



ANALYTICAL DOCUMENT – ONLINE PEER LEARNING VISIT HOSTED BY VAL GRANDE NATIONAL PARK / COMMONLANDS, ITALY

“COMMONLANDS, A RURAL PARTICIPATORY PATH OF TERRITORIAL ENHANCEMENT IN THE SOUTHERN ALPS”

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15-June-2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Focus of Val Grande online peer-learning visit (5-7 May 2021)

The focus of the online peer-learning visit hosted by the Val Grande National Park / Commonlands was the participatory governance model of local heritage implemented by the 10 mountain communities jointly sharing the Park landscape. The peer-learning visit aimed to provide participants with a better understanding of how natural and cultural heritage can become a resource for sustainable development and well-being in rural areas, and how “commons” as a governance system can facilitate to cherish shared values.

The main themes presented and discussed during the online visit are as follows:

- Depopulation and new inhabitants
- Getting inspired by other projects
- New concept of tourism based on heritage
- Empowering citizens
- Preserving historical memory, craft skills
- Environmental impact of tourism on rural areas
- Pooling resources and networking against isolation
- Using abandonment for new opportunities

Background

The Val-Grande National Park is a territory of about 15,000 hectares, located in the remote alpine area in the Verbano Cusio Ossola Province, the northern area of the Piedmont Region, Italy. The Park is shared between 2 valleys and 10 mountain communities, the “Commonlands”. The 10 municipalities (Premosello Chiovenda, Trontano, Beura Cardezza, Vogogna, San Bernardino Verbano, Miazzina, Caprezzo, Cossogno, Intragna and Aurano) are located on the mountain’s slopes, from 300 m to 900 m on sea level. Most of the communities live in small towns, in traditional historical houses made of local stones and wood. Currently, there are 434 inhabitants within the Park.

Like many rural territories in Italy and in Europe, this Alpine mountain area is at risk of marginalization. Recent demographic changes (depopulation) led not only to a progressive abandonment of material heritage, but also threaten the transmission of knowledge, values and shared local memory.

Started in November 2016 under the joint initiative of the Val Grande National Park and the local NGO Ars.Uni.VCO, the “Commonlands” project aims to activate and empower local mountain communities to take responsibility of the preservation and valorization of their shared cultural and natural heritage as a driver for community cohesion, well-being and sustainable development. The project organised 60 community meetings (public presentations, workshops, focus groups, ...) involving 250 inhabitants, and resulted in 1 “Commonlands” community map; 10 interactive digital maps available on the “Commonlands” website; 300 QR codes developed and placed throughout the territory; 10 dissemination seminars at local, national and international level for replicability in other Alpine and rural areas. The ambition of “Commonlands” is to establish an eco-museum in the area of the Val Grande National Park to further sustain and expand the ongoing initiative and reinforce community participation in the long term.

For an introduction to Val Grande National Park and its cultural environment, please watch this [video](#).

Main take-aways of Val Grande’s online peer-learning visit

- “Common lands” is a successful example of activation of available resources contributing to the safeguarding of the landscape, the local practices and well-being of the community. While cultural heritage in the rural world sometimes is seen as a problem due to lack of sufficient resources for its conservation and stewardship, the “Commonlands” project integrated natural and cultural resources in a bottom-up territorial development strategy.
- While this is a project in a rural context, it became clear that also cities and other local actors have a lot to exchange. Rural areas can complement the quality of life and well-being of people in the cities by sharing locals' own experience and feelings about cultural heritage.
- Sharing understanding and valuing cultural heritage helps to gain interest for youngsters and to reduce the impact of depopulation.
- Consider the principles of “Commons”, a bottom up governance that aims at generating benefits (more than profit), implementing challenging governance models.
- A successful participatory governance model is supported by:
 - Commitment from local authorities, both at city and regional level. Political support to sustain the project is essential to ensure long-term vision and synergy with other territorial development strategy and funding opportunities.

