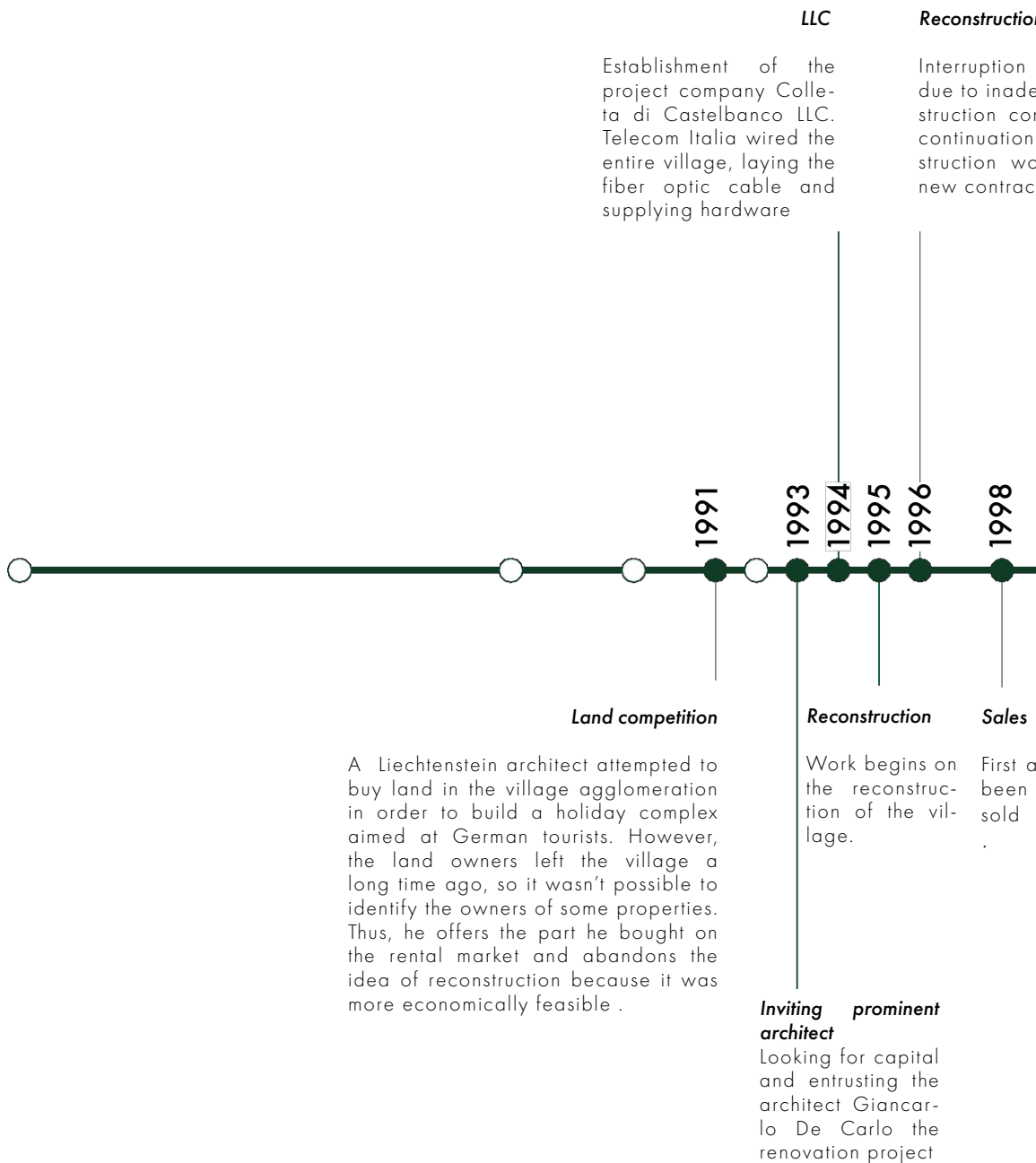
2011

Computers in house
 Figures published by National Institute of Statistics showed that 58% of Italian families had a personal computer.

2022

About 50.78 million of Italians are active Internet users. 35.72 million of them have a smart phone. 88.08% in 2022 of the rural households have Internet access.

Fig.79 Timeline of the Borgo Telematico



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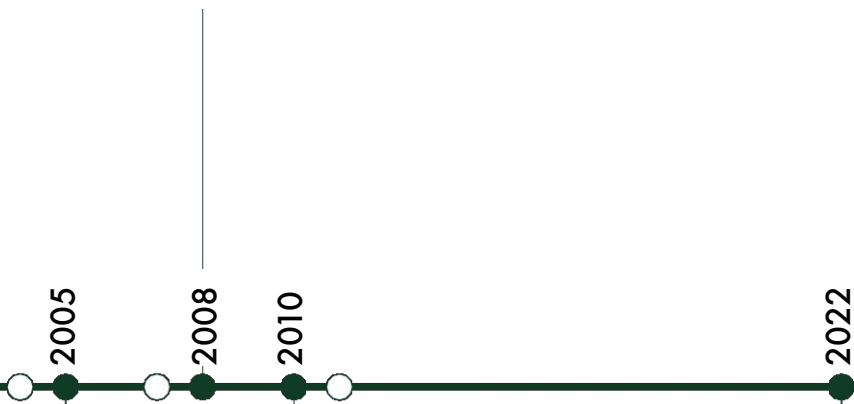
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The bar and restaurant were opened.



Promotion

First promotional measures of revival villages in the Liguria region



Holiday rentals

The Borgo Telematico LLC was founded. The operational structure was reorganized; cultural events are minimize, marketing coast are eliminated. Start of the renting the apartments to holiday guests.

www.colletta.it

Establishment of a website and a page for booking apartments.

Colletta di Castelbianco offers apartments for sale and rent on the website. There are many possibilities for sports activities around Collette, electric bike tours, climbing, walking in the saddle of our ponies, Thai massage, house, session of Bagno di Gong

Finish of reconstruction work

Conclusion

One of the key factors of this strategy was the engagement of an eminent architect at that time, which led to an increase in attractiveness. At the same time, this is seen as a weakness, because in the absence of an eminent person, the strategy loses its potential from the start. The architect managed to use architectural values such as the connection between the interior and exterior space, the flexibility and continuity of the space by joining the space vertically and horizontally. With the reconstruction of the village, they managed to maintain the qualities of the historic city and preserve the heritage, however, targeting only one group of people (White Eagles), they failed to create a permanent community. During the development of the project, many difficulties occurred in the communication between all participants, which led to delays in the development of the strategy. In 1995, the Internet in Italy was only a tool of communication between scientific societies. As the reconstruction of villages began, only 1% of

individuals used the Internet. Twenty years after the reconstruction was completed, the use of the Internet increased to about 23%.

*"In general, with a few exceptions, the technology has remained at the same level as it was in the 1990s. As a result, despite finer optic cable connections within Colletta, only a transmission rate of 2 Mbit/s is available for the entire apartment complex to the outside world."*³⁷

What needs to be taken into account is that architecture and digital technology are two different spheres that have different development speeds. The complicated and time-consuming restoration of villages takes far more than technology is developing itself. This leaves a risk that a vision based on current technological status can become obsolete until the project is finished. Although we are talking about the project that took place in 90s, the Italian government announced in 2022, almost 30 years after the project of Colletta di

³⁷ Goller, 2014

Castelbianco, that they tend to invest €1 billion in order to attract digital nomad to work in villages in Italy.³⁸ As part of this initiative, 2,000 “ghost towns” will be converted into attractive places for digital nomads. Colletta is a pioneer of telematic villages in Italy, a place made just for digital nomads. We can conclude that the Italian government is very late with bureaucratic decisions, but perhaps this possibility can still bring a new life to the rural area of Italy. The intersection of the development of digital technology and the phenomenon of the post-corona period erases the differences between the workplace and domestic space, work and leisure, production and consumption. Precisely, digital technology is an opportunity for all abandoned villages to get a chance to become attractive, not trying to compete politically, culturally and economically with metropolises, but will behave in a complementary to them. What they can offer is lower prices, manageable

settlement size, a direct connection with the landscape and nature. Many villages around London, Paris and Munich are inhabited by international active yuppies who, thanks to digital technology, do not lose connection with their city offices and this gives them the possibility of sporadically changing their place of residence, and establishing a balance between the city and the countryside.³⁹

“But the telematic revolution offers even more: Thanks to the uncomplicated, inexpensive and widespread availability of information, locations that until recently seemed marginalized and forgotten are becoming attractive again. Smaller cities are once again competitive, villages and farms in the middle of the open countryside are in demand again. You can live and work away from the metropolitan hustle and bustle and still take part in it via modem and radio.”

Lampugnani, 2002, p.42-43

³⁸ Shengen Visa Info, 2022

³⁹ Lampugnani, 2002, p.43

1 EURO HOUSE

Selling houses in the hilltop villages

HOUSES ON SALE 1€
Albugnano (Piemonte)



Area: 9.5km² Population: 549 Density: 57/km²

Triora (Liguria)



Area: 68km² Population: 416 Density: 6.1/km²

Cantiano (Marche)



Area: 83.2km² Population: 2,049 Density: 25/km²

Casoli (Abruzzo)



Area: 66km² Population: 5,901 Density: 89/km²

Borgomezzavalle



Area: 19.08km² Population: 293 Density: 15/km²

Pignone (Liguria)



Area: 16.2km² Population: 654 Density: 40/km²

Maenza (Lazio)



Area: 42.13km² Population: 3,101 Density: 74/km²

Lecce nei Marsi (Abruzzo)



Area: 66.4km² Population: 1,534 Density: 23.1/km²

Fig.80 Panoramas of villages participating in the €1 House project

Carrega Ligure



Area: 55.26km² Population: 150 Density: 2.7/km²

Oyace (Valle d'Aosta)



Area: 30km² Population: 214 Density: 7/km²

Fabbriche di Vergemoli(Tuscany)



Area: 42.55km² Population: 713 Density: 16.76/km²

Montieri(Tuscany)



Area: 108.21km² Population: 1,162 Density: 11/km²

Patrica (Lazio)



Area: 27.31 km² Population: 3,176 Density: 120/km²

Santi Cosma e Damiano (Lazio)



Area: 31.61 km² Population: 6,967 Density: 220/km²

Pratola Peligna (Abruzzo)



Area: 28.67km² Population: 7,553 Density: 260/km²

Santo Stefano di Sessanio(Abruzzo)



Area: 33.14km² Population: 117 Density: 3.5/km²

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Vision of the model

In 2009, the mayor of the Sicilian village, Gangi, came to an idea to see, renovate and rebuild abandoned and run down houses at a low price. He came up with an idea of selling houses located in hilltop villages that are affected by depopulation and rural problems in cooperation with city communes for a symbolic price of one euro. The goal was to repopulate abandoned settlements in the rural areas by attract new residents and new business to the hamlets. The abandoned houses are not always in good condition, in fact, many of them were even damaged: the roofs collapsed, the ceilings collapsed. Although the rules for renovation and purpose vary from place to place, it is possible not only to use a renovated house for living, but also for another functions as shops, touristic rent and commercial places. In some houses that I personally visited in the village of Zungoli in the province of Avellino

in the Campania region, the state of the house is exactly as it was left by the last dweller of that house. Private possession, from furniture to clothes remained frozen in time.

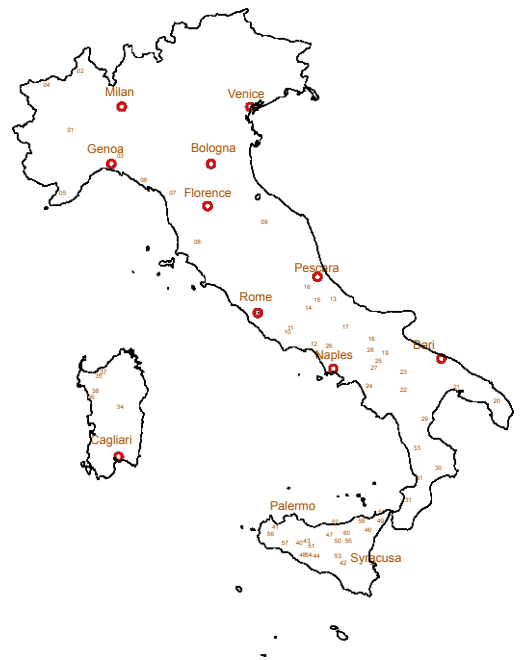


Fig.81 More than 60 villages are selling houses for €1

BELLA ITALIA!

Become homeowner in historical centre of Italy



Your dolce vita is only a dream until you do it!

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Fig.82 Front page of the magazine promoting house sales

Where and how the house could be bought?

On the official website (www.1eurohouses.com), there is the list of municipalities participating in the 1 euro Houses project, till now there are more than 60 municipalities from all the region in Italy. What is advised is to look at the general infrastructure, and to find a place that suits your needs, such as whether there is a school, kindergarten, hospital, shopping options nearby, whether you want to be crowded or more isolated.

“Troina: The Italian town that will pay you to re-style a €1 home.”

Marchetti, CNN, 2021

“€1 homes go on sale in one of Italy’s best-kept secrets.”

Ibid.

“Imagine yourself sitting on a balcony overlooking a small Italian village, sipping on fine wine in good company and with great entertainment nearby. And what if that is not just a hotel balcony, but the balcony in your very own home?”

Berti and Paoli, 2021



Fig.83 Construction site of €1 House project

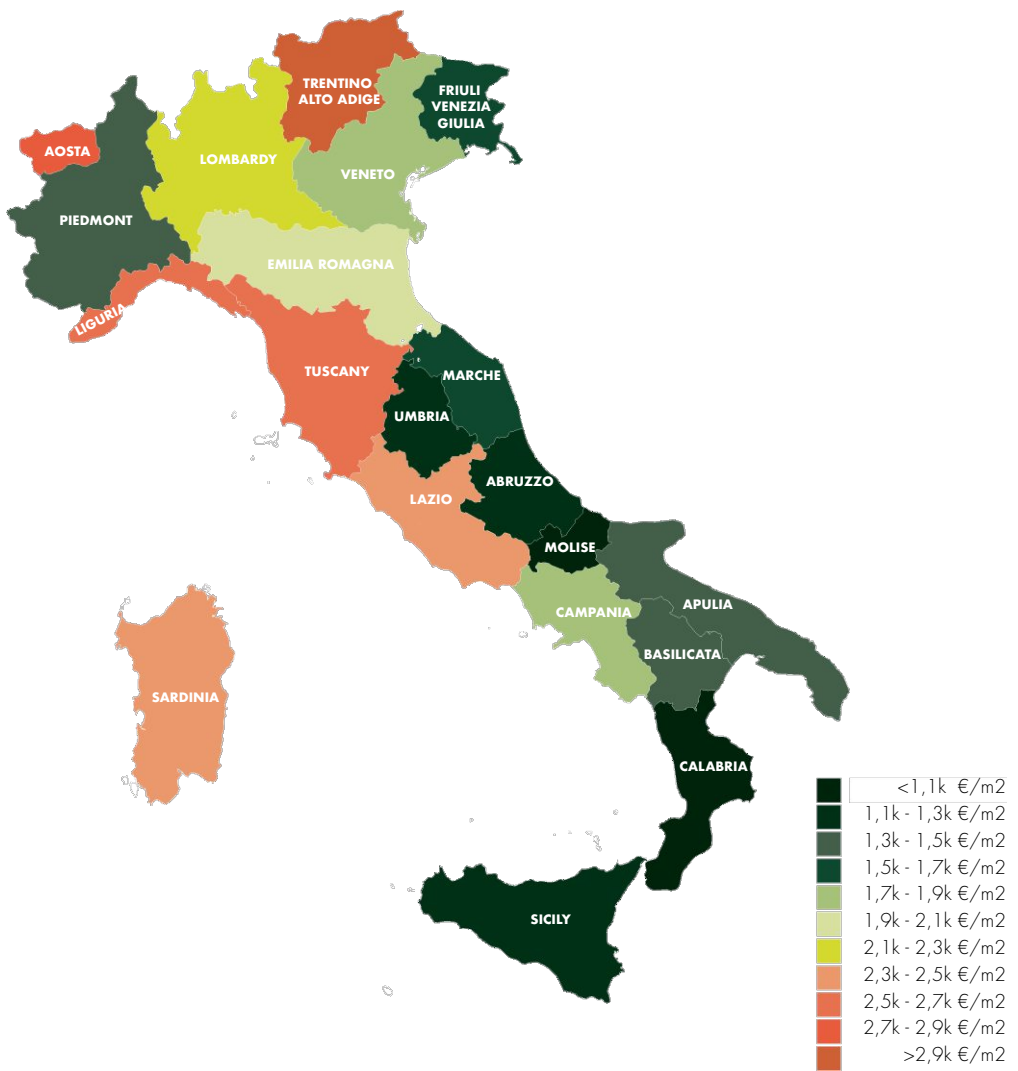


Fig.84 Sale property data in Italy

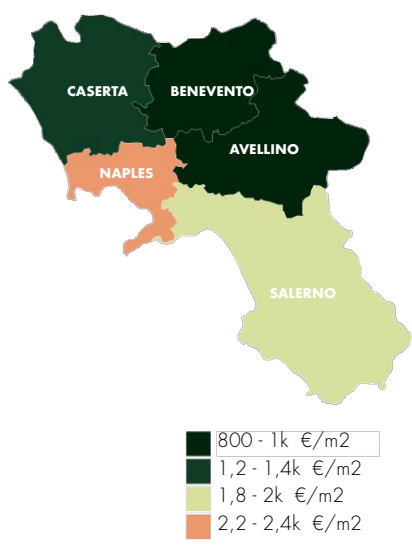


Fig.85 Sale property data in Campania

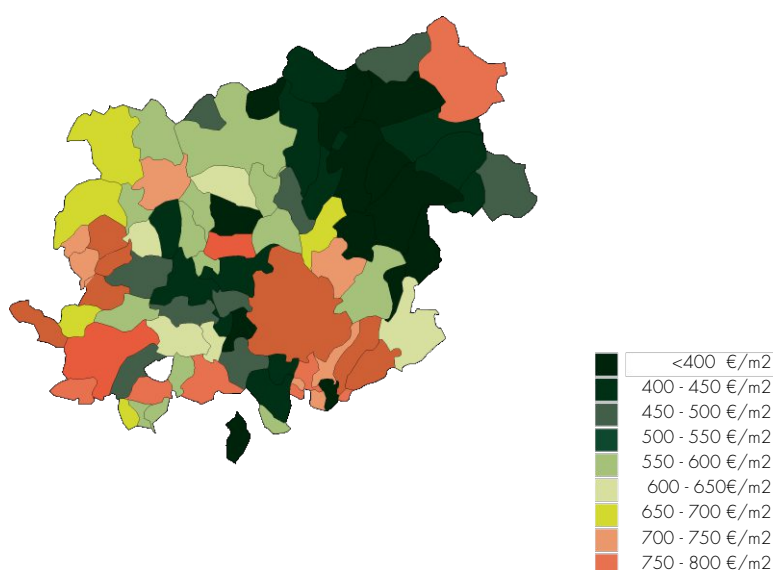
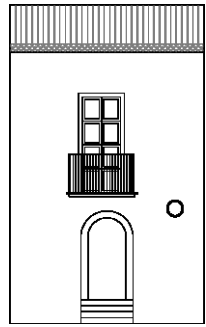


Fig.86 Sale property data in Benevento

True costs

How much money do you actually need for one house of 80m², which included one main entrance hall, living room, one bathroom, a bedroom, a guest room, a kitchen? Buying a house for the symbolic price of €1, then you have to pay a notary about €1,000-1,500, then local and state taxes amounting to 10% of the value of the house, architectural plan that is around €3,500 and all renovations amounting to 700-1,400€/m² which gives the final amount of money from €70,000 to €125,000. The work on the project itself was limited, and in case of not meeting the deadline, penalties were imposed. This made the project complicated and time-consuming, especially for foreigners as every part of the project, from bureaucracy to construction and execution had to be organised at own's cost, with translators. The practice of selling houses for one euro gave local authorities hope that they would attract new residents to the cities that had been dying for decades. But actually

the real costs of buying a house are much more than the symbolic price of €1. There is Super Ecobonus tax refund for renovation costs up to 110%, but only if your house is damaged by an earthquake. Renovations must follow prescribed rules, and the house must be sustainable and use renewable energy. Also, the government of Italy gives some financial aids. It was tried to contact all municipalities from the website via emails that was found on [www. eurohouses.com](http://www.eurohouses.com). Up until this point, we got just two answers (Fig 93). Inquiries were about whether they can provide some statistics and information about the projects of the one euro houses in their commune, how many have been sold so far, who the buyers are, the percentage of Italian or foreign buyers, how many houses have been completed, what the purpose of these houses is later or if any new job opportunity have opened since then. The answers to these questions were not obtained.



