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Cultural Welfare for inner areas. A thorough research on the multidimensional effects of cultural and creative planning for Health and Well-being

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This thesis is the result of a three-year research, from 2022 to 2024, in the PhD Course Global Studies. Justice, Rights, Politics, at the Department of Political Science, Communication and International Relations of the University of Macerata (UniMC). The research was carried out within the framework of a co-funded PhD scholarship from the European Union within the National Operational Programme (PON), Research and Innovation 2014-2020, Axis IV “Education and Research for Recovery” Action IV.5 “Doctorates on Green Issues”.

The humble converging effort of a dramatically divergent mind.

A mia madre,
A chi vorrebbe danzare
con la cultura
laddove la musica
non è ancora arrivata.

Affinché fragorose note
riecheggino nell'Italia interna
e ci scuotano spogliati
di ogni ingiustizia.

E se non avremo il pane,
noi ci regaleremo rose.

During a workshop on the generative role of Culture in inner areas, held in Castel del Giudice (Molise, IT) in December 2024, I asked myself and other cultural workers and academics whether we were concerned about putting *pretty flowers* in a *house* that was *on fire*. The answer we gave was that when the house is on fire, the role of the flowers is precisely to signal the need for *water*.

For a critical, militant, horizontal, and caring Culture.

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List of Abbreviations

CAE – Culture Action Europe

CCW – Cultural Welfare Center

CHCfE – Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe

CPP – Creative People and Places programme

CW – Cultural Welfare

CWA – Cultural Welfare Activity

CWAs – Cultural Welfare Activities

EC – European Commission

ECoC – European Capital of Culture

EP – European Parliament

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund (FESR – Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale)

ESF+ – European Social Fund (FSE+ – Fondo Sociale Europeo)

EU – European Union

EYCH – European Year of Cultural Heritage

H2020 – Horizon 2020

HECWA – Holistic Evaluation for Cultural Welfare Actions

IA – Impact assessment

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

ICOM – International Council of Museums

ICOMOS – International Council on Monuments and Sites

ICT – Information and communications technology

IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IRMO – Institute for Development and International Relations

IRPET – Istituto Regionale Programmazione Economica della Toscana

Istat – Italian National Institute of Statistics

LEP – Essential Levels of Performance

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

NPO – National Portfolio Organisation

NRRP − National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR − Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza)

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

ROP − Regional Operational Programme / POR − Programma Operativo Regionale

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

SNAI – Strategia Nazionale Aree Interne / Italian National Strategy for Inner Areas

SoPHIA – Social Platform for Holistic Heritage Impact Assessment

SoPHIA model – Holistic Impact Assessment Model proposed by SoPHIA

UN – United Nations

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

WHO – World Health Organization

Introduction

1. Background of the Research and Research Questions

In light of the significant advancements in the conceptualisations of health and well-being that have occurred over the past century, it has become increasingly evident that these phenomena extend beyond the mere absence of disease. Instead, these concepts are shaped by a multitude of complex and varied factors, both internal and external to the individual. The biopsychosocial model, first introduced by Engel in 1977, has been instrumental in transforming the prevailing paradigm of health. This model challenged the traditional biomedical approach, which primarily focuses on biological aspects and a direct cause-effect paradigm in disease treatment, by integrating biological, psychological, and social factors. As articulated by Dâmaso *et al.* (2023), in opposition to the narrow focus on disease treatment, Engel's model advocated for a holistic health promotion approach, recognising the complexity of human well-being, dynamic nature of health, and their interdependence with various determinants. The World Health Organization (WHO) has long recognised health as a multi-dimensional concept. Initially defined in 1948, health was described as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 1948, p. 1). This definition inherently supports a holistic approach, recognising that health extends beyond mere physical conditions to encompass psychological and social well-being. Complementing this, Aaron Antonovsky's salutogenic model, introduced in 1979, shifts the focus from disease treatment to health promotion by emphasising the role of "sense of coherence". Antonovsky posited that health is influenced by an individual's ability to perceive life as understandable, manageable, and meaningful. This model suggests that well-being stems from the dynamic interplay of coping mechanisms and the resilience derived from cultural and environmental contexts, thus aligning closely with the biopsychosocial approach. In 2020, WHO added that health and well-being are influenced "by a range of biomedical, psychosocial, social, economic and environmental factors that interconnect across people in differing ways and at different times across the life course" (WHO, 2020, p. 39).

The holistic perspective underpinning this transformation establishes the foundation for an intersectoral approach to addressing welfare concerns. In this changed context, health is recognised as a dynamic process, and its determinants, including culture, become the preferred levers for effecting changes capable of generating cascading positive effects useful for generating "well-being societies" (WHO, 2021). In this scenario, efforts are made to improve the context in which individuals operate and to increase their life skills capital (World Health Organization, Division of

Mental Health, 1994). The objective is to trigger self-management and empowerment modes in the individuals that form society, irrespective of whether they are affected by conditions of fragility or criticality.

Cultural, artistic, and creative experiences, by virtue of their complex and multimodal nature, have proven to be unrivalled drivers of this identified path. Indeed, they can involve aesthetic engagement, involvement of the imagination, sensory activation, evocation of emotion and cognitive stimulation, as well as, in certain cases, social interaction, physical activity, and interaction with health-care settings. Research has demonstrated that they have the capacity to act in a composite manner on individuals, generating physiological, psychological, behavioural and social responses, in both active and receptive forms of interaction (Fancourt & Finn, 2019). As outlined in the WHO's Report 67/2019, which synthesised evidence from over 3,000 studies on how arts and cultural engagement can impact health and well-being across the life course, two main areas of impact have been identified. The first one is related to health promotion and disease prevention and the second to illness management and treatment, addressing health and well-being across all stages of the life cycle. In the WHO's Report 67/2019, the advantages of culture are thus identified in a longitudinal perspective.

In this regard, recent European policies have adopted the integration of culture and health as a strategic priority, emphasising that a broad spectrum of cultural activities has proven to "support illness prevention, health promotion, and the management and treatment of illnesses" (Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023–2026 2022/C 466/01, 2022, p. 7). Using a pharmaceutical analogy, the concept of the "cultural active ingredient" refers to over a hundred distinct cultural elements directly linked to positive health and well-being outcomes (Sacco, 2023, pp. 15-16; Warran et al., 2022). This analogy highlights a unique feature or dynamic within the cultural and artistic experience that is essential for triggering specific health outcomes and is integral to the experience itself (Aesop & BOP Consulting, 2018, p. 7).

The growing recognition of the interconnections between cultural engagement, health, and well-being, both at the individual and societal levels, has underscored the pivotal significance of a systemic and systematic integration of cultural, public health and social policies (Council of the European Union, 2022; Dow *et al.*, 2023; European Commission, 2018, 2022).

In view of the previously outlined scenario, the Italian definition of "Cultural Welfare" introduced in the Treccani encyclopaedia in 2020 (Cicerchia *et al.*, 2020) describes a novel, integrated model that leverages the visual and performing arts, alongside cultural heritage, to enhance individual and community well-being and health. This model operates through a variety of mechanisms: it promotes health from a biopsychosocial and salutogenic perspective, focusing on

the development of coping and life skills; it enhances subjective well-being and life satisfaction through empowerment and interpersonal learning; it addresses inequalities in health and social cohesion, facilitating access to cultural resources and fostering community capital. Furthermore, it supports active ageing, mitigates psychophysical decline associated with isolation, and empowers people with disabilities or those in marginalised conditions. Cultural Welfare also serves as a complement to traditional treatments, enriches the doctor-patient relationship via the medical humanities, supports non-professional carers, and helps delay the progression of degenerative conditions such as dementia and Parkinson's disease. This comprehensive approach positioned cultural practices as crucial contribution in both medical and social interventions, advocating for a holistic view of health and well-being.

This acknowledgement is subsequently accompanied by an application challenge, which is predicated on the existing territorial inequalities, including, but not limited to health, education, social care, mobility and cultural provision. In this scenario, the implementation of Cultural Welfare practices poses a considerable challenge. Nevertheless, it is evident that such systemic integration could yield substantial benefits, particularly in the most marginalised and disadvantaged areas, including inner areas. In the Italian case, inner areas cover about 58.8% of the national territorial surface, encompass 48.5% of the total number of municipalities, and represent 22.7% of the population (Istat, 2022). Italy's inner areas are defined by the national policy SNAI (Italian National Strategy for Inner Areas) as those territories that are distant from the main centres of supply of essential services, including local public transport, education and social and health services (UVAL, 2014). These areas are frequently abundant in cultural and natural resources, including cultural institutions, such as libraries and museums, which, despite their often-modest size, are capillary spread (Caramis, 2023a, 2023b; Istat, 2022). However, inner areas are also among the territories that experience the phenomenon described by the Italian National Statistical Institute (Istat) as "cultural drought" (Caramis, 2023a, 2023b). These marginal and disadvantaged areas have the potential to emerge as experimental arenas for the exploration and assessment of integrated Cultural Welfare models. This is especially evident in the adoption of a place-based approach for intensive local development. Such a model is already identified within the objectives of the SNAI, and it prioritises the utilisation of cultural and natural assets in order to enhance the quality of life of inhabitants. Inner areas are characterised by an abundance of both cultural − tangible and intangible − and natural resources. This richness can foster the development of Cultural Welfare practices that rely on both cultural and natural elements. While this research field remains in its nascent stages, it has already yielded noteworthy outcomes, as evidenced by the study conducted by Thomson *et al.* in 2020, which examined the implementation of the "Creative Green Prescription" approach, and

the already rich literature on Nature Prescribing (Kondo *et al.*, 2020; Nguyen *et al.*, 2022; Tate *et al.*, 2024).

The widespread and shared demand for an integrated model of Cultural Welfare has thus given rise to a pressing need, and concomitant challenge, namely that of evaluation. Indeed, the body of evidence reported from the assessment of the contribution of culture to health and well-being has mainly concentrated on the timely evaluation of the impact of culture on health improvement, disease management, treatment, and well-being augmentation in its various forms. However, the utilisation of these instruments frequently falls short in terms of encompassing additional, more comprehensive elements that influence well-being (All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, 2017). Consequently, to harness the full potential of Cultural Welfare, the scope of the evaluation must be expanded in several ways. This naturally necessitates maintaining the adoption of a rigorous and validated methodology for assessing health and well-being impacts, which nevertheless must be contextualised within a wider framework. This is urgent in the complex territories previously mentioned, where Cultural Welfare must address the challenges posed by "cultural drought" and the accessibility of essential services.