- Tailored methodology (Community Mapping) to structure the co-creation and co-design approach of the various initiatives and ensure constant dialogue amongst participants.
- Engagement with the local hospitality industry and businesses.
- Contribution of research and training to increase knowledge and education, both onsite and online.
- Partnership with schools and youth associations: connecting youngsters through school and other exchange activities and systems could generate more interest in active participation.

For more information on the “Commonlands” project and initiatives, please watch these videos:

- [Commonlands, a rural participatory path of territorial enhancement in the Southern Alps \(introductory 10 min video\)](#)
- [Commonlands: Depopulation and new inhabitants, getting inspired by other projects](#)
- [Commonlands: New concept of tourism based on heritage, empowering citizens](#)
- [Commonlands: Preserving historical memory and craft skills, environmental impact of tourism on rural areas](#)
- [Commonlands: Pooling resources, using abandonment for new opportunities](#)

All presentations are available [here](#).

ANALYSIS

Community mapping to safeguard historical memory and craft skills

Similarly to other rural communities, Val Grande is challenged by recent socio-demographic changes and the progressive depopulation of the 10 municipalities – especially in relation to local youth. In the XIX century, the population of some municipalities in Val Grande was almost ten times higher than it is nowadays (i.e. Caprezzo now counts 180 inhabitants, while they were around 1.200 two centuries ago). The lack of infrastructures (i.e. schools, higher education institutions), digital divide (lower accessibility to internet - both in coverage and connection speed - and fewer people with adequate digital skills), and unattractive employment perspectives contribute to further drive young adults away from Val Grande and worsen the “brain drain”.

Depopulation and lack of inter-generational dialogue threaten the transmission of traditions and skills linked to economic activities typical of mountain communities, which have shaped local life and landscapes over the centuries:

- Gastronomy (i.e. production of walnut oil, grape and rye bread, biscuits and baked products);
- handicrafts made of wood or stone;
- traditional clothing and accessories (i.g. lace).

The “Commonlands” community mapping process offers an innovative and effective mechanism to (re)discover and preserve historical memory and craft skills. Over a period of 4 years, more than 60 meetings (public presentations, workshops, focus groups) have been organised with more than 250 inhabitants of the 10 municipalities. Ars.Uni.VCO (“Associazione per lo Sviluppo della Cultura di Studi Universitari e della Ricerca nel Verbano Cusio Ossola”) provided scientific supervision to the ethnographic research and methodological guidance to manage the meetings.

Through joint discussions and group works, the meetings allowed inhabitants to:

- Document new elements of their common history not captured by traditional archive research, for instance through photographs or unrecorded family stories;
- Increase their understanding of the anthropic actions that modelled the Val Grande landscape over the centuries, as well as the transformation of traditional activities following technological changes (such as the adaptation of water mills to hydroelectric power);
- Raise awareness of unknown elements of local history;
- Transmit knowledge and skills to young people and newcomers settling in Val through practical examples, demonstrations and training.

Importantly, the collected knowledge was also made available online to the wider public through the “Commonlands” website and a collaborative digital archive of historical photographs and other contents. Furthermore, 300 QR codes were developed and placed throughout the territory in 2020 to associate significant places and tangible heritage with traditional stories and facts.

More information on the community mapping methods available [here](#).

Lessons learnt

- Disseminate collected stories and knowledge (offline but also digitally);
- Involve young people to facilitate inter-generational dialogue;

- Consider the creation of new employability patterns for young people (i.e. craftsmanship) as a way to keep them in the territory. For instance, craft skills are much needed for conservation and restoration of local cultural heritage buildings using traditional techniques.

“Comunitours”: a participatory approach to balance the risks of environmental impact of tourism on rural areas

While having an attractive natural and cultural offer, the “Commonlands” are challenged by geographic features (accessibility) and lack of touristic infrastructure (i.e. transport, parking slots) which hamper the development of a competitive touristic offer. The “Commonlands” project contributed significantly to well-balanced local tourism (both national and international), also thanks to several European awards which contributed to raising international awareness on the area.¹ Tourism represents an important source of income for rural communities:

- Promote economic diversification through nature-based tourism product, not associated with mass production;
- Create employment opportunities for local youth in the hospitality business;
- Increase attractiveness for investment and human capital.