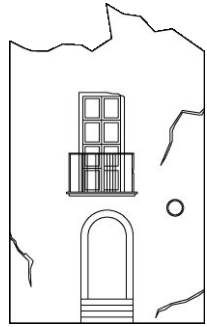
**Excellent condition
Refurbished**

5+ rooms
95m² surface
1 bathroom
1 Floor

Energy Efficiency: B (5,000kWh/m² year)

€ 60,000

Fig.87 Price of an apartment house in the centre of Morcone



€1

Need renovation

Notary fees: €1,250
Local and state taxes: max. 5,000€
General renovation plan: 3,500€/m²
Renovation work: from €66,500 to €133,000
Total amount:

€76,251 - €142,751

Fig.88 The same surface area of the apartment house in the centre of Morcone, but through cost predictions of €1 House project



Fig.89, 90, 91, 92 Private possessions left in abandoned houses

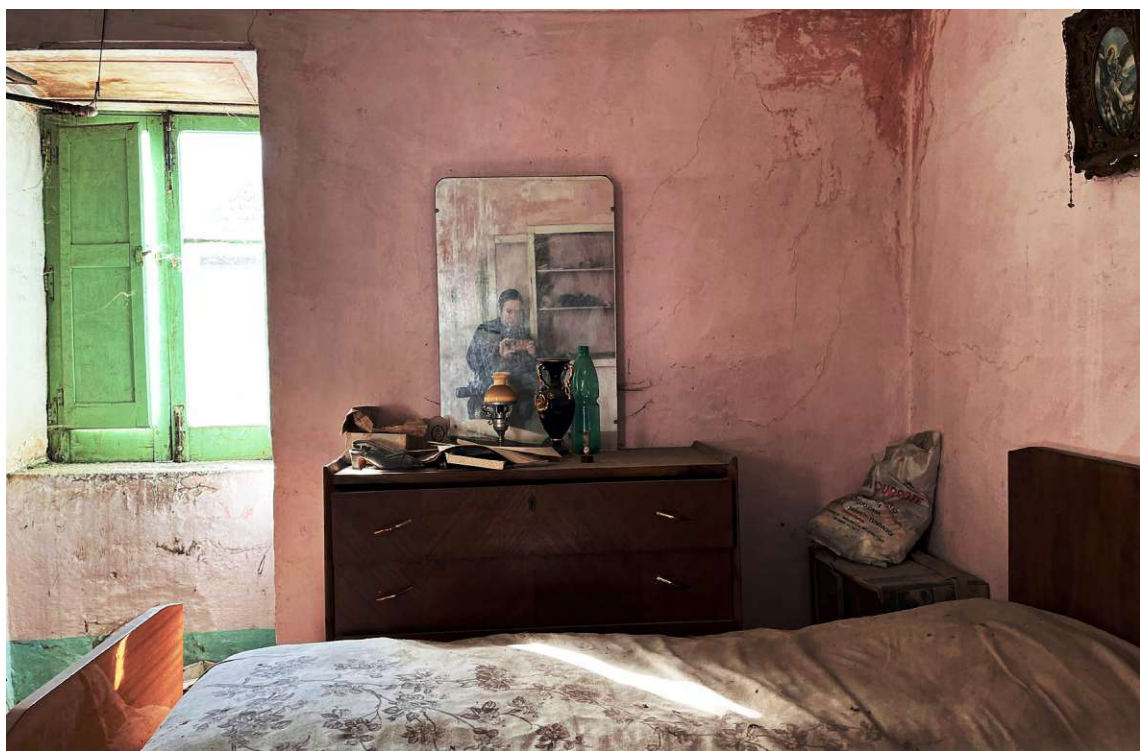




Fig.93 E-mail conversation about €1 House project

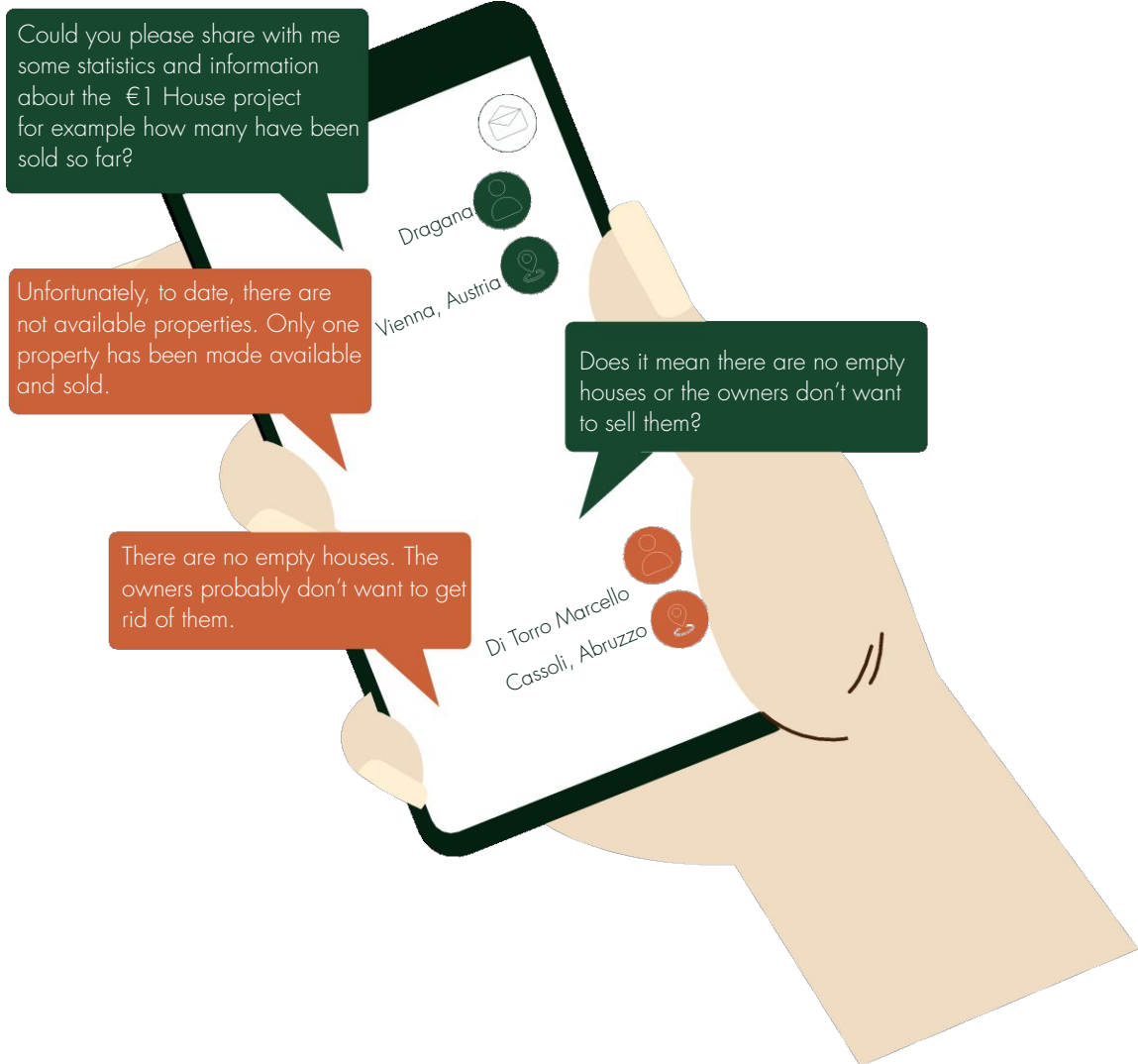




Fig.94 The condition of houses in Zungoli



Fig.95 Construction work in Zungoli

Conclusion

Thanks to very good marketing, this strategy promoted an attractive offer of real estate in comparison with the average price. The advantages were the freedom to choose according to one's preference. The attractiveness of low prices was hidden by a lot of unforeseen bureaucratic and administrative costs, as well as by the condition of the house itself. Attractive coastal locations were immediately sold out, while remote locations remained unsold. This strategy does not take into account the condition, area and the position of one house, but one symbolic price was made for all properties, which reduced the value of all the other houses on the market. The lack of a development plan for the place reduced the desire of local entrepreneurs to invest, although there was an opportunity to awake a new social and economic development.

BIOLOGICAL VILLAGE

Language of reconstruction earthquake town



Fig.96 Panorama of Cairano



Fig.97 Landscape vista

Commune: Cairano

Province: Avellino

Region: Campania

Area: 13.83km²

Elevation: 770m

Population: 379⁴⁰

Cairano is the smallest municipality in the Province of Avellino, on the border of Campania and Lucania, settled on the cliff at an altitude of 800m on the Apennines, looking to the south, with just 300 inhabitants left. This village lies on a highly seismic area.

On November 23rd, 1980, some 2,600 people were killed by a series of earthquakes that devastated southern Apennines and caused enormous damage. The entire Apennine Mountains in Italy is a seismic region. The recent major tremors follow a pattern. The danger along the mountain range is by no means averted.



Fig.98 Position of the Campania region

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⁴⁰ Istat, 2009

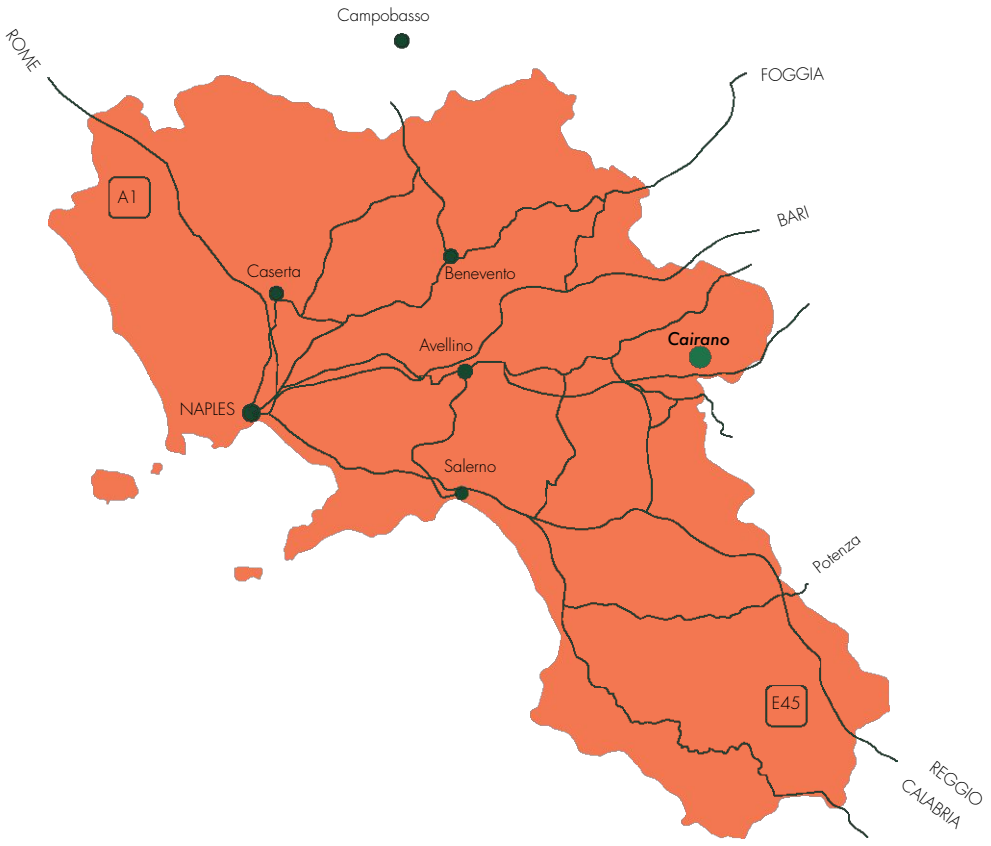


Fig.99 Position of Cairano in Campania

1. Ruins
2. Rest of the castle Langobardo
3. Castle(Borgo Castello)
4. Bell tower
5. Church Madre
7. Town hall area
8. Church of San Leone
9. Church of the immaculate
10. Way of the caves(Via della Grotte)
11. Cementary
12. Camper area
13. Casina Amato Pro Loco
14. Bar
15. Borgo giardino, study area

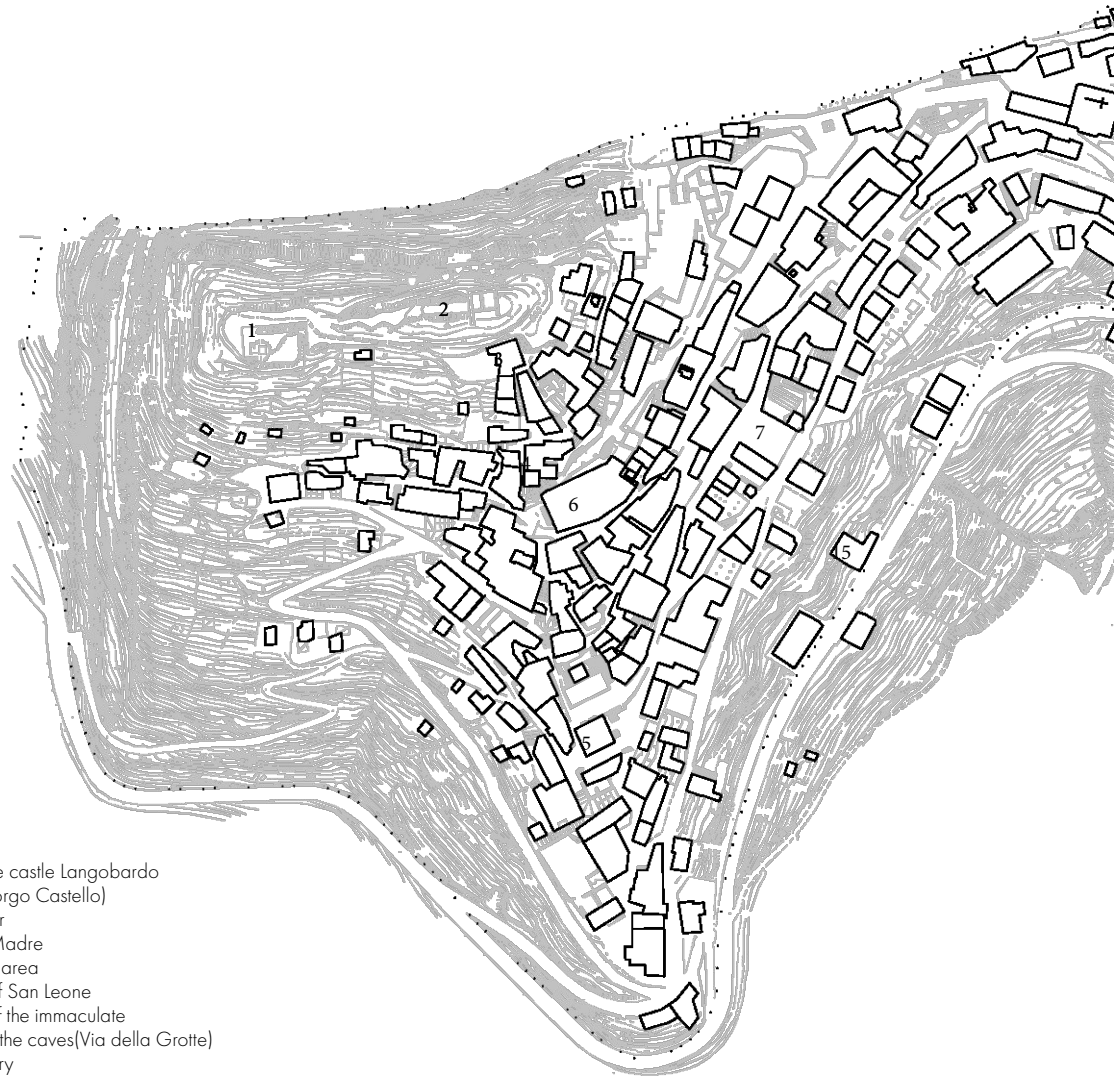


Fig.100 Old town of Cairano



The reconstruction of Borgo Biologico: Okm concept

Irpinia earthquake in 1980s also hit Cairano and devastated it, leaving the village in ruins and many people were forced to leave their homes. Architect Angelo Verderosa with his team began reconstructing Cairano in 2016, designing an organic village or Borgo Biologico. The project won the 2020 award for the best urban regeneration project, supported by European funds. In one of the smallest cities in Irpinia, technology for anti-seismic and energy saving measures, local materials come together in a series of integrated elements covering over 4,000m² supported by European funds. In this reconstruction, modern anti-seismic measures are combined with local materials, local techniques, and local power. There is an open theatre built on the ruins, as well as a school museum that organises workshops, accommodations for the diffused hotel.⁴¹

⁴¹ Direzione Generale Arte e Architettura contemporanee e Periferie urbane, 2018, 2018, p.115

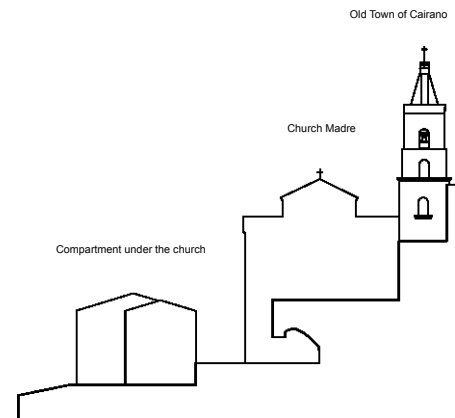
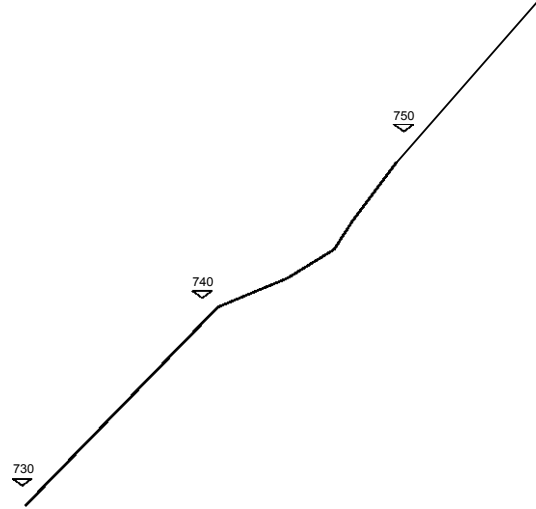


Fig.101 Silhouette of the village

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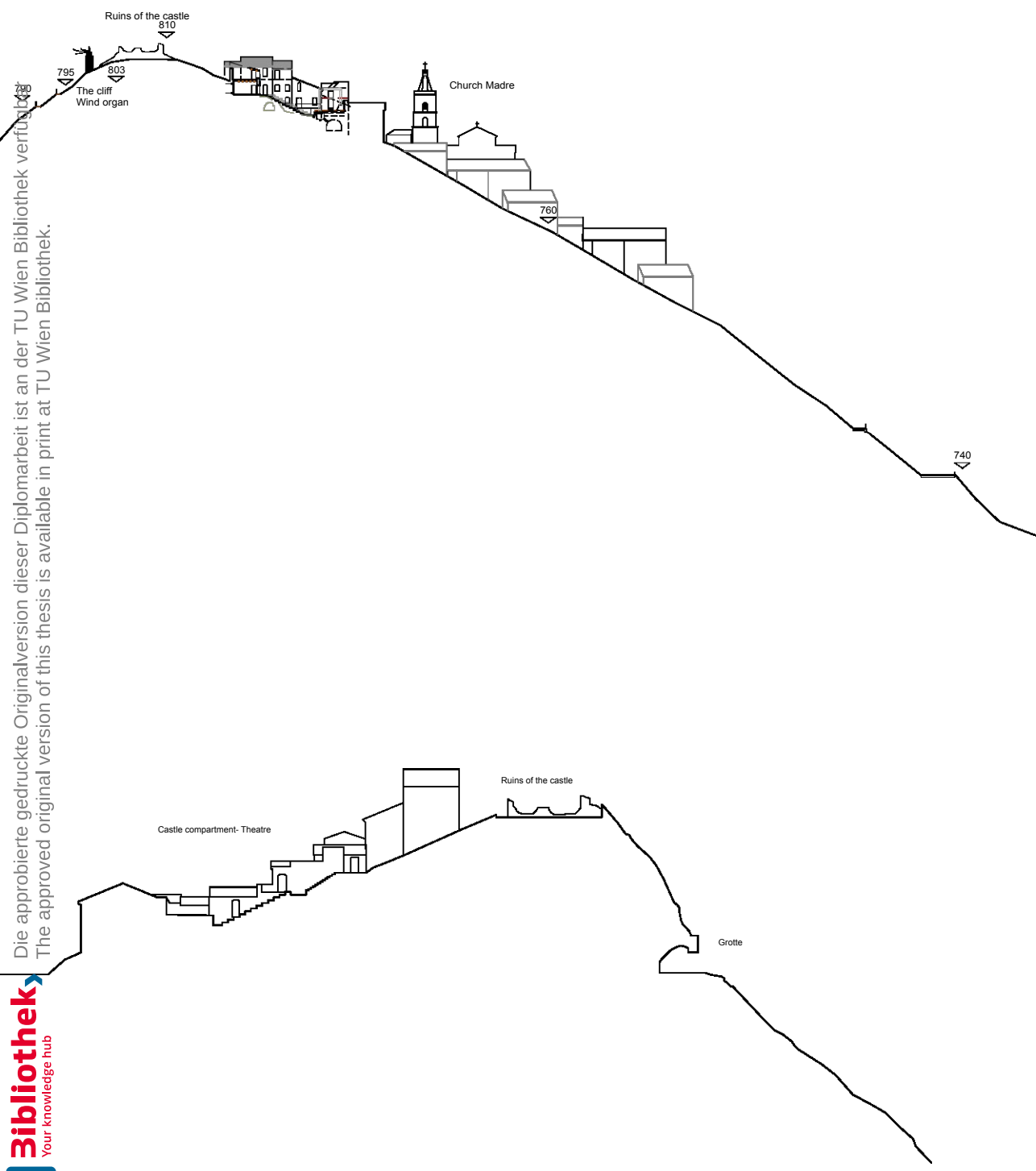




Fig.102 Hilltop theatre



Film „ La Donnaccia“

The first time Cairano gained broader attention was in the 1965 when the village welcomed the film crew for the purpose of shooting an Italian drama movie La Donnaccia by Silvio Siano. This was a big event for this village, not only because this place was chosen for the main filming location, but also for many residents from Cairano (about 1,000) that took part in the project, as background actors or had small roles in the movie. Although that project was banned because of the too revealing scenes, the residents of Cairano developed a very emotional connection to this movie. After the earthquake in 1980 the film “La Donaccia” gave a new meaning for Cairano, because the appearance of the hamlet and houses before the earthquake remained recorded in the movie. Although Cairano has been rebuilt a lot since, the houses have remained empty as a result of migration. There are wine cellars located in the rock on the north side of the village that are decaying and agriculture is

becoming just a part of the past. A support from the government with the Project Programa Operative Regionale P.O.R who invested in small villages, is compelling, but has not gained enough momentum.