Indeed, the necessity for a more holistic, strategic, and pervasive approach to evaluation has emerged as the prevailing challenge, not only in the field of Cultural Welfare, but also in the assessment of the broader contribution of culture to society, and sustainable development.

Historically, evaluation and impact assessment in cultural sectors were compartmentalised, primarily focusing on singular domains such as social, cultural, economic, or environmental impacts. This sectorial approach often overlooked the interconnected nature of these domains (Cicerchia, 2012, p. 201). The need for a more integrated approach has been recognised, as highlighted by frameworks such as Europa Nostra's report "Cultural Heritage Matters for Europe" and the Hangzhou Declaration, advocating for a holistic four-domain assessment in cultural impact evaluations (CHCfE Consortium, 2015, pp. 17, 97-102; UNESCO, 2013). Similarly, Jon Hawkes in his exploration of culture's role in sustainable development suggested evaluating the contribution of culture across four domains: social equity, economic viability, environmental responsibility, and cultural vitality (Hawkes, 2010, p. 25). The shift towards more comprehensive evaluative methods is also mirrored in broader economic and social assessments, as discussed in reports like "The Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress Revisited" by Stiglitz *et al.* (2009, p. 4), and reflected in initiatives such as the Italian BES "Measures of Equitable and Sustainable Well-being" and the OECD's "How's Life? 2013: Measuring Well-being" (OECD, 2013; Istat, 2016).

The scientific community has increasingly recognised the broad societal impacts of culture, prompting more extensive investigations into its contributions. A notable initiative by the UK

cultural research organisation Comedia, commissioned by the Arts Council of England in 1993 (Landry, Bianchini *et al.*, 1993), led to François Matarasso's seminal 1997 study, "Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts". This report identified 50 social impacts of art participation, including health and well-being, personal development, social cohesion, local image and identity, imagination and vision, community empowerment, and self-determination (Matarasso, 1997). Despite facing methodological criticisms highlighted by Merli (2002) and Belfiore (2002; 2006), this study has been a pivotal reference in shaping ongoing discussions and refining evaluation processes in the cultural sector. Concurrently, academic interest in the influence of culture on quality of life, health, well-being, and economic and social aspects has surged, evidenced by a growing body of research across local, national, and international contexts (Bollo, 2013; Brown, 2019; Cicerchia, 2017a, 2017b, 2022; Cicerchia & Bologna, 2017; Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016; Dunphy, 2015; Gariboldi & Marconi, 2021; Grossi *et al.*, 2011; Lee, 2013; McCarthy *et al.*, 2004; Oakley *et al.*, 2013; O'Brien, 2015; OECD & ICOM, 2018; Ratti, 2015; Redmond *et al.*, 2018; Scott, 2013).

The argument posits that to gain a full understanding and accurate evaluation of the contribution of culture, and Cultural Welfare interventions, it is necessary to move beyond the use of compartmentalised metrics and adopt a more holistic approach that considers the economic, social, cultural, environmental and individual dimensions.

A secondary aspect is crucial for the evaluation of Cultural Welfare activities, namely the people-centred dimension underpinning the ethos of this approach. This dimension is predicated on the identification of specific needs and the adoption of participatory approaches to address specific issues and respond to the genuine aspirations of the stakeholders involved, especially the beneficiaries. This point is closely related to the theoretical framework of the Theory of Change (Rogers, 2014), which is frequently the underlying basis of Cultural Welfare actions. In this context, organisations and teams are prompted to interrogate not so much their desired future actions, but rather the change they aspire to engender via their intervention. In order to ensure the efficacy of this approach, it is essential to undertake a meticulous analysis of needs and desires, with the ultimate objective of facilitating co-creation with the interlocutors identified by the action itself. This approach enables a design that is firmly grounded in the authentic needs of stakeholders and a collaborative definition of the objectives to be realised, and, ultimately, it facilitates a concerted and collective understanding of the success of the action (Badham, 2015; Fischer, 2012; Landry *et al.*,1993; Merli, 2002).

Moreover, as Zandonai observed in 2017, the relationship between welfare and culture is not characterised by discrete episodes or occurrences (Zandonai, 2017). This is indicative of a shift in

the very nature of welfare, which is becoming increasingly dependent on the support and resources provided by communities, rather than relying solely on the availability of service facilities. This is occurring concurrently with a parallel change in culture, whereby the participatory aspects are becoming increasingly significant (Zandonai, 2017, p. 102). Cultural Welfare is no longer confined to care, assistance and education, but it is embedded in people's daily lives. This shift has led to a transformation in the identity of key stakeholders, who are no longer confined to the "public" category but have become active agents of change (*Ibidem*). In this sense, a Cultural Welfare action has the potential to implement the democratic principle of equality in participation by enabling diverse individuals and groups to experience culture according to their needs, possibilities, and aspirations, reflecting the trajectory identified in the Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2005).

To summarise, in the contemporary context, characterised by the coexistence of diverse forms of cultural production − such as Culture 1.0 and Culture 3.0 (Sacco *et al.*, 2018) −, forces from both the grassroots and the establishment engage in a dialogue that resonates with the debate surrounding the Democratisation of Culture and Culture Democracy (Belfiore *et al.*, 2023). In light of the Faro Convention's emphasis on the significance of participation in the cultural sphere (Council of Europe, 2005), it is crucial to examine the role of participatory approaches within the cultural and creative sectors, particularly in the context of Cultural Welfare.

In consideration of the aforementioned premises, and in particular the advocated necessity for a more holistic approach to the evaluation, the significance of the participatory dimension in this assessment, and the assumption of the potential positive role of Cultural Welfare in addressing territorial inequalities in a holistic manner, the following research questions have been formulated:

RQ1: How might the multidimensional contributions of Cultural Welfare be assessed in a holistic way, especially within marginal contexts such as those of inner areas?

RQ2: What part do participatory processes play in the Cultural and Creative Sectors, and how might they be incorporated into Cultural Welfare practices?

The first research question is motivated by the necessity to establish robust evaluation frameworks that can effectively capture the diverse impacts of Cultural Welfare initiatives. In addressing this question, the focus is directed towards a specific territorial perspective, namely that of inner areas, assumed that they represent the baseline against which reflection should be initiated. This methodological approach aims to explore the research demand from the standpoint of disadvantaged territories encountering significant cultural and socio-economic challenges, providing reflections that could be easily applied to less disadvantaged territories.

The answers to the first research question are addressed in two different sections of the thesis: the first and the third (Fig. 1 shows the outline of the research). In particular, the issue related to

inner areas is tackled in the first chapter of this thesis, where a focus on the Italian regulatory scenario, presenting the regional fragmentation and the regional actions aimed at developing forms of Cultural Welfare in inner areas is presented. In order to respond to the overall dimension of how to assess the multidimensional contribution of Cultural Welfare in a holistic way, this thesis proposes an analysis of the existing holistic models developed to assess the contribution of culture in different contexts (see Chapter IV). This analysis is followed by the author's proposal for a holistic evaluation framework for Cultural Welfare activities. Moreover, the case study presented in Chapter III explores the topic of evaluation, paying particular attention to the participatory approaches developed in marginalised contexts.

In relation to the second research question, there is a growing recognition of the value of participatory approaches in enhancing the sustainability and impact of cultural interventions. This necessitates an exploration of how these processes can be integrated more deeply into CWAs to maximise their effectiveness and reach. This latter aspect is addressed in the framework proposal (see Chapter V), while the broader topic of participatory processes is addressed in the second part of this thesis, through discussion of a Structured Literature Review and a case study on the topic.

2. Outline of the Research

The present thesis adopts a theoretical approach to explore the multidimensional value generated by Cultural Welfare interventions. The main aim is to develop a comprehensive framework and methodology for analysis and evaluation. Hence, the final output of this thesis is the holistic framework for assessing the contribution of Cultural Welfare from a multi-stakeholder and multidimensional perspective, presented in the last chapter.

The thesis is structured in three main parts in order to address two research questions:

RQ1: How might the multidimensional contributions of Cultural Welfare be assessed in a holistic way within marginal contexts, such as those of inner areas?

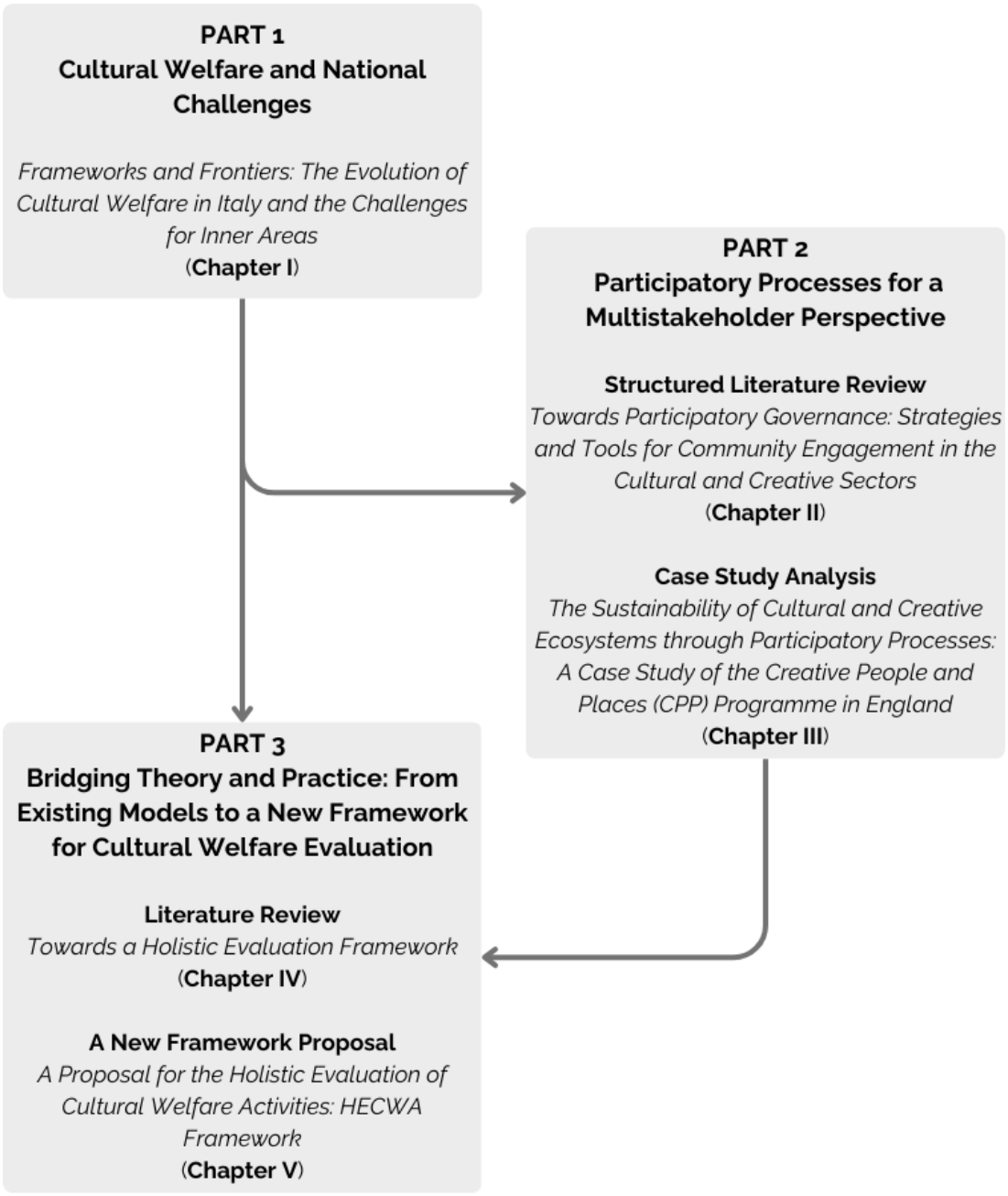
RQ2: What part do participatory processes play in the Cultural and Creative Sectors, and how might they be incorporated into Cultural Welfare practices?