However, a sharp increase of tourist inflows might threaten the sustainability of the Val Grande National Park. Over-tourism may spoil the positive economic and social results produced by tourism, especially on the environment:

- Increased pressure on natural resources through over-consumption (i.e. water cycle damage, land erosion) or natural habitats;
- Increased pollution and waste;
- Loss of traditional culture, unicity and ‘sense of place’.

To limit these negative effects of mass tourism, the “Commonlands” developed the *Comunitours*, a participatory and bottom-up approach to support local tourism by involving the local community. The *Comunitours* are cycles of group walks to discover the ten municipalities of “Commonlands” historical paths, passing by presses and oil mills, wash houses and fountains, churches, votive chapels, traditional buildings, often not open to visitors. Importantly, the tours were designed and managed by the inhabitants themselves. Inhabitants take on the role of guides of their own heritage, enriching the visits with anecdotes and personal stories. Outdoors activities promote an integrated approach to history, folklore, biodiversity and local ecosystems also work as important means for raising awareness for natural and cultural values. Another important aspect is the participation of young people and students in stories, traditional knowledge, lifestyles and beliefs related to this cultural landscape.

The *Comunitours* have been very successful, and doubled participation in only one year. In 2018, 11 community walks were organised with over 450 participants; in 2019, more than 1.000 participants joined 15 community walks.

The *Comunitours* model is very close to the principles of “slow tourism”. Slow tourism tries to give more emphasis to the time spent to know local people and culture instead of the number of tourist sights visited during a stay. In the same vein, the touristic offer of Val Grande is based on respect for natural and cultural heritage, short supply chains, innovation for sustainability, social equality and

¹ The Commonlands project received the official label of the European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018. It was awarded with the European Heritage Award/Europa Nostra Award in 2019, and winner of the EU Heritage Days promoted by the Council of Europe in 2020.

inclusiveness. This approach is equally careful of the well-being of residents and visitors, and it balances the touristic experience with the preservation of residents' quality of life. This type of tourism is also more conscious about the preservation of the natural landscape, protection of biodiversity, and ecological sustainability (i.e. slow transportation and energy-saving devices).

The model of "slow tourism" is also associated with the concept of "proximity tourism", which seeks not only to attract international tourists but also regional ones. This topic gained particular attention in the aftermath of the COVID-19 sanitary crisis. The sharp decrease of international tourism (80% drop according to WTO) in 2020 as a consequence of the travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic opens up opportunities to attract local tourists (or even residents) to previously ignored areas. As discussed during the online visit, COVID-19 has taught us about the limits of quality of life in dense city neighbourhoods which nearby rural areas with their custodians can provide. The need for social distancing and the fear of tourists to visit crowded places prepared the field for more sustainable tourist activity, based on green products and services. Furthermore, new working habits (teleworking) and forms of mobility (the "digital nomad" phenomenon) may open up opportunities for rural regions to attract workers and students looking for quiet and peaceful natural environment.

Lessons learnt

- Ensure community involvement in co-creation and co-design of culture-based tourism to balance tourism and community needs. The model implemented in the "Commonlands" project proposes a very experimental government form, where the preservation and valorisation of local cultural heritage is not the goal *per se* but rather a channel to sustain other resource streams.
- Avoid the "Venice effect" and give the tourist the opportunity to truly experience the local culture instead of just passing through. In this way, the rights and interests of local communities are taken into consideration to drive active participation and welcoming attitude.
- Get support from local authorities to facilitate new forms of sustainable tourism with adequate supporting physical and digital infrastructure.

Pooling resources and networking against isolation to build sense of belonging

The "Commonlands" are scattered around a vast territory (270 sq. km wide). While sharing the same past and landscape, the inhabitants hardly knew each other, or have even visited nearby communities.