Fig.103, 104 Scenes of the movies set

Cairano 7X

The Cairano 7X project was born between architect Mario Festa, poet Franco Arminio, theatre director Franco Dragone and the legacy of Action-Matese. Franco Dragone was born in Cairano, but emigrated to Belgium with his family in 1959 to work in the mining industry. He was well known for its work with Cirque du Soleil and Celine Dion. He supported the efforts of the architect Mario Festa and the poet Franco Arminio who came up with the idea of organising a festival Cairano 7X, designed to explore a new Cairano identity. The goal was Festival of Air and Beauty, as he further describes, multi-event lasted for one week, which through direct actions and survey tried to find out how the relationship with the territory changed. The festival of 7 days together with interdisciplinary society had the idea of re-inhabiting Cairano in a non-traditional way, promoting Cairano as a new centre. Cairano became a laboratory of ideas and experimentation during these 7 thematic days, which involved various arts and participants from different backgrounds.

“Cairano was thus a place of intertwining, the capital of the borders. Each art, each person leaned on the edge of himself, stood in the balance, listening to other arts, other people. Pilgrim artists who came to a country that became the sanctuary of a new religion, the religion of clemency. Young and old, peasants and actors, musicians, sculptors, poets, architects, pilgrims and residents, artisans, all united to make a serene objection to the existing.” Festa , 2022, in interview

In addition to its basic driving force, art played an important role in supporting the artist Giovanni Spiniello who created an organ that works on the principle of wind on the cliff of Cairano. Through this kind of project and the holding of events, a new interdisciplinary society has formed, which creates new bonds between locals, artists and entrepreneurs. From 2009 till now a 7-day festival is held in the Cairano once a year. Vast number of houses, were unlocked in order to accommodate guests.

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**festa delle
arti e della
decrecita**

Fig.105 Invitation to the festival

Silvio Berlusconi and trash from Naples

A cupola built during Cairano 7X week by the inhabitants with the help of architects, which criticises the politics of Silvio Berlusconi, who decided to solve the garbage problem of Naples by turning 400,000m² of meadows below and around Cairano into the landfills. Fortunately, this project has been stopped. One of the things that was created during the days of the Cairano 7X festival, in cooperation with the locals, architects and other participants, was the brick cupola, located on the cliff of Cairano. This small building has round windows that frame the landscape of Cairano, where garbage from Naples was planned to be dumped.

“To ensure that everything goes quickly, a national emergency was declared for this project and the facility was declared a military area. The province therefore has no opportunity to appeal. Irpinia used to be protected by

the Democrazia Cristiana party, which had a stronghold here and determined Italian politics for decades. The church had all the power. Such a project would not have been possible back then. Today the province is left without a lobby. The garbage doesn't bother you. There is no one there anymore.”⁴²

Redecke, 2009



42 Redecke, 2009



Fig.106, 107, 108, 109 Brick dome: framed views of planned landfills

Cairano degli assenti

*“Salendo verso la fine del paese
il silenzio è così forte
che si sente assai vicina
la calma della nuvola
che ha partorito la neve
e la nasconde dentro le cantine.
Paese chiuso, seduto sull’osso
dove non cresce neppure la rovina.
Sono venuto qui a pregare
su questo altare
oggi che il vento è così forte
e sparpaglia pure le ossa dei morti
nelle bare.”*

Franco Arminio



Fig.110 Beauty of the landscape

Conclusion

The concept of village regeneration affected by the earthquake by incorporating traditional and modern techniques is given a significant architectural language of reconstruction. Reconstructed village and the existing infrastructure was the starting point for the development of further projects such as this festival. By organising the festival, a platform was opened for an interdisciplinary group of people who, as a part of the festival, used the resources of the place for the purpose of searching for a new identity of the place. However, these actions did not produce permanent job opportunities inside and outside the town. By including the local population in the discussion about the future of Cairano, it awakened the interest of the first years, while the metaphysical scenarios eventually produced their indifference. The festival as an action had a temporal character and failed to develop a long-term benefit for the local community. There was a possibility of creating a local/regional

centre due to the rich history of the place, however, the slow development and lack of persistence in the discussion did not lead to greater results that could solve the problems of depopulation.

Irpinia earthquake and mafia links

On November 23rd, 1980, a strong earthquake in Irpinia also devastated Cairano, killing about 2,500 leaving about 250,000 people homeless. After that, this part of Italy was affected by a great wave of corruption. Money which was intended for reconstruction disappeared from funds - \$40 billion. It is believed that half of it went into private hands, which created new millionaires in the region. About \$6.4 billion went into the hands of the Camorra, criminal organisation, and \$4 billion of it went into the hands of corrupted politicians. Less than a quarter of the total sum of money, or \$9.6 billion, remains for the recovery of Campanian territory from the earthquake.⁴³

By taking money intended for the reconstruction of the collapsed houses, they rebuilt them with much less steel, which means they are not secure from earthquakes, and the Apennines

are known to be a fragile territory, highly seismic and the earthquakes are cyclical.

This was the moment when the crime organisation from Campania, known as Camorra, entered the world of construction work.

Roberto Saviano in his book Gomorrah writes about the power and organised crime system and their illegals actions on the construction sites.

“The clans’ power remained the power of cement. It was at the construction sites that I could feel—physically, in my gut, all their might. I had worked on construction sites for several summers; to get a job mixing cement, all I had to do was let the contractor know where I was from. Campania provided the best builders in all of Italy—the most skilled, the fastest, cheapest, the least pains in the ass. It’s killer work, and I have never learned to do it particularly well. A trade that might yield a considerable sum only

⁴³ Behan, 1996, p.188



Fig.111 Aftermaths of the earthquake

if you are prepared to gamble all your strength, all your muscles, and all your energy. To work in all kinds of weather, wearing sometimes a ski mask, sometimes just your underwear. Getting my hands and nose near cement was the only way I knew to understand what power—real power— was built on. It was when Francesco Iacomino died that I truly understood the workings of the building trade. He was thirty-three when they found him, in his overalls, on the ground at the intersection of Via Quattro Orologi and Via Gabriele D’Annunzio in Ercolano. He had fallen from a scaffolding. After the accident everyone fled, even the

draftsman. No one called an ambulance for fear that it would arrive before they got away. So they left him lying in the street, still alive, spitting blood from his lungs. The news of yet another death, one of the three hundred construction workers who die every year on Italy’s building sites, pierced my insides.”

Saviano, 2006, p.415-416

OTHER RURAL STRATEGIES

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The 1968 Belice earthquake destroyed a small commune in the Province of Trapani in the southwestern Sicily. The restoration of the historic city began in 1982 with a focus on reorganising urban structure by Álvaro Siza and Roberto Collovà. Political and administrative reasons, however, slowed down the process. The city's structure was transformed by redesigning the system of connections: new routes and passageways. Actions included paving stairs, streets, installing lamps, and installing balustrades. During a recent earthquake, the church on top of the hill, which stood on the site of a former Arab settlement, remained in ruins. Instead of rebuilding the church, the architects raised the platform of the cathedral and paved it with Trapani stone, built several pillars on the

site where the church's pillars actually stood. With this action, they created the focal point of the urban center. The architect rebuilt routes once existed, adding new urban elements. The team of archeologists and anthropologists also were part of urban renewal defining levels, investigating the pre-existing spatial component.⁴⁴



Fig.112 Traces of the severe earthquake

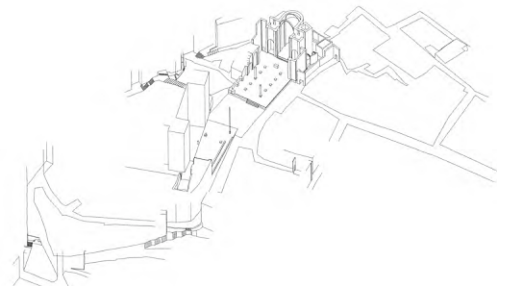


Fig.113 Isometric view of urban renewal

⁴⁴ Schittich, 2003, p.38-41



Fig.114 Transformed public space-Piazza Alicia

Alpbach forum

In 1945, Otto Molden, a Viennese student and Simon Moser, a lecturer in philosophy in Innsbruck, had an idea to bring renewal to intellectual life with a base in a small Tyrolean village in Austria. In order to stimulate open and constructive dialogue about the future of European issues and promote knowledge exchange, an interdisciplinary community who share the same interest but are from the different backgrounds is formed. In the years that followed, the idea of the gathering in Alpbach has continued to this day. Through this, Forum Alpbach seeks to foster a better understanding of the challenges facing Europe and to identify potential solutions. By becoming a member of the forum, individuals can participate in discussions that could shape the future of Europe. Furthermore, Forum Alpbach also

organises conferences and events to bring together experts and stakeholders to discuss relevant topics and promote constructive deliberation. As such, Forum Alpbach is a vital platform for advancing the discussion of European issues and creating a brighter future. Such examples could be a powerful tool bringing together like-minded at one place at the same time. The gathering has continued to be an important part of Austrian cultural life for more than 75 years, which now has more than 4,000 participants. August is the month reserved for these events, which includes variety of events such as exhibitions, concerts and lectures. This is a great example of how rural small villages can become a symbol of social cohesion, promoting dialogue about important topics.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ EFA, n.d.



Fig.115 First participants of Alpbach forum



Fig.116 Recent gatherings

My Villages

The MY Villages foundation is based in the Netherlands and was founded in 2003 by Kathrin Böhm (UK/DE), Wapke Feenstra (NL) and Antje Schiffers (DE). The work of this artistic group is based on multidisciplinary research, questioning the relationship between rural and urban, as well as exploring new ways to work with local resources, culture, and production. In villages around the world, they organize international and trans-local projects with temporary or permanent stay.⁴⁶

They collaborated with Private Works and Grizedale Arts on the International Village Shop in 2007. It is a network of communities developing products such as Horsemilk soap (Friesland/NL), to Frogbutterpoons (Upper Frankonia, Ger), Caravan Pots (Ballykinlar, Northern Ireland) to Ittinger Ei (Kartause Ittingen, CH) and Ohner Linen (Ohne, Ger).

Based on local knowledge, skills and resources, the community determines what type of goods best describes its village. The website, which was created in 2010, offers insight into production, trade, and distribution of goods. Besides improving the economy, products also strengthen the local community, culture, and facilitate the exchange of differences and similarities with other communities.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ My villages, n.d.

⁴⁷ Internation Village Shop, n.d.

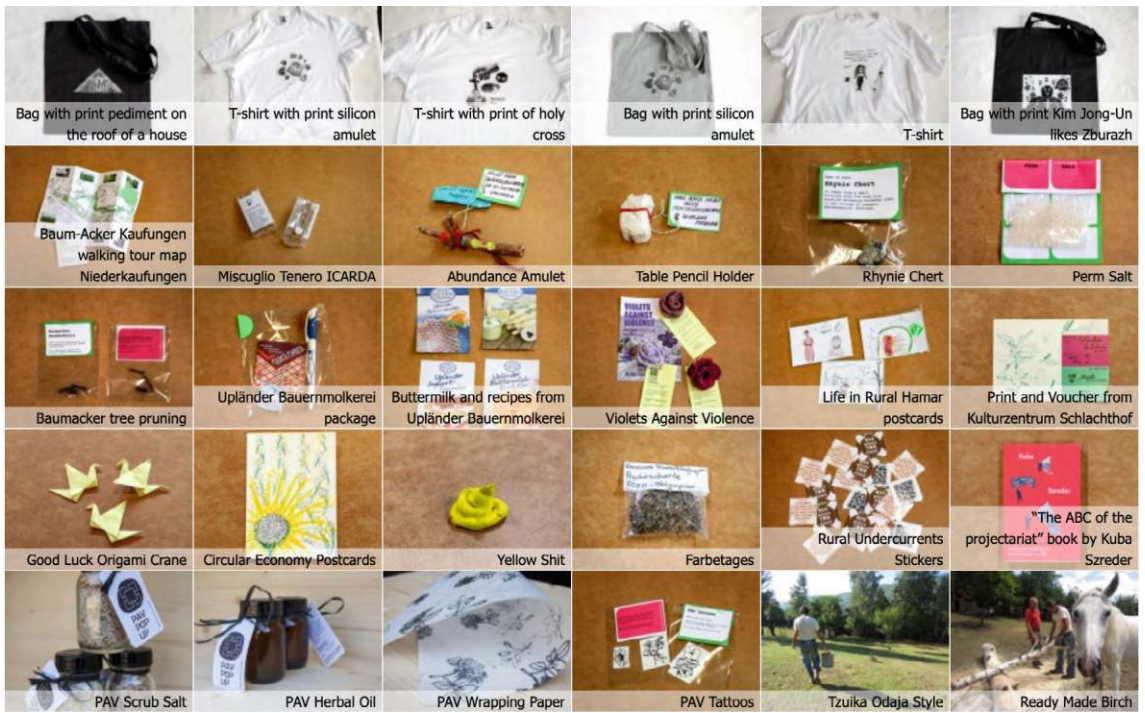


Fig.117 Unique village products

DA: The Upper Vinschgau

Upper Vinschgau citizens cooperative in Mals, South Tyrol, is a not-profit organisation whose members include citizens and entrepreneurs who are committed to making Upper Vinschgau a more sustainable region. Located in the north of Italy, at the border with Austria and Switzerland along the Etsch river valley, this area belongs to western part of South Tyrol, characterised by intensive agricultural use, such as cow husbandry, cereal cultivation and vegetable and fruit cultivation. One of the main goal is to create new economic model based in an organic, sustainable area, without the use of chemical synthetic pesticides, local resources, by supporting the local community, and responding to its needs. This civic cooperative generates projects in various sectors, including agriculture and forestry, handicrafts, trade and services, tourism and hospitality, culture and education, tourism and innovation, regional development and landscape, and the social

part. Their operation is based on a couple of principles; which include cooperation, sustainability, endogenous resources, resilience, regional cycles, cooperation of the public sector, as well as the opening of new and quality jobs in the regions. A holistic approach and the participation of as many locals as possible can lead to the development of a this region.⁴⁸

“We build on the people and resources of the region. We strengthen local cycles and social cohesion. We are here. Wir sind da.”

DA:The Upper Vinschgau



Fig.118 Celebrating the landscape

⁴⁸ DA: The Upper Vinschgau

The Cheese Factory Prad

The Upper Vinschgau Citizens' Cooperative committed itself to preserving cheese production in the dairy village Prad, which has had a tradition of 100 years. This project emphasises quality, sustainability, and collaboration. The project was considered ecologically and economically sustainable development of this valley, generating high-quality jobs, as well as organic goat cheese made from goat milk of high quality, ensuring agricultural farms' future. Organic dairy re-launched in 2019 in a partnership with farmers and experts. The plan also involves selling vouchers in advance, with the proceeds used to start the business. A voucher purchase cost €200, which entitles you to 33 vouchers. Each voucher comes with 200 grams of organic goat cheese from this valley, or you can purchase other organic products from this area.



Fig.119 Supporting local produce

"The more we make examples of solidarity-based, sustainable economic activity a reality in the region, the more sustainable our region becomes and the more we show that the necessary change is possible."

Armin Bernhard, Board member of the citizens' cooperative



Fig.120 Cheese production

Robida

Robida is a collective based in Topolo, Friuli Venezia Giulia a small town on the Slovenian-Italian border with an elevation of 500meters. The landscape of Topolo features a characteristic terraced pattern, supported by dry stone walls. Only 22 people remain in Topolo today, down from almost 400 residents at the beginning of the 20th century. This association focuses on theoretical research, but has moved to Topolo to practice from the site, to revitalize and open new spaces, and to take care of this place. Topolo-related topics include abandonment, silence, forest, domesticity, wildness, and landscape.



Fig.121 Panorama of Topolo

49 Robida, n.d.

Robida Magazine is a multilingual publication that has been published once a year since 2015. Furthermore, Robida collective conducts workshops, radio programs, research walks, field work, and symposiums. As a part of their efforts to maintain relations with faraway people and to spread awareness about marginalized places, they created Radio Robida as well. Robida projects also have physical components. They also opened a place for the community of Topolo residents, but likewise for the people who visit this place. Academy of Margins is one of the latest projects. It is a learning platform designed to stimulate mutual exchange between contemporary artists, curators, and thinkers.⁴⁹



Fig.122 Robida magazine





Fig.123 New collective space of hospitality



Fig.124 Radio station



Fig.125 Academy of Margins



Fig.126 Robida community

"Robida is a curatorial group for long term projects connected to landscape and the place of Topolò.

Robida is commitment, dedication, concreteness, care and responsibility.

Robida is a way of learning from scratch to take care of one's dreams.

Robida is a group of people with a great sense of community.

Robida is a platform for creating a place of belonging.

Robida is a space where to dig deeper into things.

Robida is a place for observation and reflection.

Robida is a project to connect people.

Robida is a place to experiment.

Robida is a laboratory.

Robida is relationships.

Robida is a cure."

Robida, n.d.

Brave New Alps

Brave New Alps is collective based in small commune Rovereto in Trentino in northern Italy. Bianca Elzenbaumer and Fabio Franz formed this cultural association in 2005. Their participatory design projects question political, social, and environmental issues. A result of their work includes spaces for creation, learning, and exchange, community building, workshops, conferences, writing, and publishing research. Their current projects are La Foresta, Comunità Frizzante, Alpine Community Economies Lab and Mapping Eco-Social Design.⁵⁰

Forno vagabodno is a mobile social oven, with the concept of riding an electric cargo bike through the Lagarina (Italian: Vallagarina) valley, the idea is to emphasize the interconnected nature of the world of fungi, microbes, insects, infrastructure, land, agriculture, and all the relationships involved in the process of making

sourdough bread and sharing it. Their goal is to encourage social interaction. Through common topics such as biodiversity, local care, joint work such as bread baking, sustainability, we intend to create a network of bakers, social, cultural, and agricultural associations.⁵¹

"It is a tool for raising awareness of ecological interweaving, a bridge to make abstract issues tangible through the shared practices of sourdough bread making. This is not done through long speeches, but through stimulating questions, through prefigurative politics, the shared collective fermenting of bread and thus the possibilities of literally putting one's hands into new narratives, dough or rather "bread". The mobile oven is therefore not only a space to bake breads, but futures of (more-than-) human coexistence."

Rural Commons Assembly

⁵⁰ Brave New Alps, n.d.

⁵¹ Rural Commons Assembly, n.d.



IN CONVERSATION WITH...

BIANCA ELZENBAUMER

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Social innovations

In conversation with Bianca Elzenbaumer, one of the founders of the Brave New Alps collective, the focus was on explaining the concept of social innovation which underlies the work of the association. Social innovation is described through the description of their work, including what forms of social interaction are necessary for sustainable development, good management, and improved living in the Alps. Bianca speaks about her experience working in both rural and urban contexts in the Alps. The collective is based primarily in the Lagarina valley, which is a mountainous region with side valleys that only attract a small percentage of the population. Emigration is one of the subjects they deal with when they go to the side valleys. They chose this location because they encountered resistance and misunderstandings with the local administration regarding their social innovations. *“When we talk to the mayor or deputy mayor, it’s too abstract for them; their faces are expressionless when we talk to them and for now we can’t get over it. So we moved our base of operations to Rovereto, a town of 40,000 inhabitants, and we had an amazing experience with the municipality*



Fig.128 Zoom conversation with Bianca Elzenbaumer

there; in fact, the door was open; they had an understanding of social innovation. Our traditional way is to bring in new actors, whose voices have not been heard as much, new methods of negotiation, new methods of gathering and discussion, and methods that enable the creativity of many different stakeholders. When we work in the city, there is much more openness. I think we work especially hard in the village where we live. We have a village in our migration area where we have various young mayors, from 28 to 35 years old; some of them are architects, but they have different ideas about what can be done in these valleys. This issue of migration is more fluid in our area, so the migration is from the side valley to the central city, and people would still migrate back and forth. It is a continuum; people are gone in their daily lives, but they may still spend weekends in the places where they grew up."

Bianca Elzenbaumer

Temporary or permanent residence

The difference between these two types of residences is something that characterizes the way of life of the people in this area, according to Bianca. Some people, including the elderly,

view their home as more than just a village. As an example, Bianca cites a 70-year-old lady, she meets every day on the bus who only goes to Rovereto for shopping, drinks coffee there, and takes the last bus home. By bus, the distance between the side valley and the main valley is about 40 minutes. The old lady believes that her community consists of the people around her in her village, the people she meets every day on her journey, and the people she meets in Rovereto. Bianca wants to clarify that one man actually inhabits a much larger territory than his own village. It is through leaving, coming, exchanging experience, feelings with other people that you form a rather large teaching within your community. She also has a community in her village, in the city, in the international community, and everywhere else she lives, works, contributes, and cares for.