The first part, discussed in Chapter I, sets out the context by examining the evolution of Cultural Welfare in Italy and the national challenges it faces, especially in the inner areas. The second part, detailed in Chapters II and III, explores participatory processes, with a particular focus on community involvement strategies in the Cultural and Creative Sectors and a case study of the Creative People and Places programme in England. The third part (Chapters IV and V) presents the development and application of a new holistic framework for assessing Cultural Welfare activities,

emphasising the integration of theory and practice through a detailed review of existing models and the formulation of a new multidimensional and multi-stakeholder framework.

The following figure shows the outline of the research.

Fig. 1 Outline of the research (own elaboration)



Part I of the present study commences with a comprehensive overview of the subject, encompassing the evolution of Cultural Welfare and its contemporary role, both at the European and international levels. The subsequent section of the first Chapter involves an analysis of the regulatory framework implementing Cultural Welfare interventions at both the national and regional levels in Italy. The study acknowledges the uneven implementation of the Cultural Welfare model in

regional policies in Italy and presents an in-depth analysis of the measures aimed at inner areas. In this regard, the final section of the chapter provides an introductory overview of the needs and opportunities of Cultural Welfare for inner areas, which are characterised by a lack of essential services and account for approximately 58.8% of Italy's national surface area. The exploration is facilitated by the presentation of the two regional cases of Cultural Welfare strategies targeting inner areas.

Another crucial aspect of interest in the development of a multi-stakeholder evaluation framework concerns the underlying participatory dimension. The subject was addressed in the second part of this thesis, comprising two chapters. The initial chapter of this part consist of a literature review, whereas the subsequent chapter is a case study. In order to identify the most effective ways to incorporate a participatory ethos within the framework, a Structured Literature Review was conducted and presented in Chapter II. The review outlines a theoretical frameworks for participatory processes and discusses the detailed analyses of 45 contributions (40 papers and 5 book chapters) presenting operational tools and approaches to deliver participatory processes within the Cultural and Creative Sector. The tools are organised according to the management phase in which they were applied: a) planning and decision-making phase; b) management phase; c) measurement and evaluation. From the earliest stages of collection, it became evident that there was a significant presence of contributions that employed the terminology of participation, but which conspicuously lacked the presentation of tangible tools or methodologies for fostering engagement. These contributions appeared to utilise the term merely as a buzzword, with the aspiration of fostering increased adoption in their final recommendations. This phenomenon, in conjunction with the absence of proper tools and methods in many of the results, caused a substantial filtration process that initially reduced the number of contributions from 404 to 108, and ultimately to 45. Furthermore, in relation to the three management phases that have been identified for the thematic analysis, most contributions were associated with the management phase. Conversely, the utilisation of participatory tools in the design and evaluation phases was less prevalent in the examined literature.

The present literature review has thus given rise to the desire to explore the practical application of participatory approaches in the cultural and creative sector, with a particular focus on their use in the design and evaluation phases. The results of the review prompted an exploration of the practical application of participatory approaches in the cultural and creative sector, with a particular focus on their utilisation in the design and evaluation phases. To address this need, field research was conducted, which culminated in the case study presented in Chapter III. Adopting the single-case study methodology, the research focuses on "Appetite", Stoke-on-Trent's Creative People and

Places (CPP) project. The 10-year CPP programme aims to improve audience engagement in regions of England with historically low levels of participation. The research integrates diverse data sources, including interviews, observations, and document reviews, to construct a comprehensive narrative that elucidates the dynamics that emerged at the local level (i.e., consortium partners) when adopting participatory processes with a large-scale programme. The results discussed in this chapter emphasise the dual nature of participatory processes. On the one hand, these approaches have been shown to substantially increase community involvement, especially of previously marginalised groups, and support project viability and place-based ethos. However, they also reveal significant challenges, such as the great amount of resources required and the difficulty of aligning different stakeholder interests. The chapter goes beyond simple operational concerns, exploring wider social ramifications in the local culture-led ecosystem (Borin & Donato, 2022), and the consortium partners' perception of participatory design and evaluation. This in-depth qualitative review of the "Appetite" project offers novel insights into the application of participatory approaches and practical guidance for policymakers, cultural leaders and practitioners. By delineating the strengths, obstacles, and limitations of participatory strategies, this chapter establishes a foundation for the refinement of these methods within the context of cultural policy frameworks.

The third part presents a narrative critical review of existing holistic models, followed by the formulation of a new multidimensional and multi-stakeholder evaluation framework specifically designed for Cultural Welfare activities, and aimed at intercepting the assessment needs of disadvantaged and marginal locations, such as inner areas. Chapter IV discusses the theoretical foundations, focusing in an opening on the concepts of *value*, *culture*, and *evaluation* and the need for a holistic model to assess the broad contribution of Cultural Welfare. Then, a comparative analysis of several prominent holistic models is presented, such as the Impacts 08, the SoPHIA Model, and Dunphy's Holistic Framework for Evaluation of Arts Engagement. These frameworks are analysed through the lens of Cultural Welfare, identifying their strengths and gaps in addressing the complex impacts of Cultural Welfare activities. This critical assessment helps pave the way for the development of a refined evaluation model that better suits the nuanced needs of Cultural Welfare.

In Chapter V, the new holistic framework, HECWA − Holistic Evaluation for Cultural Welfare Actions − is introduced, its axes and components are delineated, and the underlying theory, principles, and main objectives are presented. This chapter explains how the framework integrates the insights gained from the review of existing holistic models and the participatory approach of a multi-stakeholder perspective. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the implications of the

findings for future policy and practice, suggesting how the framework can be adapted and utilised in various contexts to enhance the strategic impact of Cultural Welfare activities. This part of the thesis underscores the importance of a flexible and responsive evaluation tool that aligns with the dynamic nature of cultural work and addresses the multifaceted impacts on communities.

3. Notes for the Reader

This thesis is the result of a three-year research in the PhD Course Global Studies. Justice, Rights, Politics, at the Department of Political Science, Communication and International Relations of the University of Macerata (UniMC). The research was carried out within the framework of a co-funded PhD scholarship from the European Union within the National Operational Programme (PON), Research and Innovation 2014-2020, Axis IV "Education and research for recovery" Action IV.5 "Doctorates on green issues". The general topic of the fellowship was: "Cultural Welfare and socio-territorial regeneration. A multidimensional and multi-stakeholder model for measuring the impact of culture in peripheral areas".

The PON PhD programme in Global Studies. Justice, Rights, Politics required the completion of a six-month period in collaboration with partners and a period of twelve months abroad (of which six months should have been completed by December 2023). Regarding the period spent with the partners, six months were dedicated to the "Società Cooperativa Consortile Fabbrica Cultura" (IT), while three months were spent with the start-up "La Rete dell'Appennino" (IT).

In terms of international mobility, a nine-month period was spent at the University of Staffordshire in England (UK) in 2023. Hosted by the C3 Centre, Creative Industries and Creative Communities, the topic of participatory processes and creative tools for evaluation was explored. This mobility also made possible the field research that led to the case study presented in the third chapter of this thesis. Indeed, a revised version of **Chapter III** has been presented during the "XLIV Annual Scientific Conference of AISRe − Europe and the Mediterranean between transitions and conflicts. Opportunities and risks for regions and territories", held at the Università degli Studi di Napoli Parthenope (IT), in September 2023.

At the time of writing, a revised version of this case study, developed together with Prof. Mara Cerquetti (UniMC) and Prof. Carola Boehm (Staffordshire University), entitled "Can participatory processes contribute to the sustainability of cultural and creative ecosystems? The case of the Creative People and Places (CPP) Programme (England)" is under the reviewing process for publication on *Piccola Impresa / Small Business* scientific journal. It is imperative to underscore the invaluable support received from Carola Boehm for this fieldwork conducted in the UK, and her

indispensable contribution to the findings presented in this chapter. Specifically, her meticulous analyses, which have been preserved for the sake of comprehensiveness in this chapter and are presented in greater detail in Section 5.3, entitled “Higher Education Institutions, Funders and Local Government”.

The second mobility was a three-month stay as a Visiting PhD at Erasmus University Rotterdam (NL). This visiting gave me the opportunity to share my framework (**Chapter V**) with other scholars and to improve its structure based on their feedback.

The results of the structed literature review I carried out on participatory processes in the Cultural and Creative Sectors (**Chapter II**), have been discussed in two academic settings: a) the third edition of the workshop “Rethinking Culture and Creativity” organised by the Università degli Studi di Torino and the Fondazione Santagata per l’Economia della Cultura, in 2023 in Turin (IT); b) in the young scholars’ poster session, organised by the Università degli Studi Roma Tre, during the conference “Culture shapes our Future: The role of Culture in the framework of economic, social, environmental and cultural development”, held in Rome in December 2023, and organised by the Master biennale Economia e Gestione dei beni culturali di Roma Tre, in collaboration with the Associazione Economia della Cultura, the CLES, and the Fondazione Scuola dei beni e delle attività e con il Dipartimento di Economia Aziendale di Roma Tre. The long abstract of the poster was accepted for publication in the Conference Proceedings.