The "Commonlands" project developed a heritage-based method to improve cohesion through the creation of strong community networks, and nurturing a sense of belonging and confidence in local people. The engagement strategy proposed by the Community Mapping methodology (over 60 meetings, focus groups, workshops over a period of 4 years) allowed participants to increase their knowledge about their own territory and traditions, touching upon both tangible and intangible heritage. By putting common values, shared history and heritage in the spotlight, the project reinforced a sense of belonging amongst participants. The remarkable participation rate (250 people out of 434 inhabitants within the Park) indicates the underlying interest and need for this initiative in the community.

As noted by one participant, these principles are in line with important policy strategies at European level, such as the Council of Europe's European Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century.

The creation of the ecomuseum will also be instrumental in further driving local support to the next phases of the “Commonlands” project. As noted by several participants, community involvement was quite strong in the initial phase of the participatory government process, i.e. raise awareness, provide information or setting up a decision making system. However, it is much harder to keep a high participation rate in the long term to ensure proper management and implementation of the activities. As underlined by the hosts, while a considerable number of inhabitants took part in the community mapping and workshops in the early stage of the “Commonlands” project, the participation rate decreased over time.

Lessons learnt

- Clear methodological framework to support participatory governance and Common decision making process;
- Sharing understanding and valuing cultural heritage helps to gain interest for youngsters and to reduce the impact of depopulation;
- Be open: consider the participation and coordination with other municipalities or initiatives at regional level;
- Plan on the long term: the time factor is a particularly important element to reinforce mutual understanding and community cohesion, which are difficult to establish in the short term.

Adaptive reuse of abandoned heritage for new opportunities

The depopulation phenomenon in the “Commonlands” areas have not only threaten the preservation and transmission of intangible cultural heritage, but also the extraordinary wealth of tangible heritage:

- secondary houses
- fountains
- libraries
- churches
- Remains of the agricultural past of the valley (mills, mule tracks or alpine pastures).

The “Commonlands” project dedicated considerable efforts to raise awareness on the key role of heritage as a resource for community development, developing stewardship and sense of ownership of the local heritage within the inhabitants. The recognition of the importance of cultural heritage value is a crucial element of both community engagement and heritage adaptive reuse.

Local cultural associations play an important role in driving bottom-up initiatives to valorize and reuse natural and architectural heritage to drive opportunities for socio-economic development. For instance, some historic buildings have been converted in “Albergo diffuso” (“dispersed hotel”) to welcome tourists. The main characteristic of an “Albergo diffuso” is that it is not in a single block, but composed by various historic buildings in a small community. This innovative concept of hospitality has proven to be a useful tool to revive small, historic villages and town centres usually off the usual tourist tracks. The restoration of historic buildings highly relies on traditional techniques in the use of materials (wood, stones), which can offer job opportunities for local artisans.

Another example of reuse of traditional heritage discussed during the peer-learning visit is the adaptation of old mule tracks for hiking or cycling trails.

Lessons learnt

- Rediscover traditional agriculture (terraces) and offer ecotourist experiences;

- involvement of the public and private sectors (hospitality industry) could be an important aspect to consider to increase funding for restoration and adaptive reuse projects.

Youth engagement strategies

As Commonlands is attempting to reinvent itself from the initial idea and to strengthen one municipality's ability to show its heritage and culture to other municipalities, it has adapted towards a joint effort to create a systemic vision and relation between various local actors and the visitors/tourists. While workshops for young people and attractive activities for youngsters were organised, it seems this part of the community could be better integrated, paying attention to their current specific needs and challenges.

Capacities and skills as well as partnerships need to be developed to achieve this goal. It could help to reach out to student associations and to establish a network that allows youngsters to participate in the project. Therefore, mapping what is working and what is not working for young people is key. Proper channels used by youngsters (such as social media) could be used for consultation, but also for the development of new communication tools to reach out and involve them in co-creation processes.