Comunita Frizzante

To find out more about the beginnings of Comunita Frizzante whose slogan is "We make drinks to create a community", what approach and who were the protagonists, we find out how such a project is possible to realise from conception to completion. The Lagarina valley itself serves as a generator of connecting people, not just an economic model.

"We come up with an idea of what we want to

do, and then we start telling that idea to others. We have a lot of meetings with people from different fields. Persistence is very important; it takes some time for an idea to become a reality. With Comunita Frizzante, we want to come with tools so that drinking can involve people in the discussion of regional development issues. The main question was: What does the valley taste like? As a result of discussions about taste, about changes in agriculture, what is still enjoyed and what is not, as well as how they envision the future, ideas for the production of drinks were born.”

Bianca Elzenbaumer

At the beginning, all members were involved in the realisation of this project, but today the project is run by three people, Carlo, an agroecologist who knows how to produce drinks and sell them, Ciara, a social worker who grew up locally and speaks the dialect, as well as two female social service volunteers who are passionate about nutrition. Drinks are produced twice a month and sold locally



Fig.129 Comunità Frizzante

“ Siamo tutti ingredienti unici in grado di creare una comunità gustosa e diversificata...”



Fig.130 Diverse communicates in drink production

or in museums, restaurants, social centers, cafes and bars, even in Rome and Milan. It was necessary to find a food laboratory and register for food production in order to produce drinks, but each project comes with a growing network of people who help. This project involved 18 different partners. The Comunità Frizzante project took two and a half years before they opened their first bottle. They map resources, information, and actors, and they want to first see how to do something without money. There is a saying that they have: “No money, no problem”, says Bianca. They say this is an impossible idea because no one will pay for it. Over a three-year period, they received €140,000 from the local banking foundation Caritro and 10,000 from the government.

La Foresta

La Foresta is a community academy very important project for them, located at the Rovereto train station. They worked for 4 years and had a budget €25,000. A kind of platform for sharing, this academy is the engine for everything else, at the train station, for self-organizing social work. The Rovereto station serves the other villages, which have about 80,000 residents, which is very important to them. Since there aren't many attractive jobs in the valleys, it is very important for them to remain together as a group and support each other. "With all our projects, one of the most important things is that we want to work in this valley for at least 40 years. What if we are stubborn and stay for years? I didn't do projects in which something changes instantly, everything takes time. It's been 7 years since we've been here and we're already seeing changes."

Bianca Elzenbaumer



Fig.131 Community Academy on the train station

The Mietshäuser Syndikat: Self organised living

A rather interesting example of developing housing takes us to Germany, where The Mietshäuser Syndikat, an organisation formed in 1989 in Freiburg Grether Project, managed to successfully accommodate 260 inhabitants over a 17 project initiatives.

It could be summed up that with this type of projects there are emerging new communities of people eager to transform empty or endangered houses into their homes. The vision is that every house could be a self-organising team that will deal with their own individual affinities or problems rather than a major developer serving them already tightly packed units. With that, each project can develop its own vision and work from its own perspective. All dwellers are moved by the same goal, and that is a wish for a home in which their lives and spaces can evolve independently. The question of funding is naturally a big subject because every project has to find their own sources,

which can be difficult as many legal subjects such as loan or construction activities are unknown to the initiators. For a consequence, each project has a challenging start with problems that have to be manoeuvred, but the position changes itself in time and the results are most often satisfying. Usually the funding is consisted of 48% bank loans, 45% direct loans and 7% self-funding. The beginning is usually followed by difficult construction phase with a lot of consultations, economic deficits because of the high initial interest rates which can result in higher rent prices in the first years. However, this is balanced after the project is established and has paid off a part of the loan, which then produces fairly low rents and surpluses. With every new project, the network of contacts and organisations is widened and new projects can be more involved in political disputes and funding opportunities.⁵²

⁵² The Mietshäuser Syndikat, n.d.

Vielseitenhof – Leben auf dem Land
GmbH
Hauptstr. 2
14822 Brück OT Trebitz
033844 729468
info@vielseitenhof.de
www.vielseitenhof.de

Living in the countryside

Vielseitenhof is project of the Mietshäuser Syndikat in the Brück, town in the Potsdam-Mittelmark district, in Brandenburg, Germany. Residents of this house run together a farm café and guest rooms. The house is in the Hotel Fläming Nature Park, attracting nature lovers, trail riders of cyclists. They offer two double guest rooms in the building, each with own bother and can be booked all year round. Recognising resources and balancing between work and leisure in constant contact with nature is one of the inspiring examples of possible business start-ups in rural regions for people who want to live in the countryside.

“We live in the country with our children – growing and fading to the rhythm of the season. Plants and all sorts of creatures populate the garden or come to visit; The crickets chirp in the tall grass and the birds sing from the stream below. Under the wild



Fig.132 Community of Vielseitenhof

rose roof behind the old gatehouse wall, neighbours join those from further afield and fortify themselves with organic cakes, fair-trade coffee and top-fermented beer; At the top, well-traveled cyclists can rest their tired heads in white pillows. We laugh and we argue with each other, we love and we part, and sometimes, in the evenings under the apricot tree, we can listen to the time as it passes quietly. ”

Residents of Vielseitenhof

Founded in 2009
Building plot: 3,600m²
Living space: 245m²
Costs: €530,000
Rent: 5.90€/m²

COMUNITÀ RURALE



Fig.133 Morning in the Zungoli

What do rural areas offer?

How can the countryside be made a better place for people to live, work, and create, including education, infrastructure, culture, mobility, and health?

How to improve life of local population?

What can new social cohesions look like?

What kind of jobs can be created or shifted to the rural areas?

How to attract investors? How to stimulate micro-economy?

How to attract new residents?

How to reactivate abandoned spaces?

How could the digital technology be used in order to revive those places?

How to create new ways of mobility?

What could the connection between the city and countryside look like in the future?

Shifting the focus from urban to rural territories, which are far from each other, and analysing contemporary issues of these areas, is the main subject of this work. These areas are valuable by possessing cultural heritage, unique features and resources, whose material differentiates this area from European urban structures. The topics we will deal with include the current problems of the countryside, abandonment, possibility of the balance between the countryside and the city, between leisure and work through creating new prototypes for creating jobs, new social cohesion, using social capital as a main force, transforming abandoned building materials, improving and extending mobility and strengthening already developed infrastructure with new mobility functions. This project raises the question about territory, identity, periphery, centralisation and decentralisation, shrinking and transformation, showing potential for a future development. How to create new jobs, boost the economy,

reactivate abandoned spaces and to bring life back to an entire territory in the long run. Each village has certain resources, but the common resource is the beauty of the landscape, good air quality, isolation of urban sprawl, and there is no perfect and quick response to the problem of shrinking villages. Observing the rural area as a canvas for experimentation is a big process, and it opens up the question of freedom, how and where we want to live. Morcone and other areas of Campania belong to high-treasure regions, they survived the Irpinia earthquake in 1980. People had to move out, some buildings were restored, but it is necessary to think about transformation. Transforming the urban structure of each village requires a careful analysis of the material itself. Many houses remain abandoned, the inhabitants died, there are no heirs, therefore there is a risk of neglecting of the cultural heritage. It is necessary to include the residents who are left, who care about the community

and attract the new ones. It is the community that should decide about the future of a village, where the privatisation of the village will be suppressed, and individual investors will not be allowed to transform the village into what best suits their profit. Many leave the village due to inadequate local government management. Creating an interdisciplinary team by using traditional and professional tools, where the community will get a platform for discussion, for creating ideas, forging new connections. Dealing only with the tourist aspect avoids the question of rights. The tourist effect surpasses projects aimed at creating jobs, public spaces, training and educational activities for all age groups. International tourists mostly visit the famous villages of Tuscany or Umbria, but what about the marginalised hill towns of the Apennine Mountains? It takes constant investment and a lot of effort for lesser-known areas, which are also valuable.

The village does not respond to the needs of the inhabitants. The population is shrinking, but the elderly population is growing. Many of them remained alone, invisible, on the edges of existence, deprived of many services. Creating opportunities for employment in isolated regions is also possible through the development of services for the people in their 60s or older. Creation of necessary skills for future work. Traditional crafts could revive. If we consider the ever-present artificial intelligence, we need to think about what skills people need to stay employed and what skills are worth cultivating. AI can help in efficiency and speed and make everyday life easier, but the focus of future jobs will be more on social connection and creative skills that will be shared.⁵³

⁵³ Rizzo, 2022



Fig.134 Panorama of Morcone



Fig.135 Landscape vista

Commune: Morcone

Province: Benevento

Region: Campania

Area: 101.33km²

Elevation: 680m

Population: 4,744

The commune of Morcone is a hilltop town, located on the slopes of the Matese mountain range. The Tammaro river flows through the valley and the Tammaro artificial lake is located nearby. The closest airport is in Naples, which is also 70km away, and the capital of Province of Benevento is about 31 km away or 33 minutes by car.

The name Morcone comes from the ancient Samnite city of Murganita or Mucrae, the ruins of which are located on top of the old town. The first mention of Morcone is in 776 AD, when it became an important centre in the Lombard kingdom. It was also the episcopal seat between the 11th and 12th centuries, after that period it received the title Civitas. It was an autonomous community during the Univeristas organization. In the 19th century the province Benevento was formed and since then the municipality of Morcone has been a part of that province.



Fig.136 Position of the Campania region

54 Istat, 2021

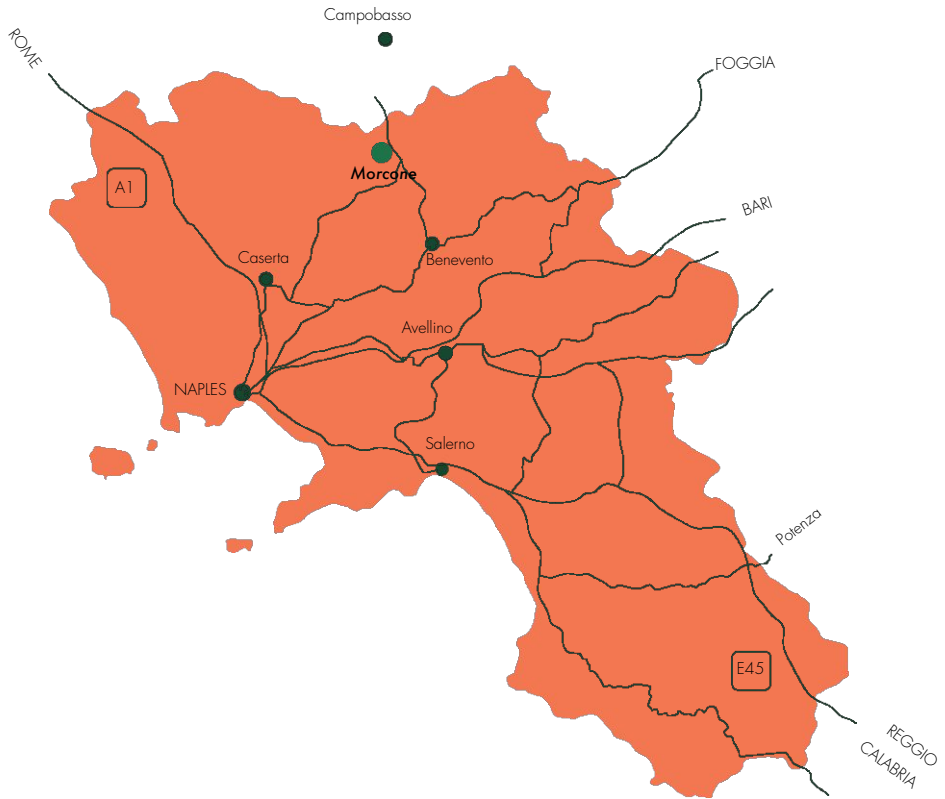


Fig.137 Position of the Morcone in Campania

Demographical development

The depopulation and outmigration phenomenon is also present in Morcone.

According to the graphs, the village had 9,578 residents at its peak in 1931. After that peak year, the population decreased drastically, almost by half, from 5,042 inhabitants in 2011.⁵⁵

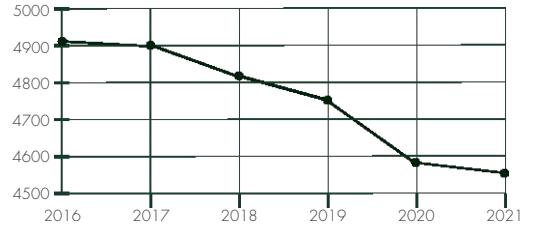


Fig.139 Population decline

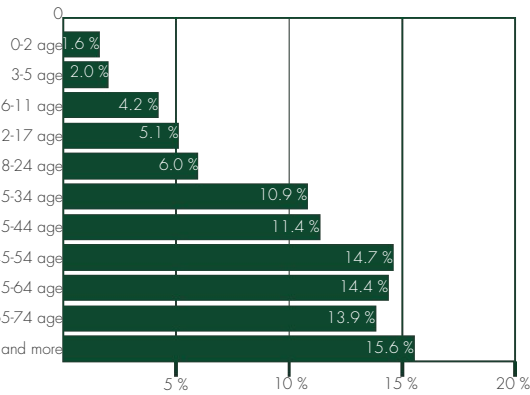


Fig.138 Age classes

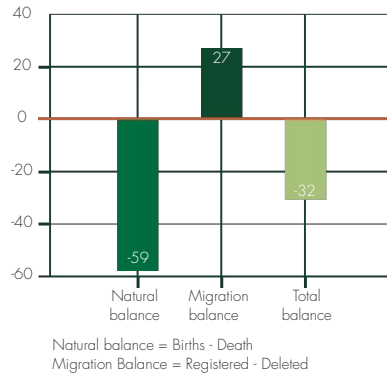


Fig.140 Demographic balance

⁵⁵ Istat, 2012



Fig.141, 142 Street atmosphere

Housing and prices

There are 3,445 housing units in the village. There are 310 houses built in 1918, 482 between 1919-1954, 758 houses were built between the 1940-1960, 620 houses between 1961-1970, 585 between 1971-1980, 413 between 1981-1990, 241 between 1991-2000 and 34 from 2000. Houses with six or more rooms and houses with two floors are the most common in the village. In today's market, a house can be rented from 3.48 €/m² to 6.70 €/m² or bought for from 241 €/m² to 1,112 €/m².⁵⁶

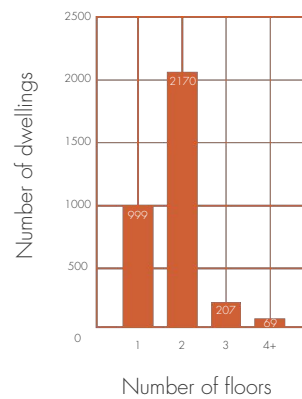
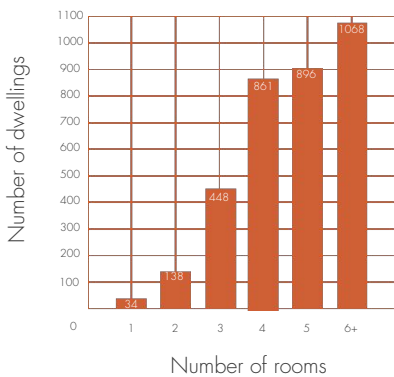


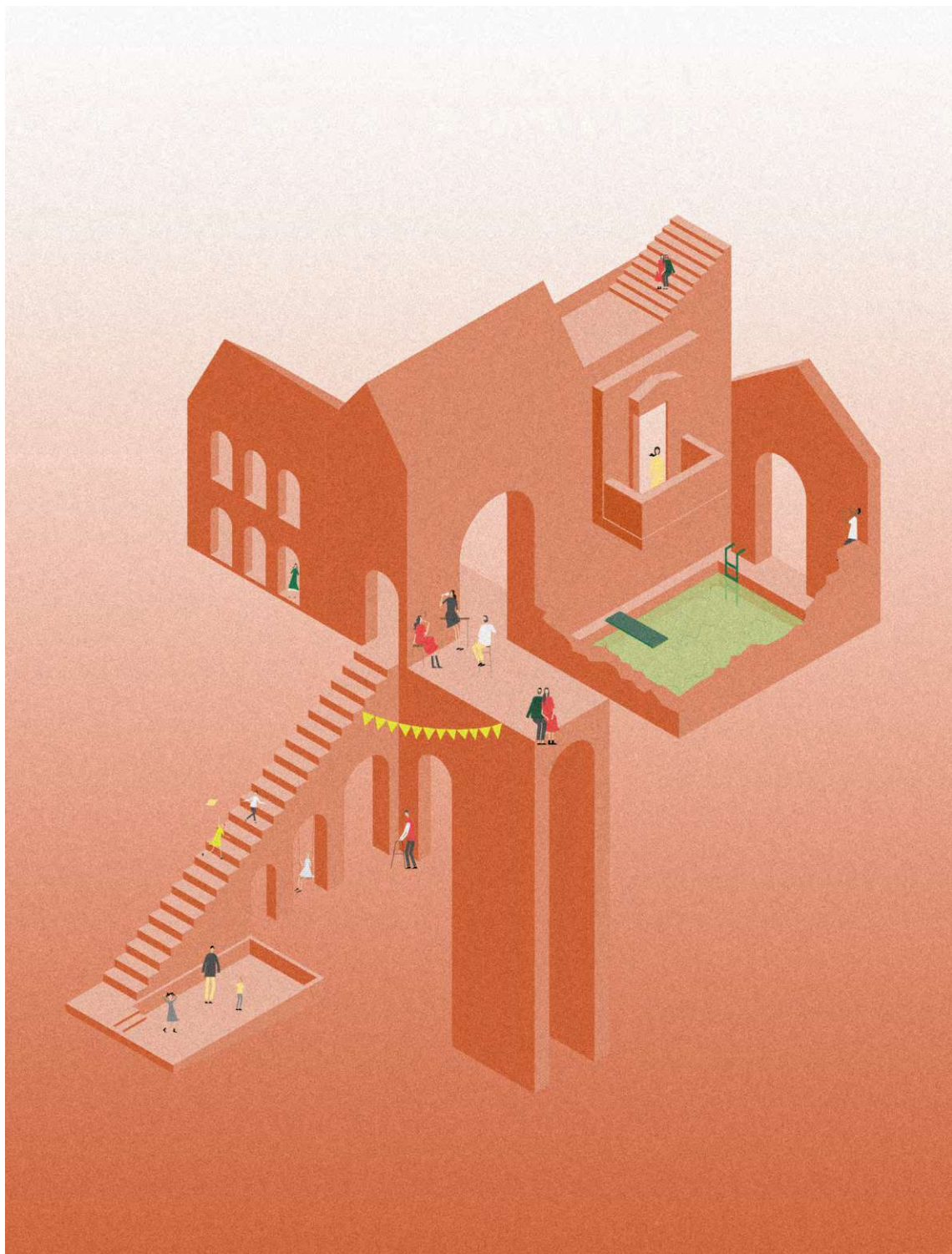
Fig.143, 144, 145 Property data analysis

⁵⁶ Immobiliare IT, 2023



Fig.146, 147 Houses in Morcone

Fig.148 Fragments of an Old Town



The urban structure of Morcone is an old town, which was surrounded by walls, except for the southern part, where La Prece is located, natural defence against enemies. It had six entrance doors: the Porta della Rocca, the Porta Stampatis, the Porta San Marco, the Porta Salvatis, the Porta S. Maria de Donatis and the Porta Sant'Angelo.⁵⁷ Porta San Marco is the only one left today, while the other are demolished due to the construction of the new access roads to the municipality. The fortress, square, and palace were the three largest urban agglomerations in Morcone by the turn of the 19th century. This centre is characterised by closely spaced houses and narrow streets paved with white local stone. As a result of the 1980 earthquake, much of the urban agglomeration was destroyed.

⁵⁷ La Bella Morcone, 2012



Fig.149 Old town of Morcone

Fig.150 Old Town





Churches

There are twenty two churches and two monasteries (Convento di Morcone Frati Cappuccini) in Morcone municipality, including eleven in the old town. Rather than a typological church structure with a bell tower and naves, the churches possess a simple structures. Many of them are no longer in function and remain closed. What could be a new adaptive reuse of the church?