The preliminary findings of the research presented in **Chapter IV** and **V** were shared in the short paper “*Contributing to Cultural Welfare: A Critical Review of Methods for Measuring the Impact of Culture on Sustainability and Well-being*”, presented at the Sinergie-SIMA Management Conference 2024, held at the University of Parma in June, and published in the Conference Proceedings.

The framework delineated in **Chapter IV**, and in particular the tailor-made structure modelled on the needs of Cultural Welfare for inner areas, was presented at the: a) “XLV Annual Scientific Conference of AISRe”, hosted by the University of Turin in September 2024; b) “4th International Workshop on Rethinking Culture and Creativity”, held at the University of Chieti-Pescara in October 2024.

During my doctoral research, I engaged in the second edition of the Cultural Welfare Centre’s executive master’s programme. Specifically, from November 2023 to June 2024, I participated in the 140-hour course, “*Designing Cultural Welfare: from conception to impact evaluation*”. The experience was of incalculable value, both in terms of the high-level training received and the network built with 52 other participants from across Italy. It was a foundational pathway for both

personal and academic growth, a collective experience that saw educators and students united by a shared commitment to Cultural Welfare.

Over the past three years, I have had the opportunity to get to know several organisations delivering Cultural Welfare projects. Notably, I have had the opportunity to conduct an in-depth observation of ImproLANDS, a 22-month small-scale European Cooperation Project aimed at social inclusion funded by the CreativeEurope, taking place in four targeted inner territories across Europe: Italy (leader); Spain; Romania; Greece. The project employs theatre improvisation techniques with the objective of enhancing the well-being of individuals and communities residing in areas impacted by natural disasters, depopulation, and/or loneliness. I was directly involved in its implementation and evaluation, and I presented it as an example of CW for inner areas at a conference held at the University of Granada in April 2024. The research presented in Granada will be published in the Conference Proceedings in 2025. The presentation examined Italian experiences, investigating the opportunities and challenges associated with the delivery of CW in rural areas. The contribution, entitled "*Welfare Cultural: oportunidades y desafíos para las zonas rurales*" (own translation: "Cultural Welfare: opportunities and challenges for rural areas"), was presented on 22 April 2024 at the Faculty of Law, University of Granada, during the conference: "*Jornada Internacional sobre Políticas Públicas e Instrumentos Jurídicos para la Lucha contra la Despoblación*" (own translation: "International Conference on Public Policy and Legal Instruments for the Fight against Depopulation"). The collaboration with ImproLANDS prompted a series of reflections that subsequently informed both Chapters I and V. For the latter, the knowledge acquired was imparted through the design of the subordinate categories of framework intended to ascertain the role of Cultural Welfare in inner areas. Concerning Chapter I, the methodological approach of focusing on regional planning maturity precluded an examination of pertinent bottom-up practices conducted at the regional and inner area levels, as exemplified by ImproLANDS. However, the experience gained was employed to provide a pragmatic nuance in the analysis of opportunities and challenges in the design of CW initiatives in inner areas.

Other aspects related to **Chapter I** were presented at the Workshop "Biodiverso Culturale – Economie della Rigenerazione", as part of the PNRR Borgo di Castel del Giudice project. In the presentation, I explored the pillars of social innovation through the lens of Cultural Welfare, particularly in relation to rural regeneration.

Since January 2024, I have been contributing, as a member of the ICOM Italy, to the Working Group on Cultural Welfare. This volunteering has given me the valuable opportunity to share insights and collaborate with esteemed academics and professionals committed to advancing the field.

Part 1
Cultural Welfare and National Challenges

Chapter I – Frameworks and Frontiers: The Evolution of Cultural Welfare in Italy and the Challenges for Inner Areas

This chapter aims to trace the evolution of the relationship between Culture, Health, and Well-being with particular attention to the European context.

The initial section of this study examines the paradigm shift that has been initiated by the biopsychosocial model, as pioneered by Engel (1977), and the conceptualisation of salutogenesis, as introduced by Antonovsky (1979). The subsequent effects of these shifts on the conceptualisation of health and well-being are also analysed. The holistic perspective driving this transformation lays the groundwork for an intersectoral approach to addressing welfare concerns. In this changed context, health is recognised as a dynamic process and its determinants, including culture, become the preferred levers for making changes capable of generating cascading positive effects useful for generating "well-being societies" (WHO, 2021). Consequently, the focus of interventions has shifted from solely addressing the disease to encompassing a broader range of health concerns. In this scenario efforts are made to improve the context in which individuals operate and to increase their life skills capital (World Health Organization Division of Mental, 1994). The objective is to trigger self-management and empowerment modes in the individuals that form society, irrespective of whether they are affected by conditions of fragility or criticality. Cultural and creative experiences, by virtue of their complex and multimodal nature, have proven to be unrivalled drivers of this identified path. Indeed, they have the capacity to act in a composite manner on individuals, generating physiological, psychological, behavioural and social responses, and have demonstrated their contributions in terms of promotion, prevention, management, and treatment (Fancourt & Finn, 2019). The growing recognition of the interconnections between cultural engagement, health, and well-being, both at the individual and societal levels has highlighted the critical importance of integrating cultural participation and engagement into public health and social policies.

The initial section of the chapter thus presents the actions that have been taken at the European level, as well as those that have been pursued by bodies such as the World Health Organization. The chapter provides an additional focus on the level of spreading of this systemic integration in pioneering countries. A significant focus is then placed on the Italian scenario, where the coexistence of grassroots innovation and fragmented regional policy has produced a unique context. Certainly, as Sacco has observed, the proliferation of bottom-up initiatives is a distinctive feature

and a source of strength in the Italian context, in contrast to countries (e.g., Finland) where measures are more firmly established but are implemented exclusively through a top-down approach (Sacco, 2017). However, despite the multitude of these practices − some of which are remarkably valid, while others are less structured −, they remain scattered, ephemeral, and struggle to find long-term stability. It is therefore evident the need for structured policy support to ensure a widespread diffusion of these practices throughout Italy and to guarantee indications and support to local actors, from design to evaluation (Sacco, 2023, p. 17).

The second section of this chapter is concerned with the implementation of Cultural Welfare policies within the Italian national and regional agendas. It highlights the absence of uniformity in legislative and policy frameworks across Italy, which has resulted in uneven dissemination and adoption of this approach. By examining regional planning maturity and active legislation, the chapter provides an analytical lens to understand the challenges and opportunities in fostering a cohesive Cultural Welfare strategy.

The final section of the chapter will present a discussion of the current state of the art with regard to the implementation of these practices in regional and national policies for inner areas, which cover about 58.8% of the national territorial surface. This section presents an initial overview of the characteristics of inner areas, derived from the national regulation on these territories (i.e., the distance from essential services, such as health, education, and public transport) and from the Istat analysis of the phenomenon of “cultural drought” and the widespread diffusion of certain cultural institutions (such as museums and libraries) (Caramis, 2023a, 2023b). Prior to the presentation of regional cases, this third section delineates the potential strengths and challenges associated with the implementation of Cultural Welfare programmes in these complex territories. Subsequently, the specific cases of two regions, Umbria and Toscana, are presented. Both regions − Umbria (already in the first programming cycle 2014-2020) and Tuscany (in the current cycle 2021-2027) − have adopted specific Cultural Welfare policies for their inner areas, within the framework of European funding for the implementation of the National Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI).

1. Culture, Health, and Well-being: From Evidence to New Policy Perspectives

> Engaging in cultural and artistic activities has been innate to us as human beings since prehistoric times. The beneficial impact of culture and the arts on individual and societal health and well-being has been highlighted by the cultural sector for a long time, and now there is a strong body of evidence confirming this. Engaging in cultural and creative activities is a health behaviour (similar to physical activities, good nutrition or being in nature). Both active and receptive (as an audience) participation in culture has a beneficial effect on individuals and communities.
>
> (Culture Action Europe, 2024, p. 1)

To introduce this chapter on the evolution of Cultural Welfare (henceforth referred to as CW), it was deemed appropriate to provide an overview of the current state of the field. A particularly relevant and recent reference is the opening statement of the position paper published by Culture Action Europe (CAE[1]) in September 2024, quoted above. This document builds upon and expands the policy recommendations outlined in the "CultureForHealth Report: Culture's Contribution to Health and Well-being. A Report on Evidence and Policy Recommendations for Europe" − which CAE co-authored −, presented to the European Commission in November 2022 (Zbranca *et al.*, 2022). Another relevant contribution from the European Network Voices of Culture[2] is the 2022 report "Youth, Mental Health and Culture", which is concerned with the role of culture in promoting the wellbeing of young people, particularly regarding mental health. Among the principal recommendations set out in the report for policymakers are those relating to fostering cross-sectoral collaboration through the integration of the cultural and creative sectors with health and social services, including the incorporation of the arts into social prescribing initiatives (Voices of Culture, 2023). By fostering deeper collaboration between the cultural and health sectors, this body of work marks a significant step forward in advancing cross-sectoral integrated approaches at the European level.

[1] Culture Action Europe is a leading European network comprising cultural organizations, artists, activists, academics, and policymakers. It advocates for culture as essential for sustainable development at both local and European levels. As a unique intersectoral network, it unites members from diverse cultural areas, serving as the political voice of Europe's cultural sector and a central hub for informed opinions and debates on arts and cultural policy.

[2] Voices of Culture is a structured dialogue initiated by the European Commission as part of the New European Agenda for Culture. Running from 2015 to 2023, it provided a platform for discussions between civil society stakeholders and the Commission. The initiative was implemented by the Goethe-Institut on behalf of the Commission, following a successful call for tender.

At the conclusion of the 2022 calendar year, the European Commission published “Get Inspired! Culture: a driver of health and well-being in the EU”, a compendium of successful projects funded through programs including Creative Europe, Erasmus+, and Horizon 2020. This publication underscores the way cultural activities contribute to mental health, social cohesion, and quality of life, by promoting innovative approaches and cross-sectoral collaborations to address the challenges of European health strategies (European Commission. Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2022).