The lack of local schools in the area also contributes to the alienation of youngsters with their region, as they have to move to larger cities when getting older. This adds an additional challenge for young people to understand the importance of the heritage and the specificities of their territory. Thus, a partnership involving local schools and "external" schools could help; for example through a program of twinning schools. With "twin schools", different experiences can be shared (e.g. sending letters, skypeing and meeting classes). Not only can this contribute to strengthen the awareness of the youngsters with their own region, but it can also sensitise kids from other territories and large cities about the quality of life the territory provides. It would allow for co-creation activities in schools as a means to educate about heritage.

Local youngsters can become hosts to their peers in their own region. Considering the playful tools they are using, it could also lead to other ways of communication such as video games and the use of digital technology.

Participants in the Peer Learning Visit, from their own experience, shared interesting examples in which also youngsters that do not attend school could be integrated, while providing them with support in writing skills. Other examples include a project on digital creators involving various private and public stakeholders that aims at bringing youth closer to heritage, involving them in projects for different age categories. It is also inspired by the commons concept. This project organises different trips with youngsters who afterwards share their experiences via photographs or videos.

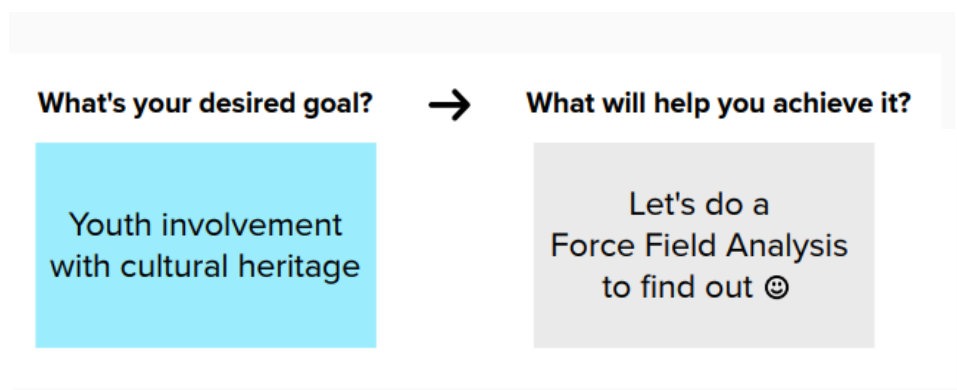
To make this work, various actors (schools, NGO, (mental) health services, etc.) acquainted with young people could be consulted and involved. All ages could be involved, including high school and university under proper guidance, as the process as well as the outcomes can increase their interest and awareness for local cultural heritage.

Such knowledge gain could be disseminated with other regions to inspire young peers.

Lessons learnt

- Start from needs assessment through various techniques such as surveys in schools or youth associations
- Promote synergy with local cultural and creative industries to develop interactive engagement strategies and tools to raise interests in younger generations (competitions, artistic interventions, video games) and transmit knowledge in a playful way (edutainment)
- Pupil and student's exchanges were seen as potential systemic way to contribute to the depopulation challenge while allowing to share cultural heritage values also externally.
- Co create with youngsters while connecting the schools and youngsters in the territory with peers, schools and universities outside the territory and allow knowledge and experience sharing, as well as their passion for heritage.

FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS ON THE TOPIC OF YOUTH INVOLVEMENT WITH CULTURAL HERITAGE, CARRIED OUT BY PARTICIPANTS



What are the factors that are favorably and unfavorably influencing your desired goal(s)?



Select

Pick the top 3 forces you'd like to tackle. Consider what would be most impactful but also relatively easy to get started on.

START BY KNOWING YOUTH!!!!
(needs, expectations, who they are)

digital interpretation and promotion of heritage (using tik tok, instagram etc to communicate your heritage etc

exchange knowledge with similar associations in different regions

Action

Detail your action plan, step-by-step, to minimize the restraining forces or maximize the driving forces in your list.