Fig.151 One of the three churches where the Holy Mass is still held

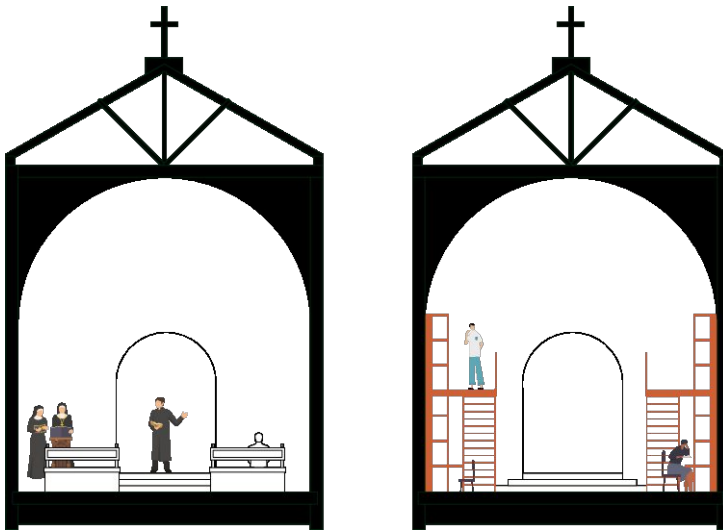


Fig.152 Adaptive reuse: Archive of knowledge, Bio-lab, Herbarium



Fig.153 Church St. Giovanni



Fig.154 Renovated church St. Bernadino da Sienna serves as community house today

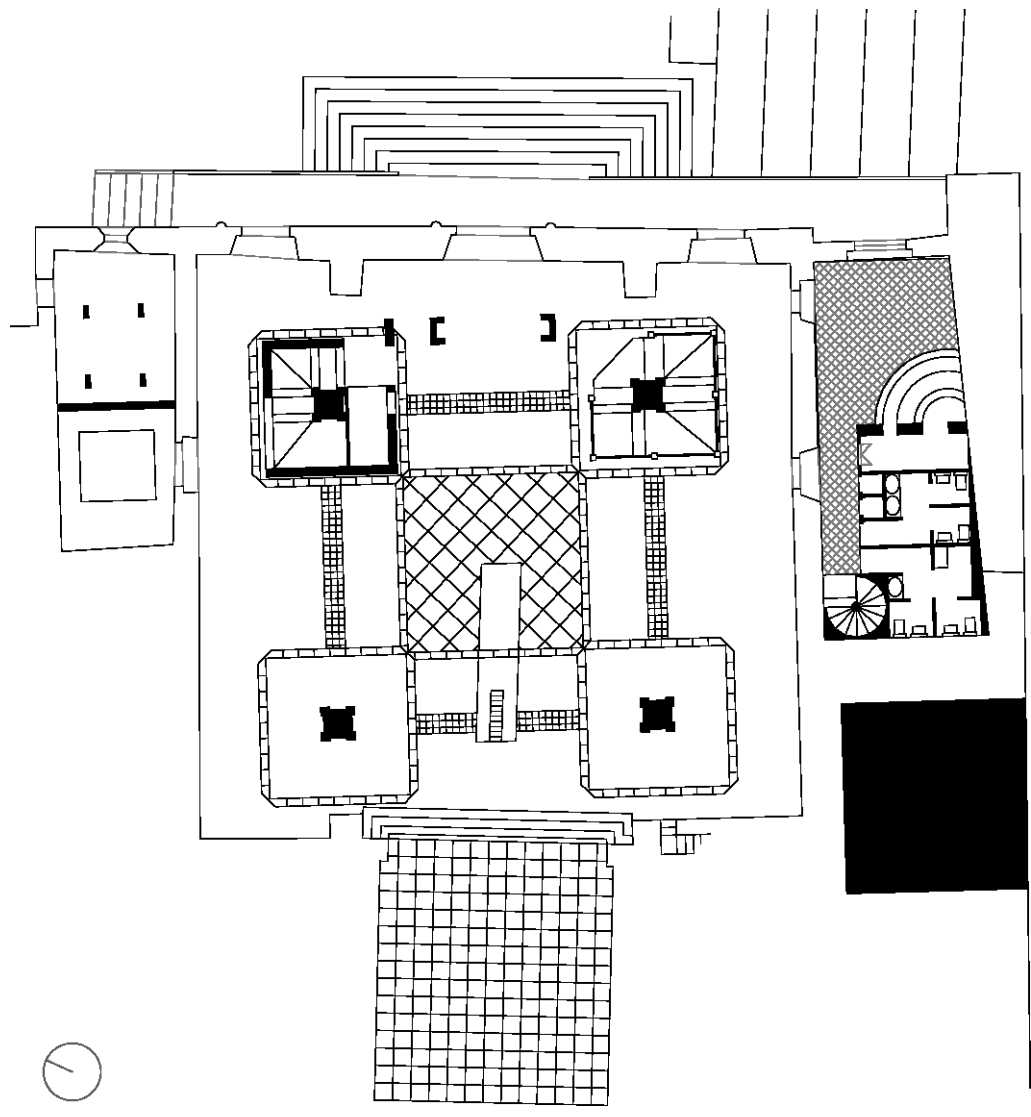


Fig.155 New pillars added in the process of the reconstruction



Fig.156 View from Bell tower

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Fig.157, 158 Church interior, the former church is used as an event space today

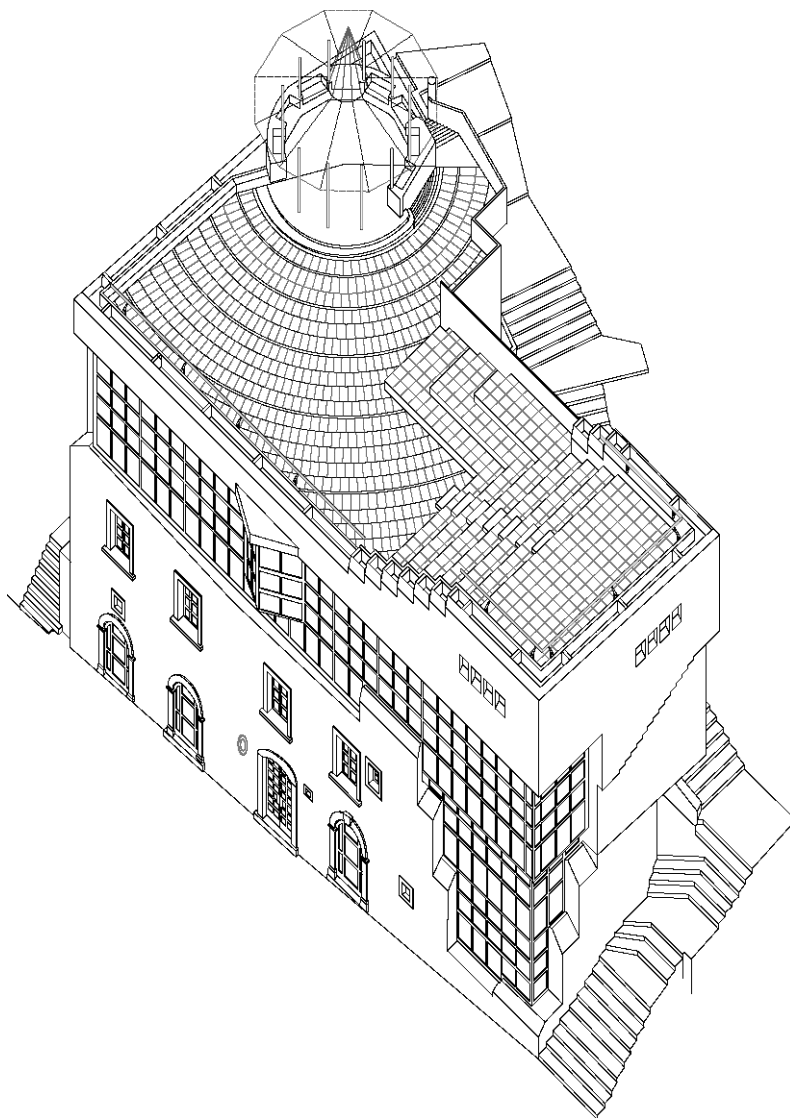


Fig.159 The new Municipal house in the Palazzo Isidoro di Nunzio



Fig.160 New and old fabric

Public space: Streets as communal living space

“Just as little should we ignore the fact that despite all the dematerialisation and spiritualisation euphoria, our world does not only consist of data and bits, of information and communication, but that people also need tangible objects for certain activities. You need a chair to sit down. To live in, a room. To stroll, a street or a square.”

Mitchell, 1999

There is a common element that defines medieval Italian hamlets: narrow streets and squares that form between densely placed houses, which are the essence and authenticity of these places. Based on the wider double doors and small windows in the ground floor area, we can conclude that the ground floor was mostly used for commercial purposes. It can also be seen as a communal extension of the public space. There are some houses, however, where people live on the ground floor, thus also having a strong connection to the public world. It creates dense structures

that are conducive to socialisation, movement, and a sense of closeness by intertwining narrow streets. Because of the narrowness of the streets and the number of steps, they cannot be used for traffic, but primarily for pedestrians. This is a quality that we cherish in cities such as Venice, where the absence of traffic is making the experience of the city just better. Using the street as already traffic-free zone is something that city dwellers strive for.

Squares and fountains

In Morcone, fountains served as public laundries and were an important part of urban furniture. Water was supplied by this aqueduct to the four main fountains in the squares, Pozzo, San Marco, San Barnardino, and Palazzo until 1800. As the second aqueduct was built at the beginning of the 1900s, it sprinkled several smaller fountains throughout the city. Old town houses were constructed in such a way that by

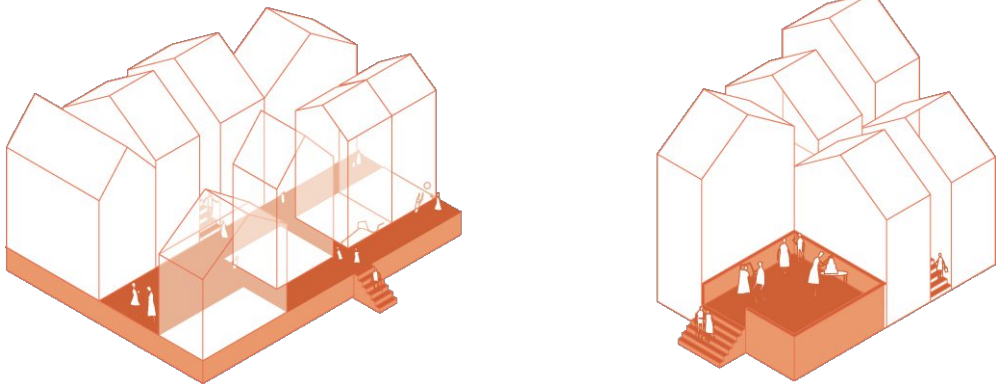


Fig.161 Narrow streets and squares as a valuable part of an Old Town

expanding the space between them, squares were formed. Fountains and squares are vital elements of socialisation in Italian cities. The already created network of public spaces is a great value for empowering a community, especially in today's world with a focus on virtual worlds. The structure of the old town unites the community through the proximity of the space.



Fig.162



Fig.163

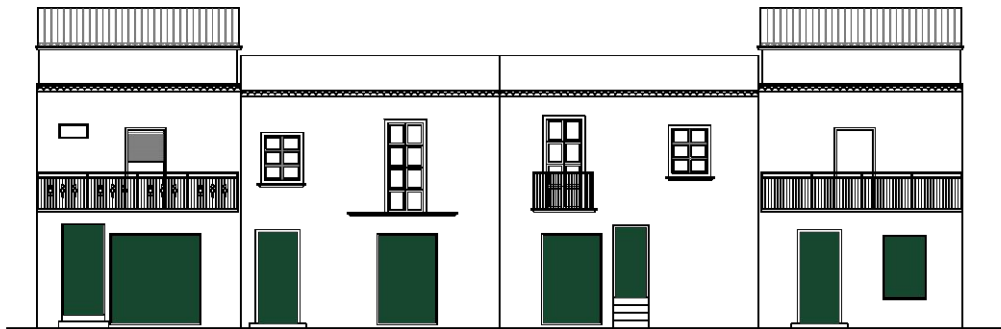


Fig.164 Activation of the vacant spaces on the ground floor by connecting it with a street: places for service, local supplies and trade

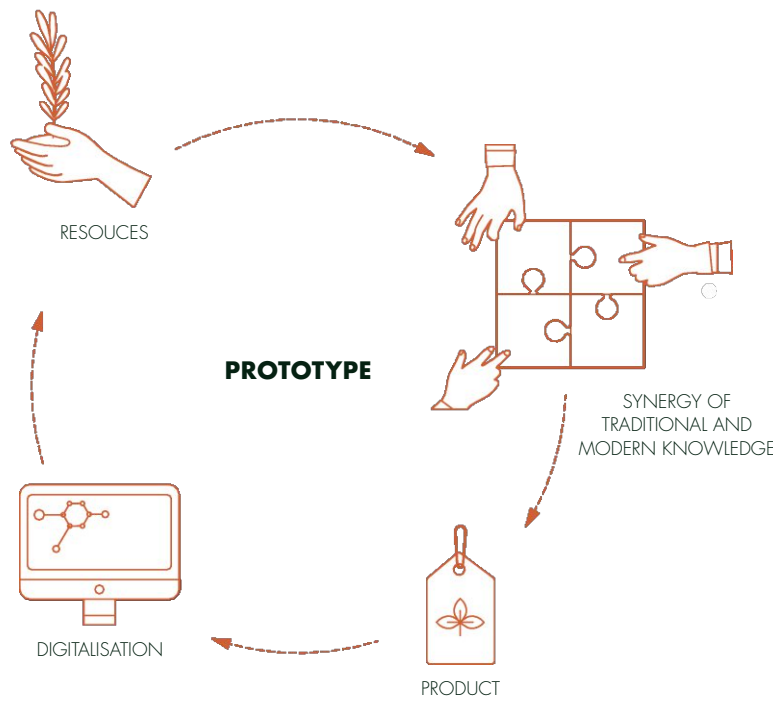


Fig.165 Ground floor as working spaces

SYMBIOTIC JOBS

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Fig.166 Symbiotic jobs



Digital Support

Digital Literacy in Italy

The goal of developing digital literacy is primarily to reduce the gap between urban and rural areas in order to avoid digital isolation. In Italian hamlets in the Apennines, the dominant demographic group is people aged 60+ or more, who use digital goods significantly less than young people. Digital skill have become an important element of our daily working life, therefore the EU aims to increase the percentage of people with basic digital skills to 80%, considering that the knowledge of basic skills is the right of all EU citizens.⁵⁸

Nearly 10 million Italians, one sixth of the total population, have never used the Internet. About 88% of rural Italy is covered by the Internet.⁵⁹ 90% of the professional role require a basic level of digital knowledge in Europe.⁶⁰

19.9%

Of adult population thought 5G wireless technology was a sophisticated way of controlling people's minds⁶¹

26.7%

Of people over 65s and families without children in 2011 think the Internet is useless and uninteresting⁶²

⁵⁸ European Commission, 2021, Massive boost in digital education

⁵⁹ Statista, 2023, Share of rural households with Internet access in Italy

⁶⁰ European Commission, 2023, Digital skill

⁶¹ Enough, 2021

⁶² Roe, n.d.

ITALY

83.6%

Of Italian use the Internet in 2023⁶³

45.6%

of people have at least basic digital skills ⁶⁵

EUROPE

89.2%

Of people in Eu use daily Internet in 2023⁶⁴

54%

of people in the 2021 aged 16 to 74 had
at basic digital skills ⁶⁶

⁶³ Statista, 2023, Internet usage penetration in Italy

⁶⁴ Internet World Stats, 2023

⁶⁵ Kralj, 2023, Italy Digital skills

⁶⁶ Eurostat, 2022, How many citizens had basic digital skills in 2021

“Rural digital hubs offer physical spaces with fast, reliable Internet access that provide a whole range of business and community support services in rural areas. The activities offered by digital hubs depend both on whether their target is business, the community, or both and whether they provide space or also specific services to their target groups. Most digital hubs cannot be categorised within a single category of activity, but carry out a combination of these.”

ENRD, 2017, *Revitalising rural areas through digitisation*, p.1

The first new residents of the city could be members of the digital hub, which could open the door for new start-up projects. The first houses that would be adapted could be work or meeting spaces just for these purposes.

“One of the main challenges was to change the ideas of young people in the area, to show them that they have services and support that can allow them to build a future in the local areas.”

Ibarra in ENRD 2017, p.11

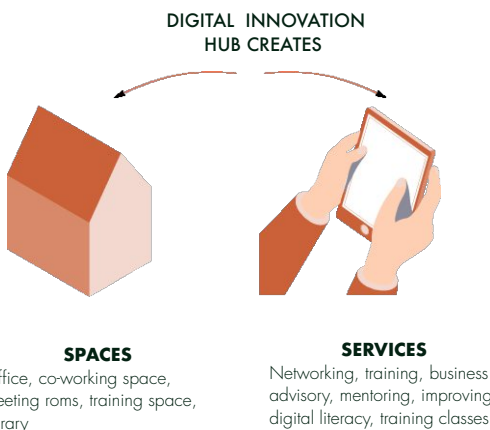


Fig.167

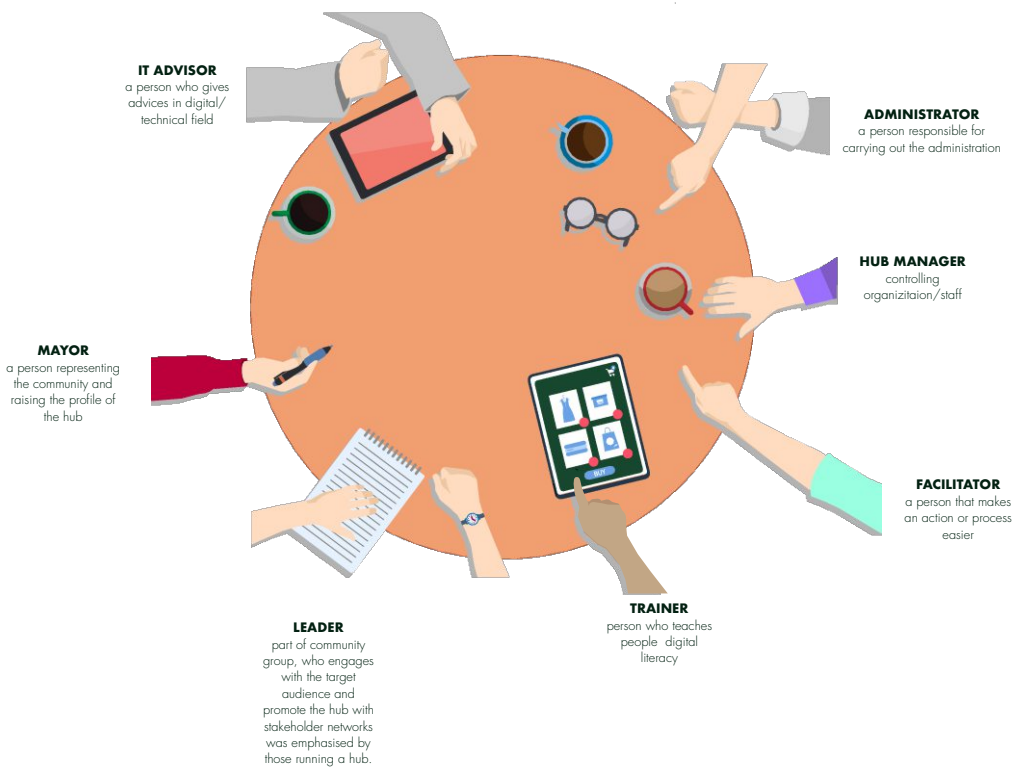


Fig.168 Round table with founders of Digital Hub



Greta, 65 years old, a pensioner

She has time to pursue a hobby that she learned from her mother and nurtured for years. Her idea is to pass on her knitting skills to other generations, but also to create her own product based on authentic materials and patterns from Campania. She does not want to go to a bigger city but to stay in her hometown of Morcone, but her main obstacle is placing the product on the market. In the digital hub, she received appropriate support to use digital services that will connect her with customers. There she meets two designers from Naples, and they start working on the project together.



Alice, 31 years old, a graphic designer

They met at a university in Naples and they share a common love for nature and idyllic places so it would be ideal for them to be able to work in a different environment for a part of the year and escape city life. They had the idea to test indigenous materials and make sustainable pieces of clothing that they would later sell online. Through the Internet, they found the digital hub in Morcone and decided to visit it. Their attention was attracted by the offer of the digital hub, which referred to the low rent price and the free space for work. Alice and Antonio use digital technology, however, they receive support in business management and how to produce their product best.



Antonio, 28 years old, a textile designer



Matteo, 46 years old, an olive oil producer

His wish is to market his products and to make a better use of large quantities of biological waste during the production of olive oil as a resource for obtaining energy. For his idea, he needs support from the digital hub in order to find experts with whom he could develop the patent. He would be happy to make the house he inherited from his parents available to future scientists in the residence.

Fig.169 Protagonists



Rosa, 37 years old, an engineer

She already has a team in Naples that deals with the collection of biological waste, recycling and circular economy, consisting of a chemist and a mechanical engineer. In the absence of biological resources in the city, the offer coming from Marcone sounds tempting to her because they call for the creation of new patents from biological waste. In the digital hub, he meets Matteo, a local, with whom she begins cooperation in the form of testing new uses and benefits from waste.



Francesco, 51 years old, a bioengineer

He is a professor at the Faculty of Natural Sciences in Naples. His research topic is biodiversity and its impact on our health. They have an idea to map and investigate different types of microbes, fungi, insects and how they work. In cooperation with the digital hub, he gets the opportunity to stay with his students for a certain period of time and the opportunity to stay in contact with his colleagues in the city.



Sofia, 42 years old, a plant scientist

The goal is to improve the biodiversity of conventional agricultural fields in order to explore new ways of sustainable food production, which does not have a bad impact on the environment. The potential of the fertile soil of Campania has been less and less exploited after the disappearance of the farming profession. The digital hub offers the possibility of creating an interdisciplinary society made up of locals, who will offer traditional knowledge and scientists who will research prototypes.

One of the main resources of rural regions is the landscape. The landscape not only has the characteristic of beauty but can also serve as resource on which new jobs can be created. The lab will investigate endemic species that can be used as sustainable materials for the production of clothing. The entire process of

design and production will involve young people who have good digital skills, and on the other hand, older people who have traditional skills or knowledge of traditional styles, patterns and techniques. Digital technology helps the promotion and sale of products and can make communication between users easier.