The importance of a cross-sectoral integration had already been acknowledged by the European Commission in 2018 through the recognition of the significance of cultural crossovers, as articulated in the New European Agenda for Culture 2030. Cultural crossovers entail the establishment of systemic and systematic relationships between, previously weakly interconnected, policy domains, most notably that between culture and health (European Commission, 2018).

This represents both a strategic recognition of the progress achieved and a clear indication of future investment, as outlined in the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (Council of the European Union, 2022). For the first time, the Plan integrated the connection between culture and health into its strategic priorities for the 2023-2026 programming cycle, introducing a dedicated intervention titled “Culture and Health” under the area “Culture for people: enhancing cultural participation and the role of cultures in society.” In this context, EU Member States agreed to collaborate on the “Culture and Health” topic through the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). The “Culture and Health” OMC group, comprising representatives from Ministries of Culture and Ministries of Health of participating Member States, commenced its work in February 2024[3].

The new European perspectives on the subject are therefore highly promising and demonstrate a notable level of political and strategic maturity. It is evident that the discourse surrounding the value of culture as a health resource has gained greater prominence in the transformed post-pandemic cultural scenario. The integrated and collaborative relationship between culture and health has undoubtedly garnered considerable support in the position of the WHO European Region on the matter.

[3] Italy recently joined the OMC group with a representative from the Ministry of Culture: Anna Principato, Responsible for the coordination of activities of European relevance of the international relations office of the Ministry of Culture, which participates in the Cultural Affairs Committee (CAC) of the Council of the European Union. The OMC groups operate within this committee, including the Culture and Health group, in which all 27 EU countries are represented.

In particular, the 2019 seminal piece of research on this subject is a scoping review produced by the WHO, the report 67/2019, entitled "What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review" (Fancourt & Finn, 2019).

The document, which synthesised evidence from over 3,000 studies[4], represents a foundational reference point for elucidating the nexus between culture and well-being. It systematically examined existing evidence on how arts and cultural engagement can impact health and well-being across the life course. In the Report 67/2019, the arts were categorised into five main areas of engagement (Davies *et al.*, 2012, p. 1):

1. performing arts (such as music, dance, theatre, singing, and film);
2. visual arts, design, and craft (covering activities like painting, photography, sculpture, and textiles);
3. literature (encompassing writing, reading, and literary events);
4. cultural activities (visits to museums, galleries, concerts, festivals, and community events);
5. online, digital and electronic arts (including animation, filmmaking, and computer graphics).

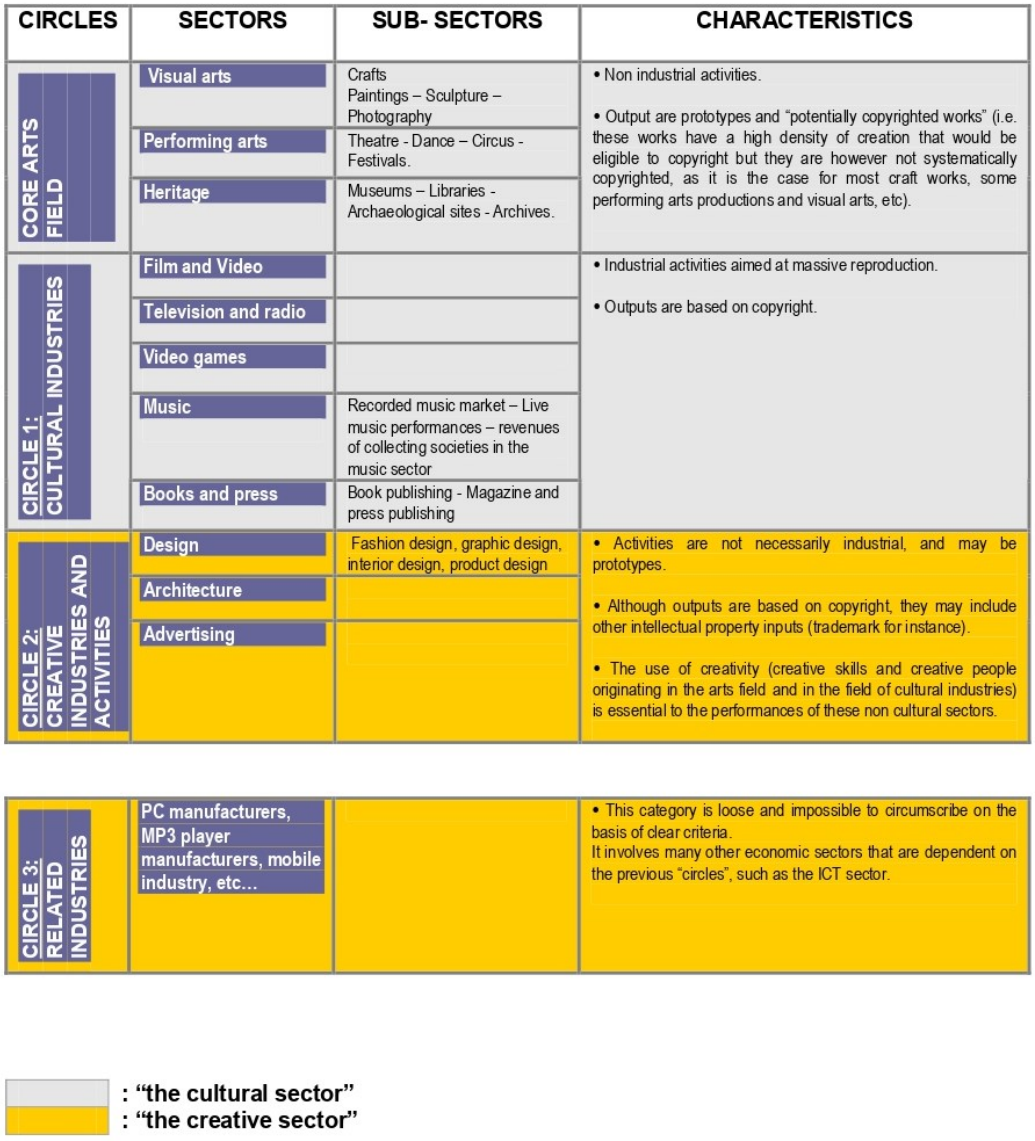
Although these categories focus on engagement − primarily experienced from the perspective of the consumer or active participant, rather than the production and offer side – an examination through the lens of the KEA classification (presented in the following figure) allows to contextualise them within a broader, structured framework of cultural and creative sector (KEA European Affairs, 2006). To illustrate, the performing arts (1), are closely aligned with the *Core Arts Field*, which encompasses traditional artistic activities such as theatre, dance, and music. Similarly, the visual arts, design, and craft (2) correspond to the *Core Arts Field* for fine arts (e.g., painting and sculpture). Literature (3) finds a natural place within the *Cultural Industries Circle*, specifically the Books and Press sector, which includes publishing and other literary activities central to the dissemination of written culture. Cultural activities (4), including visits to museums, galleries, and participation in festivals or community events, reflect the heritage sector in the *Core Arts Field*. Finally, online, digital and electronic arts (5) align with emerging sectors identified in the *Cultural Industries Circle*, such as film, television, video games, and music, and extend into *Related*

[4] The report includes evidence drawn from over 900 publications, comprising more than 200 reviews, including systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and meta-syntheses. Collectively, these sources cover over 3,000 studies, alongside an additional 700 individual studies (Fancourt & Finn, 2019, p.7).

Industries, where technological advancements in devices and platforms support the creation, distribution, and consumption of digital content.

The WHO report distinguished art from activities that, although creative − such as gardening, cooking, or volunteering − do not align with standard definitions of art when cross-referenced with national arts councils (*Ibidem*). Similarly, architecture and building design (KEA *Creative Industries Circle*) were not a primary focus of the review, though there were occasional references to the role of visual arts within health-related settings.

Fig. 2 Proposed delineation of the cultural & creative sector (source: KEA European Affairs, 2006, p. 3)



In terms of the nature of engagement with these categories, the Report identified two forms of interaction that it considered valuable: active participation, which includes activities such as

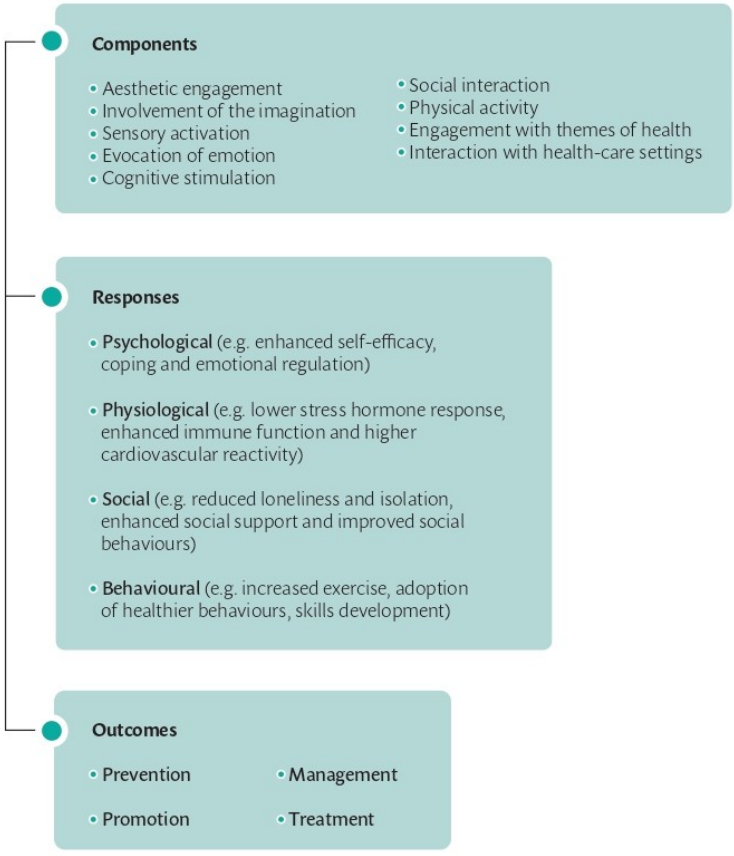
creating art or joining workshops, and receptive engagement, which encompasses activities such as attending performances or visiting galleries.