Mapping and research

Create moments only with youth

Build and Disseminate a model of Survey

more than 1000 surveys

Conduct surveys at schools

INCENTIVES TO PARTICIPATE IN SURVEYS!!!!

WORK WITH YOUTH NGOS

REACH OUT YOUNG PEOPLE THAT ARE ALREADY INVOLVED WITH CH

education
vocationale education
crafts

Commitment

Assign individuals the responsibility to execute on the action items and identify timelines, barriers, help required, etc.

Who will do what

Timeline

Barriers

Help required

LIST OF REFERENCE AND PROJECT SHARED

Useful resources

- [Cultural Heritage counts for Europe Report \(2015\)](#)
- [Peer to Peer, The Commons Manifesto](#)
- [Council of Europe Strategy 21 – Good Practices](#)
- [Travel to Tomorrow ... Policy recommendations for Tourism Policy 2019-2024, Memorandum from VISITFLANDERS, 2019](#)

Other Cultural Heritage in Action best practices mentioned during the visit

- [Sibenik](#) (HR) – Revitalisation of Sibenik fortresses
- [Vantaa](#) (FI) - Cultural Environment Programme

Projects mentioned by participants

[EU Strategy for the Alpine Region - EUSALP](#) - The EU Strategy for the Alpine Region brings together seven states (Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Switzerland and Liechtenstein) and 48 regions. The EU Strategy for the Alpine Region focuses on three priorities: competitiveness and innovation, environmentally friendly mobility and accessibility, and sustainable management of energy, natural and cultural resources.

[Youth Alpine Interrail](#) (Yoalin) is a project of the [CIPRA](#) Youth Council and CIPRA International that started in 2018. It enables 100 selected young people to travel sustainably across the Alps by means of public transport in the summer of 2018, 2019 and 2021.

[E- twinning-](#) eTwinning offers a platform for staff (teachers, head teachers, librarians, etc.), working in a school in one of the European countries involved, to communicate, collaborate, develop projects, share and, in short, feel and be part of the most exciting learning community in Europe.

Other news, examples and tools from participants

Methodologies to collect and share local memory and stories:

- [Talking Houses](#) of Kőszeg (HU) - urban research project aiming to rediscover private stories associated by historical places to better understand common past and experiences. The project collected unexplored episodes of individual life stories of those who had once inhabited historical buildings of the city through an interdisciplinary approach, integrating the methods of social and cultural history, historical anthropology and sociology.
- [Digital columnists](#) (RO) - collaborative digital storytelling platform which aims to collect stories and promote cultural heritage especially amongst younger generations. The project also aims at intergenerational communication (close the gap) on cultural heritage. The project is supported by the National Heritage Institute.

- Local Flavours (FI, LV, RO, HR, IT, AT, NL, HU, IE) - Interreg-funded project aiming at offering sustainable tourism experiences rooted in local history and the preserved cultural legacy of communities, adding unique flavors and excitement to their adventure.

Initiatives to support slow tourism:

- [NATworking](#) (IT) – the first network of spaces dedicated to work and study in natural environments. The network encourages soft tourism and the enjoyment of unexplored heritage to promote social innovation and local development.

Initiatives connect youngsters and heritage:

- [Archaeology of football](#) (UK) - a collaboration between Archaeology Scotland & Hampden Bowling Club.
- [Crafting the Past](#) (UK) - a collaboration between the Dig It! archaeology project and Immersive Minds, a creative digital educational consultancy. Crafting the Past was launched in 2015 and has collaborated with organisations such as EventScotland, the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and the Scottish Civic Trust.
- [Father and Son](#) (IT) – an interactive video game produced and distributed by the Archaeological museum in Naples aiming to connect young players with its collections.
- [Heritage Hero Award](#) (UK) – initiative by Archaeology Scotland offering a framework, a focus and a reward for groups undertaking heritage focused projects.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS FROM PARTICIPANTS (NON-EXHAUSTIVE)