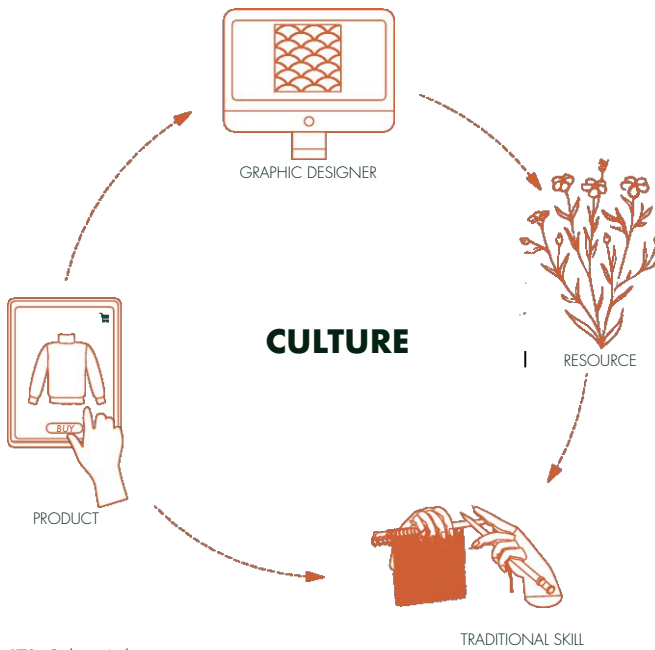


Fig.170 Culture Lab



Greta
a pensioner



Alice,
a graphic designer



Antonio,
a textile designer

Italy is one of the leaders in the production of olive oil in the European Union. About 1.1 million hectares of land is for cultivating the olives for the production of oil. The South of Italy is the leader in the olive oil production.⁶³ However only 20% of the olive fruit is used for oil production, the other 80% is waste. This waste or pomace contains large amounts of antioxidants that, when placed in a pile, cause the growth of microbes, which the soil cannot enclose. Waste from the production of olive oil

can be used as a source of renewable energy, or hydrogen fuel. Hydrogen is a natural gas that can be used in heating systems. Producing a more sustainable source of energy allows us to reduce the use of fossil fuels, which are large producers of carbon dioxide that creates the greenhouse effect, thus causing global warming. Association of agricultural workers, engineers, innovators, enthusiasts, permanent and temporary workers will create social synergy and driving force for this kind of job.

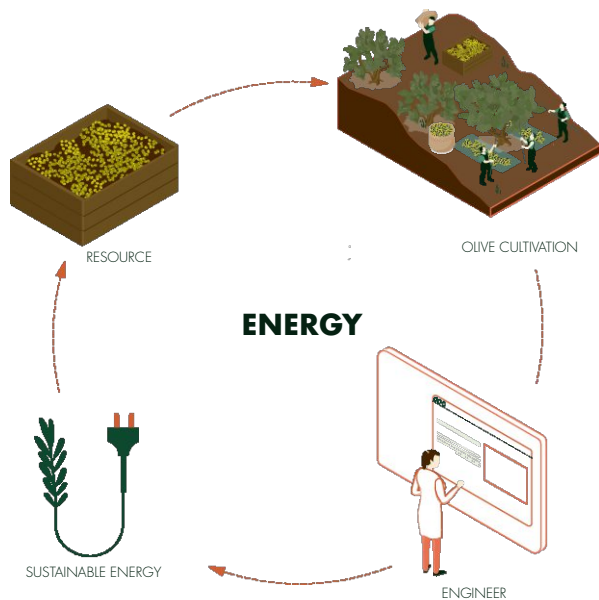
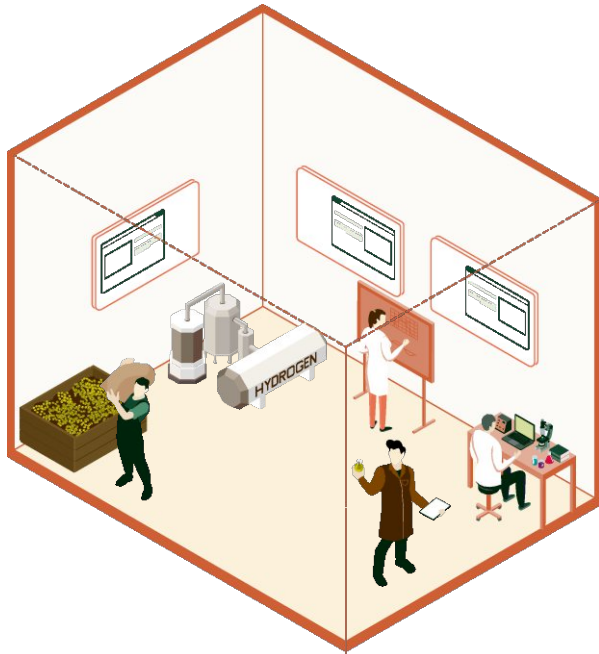


Fig.171 Energy Lab

67 Statista, 2022, Olive oil industry in Italy



Beatrice,
a botanist



Matteo,
an olive oil producer



Rosa,
an engineer

Artificial intelligence is a current topic that Yuval Noah Harari talks about as the uncertainty of our human future, the assumption of dominant power by machines. Systems of functioning in one ecosystem, such as swarm intelligence, that is collective behaviour of self-organised systems, are the main models for developing artificial systems, such as artificial intelligence. Landscape is characterised by a diverse and rich ecosystem: plants, animals, other organism in which every living thing has its own role.

This lab investigates the patterns of behaviour of biological systems, herd intelligence, known among bees, ants and mushrooms, and it is used in work on artificial intelligence. Change of focus from cities as synonyms of knowledge to villages as new laboratories of research, in cooperation with people whose job it is to raise bees for example, then experts in their fields build a society that will be based on non-traditional connections.

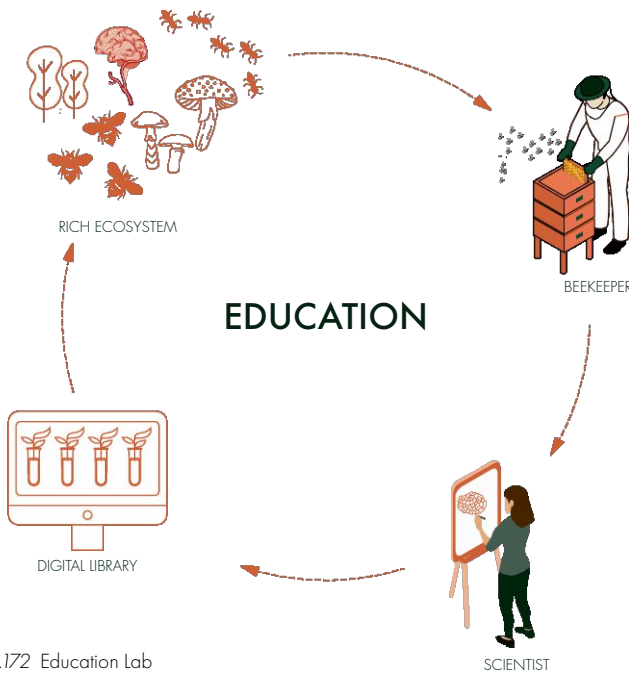


Fig.172 Education Lab



Luca,
a beeper



Francesco,
a bioengineer



Sofia,
a plant scientist

CONSTRUCTIVE SUPPORT

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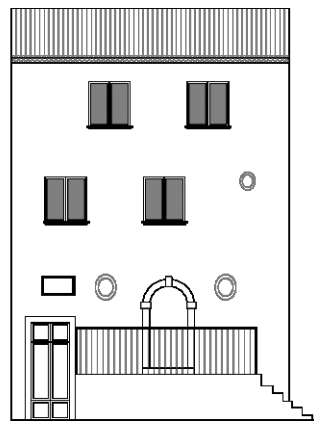
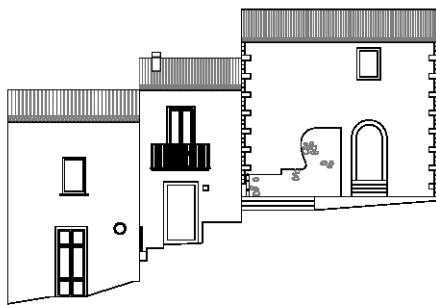
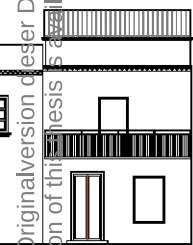
Building substance found in the old town of Morcone, the silhouette of the village should remain unchanged because it is something that characterises every hamlet. Qualities such as a sense of security, curiosity, narrow passages and anticipation of what each next street will bring are the main values of these villages. The idea of the project is to transfer that atmosphere and logic of functioning to the interior spaces as well. This is firstly and primarily achieved by ensuring and supporting in a constructive sense. Unique stone walls, which have an undoubted value, in many cases begin to deteriorate over time, while the professional workforce that would reconstruct them is increasingly rare. It is necessary to strengthen the structure against unpredictable seismological activities. As a result, an additional layer of support is added on the inside so that the exterior appearance of the site remains maximally preserved. On the inside, this gesture allows the creation of a second layer of the wall, which, in addition

to security, can provide additional insulation improvements and a place for the integration of the new necessary technology. As a result, the interior gets an additional volume that enables diverse spaces that are reflected on the outside, from individual niches as workplaces to connecting corridors, closets, etc. The character of the street and its spontaneous meetings is strengthened by the additional factor of common living. Row houses, following the landscape line, as an inevitable element of the hamlet, are given the opportunity to connect special units both horizontally and vertically. The most characteristic typology of houses is a two-story house with an entrance from the street. By scaling the support system, one sequence of three houses can get the central house as the core of joint activities, while the other two serve as individual spaces. This also enables the common life of different age groups. For elderly lonely people, it can provide a little help in everyday challenges,

while it gives new residents the opportunity of an integrated life in the local style. What do we get as city dwellers and what do the people who already live there get? Social capital that is inherited is the main basis for the development of a new network of mobility and housing. On the basis of social capital, developed infrastructure, landscape, public spaces, building substance, new interconnections that are created through an indiscipline society lead not only to a change in lifestyle, i.e. the search for balance between work and rest, which we seek every day in cities.



Fig.173 Typologies of houses in Morcone



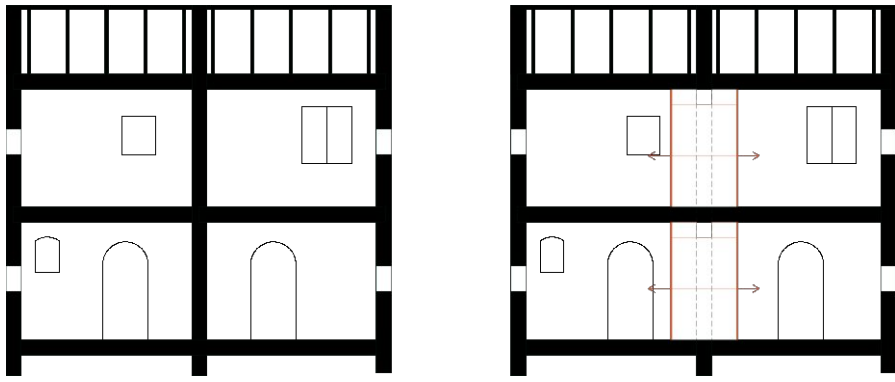
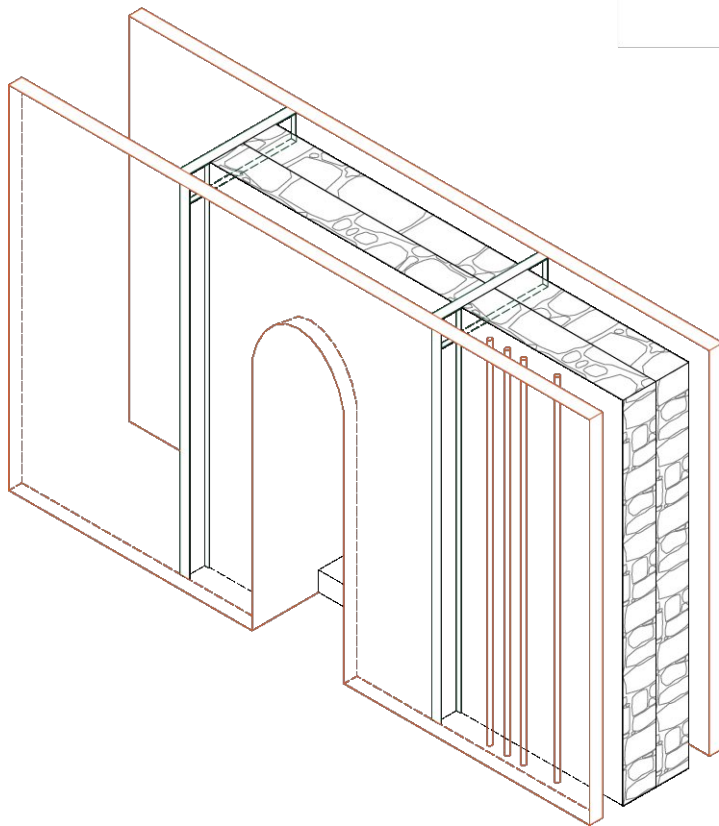


Fig.174 The wall support: Connecting two houses offers flexibility for shared spaces

Fig.175 Conservation of building fabric with support of constructive columns and beams





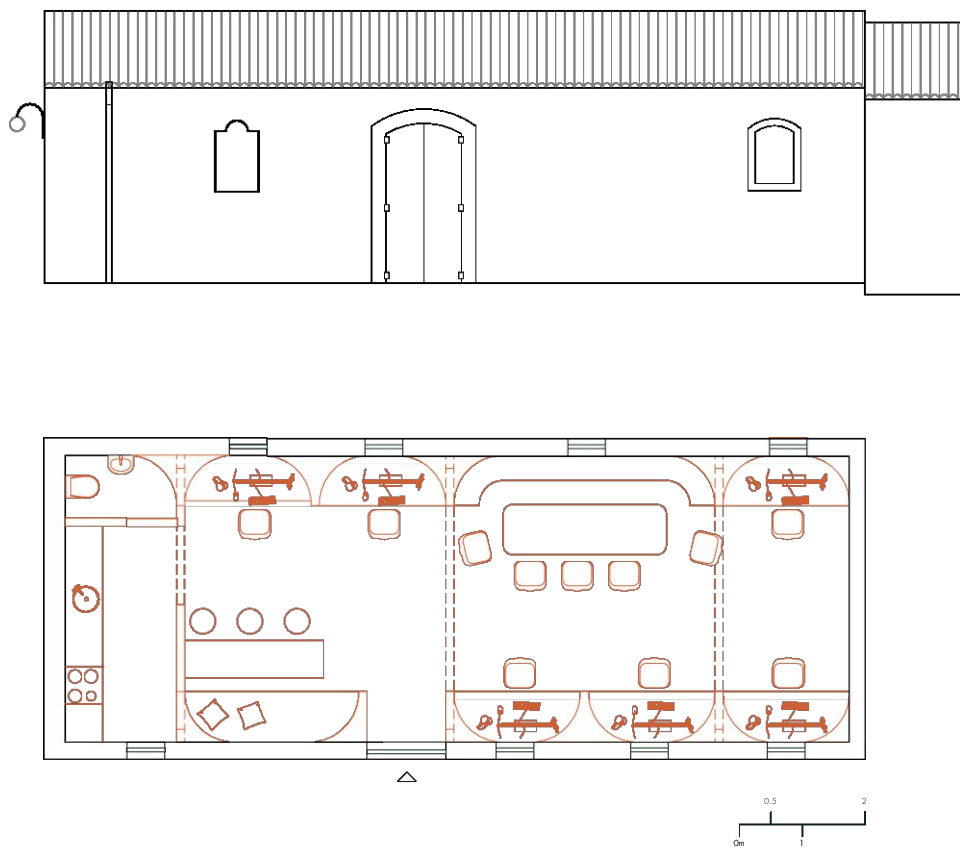
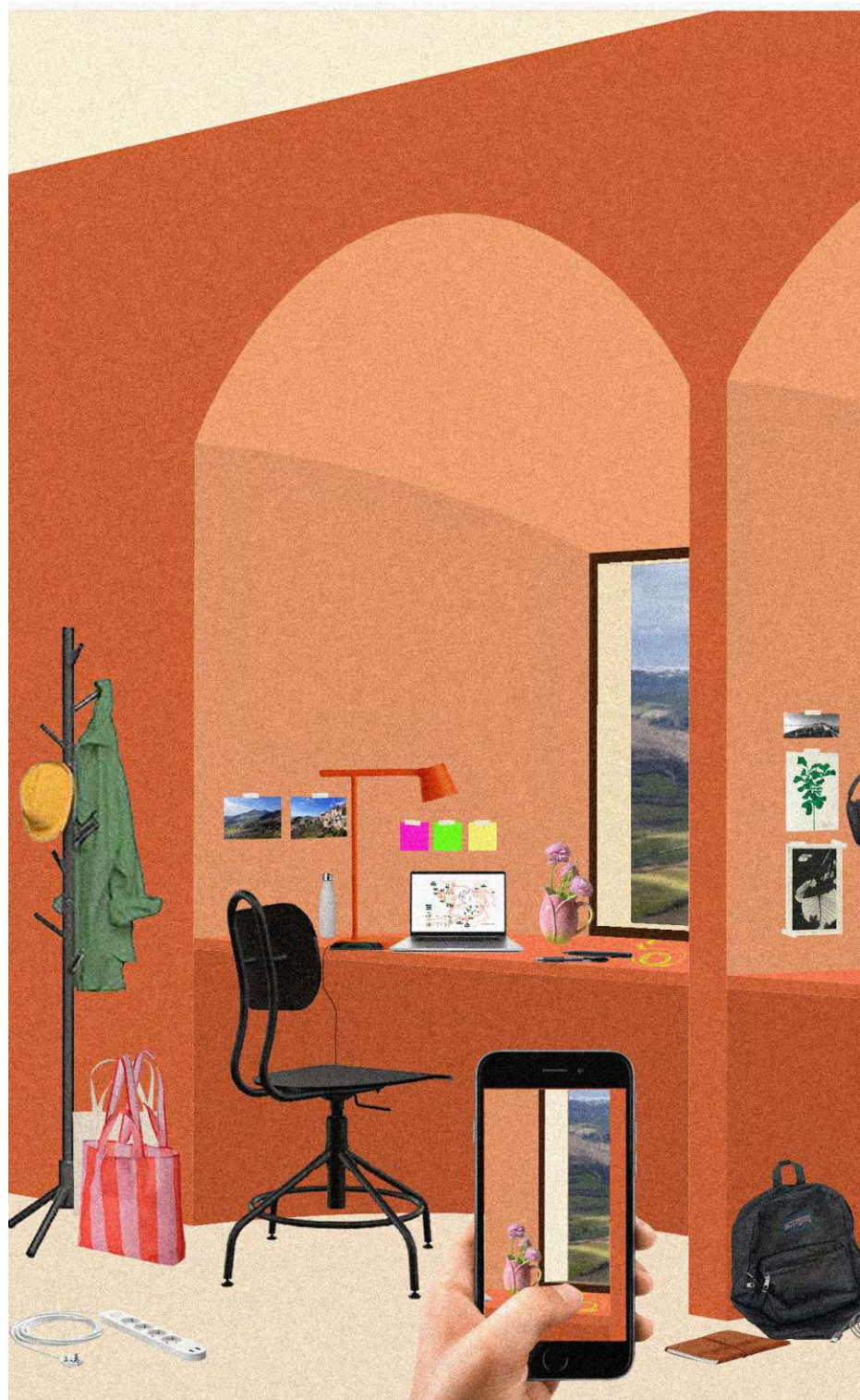