The analysis of the findings suggested two main areas of impact: 1) Health Promotion and Disease Prevention and 2) Illness Management and Treatment, addressing health and well-being across all stages of the life cycle. The advantages of culture are thus identified in a longitudinal perspective, spanning from the promotion of healthy behaviours and the prevention of illness, to fostering alliances in the management and treatment of pathologies and disabilities, and extending to end-of-life care. These actions occur in a variety of settings, including places of care, cultural institutions, and locations from the everyday life.

Moreover, the beneficial effects of arts activities are inextricably linked to their complexity and multimodal nature. These interventions encompass a multitude of elements that are widely acknowledged to be beneficial for health (Fancourt & Finn, 2019, p. 2).

The logic model presented in the report, and reproduced here, delineates the different components of arts activities. They can involve aesthetic engagement, involvement of the imagination, sensory activation, evocation of emotion and cognitive stimulation. Depending on its nature, an art activity may also involve social interaction, physical activity, engagement with themes of health and interaction with health-care settings (*Ibidem*).

Fig. 3 A logic model linking the arts with health (source: Fancourt & Finn, 2019, p.3)



The enumerated components of arts activities have the capacity to elicit psychological, physiological, social, and behavioural responses that are themselves causally linked with health outcomes.

The six arts categories delineated in the Report encompass a multitude of combinations of health-promoting elements. These may be observed in *everyday activities* that offer secondary health benefits, *bespoke programmes* devised for specific health or well-being objectives, or *therapeutic arts interventions* delivered by trained professionals. The suitability of specific arts activities is contingent upon the targeted population or health condition, as some are more efficacious in combining components (e.g., dance is particularly relevant for physical rehabilitation due to its emphasis on movement).

The profound salutogenic vision embedded in this essential WHO's scoping review would not have been possible without the introduction of the biopsychosocial model, which emphasises a holistic understanding of health, addressing biological, psychological, and social dimensions in the promotion of well-being. Indeed, the debate between the bio-medical model and the biopsychosocial model, introduced by Engel (1977) represented a fundamental sparkle that shaped the way health and illness were understood and approached. The biomedical model, which is exclusively focused on biological factors linked to disease and characterised by the cause-effect paradigm, has been extended thanks to the model proposed by Engel, which incorporates psychological and social factors into the understanding of health and disease. In this way, the biomedical model limit related to a focus on disease treatment, was overcome promoting health in a holistic manner (Dâmaso *et al.*, 2023). Indeed, in his work, Engel presents a novel approach to the concept of individual well-being. This approach is founded upon the notion that the intricate and variable interaction of biological, psychological, and social factors plays a pivotal role in determining an individual's overall well-being.

The interconnection between health and well-being was first recognised by the World Health Organization (WHO) in its 1948 definition of health, which transcended the simple dichotomy of the presence or absence of disease. Instead, it emphasised a more holistic perspective, defining health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 1948, p. 1). Moreover, in the document "Health 2020: a European policy framework and strategy for the 21st century", the WHO further refined its definition of health, highlighting that health and well-being are shaped by "a range of biomedical, psychosocial, social, economic, and environmental factors that interconnect across people in differing ways and at different times across the life course" (WHO, 2020, p. 39). This expanded understanding acknowledges the dynamic and multidimensional nature of health.

This definition of health rooted within society and culture, influenced by internal and external determinants, together with the salutogenic approach introduced by Antonovsky (1979), provided a new framework to understand and promote determinants that contribute to health and well-being.

The salutogenic approach, developed by the sociologist Aaron Antonovsky, posits that well-being and health are not determined by the absence of disease (Antonovsky, 1996). Rather, they are the result of a process through which individuals maintain their *sense of coherence* (e.g. that life is *understandable*, *manageable*, and *meaningful*[5]) and cope with the changes that occur in them, in relationships with others and in the environment (*Ibidem*). A key element for salutogenesis for Antonovsky is therefore the *sense of coherence* that is also achieved through the symbolic apparatus, also nourished by culture and the effects it has on people's lives.

The salutogenic approach aligns with the holistic and integrated approaches advocated by the WHO, spanning from the intersectoral advocacy of "Alma-Ata Declaration" (WHO, 1978) and the focus on the key areas of health promotion of the "Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion" [6] (WHO, 1986), to more recent frameworks such as "Health in All Policies" (World Health Organization, 2015) and "One Health" (WHO, 2017), which emphasise the need for comprehensive and collaborative strategies in health promotion.

In 1994, the World Health Organization (WHO) introduced the concept of life skills as a fundamental set of abilities that are determinant for health promotion (World Health Organization Division of Mental, 1994). These skills are rooted in principles of self-management, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and the development of resilience to adversity. The term is used to describe a set of cognitive, emotional, and relational competencies that can be developed through learning, and which provide the individual with the capacity to effectively navigate the challenges inherent to daily life, with confidence.

The 2021 "Geneva Charter for Well-being" builds on earlier frameworks, such as the "Ottawa Charter", by focusing on the broader determinants of health, including environmental and social factors as well as cultural aspects, which are recognised as important factors in the formation of well-being (WHO, 2021). The 2021 Charter underscores the importance of creating environments conducive to well-being, integrating health planning and related investments with social

[5] In this regard, the salutogenic approach emphasised the relevance of the eudaimonic aspect of well-being, which is related to personal growth, self-realisation, and living a meaningful, purposeful life.

[6] The 1986 Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, developed by the WHO during the First International Conference on Health Promotion in 1986, emphasised the creation of supportive environments as fundamental to health promotion. The Charter introduced strategies aimed at enabling individuals to gain greater control over their health, recognising the importance of social and environmental determinants in achieving well-being (WHO, 1986).

dimensions. It advocates for public policies aimed at fostering resilience and well-being, ultimately contributing to the establishment of *well-being societies* (WHO, 2021).

*Well-being societie*s aim to create the conditions for all members of current and future generations to thrive on a healthy planet, regardless of their location. These societies are shaped by bold policies and transformative approaches, which are underpinned by key principles and priorities that embed a holistic approach to health, namely: a) a positive vision of health that integrates physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being; b) the principles of human rights, social and environmental justice, solidarity, gender and inter-generational equity, and peace; c) commitment to sustainable low-carbon development grounded in reciprocity and respect among humans and making peace with Nature; d) new indicators of success, beyond gross domestic product, that take account of human and planetary wellbeing and lead to new priorities for public spending; e) the focus of health promotion on empowerment, inclusivity, equity, and meaningful participation.

As remarked by Dow *et al.*, thanks to this growing body of evidence, "WHO has called for governments to take an intersectoral approach, both within and across traditional areas of policy, to realise the potential of the arts for public health" (Dow *et al.*, 2023, p. e155).

The European scenario has a long history of a considerable number of countries pursuing the advancement of policies and initiatives in this field. Indeed, as early as the 1990s, the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries had already demonstrated a notable interest in the field of medical humanities, as well as in systemic programmes that sought to integrate culture and health.

In the United Kingdom, the Arts on Prescription initiative, which commenced in 1994, permits medical practitioners to prescribe artistic activities to patients. This approach resulted in the establishment of the National Network for Social Prescription, in 2016, and, later in 2019, the Social Prescribing Academy. Additionally, research and strategic documents, including the "Creative Health Report" (APPGAHW, 2017) and the "Culture White Paper" (Department for Culture, Media & Sport, 2016), have provided substantial operational guidance and funding, promoting culture as a tool for public health. Recent commitments, such as the Arts Council England's 2022 "Creative Health & Wellbeing" strategy, extend these efforts by prioritizing equity in access to cultural participation, fostering collaborations between the health and social care sectors, and focus on developing skills for creative practitioners (Dow *et al.*, 2023).

Since 2018, the Arts Council of Wales has also developed strategies, and cross-governmental policies[7], to increase funding for arts promoting prevention, wellbeing, and recovery for mental ill health (*Ibidem*).

The Scandinavian countries have been at the vanguard of this field, with government programmes and longitudinal research forming the cornerstone of their approach. In 2007, Finland implemented policies to elevate the significance of the arts in healthcare, while Sweden published the "Report of the Swedish Committee of Inquiry on Cultural Policy" (2009) with the objective of fostering collaboration between cultural and healthcare policies. In 2015, Norway enacted legislation underscoring the significance of the arts in healthcare. In recent years, Finland has demonstrated a unified national approach to local government policies, as evidenced by the simultaneous publication of local cultural wellbeing plans (Dow *et al.*, 2023).

In Ireland, since 2010, the "Arts and Health Policy and Strategy" systematically promotes the integration of culture and health through institutional collaborations (The Arts Council, 2010), while in France the "Culture & Santé" policy, started in 1999 (Ministère de la Culture, 2018), and the 2010 National Convention (Ministère de la Culture, 2010) support artistic-cultural interventions in hospitals with dedicated budgets and practical indications on a regional The Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan for the period 2021-2025 committed to providing support to local authorities in order to facilitate the fulfilment of long-term strategic cultural planning (Dow *et al.*, 2023).

A Memorandum of Cooperation for cultural prescription has been issued by the Greek government between the Ministry of Culture and Sports and the Ministry of Health (Dow *et al.*, 2023). The document defines a specific intergovernmental work programme for the training of artists and cultural workers and healthcare workers simultaneously, provides culture on prescription, and raises public awareness of the scheme.

The recent review by Dow *et al.* [8] also provided an overview of the latest developments on the subject in the global context. Singapore has spearheaded initiatives aimed at providing support to under-reached communities, utilising the arts as a means of enhancing mental health and wellbeing,

[7] The Arts Council of Wales and Welsh NHS Confederation signed a memorandum outlining commitments to raise awareness of the benefits of the arts in health, provide training and support networks for arts and health practitioners, and invest in an arts and health coordinator post in each of the seven Welsh health boards. This memorandum demonstrates a significant step forward in intersectoral collaboration and targeted investment in arts and health policy (Dow *et al.*, 2023, p. e156).

[8] The review presented different examples of promising policy developments, from different government areas, such as central or state government a) arts and culture policies; b) health policies; c) cross-governmental policies; d) local government policies; e) intergovernmental (international) policy making. The scoping review of 172 relevant global policy documents provided a series of examples, and touched different countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Finland, Singapore, Ireland, Ethiopia, New Zealand and Greece (Dow *et al.*, 2023).

particularly within the context of hospitals and nursing homes. Similarly, Australia's strategic documents, such as those from the Australia Council for the Arts, emphasise the economic and social value of arts interventions in addressing loneliness, chronic illness, and mental health challenges. Furthermore, Ethiopia has acknowledged the significance of interdisciplinary collaboration, as evidenced by its National Mental Health Strategy, which explicitly recognise the necessity of cooperation between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Culture to tackle poor mental health. In the United States, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies has developed a series of strategy samplers offering evidence-based recommendations for the utilisation of the arts in addressing salient public health concerns, including the opioid epidemic, the ageing population.