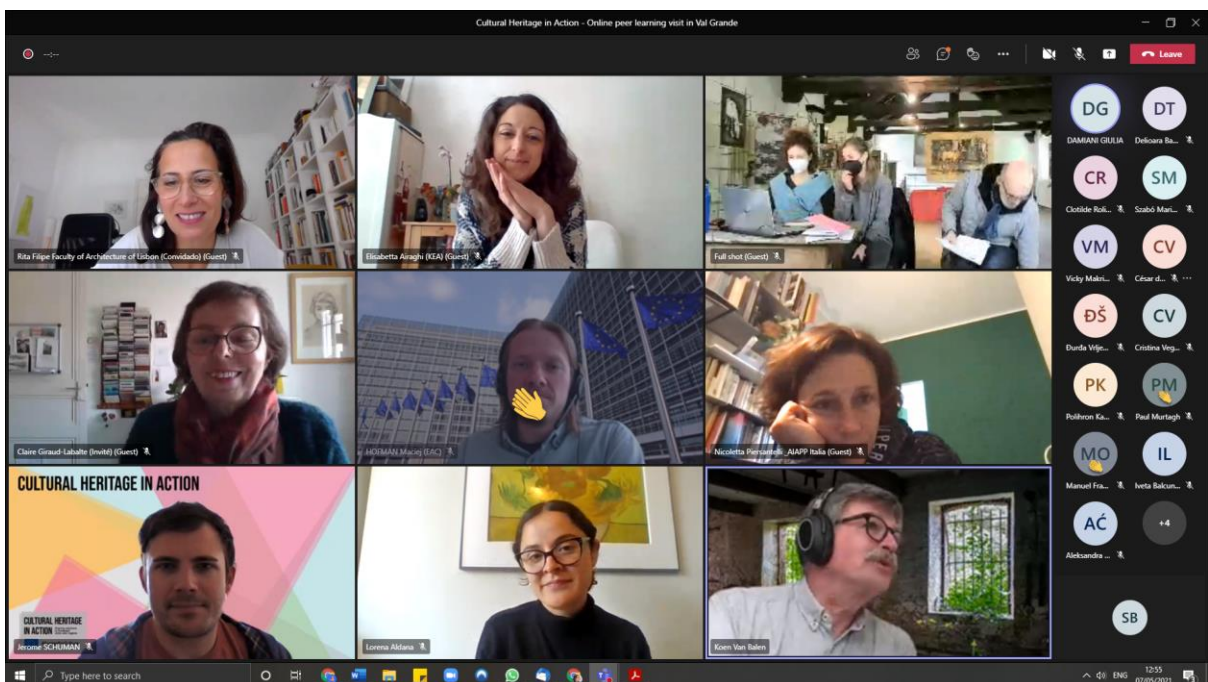
City/region/ stakeholder	Main lessons learnt	Future use of ideas and knowledge gained – projects that were shared and that could be transferable to your local context
Timis County Association for Promotion and Development Of Tourism, Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Importance to be perseverant in connecting communities and empower them to work together - Value senior citizens and their experiences in order to keep traditions alive - Small things in community can bring great changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intends to develop projects through which learnings can be applied
University of Warsaw, Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The value of heritage is usually brought/recalled to the rural community from the outside (i.e. scholars, activists). - Engaging youth is a common challenge, still unresolved but actively addressed - It is hard to choose between economic sustainability and the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - intends to incorporate the knowledge acquired in PhD thesis and further plans which include workshops and educational materials for ecomuseums in Poland