Fig.177 Fragment: Wall as individual space

Fig.178



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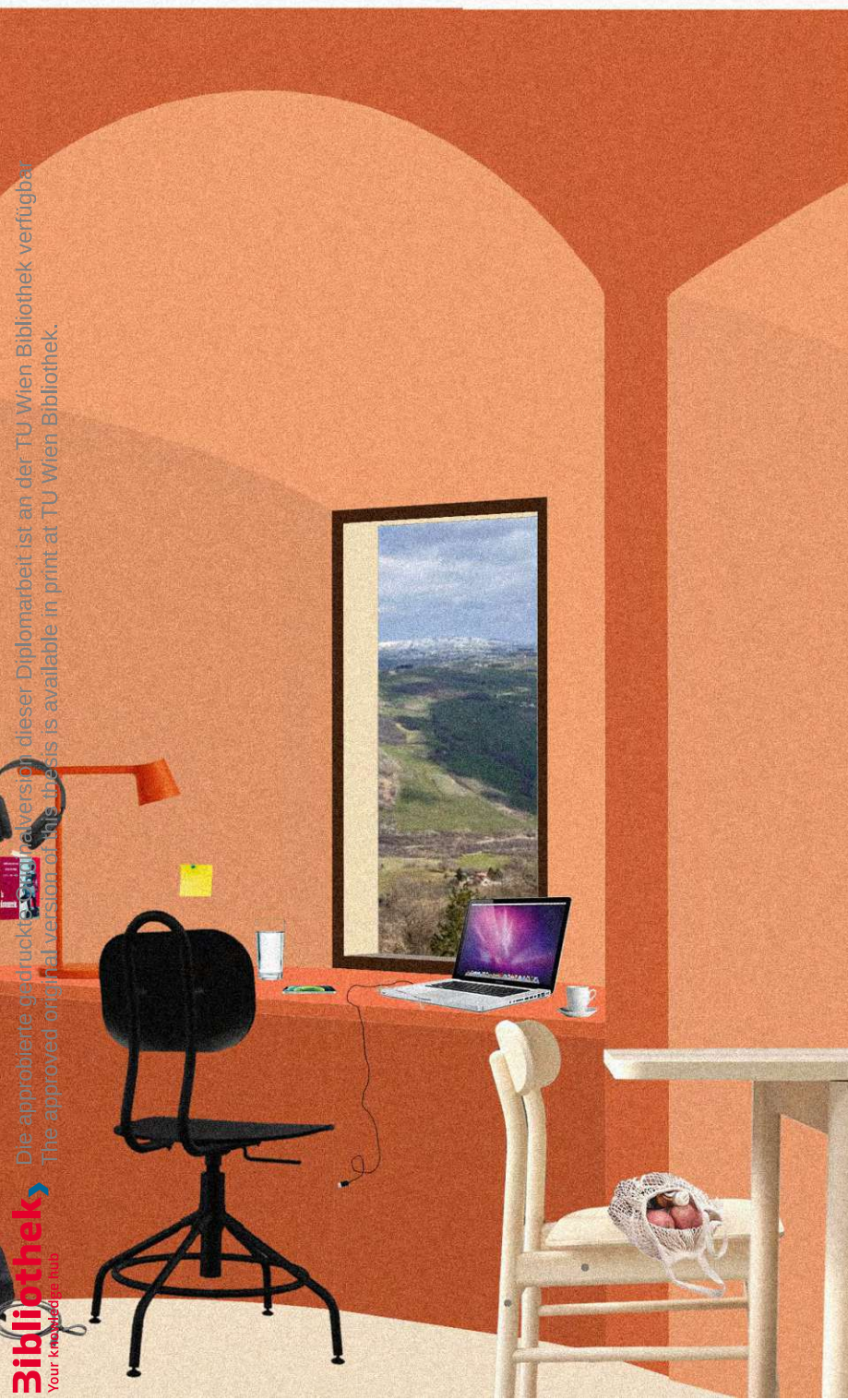




Fig. 179

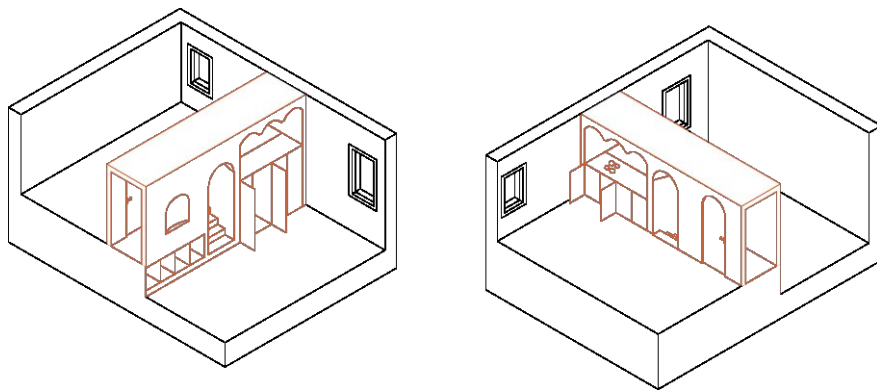


Fig.180 Fragment: Wall as service space

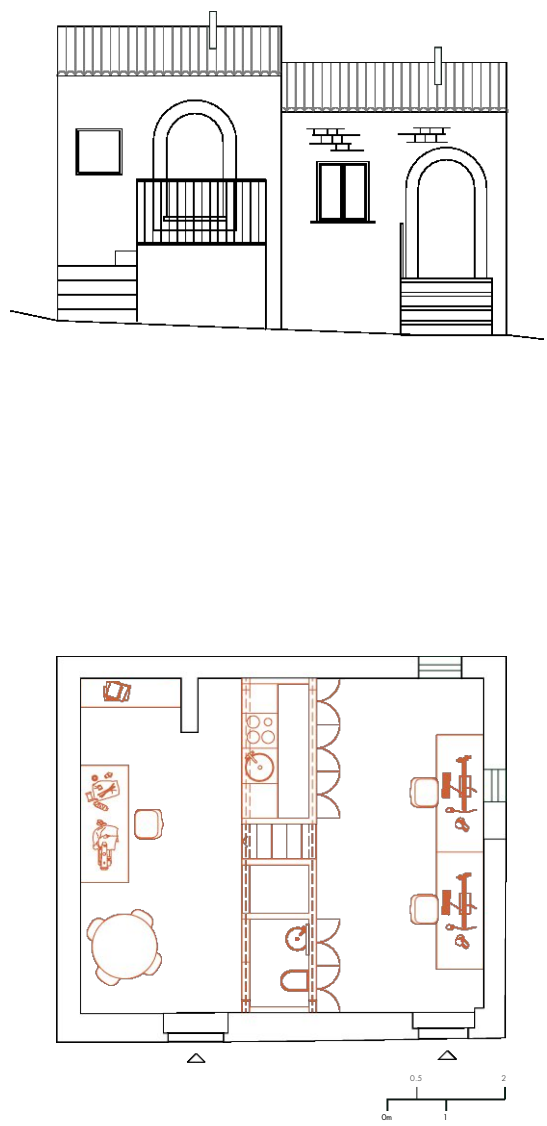


Fig.181 This type of house can be used for Labs, where symbiotic jobs are generated

Fig.182



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Fig. 183

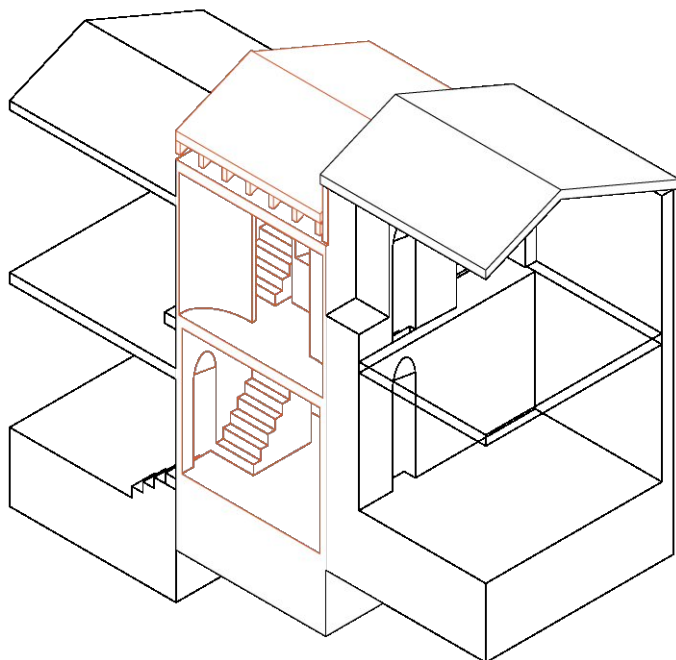


Fig.184 Whole house as a shared space

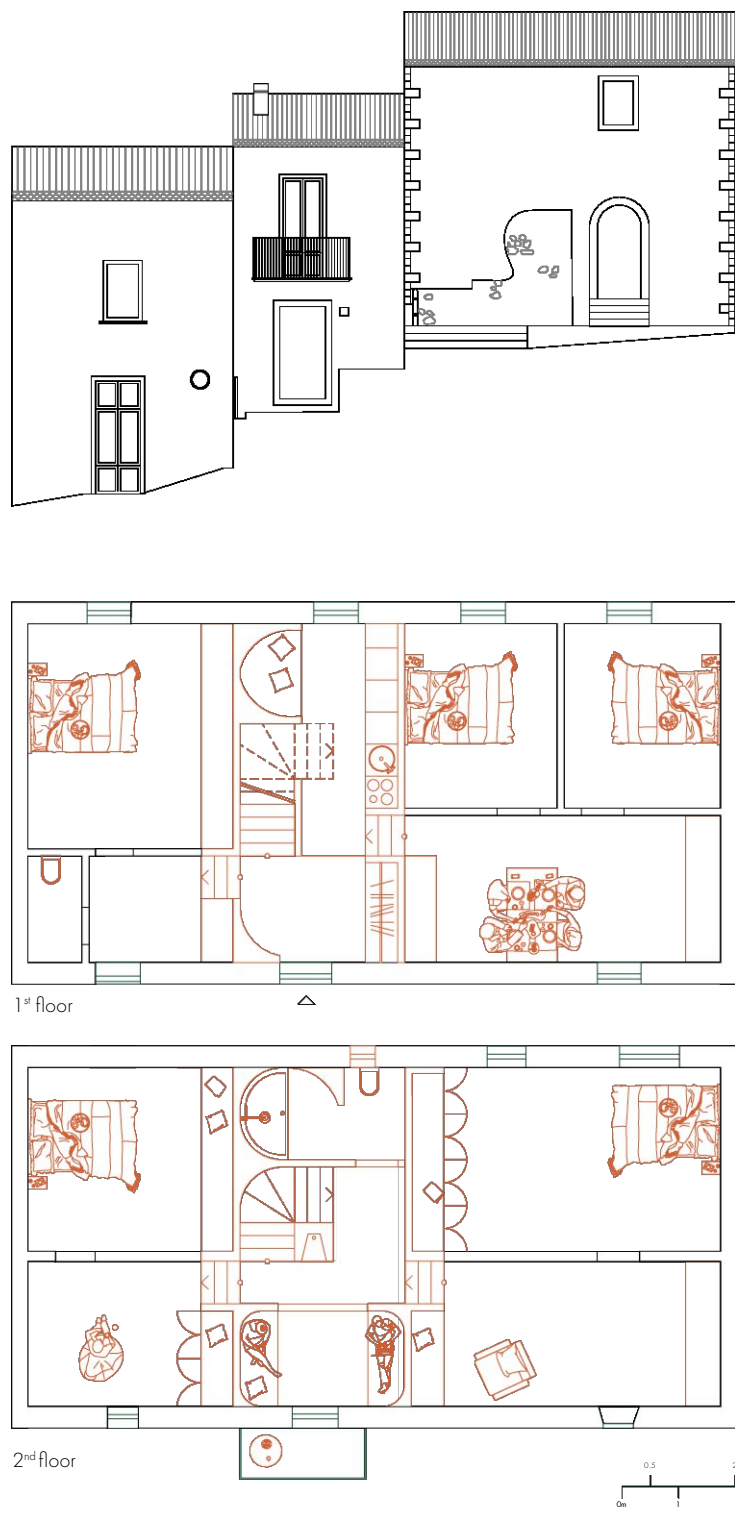


Fig.185 By connecting two houses it is possible to accommodate more people, by assigning them individual and shared spaces.



Fig.186

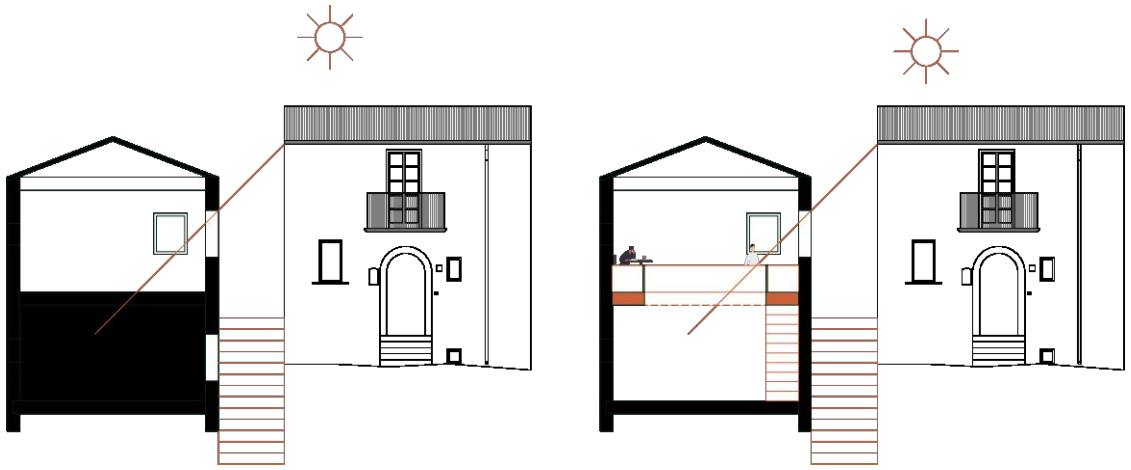


Fig.187 The ground floor remains in the dark because light cannot reach it due to the narrowness between the houses. One of the first things that tends to deteriorate over time or by earthquake is the roof and ceiling. By breaking the ceiling, we get the possibility of greater volume of the room, which can potentially become a house for collective studio, which further can be rented and the money can be investment in the apartment house funds for further projects.



Fig.188 Narrow passage between houses



Fig.189



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Ruin

Many houses that have historical value were damaged in the earthquake or over time. How to treat the ruin? Using three types of strategies for the adaptive reuse of ruin, gives potentially new reconstruction language. Walls that often have historical value can be saved from further deterioration, by supporting them. A new language of reconstruction that includes the addition of a new construction, or refining the walls by returning them to their old silhouettes as well as giving a new value to the object through following the old values. Houses that are in an irreparable condition, which unfortunately exist, can be seen as a potential extension of public space. By securing the existing state from further deterioration, it is possible to achieve new social moments in the form of squares, playgrounds for children or gardens. And with an additional refined approach and upgrades to the existing condition within the original sizes and volumes, as an exception in relation to the grammar of the place, it is possible to achieve

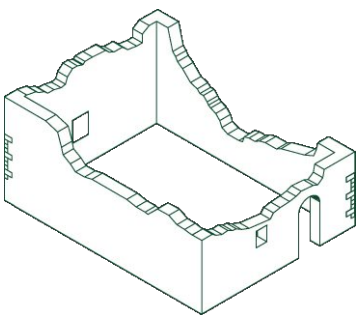
a new value. It is the community that decides where they want the money collected through the Mietshäuser Syndikat model. The money can potentially go towards the reconstruction of ruins and new public spaces.



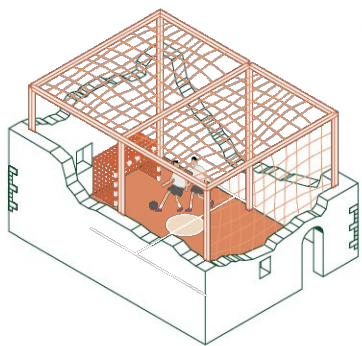
Fig.190 Nature acquiring building substance

Fig.191 Ruin

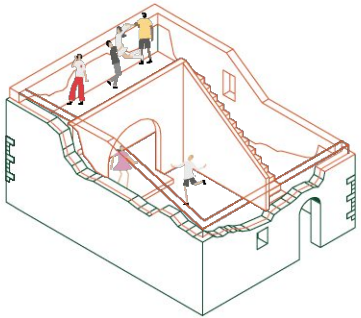




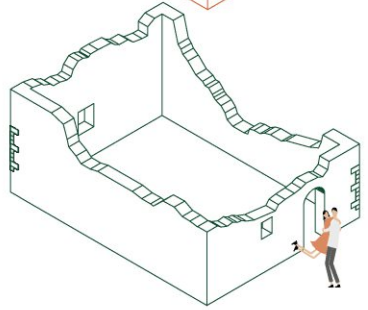
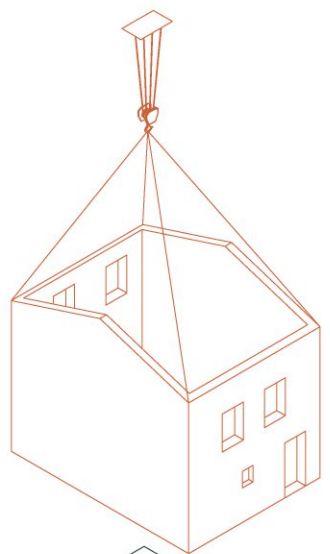
Status quo



Frame construction



Refined addition



New value

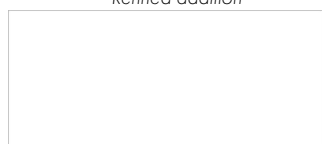
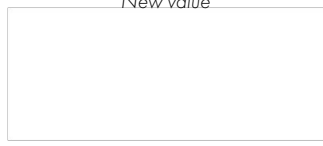


Fig.192 Reconstruction language of the ruins

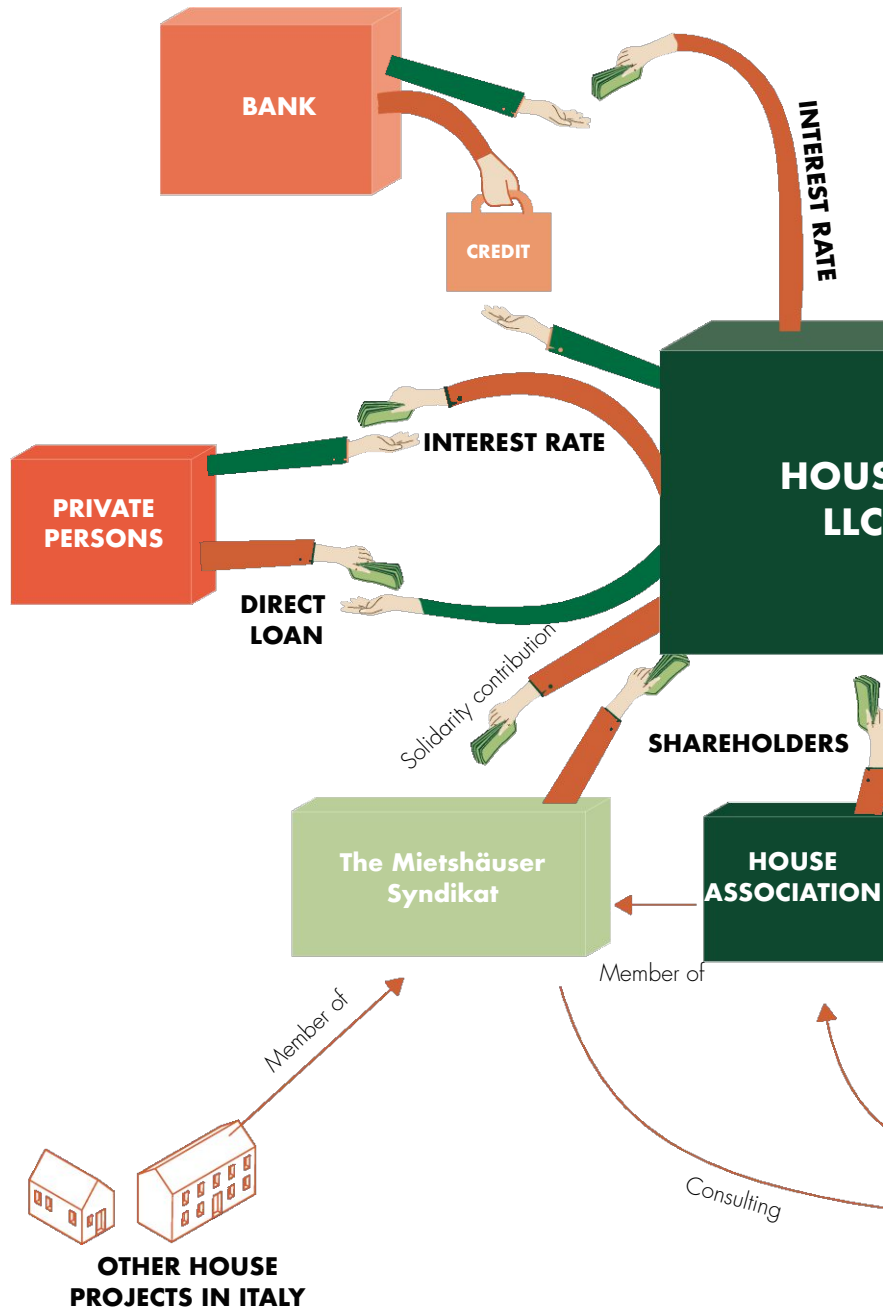
SOCIAL CAPITAL

Affordable housing for everyone!

As statistics show that in 30 years more people will live alone than as part of a nuclear family, the question arises as to how much space one person needs for individual use. In Morcone, where houses are usually 100m² on average, we come to the conclusion that we can share a house with more people. So that our way of living would not be decided by investors, by creating a community so that houses become owned by people and not by investors, we can use The Mietshäuser Syndikat strategy from Germany. With their model, the rents will decrease from year to year and not increase, as we are faced with the present situation. Using this strategy villages can become autonomous, giving the community a voice to manage and shape spaces for the common good. Using the The Mietshäuser Syndikat model as example and implementing it on Italian hamlet can help the community to produce affordable living and working space in collective property. What benefit do permanent and temporary residents have? Permanent residents mostly own houses.

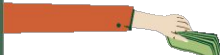
However, they do not want their village to go into the private hands of an investor who, in accordance with his benefit, will do something for the village. For them, this housing model enables the village to belong to them, not to private individuals by giving the community a voice regarding what it wants to do and how it wants to live in accordance with its needs. The temporary population, who do not need to own capital, is a part of the syndicate because they want to rent their place of residence both in the city and in the village at favourable prices, and this also gives them the opportunity to balance between urban and rural environments, between work and leisure. For example, a resident of Berlin who works half a year in the city, is a part of the syndicate in Berlin, but is also part of the syndicate in Morcone. By paying a lower rent in both places, he manages to provide himself with more freedom in his life choices. Living in self-sufficient, self-determined, affordable spaces that are not threatened by house sale or private conversion provides a long term freedom for

residents. Housing is becoming more expensive, rents are overpriced. The same policy cannot be allowed in villages. German housing policy spokesman Jürgen Mistol (2021) says: "Housing is not a commodity, but a right and therefore essential for social cohesion in our society."