These national examples demonstrate not only the cost-effectiveness of integrating the arts into public health strategies but also align with the World Health Organization's recommendations for intersectoral collaboration. Moreover, they delineate a sophisticated framework of policies that integrate culture and health, thereby providing best practices for the formulation of analogous strategies in less mature countries, such as that of Italy, which, conversely, is characterised by a widespread presence of bottom-up initiatives. These examples illustrate how robust, evidence-based policy work can amplify the role of culture in improving public health outcomes and reducing inequalities.

The Italian Statistical Institute has introduced a system of "Measures of Equitable and Sustainable Well-being" (BES – "*Misure del Benessere Equo e Sostenibile"*) since 2010. The objective of this system is to evaluate the progress of society from an economic, social, and environmental perspective. To achieve this, the conventional economic indicators, most notably the GDP, have been augmented with metrics pertaining to the quality of life of individuals and the condition of the natural environment (Istat, n.d.). The BES measures include landscape and cultural heritage as a baseline dimension, as well as a composite indicator of cultural participation. Since 2017, the protective effect of cultural participation for people with severe disabilities has been documented, and a basic research line has been initiated that includes CW among emerging forms of welfare (Cicerchia, 2021, p. 216).

In Italy, the establishment of the Cultural Welfare Center − henceforth referred to as CCW −, the inaugural centre of excellence in Italy on the interconnection between culture and health, in 2020, has catalysed a discourse on the subject, through the implementation of two key strategies. The first entails the dissemination of knowledge and training within Italy. The second enables continuous updating and international participation through the delegation of a qualified Italian representation, also thanks to the Centre's involvement in a multitude of European and international programmes.

Moreover, three of the CCW's founding members were responsible for the creation of the headword on "Cultural Welfare" in the Treccani encyclopaedia, from which some excerpts are provided below (Cicerchia *et al.*, 2020):

The expression cultural welfare indicates a new integrated model for promoting the well-being and health of individuals and communities, through practices based on the visual and performing arts and on cultural heritage, as a factor of:

1. health promotion from a biopsychosocial and salutogenic perspective, also linked to the acquisition of coping skills and the development of life skills;
2. subjective well-being and life satisfaction, by virtue of its interpersonal aspects, empowerment and the ability to learn;
3. combating health and social cohesion inequalities to facilitate access and to develop individual and local community capital;
4. active ageing, fighting depression and psychophysical decline resulting from abandonment and isolation;
5. inclusion and empowerment for people with disabilities, including serious disabilities, and for people living in extremely marginalised or disadvantaged conditions (for example, without fixed abode, prisoners, etc.);
6. complement to traditional treatments;
7. support of the doctor-patient relationship, through medical humanities and the physical transformation of healthcare facilities;
8. support of the care relationship, also and in particular for non-professional carers;
9. mitigation and delay of several degenerative conditions, such as dementia and Parkinson's disease.

In order to establish a foundation for CW that is firmly embedded in the fabric of daily life, it is essential to overcome the "fragmentation of information, the approach based only on the mosaic of good practices and aiming at system actions" (*Ibidem*). It is thus imperative to facilitate a stable collaborative process between professionals from different disciplines, with a particular emphasis on integrating the institutional systems of health, social policies and those pertaining to arts and culture. As Andorlini and Zandonai have observed, CW preserves its integrity and fulfil its role as an agent of change if it is conveyed through service models such as social prescription[9] (Andorlini & Zandonai, 2023). It is necessary to define management models that facilitate the implementation of initiatives in a systematic and uniform manner, thereby avoiding an unequal presence across

[9] With regard to social prescribing, in 2022, the World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific published "A toolkit on how to implement social prescribing", providing practical strategies to enhance its adoption and effectiveness (WHO, 2022). An Italian version is available, edited by the CCW and published in 2024.

different territories. Nevertheless, at the time of writing, Italy is characterised by two distinct identities. One is populated by grassroots practices, which exhibit considerable variation in terms of quality and longevity. The other comprises a significant number of enlightened initiatives at the regional level. However, their distribution is uneven and poorly designed to support marginal areas, as will be discussed in the following section.

2. The Fragmented Scenario of the Italian Regulation

The 2023 review by Dow *et al.* identified countries where government policies actively support the integration of arts into public health. In contrast, Italy has not yet established a comprehensive nationwide policy initiative. However, despite this national silence, a number of national and regional initiatives are emerging that, while exhibiting considerable diversity and inhomogeneity across the territory, demonstrate significant potential for an innovative approach that incorporates culture as an enabling factor for a new form of welfare.

Prior to an examination of the national initiatives and those put forth by the regions, it is essential to present a noteworthy Italian sectoral policy – which was exported from the USA (Cicerchia *et al.*, 2020) − initiated in Assisi in 1999 and has since been implemented across the country. The “Nati per Leggere” programme, which promotes reading from the perinatal period to the first six years of life, is a collaborative initiative of the Associazione Culturale Pediatri, the Associazione Italiana Biblioteche and the CSB Centro per la Salute del Bambino Onlus. Local projects are implemented by a diverse range of stakeholders, including librarians, paediatricians, educators, social and health workers, public bodies, and cultural and voluntary associations. This policy has been incorporated into the Health Guidelines of numerous Italian regions for over two decades. Moreover, this enduring work receives corroboration from the Italian legislative framework, thanks to the Law 15/2020, on the promotion and support of reading. Article 2 outlines the establishment of a National Action Plan for the Promotion of Reading (henceforth referred to as Action Plan), which is to be adopted on a three-year basis by the then Minister of Cultural Heritage and Activities (now Minister of Culture), in agreement with the Minister of Education, Universities and Research (now Minister of Education and Merit). The Action Plan is to be financed by a special fund, managed by the Centre for Books and Reading, which considers a wide range of possible actions involving public and private entities across the entire book supply chain, from the publishing industry to bookshops, libraries and professional associations in the sector. The second three-year Action Plan was adopted in 2024, subsequent to the inaugural plan, which spanned the period from 2021 to 2023. The fund for the implementation of the Action Plan, which was endowed

with €4,350,000 per year from 2020 onwards, suffered a 5% reduction in appropriations. This resulted in a reduction of this sum to €4,132,500 per year for the period 2024-2026. The Action Plan has been developed with the objective of fostering a reading habit throughout Italy, addressing the existing disparities in literary engagement within the country, with specific emphasis on the regional disparities between the northern and southern Italy, as well as between urban and inner areas[10]. This initiative recognises the value of reading as a tool for personal growth and for the advancement of civil, social and economic development. Furthermore, the plan provides training for those involved and promotes interculturalism in educational institutions and libraries. The plan targets specific reader groups, including those with disabilities or learning disorders, and emphasises the importance of the social and digital dimensions of reading. It seeks to integrate traditional reading with new digital skills, thus providing a comprehensive approach to reading promotion. The Action Plan incorporates a series of strategies designed to reinforce the practice of reading across a range of social and demographic settings. The principal actions comprise the promotion of reading in early childhood, the involvement of counselling centres, paediatricians and toy libraries, and the facilitation of reading in social care facilities for the elderly and in hospitals, with particular emphasis on those experiencing prolonged hospitalisation. Furthermore, the Action Plan seeks to promote reading in penal institutions, with a particular emphasis on facilities for minors. Indeed, this implementation of cultural offerings in penal institutions is expected to be beneficial, as it aligns with data showing a statistical correlation between suicidality and the lack of cultural services in these environments, highlighted by the National AIB – Prisons Protocol and the National Framework for agreements between municipalities and prisons (Campana *et al.*, 2023).

Returning to the broader issue of Italian legislation at the national level, Decree Law n. 146 of 20 September 2015[11], entitled “Misure urgenti per la fruizione del patrimonio storico e artistico della Nazione”[12], establishes that access to cultural heritage constitutes a fundamental activity related to civil and social rights, guaranteed throughout the Italian territory. The decree refers to Article 9 of the Italian Constitution, which states that the Republic promotes development and scientific and technical research and protects the landscape and the historical and artistic heritage of the Nation. Furthermore, Article **3** of the Constitution stipulates that it is the responsibility of the Republic to eradicate economic and social barriers that impede the freedom and equality of citizens, thereby hindering their full personal development and active participation in the political, economic, and

[10] Article 2, general objectives and priorities of the Action Plan, priority a).

[11] Subsequently amended by the Law of 12 November 2015, published in the Gazzetta Ufficiale on 18 November 2015, N. 269),

[12] Own translation: “Urgent measures for the enjoyment of the Nation’s historical and artistic heritage”.

social life of the nation. This vision, as Lampis noted (2019, p. 23), is underlined also in the Italian Law N. 146/1990[13] which addresses the regulation of essential public services, the rules governing strike action in these services, and the safeguarding of constitutionally protected personal rights. In this context, museums and cultural institutions are designated as "essential public services", underscoring the acknowledgment that culture is an indispensable aspect of social welfare and the quality of life[14]. Consequently, As Cavalieri pointed out (2017, p. 16), the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of cultural goods should be considered among the rights that contribute to the full development of the human person, for which the State must act as a guarantor, removing the economic and social barriers that prevent access by all. Culture (and therefore cultural rights), on the other hand, must be seen as a kind of "ecosystem" that includes not only the economic aspect (Flick & Flick, 2021), but also the main dimensions of social life: psycho-physical fulfilment, work, rest and leisure, innovation, environmental sustainability, social cohesion, quality of life (Cavalieri, 2017).

A shift in focus from the Constitution to the Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio[15] (Legislative Decree 42/2004) unveils Article 102, which stipulates that the State, the regions, other territorial public bodies, and any other public body or institution must guarantee the *fruition* of cultural heritage, which is the reason for its *protection* and the prerequisite for its *valorisation*.

In this regard, Article 117 of the Italian Constitution (Part II, Title V) outlines several subjects of legislative authority shared between the State and the regions, (including special statute regions and autonomous provinces). These shared areas include education[16], health protection, the enhancement of cultural and environmental heritage, and the promotion and organisation of cultural activities. While the regions generally exercise legislative power, the establishment of fundamental principles remains exclusively within the purview of the State. This condition permits the regions a substantial degree of autonomy in devising their own CW initiatives, whether independently or in collaboration with one another, as will be discussed subsequently.