	focus on the community. Small and locally engaging initiatives might be less interesting economically, but it is the most desired from the ethical, cultural and environmental point of view.	
Maastricht University, Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methods to engage community members. - Challenges for infrastructure required in rural areas - Methods to capture micro-stories 	- Intends to use the knowledge acquired in current and future research projects
AIAPP Liguria, Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to take time to involve the community. - It is not so easy to start a new form of tourism; the key is to empower inhabitants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will try to implement a community map in another valley - A participatory environmental plan would also be transferable
Luznava Manor, Latvia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for community-based and sustainable tourism services and educational activities in communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will introduce the learnt ideas to the community administration and see what we can be adapted in the local work - Ideas of voluntary work which can be adapted
The Nordic Centre of Heritage Learning and Creativity, Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The problem of outward migration from rural areas is the same all over Europe. - Other rural problems similar across the continent: lack of infrastructure, bad internet connections, aging population. - Need to focus on young people's needs if we want them to engage with local heritage. It's not just about welcoming them into our activities, it's about finding ways of integrating heritage into their own activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community maps are easily transferable, so are the plaques with QR-codes. - In contact with a community where the approach developed by Commonlands would be a good starting point for developing sustainable heritage tourism and community building. The peer-learning visit will truly influence this project.
Rewilding Rhodopes, Bulgaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many European countries share the same challenges in developing rural areas, and heritage could be used as a force for social transformation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The plaques with QR codes that were placed on buildings in Val Grande could work well in the Eastern Rhodopes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital infrastructure is an important aspect when adopting new initiatives. 	
Pôle des des acteurs du patrimoine culturel en Pays de la Loire, France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to exchange with other people and other regions (near or far) when implementing a project. - Need to see and analyze what is being done elsewhere - Need to visit sites, meet people, "breathe the air of the place" 	
Bucharest/ Ministry of Culture, Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The involvement of the community in discovering their own heritage and identity is the most important step in developing a strong bond within the community. - The success of a heritage project is ensured when different types of heritage are tackled in a cohesive manner (natural and cultural heritage, landscape and built heritage, tangible and intangible heritage). - The revitalization of an abandoned or neglected rural heritage, which is a common issue in many regions/ countries, can be achieved if the communities become aware of their traditions and interested in keeping them alive. - Promoting cultural heritage through targeted activities for different people (young or old, local people or tourists etc.) is a good way to cover the great diversity of people's interests in relationship with their historical and cultural assets. 	
Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg, Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The "for people with the people" approach is key. - Need to assess the sense of place: what people are proud of. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently working on an INTERREG Europe project where the acquired knowledge (such as the emphasis on storytelling and the assessment of endogenous knowledge which

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participatory design for population retention 	<p>enables regions to learn) can be implemented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cronicari Digitali. The heritage competition and the use of consumer-generated-content is relevant for other local contexts.
Archaeology Scotland, Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisations throughout Europe are working on similar landscape-scale projects with local communities using many of the same methods. - Need to engage members of the community in sharing their stories of places, sites and landscapes by recording and legitimising their ideas of what is valuable to them. - Need for a deeper and more democratic understanding of the cultural heritage of rural areas. - Need for community co-design initiatives highlighting the places that the community values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will try to implement some of the engagement methods learnt, including the map-making and recording of the stories, in own project.
Culture Fortress of Culture Šibenik, Croatia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New insights in participatory governance and community building processes. - Innovative methods of presenting cultural heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The next big project of Fortress of Culture will put emphasis on community building, so the inputs from this peer visit will be more than useful. - Vaanta's example in developing a local cultural environment programme will also be useful for further developments.
Museo de Palenzuela, Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to involve the youth as much as the elderly in heritage projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans to implement some of the discussed ideas to encourage people to participate.
Faculty of Architecture - University of Lisbon, Portugal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interactivity, participation, diversity and cooperation are key. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans to test some of the techniques learnt.
Junta de Castilla y León, Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not only actively involve the population: empower them to be the creators of the project from the beginning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Junta de Castilla y León tries to involve the local population in its projects, but in the Commonlands people are part of it from the beginning. This vision is more

	<p>- Need to ask people what they want and what they can do for cultural heritage and together create a project that really represents the community.</p>	<p>interesting and will apply it in own work.</p>
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USEFUL CONTACTS

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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City and Stakeholder	Latvia	Iveta Balcune	Manager of Luznava Manor	iveta.balcune@rezeknesnovads.lv
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