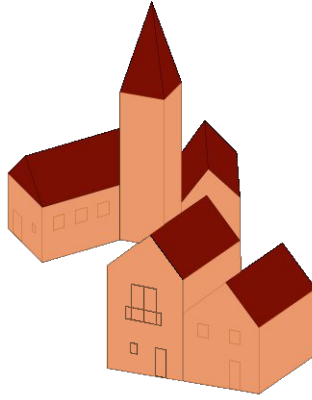


HOUSE LLC- Legal link between the house project and the Mietshäuser Syndikat)
HOUSE ASSOCIATION- Self government, managing directors, right on veto and

Fig.193 Autonomous village



Builds, owns and legally responsible



VILLAGE



RENT

Live Design Manage

Take on all tasks

Take on all tasks



RESIDENTS

Shared Trust Mobility System

As already mentioned, the most valuable resource of Inner Areas is social capital. This resource is can be used for establishing a shared mobility system network, which is precisely based on trust between residents. There are two groups of people, those who have a means of transportation and those who don't but would like to use the services. Each of the residents, with the support of the digital hub, can create a profile where they can register their assets in the exact time frame when it is available for renting, while on the other hand, people who do not have funds will share their wishes and needs to use these assets. There are people like commuters who go to work every day but don't need a car while at work. There are people who are not permanent residents of this territory, who are in the territory for a few months a year and who also use the services of this system. By exchanging information through an application that is based on a strong relationship of trust, the resources of existing

cars can be used. Thanks to this exchange, people who have assets can collect money for the maintenance of their cars, which are unused enough anyway, and they certainly have to pay for their maintenance. From every payment for driving or using someone's car, a certain amount of money goes to the Solidarity Fund. The Solidarity Fund belongs to the community, which itself decides what to invest the money in, such as investment in new vehicles and new mobility projects, system or road maintenance or vehicle servicing. The problem of elderly people can sometimes be mobility. The problem of the mobility of elderly people can be solved by investing in a system of delivery robots or new futuristic means of delivery. Supply chain can become more digital and mobile. Resources from municipalities are shared, micro-economy is being reinforced. Healthcare for the elderly must be emphasised and encouraged by municipality. There is infrastructure that comes to residents i.e. doctors come to the elderly, not

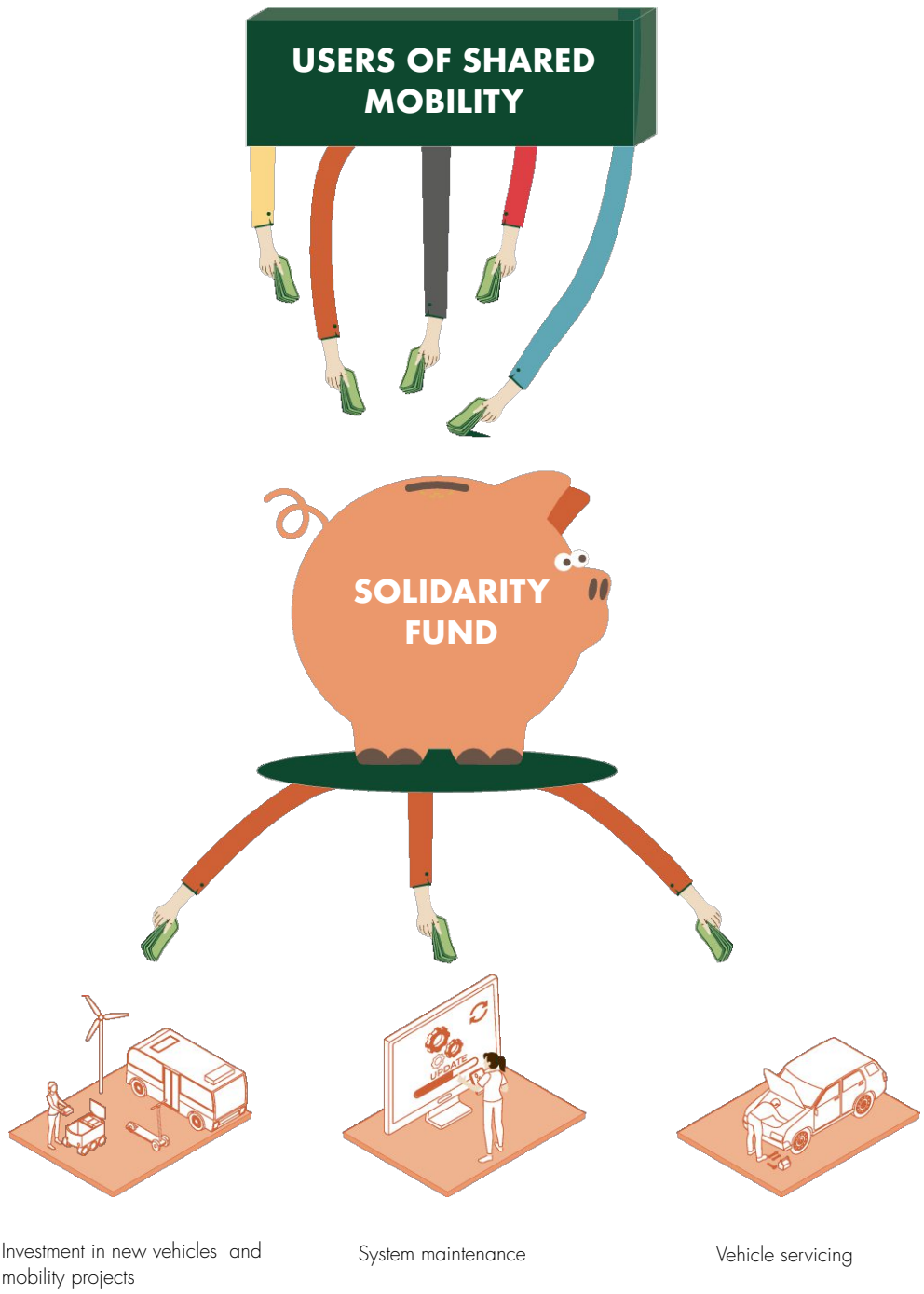


Fig.194


the other way around. For people who have limited mobility, they can get help by getting care according to their needs, thus creating new day-care jobs. Multi-supply centre could be created in the radius of 10km, connecting more doctors from different fields and strengthening connection between them. The culture qualities could be used as resources too. The cultural community must be supported with good organisation and persistence. Cultural events aren't centralised, but focused on reviving micro- cultures. Good connection between municipalities allows more diverse experiences. Mobility and culture must act together as a service. By organising events in one municipality it is necessary to organise transport from another one. Diversification of work is taking place. After early shift, second one serves as a helping hand to community. Shared work-forces offer flexibility. By engaging elderly to babysit while parents are working or engaging youth to help elderly cope with digital technology can create new social relations or work conditions. Resources of each municipality should be investigated in order to evaluate which jobs, and how many workplaces are needed in order to avoid diseconomies.



Fig.195 Scheme of Shared Trust Mobility System




Fig.196 Mobile food market in Cairano



GRETA
 Morcone, BN, Italy
 Verified phone number
 Verified identity

OPEL ASTRA

2012




10 €/day

Diesel Manuel Keyless 5 Seats GPS

Availability:
 Minium 1 hour —Maximum 5 days

Pick-up and return location:
 Via dei Monti, 8, 82026 Morcone BN, Italy


RESERVE



MATTEO
 Morcone, BN, Italy
 Verified phone number
 Verified identity

PIAGGIO APE

2019




15 €/day

Electric Manuel Keyless 2 Seats Trailer

Availability:
 Minium 1 hour —Maximum 1 days

Pick-up and return location:
 Contrada Piana, 82026 Morcone BN, Italy


RESERVE



ROSA
 Naples, CAM, Italy
 Morcone, BN, Italy
 Verified phone number
 Verified identity

FIAT 500

2019




10 €/day

Hybrid Automatic Keyless GPS 3 Seats

Availability:
 Minium 1 hour —Maximum 6 days

Pick-up and return location:
 Piazza Padre Pio, 82026 Morcone BN, Italy


RESERVE



ANTONIO
 Morcone, BN, Italy
 Campobasso, Mo, Italy
 Verified phone number
 Verified identity

ROAD BIKE

2021



10 €/day

max 95km range Keyless 25Mph 500W


Availability:
 Minium 1 hour —Maximum 10 day

Pick-up and return location:
 61 Piazza Pozzo, Morcone, BN 82026, Italy

RESERVE

Fig.197 Profiles of users of Shared Trust Mobility system

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FRANCESCO
*San Lupo, BN, Italy
 Foggia, PUG, Italy*
 Verified phone number
 Verified identity

Vespa VX 125

2019

6 €/h



Hybrid AutomaticKeyless 70 km/hr max 100km range

Availability:
 Minimum 30 minutes —Maximum 4 hours


Pick-up and return location:
 As agreed

RESERVE

ABOUT FRANCESCO:

I am very often on wheels, but sometimes I stay in the village for 3-4 hours and then I offer to rent out my Vespa. I will be happy to help an elderly person to deliver the post or pick up the groceries from a mobility station. Just write me a message!

SEND MESSAGE




Beatrice
Guardia Sanframondi, BN, Italy
 Verified phone number
 Verified identity

FIAT PANDA

2011

11 €/km



Pick-up:
 7:00 am
 Via Municipio, 285, 82034 Guardia Sanframondi BN, Italy


Return: 19:00 pm Piazza S. Salvatore, 82026 Morcone BN, Italy

SHARE RIDE

ABOUT BEATRICE:

I work at D'Errico Michele Pharmacy in Morcone and every morning at 7 am I travel from Guardia Sanframondi to Morcone. I travel by my car and I will be happy to share the ride with someone on the way to or from Morcone when I finish my work.

SEND MESSAGE



SOFIA
*Morcone, BN, Italy
 Berlin, BB, Germany*
 Verified phone number
 Verified identity

ABOUT SOFIA:

I am a plant scientist, working 6 months in Berlin and Morcone respectively. I am very enthusiastic about exploring biodiversity of the Campania fields, new ways of sustainable food production. I do not have a driving license, but I rent a bike. I am comfortable with ride sharing and looking forward for some trips on weekends.

SEND MESSAGE



ALICE
*Morcone, BN, Italy
 Naples, CAM, Italy*
 Verified phone number
 Verified identity

ABOUT ALICE:

I am a graphic designer and I work in Naples and Morcone, changing every three months between the city and the countryside. I like nature very much. I don't have my own bike, but I rent one when it's available every morning. I like to go for a ride before starting the day.

SEND MESSAGE

15 minutes territory

The concept of 15 minutes is a model of planning the cities that should satisfy as Lampugnani stresses in his book "Die Zukunft der telematischen Stadt: Verhaltene Geschwindigkeit", six main functions of the city including life, work, shopping, education, health and leisure. The goal of this concept is to have all of these functions within a 15 minute radius of Morcone municipality. Using the resources of renewable energy, such as windmills which are located on the territory, it is possible to switch on electric mobility. By shared mobility, mobility can be maximised and services can be accessed more easily, and can be created through social capital which includes commitment and voluntary work. As Wouter Haspeslagh mentioned in this interview that infrastructure is coming to us or we going towards it. This means to enable some services to the people, such as health or bank services and on other hand services bring to people providing them maybe with supplies

in a place such as village centres. The termination of railway services to the territories of the interior of Italy is also a consequence of the circle of decline: high operational costs, reduced frequency and lack of users. However, the railway infrastructure remained abandoned, but it is still there. By reusing that infrastructure, it is possible to reactivate previously abandoned railway stations. These spaces can be reactivated by using them for new working spaces, for example call centres which are very popular in the southern part of Italy. With further investment in the infrastructure from the solidarity fund, it is possible to build an autonomous electric train that has different activities. The existing railway infrastructure will be strengthened with new functions, i.e. mobility stations. From the pick up point, where bio waste will be deposited or collected, or post station, to the place where there will be pick up or drop off points for vehicles.

"Rural mobility requires consideration of internal resources such as people, experience, know-how, contacts. There are also factors such as the landscape, whether it is steep or flat, and what age group lives in the area, as well as the legal aspect, such as having a driving license. Recent advances in sharing concepts or communication technologies bear the potential for better accessibility in rural areas. There are also promising cases where certain services come to the people, rather than everyone traveling individually to a store, a bank, a doctor's office."

Dick, Brand, Tovaas, p.7

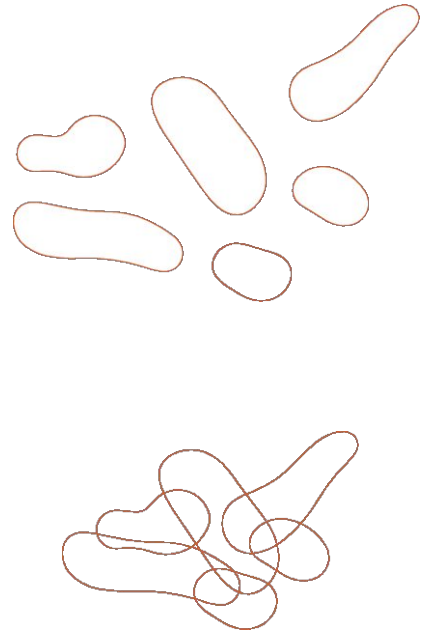









Fig.198 Decentralisation and mutual exchange of already existing resources between the municipalities, makes the ties among them stronger, creating a balance in the rural equilibrium

- Railroad 
- Highway 
- Provincial road 
- Province border 

- Municipality 
- Abandoned train stations 
- Existing infrastructure 

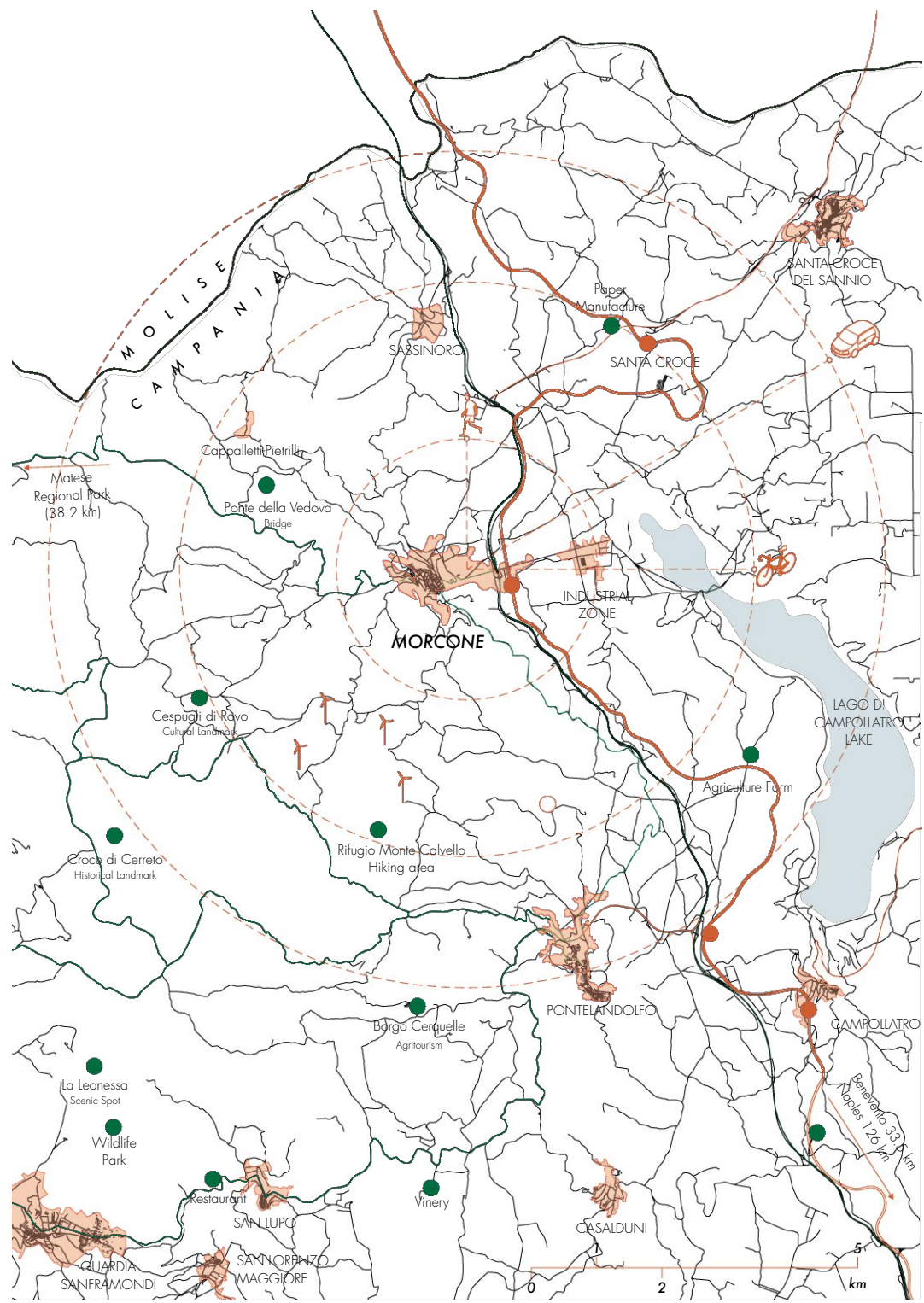
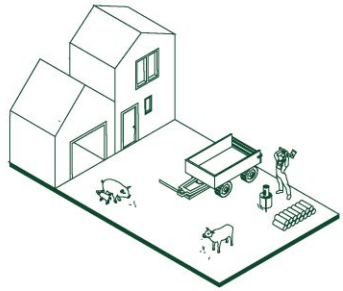
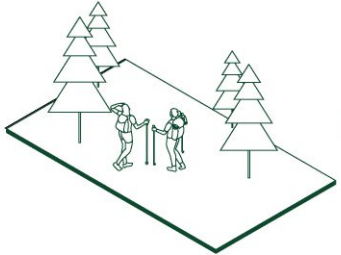


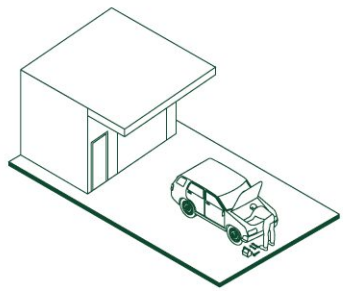
Fig.199 15 minutes territory



Agriculture



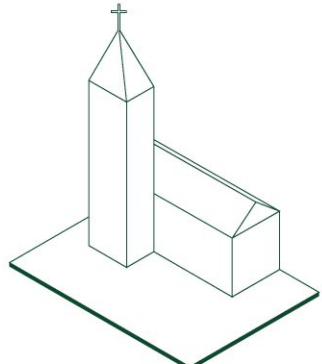
Leisure



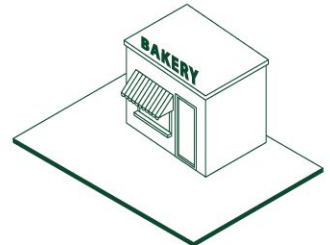
Service



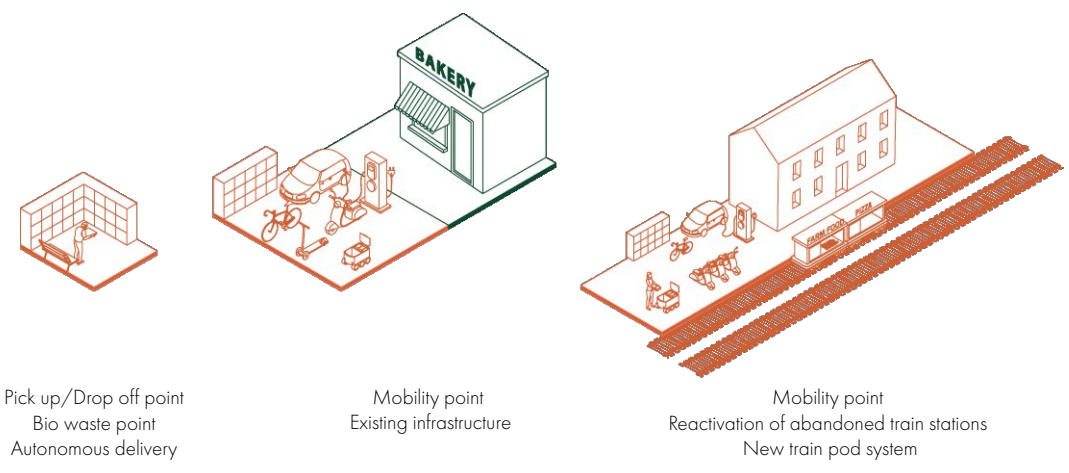
Tourism



Religion



Gastronomy



Pick up/Drop off point
 Bio waste point
 Autonomous delivery

Mobility point
 Existing infrastructure

Mobility point
 Reactivation of abandoned train stations
 New train pod system

Fig.201 Mobility station combined with infrastructure



Fig.202 Saluti da Morcone

Comunità rurale is an interdisciplinary society that relies on the symbiotic generation of jobs. Both temporary and permanent residents take care of their community, cultural heritage, working for its common good. The concept of social capital, decentralisation and the building fabric are the main resources that require perseverance, but also a long process where it is necessary to introduce cultural changes through a new balance between the city and the countryside.

APPENDIX

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