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[13] Law of 12 June 1990, n. 146: "*Norme sull'esercizio del diritto di sciopero nei servizi pubblici essenziali e sulla salvaguardia dei diritti della persona costituzionalmente tutelati. Istituzione della Commissione di garanzia dell'attuazione della legge".*

[14] Nevertheless, the stipulation "without additional expense to the State" suggests that, despite the acknowledgement of the significance of cultural services, the government did not intend to augment public expenditure to bolster them. This presented cultural institutions with the challenge of ensuring the accessibility and quality of services without additional resources, thereby prompting a shift towards more efficient management and the exploration of alternative funding models, such as public-private partnerships, sponsorships and other forms of external financial support (Lampis, 2019, p. 23).

[15] Own translation: "Cultural Heritage Code".

[16] Notwithstanding the autonomy of educational institutions and excluding vocational education and training.

As Gariboldi observed (2023), glimmers of hope have emerged not only in Italian regional policies but also in exceptional national investment policies, such as those of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), and the National Culture Plan 2021-2027 (PN), and, I must add, in the underscoring general framework of the Cohesion Policy Cycle 2021-2027. Notably, both these policies represent a significant departure from previous approaches, as they acknowledge the pivotal role of culture in development policies aimed at fostering social cohesion and inclusion (Gariboldi, 2023, p. 51). Indeed, an objective of the national policy is to implement actions to broaden access to culture and extend cultural participation of citizens. These actions are reflected in the NRRP with a line of action dedicated to broadening the physical and cultural accessibility of cultural venues and in the PN through a programme of interventions and initiatives aimed at promoting the full integration of culture in the life of communities. It is crucial to underscore that this focal point, particularly within the context of the PN, is inextricably linked to a ministerial reorganisation and the subsequent delineation between culture and tourism. This has permitted a more concentrated attention on elements of culture that had been overlooked because of policies designed to perpetuate this combination. As Rossella Almanza − Mission Unit and Cohesion Policy Programmes, Ministry of Culture – has emphasised, during ArtLab Bari Matera 2023, the Ministry of Culture is now reconsidering its engagement with other forms of heritage, such as archives and libraries, since it is no longer constrained by the traditional focus on museums and tourist-oriented activities.

The PN identifies three key challenges, one of which is the priority objective OP 4, which aims to maximise the contribution of the cultural sector to the reduction of growing social inequalities and territorial disparities, promoting cultural participation and practice. In the same document, strategic objective 4, “A more social and inclusive Europe”, delineates the specific objective 4.6, “Strengthening the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation”.

Through this objective, the PN promotes broader cultural and artistic practice and participation of citizens as a tool for social integration and innovation that can also generate opportunities for new skilled employment. This objective comprises three actions: a) Action 4.6.1 “Revitalization and re-functionalization of state cultural sites for the expansion of cultural participation”; b) Action 4.6.2, “Promoting contemporary creativity, cultural participation and enhancing the resources of the territories”; c) Action 4.6.3, “Accompanying and capacitating public and private institutional actors in the implementation of models of participatory governance and partnership collaboration”.

At national level, the programme is part of a strategic and unified vision of the programming of European, national and regional funds, developed in comparison with the institutional partnership,

economic and social, mainly attributable in these years to the NRRP and the PON ERDF Culture and Development PON 2014-2020. As recommended in the Plan, actions such as the enhancement of cultural sites through additional functions and services (Action 4.6.1) are highly regarded. However, since the PN pertains to state-owned assets, it is recommended that these actions be extended to non-state cultural sites as well through regional programme aimed at complementing the PN. The total value of the PN Culture is €648.33 million, of which €389,00 million are derived from ERDF funds. The programme encompasses seven less developed regions: Molise, Campania, Basilicata, Calabria, Puglia, Sicilia and Sardegna.

However, returning to the matter of the autonomy of the Italian regions, it is necessary to examine the current state of CW in their fragmented composition. To this end, the following section will attempt to provide an overview of territorial actions concerning the CW, focusing only on the political and regulatory actions at regional level, leaving aside for the moment the examples of programming for inner areas, which will be dealt with in the next section.

The following cases have been identified through analysis of Italian regional policies and initiatives in the field of CW:

1. Autonomous Province of Bolzano;
2. Autonomous Region of Sardegna;
3. Campania Region;
4. Emilia-Romagna Region;
5. Friuli Venezia Giulia Region;
6. Marche Region;
7. Piemonte Region;
8. Puglia Region;
9. Toscana Region;
10. Umbria Region;
11. Veneto Region.

The scenario presented in the next section demonstrates significant imbalances in regional implementation. The absence of national legislation and the influential role of regional discretion tend to perpetuate existing inequalities across the peninsula. This situation is both a consequence, and a cause, of a general discourse that undervalues CW and overlooks its complex dimensions. Furthermore, this discourse fails to recognise the intrinsic connection between cultural rights, the guarantee of access to them and the possibility and ability to exercise them.

2.1 Autonomous Province of Bolzano

One of the first significant experiences of cultural experimentation in Italy took place in the autonomous province of Bolzano, recognised as a pioneer in research initiatives since 1998. These experimentations have had a considerable impact on cultural policies, aimed at improving the quality of life of people and communities. Antonio Lampis − key figure in this context and in the Italian panorama of the CW − director of the Department of Culture, Environment and Energy of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano from 1997 to 2017 and again from 1 September 2020, played a crucial role in this evolution, as detailed in his writings (2017; 2019). The approval in 2015 of the "Provincial Law for cultural activities" which recognises the right of all people living on the territory to have access to cultural activities marks a turning point. This law is distinguished by its explicit recognition of the right to culture, extending it to all residents, not only to Italian citizens, and assigning to the administration the task of making culture accessible to all social classes, including the most marginalised groups (Lampis, 2019, p. 22). This legislation highlights decades of efforts to connect culture with other dimensions of welfare, such as housing, education, social housing and health (*Ibidem*). In accordance with this approach, in 2024 the Autonomous Province of Bolzano initiated the Cura di Cultura programme, the inaugural call in South Tyrol for the support of CW projects, with a budget of €100,000. This initiative is intended for cultural organisations and bodies accredited for at least three years and involves close collaboration with health and social sector organisations to promote well-being and health through the arts and artistic and architectural heritage.

2.2 Autonomous Region of Sardegna

In accordance with the regional ERDF 2021-27 strategy, which seeks to advance a more socially and inclusively oriented Sardegna, the region has initiated the action entitled "Projects for social innovation in culture and inclusive tourism". In 2024, a special public-private partnership was established with the objective of providing support to the regional system in the adoption of inclusive models of CW and sustainable tourism. The partnership was allocated a budget of €660,000 (Fondazione Symbola, 2024).

2.3 Campania Region

The Campania region, under the Regional Law 15/2020[17], entrusts to the Fondazione Politiche Integrate di Sicurezza (Pol.I.S.), the task of allocating funds confiscated from organised crime for various activities and projects, including the activation of reading points for children from 0 to 6 years on the regional territory. A list of spaces made available for the creation of reading points is available on the region's website, updated as of 12 November 2024.

2.4 Emilia-Romagna Region

Emilia-Romagna is distinguished by its noteworthy approach to CW, which is characterised by innovation and productivity. A notable example is the initiative of the Municipality of Parma, which, in the context of Parma Italian Capital of Culture 2020-21, conducted an in-depth regional survey on CW practices. This study resulted in the formulation of the Parma Protocol, an agreement with local health authorities to identify and document existing effective practices and to propose more efficient policies at the regional level. The recommendations include the necessity for a guidance document from the regional board, the promotion of collaboration between different institutions, and the development of common systems for monitoring and evaluating cultural policies. In a similar vein, the region has initiated an investigation into the accessibility of its regional museums, the findings of which will inform a series of concrete proposals. These include the implementation of targeted training programmes on accessibility, the establishment of networks for the comparison of museum and socio-health sector operators, and the definition of guidelines and professional requirements to enhance access to cultural services. In addition, in 2023, the region launched a major project to build networks and skills involving more than 200 cultural and social health professionals. In 2024, this effort will be concretised with the allocation of €300,000 for a call for proposals aimed at establishing good practices in CW, linking museums and local communities.

At the same time, Emilia-Romagna and Toscana have collaborated in a knowledge and training path, scientifically supported by the Promo PA Foundation, to study and train the socio-cultural systems of the two territories, with a particular emphasis on accessibility as the basis of CW. This

[17] *Legge Regionale 15/2020, Istituzione di una rete capillare di Punti Lettura in Regione Campania dedicati a bambine e bambini da zero a sei anni di età e ai loro genitori*. Own translation: Regional Law 15/2020, Establishment of a capillary network of Reading Points in the Campania Region dedicated to girls and boys from zero to six years old and their parents.

has led to the publication of a joint "Manifesto condiviso sullo sviluppo del Welfare Culturale"[18], which represents a significant commitment to promoting cultural access and participation as pillars of social well-being (Promo PA Fondazione *et al.*, 2024). This shared manifesto for the development of CW was officially presented on 9 October 2024 in Lucca during the 20th edition of LuBeC - Lucca Beni Culturali, by Francesca Velani, director of LuBeC and Area Culture and Sustainability Promo PA Fondazione, and Miriam Mandosi, accessibility expert, Consultant Promo PA Fondazione.

The following institutions and networks participated in the event and contributed to the discussion of the manifesto: a) technical coordination of the Commission for Culture of the Regions and Autonomous Provinces; b) Friuli Venezia Giulia Region; c) Marche Region; d) Puglia Region; e) ACRI −Associazione di Fondazioni e di Casse di Risparmio; f) CCW − Cultural Welfare Center; g) Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Lucca.

The manifesto identifies four priority areas for action: 1) the formulation of policies for cultural organisations; 2) the education and training supply chain; 3) impact assessment; 4) cross-sectoral networks.

2.5 Friuli Venezia Giulia Region

The Friuli Venezia Giulia region has adopted a series of decisive measures, as set forth in regional Law n. 22 of 14 November 2014, with the objective of combating the phenomenon of loneliness and enhancing the role of older people, thereby promoting active ageing. This legislative measure has established a permanent committee comprising representatives from several central directorates, including the Directorate-General, the Directorate-General for Health, Social Policy and Disability, and the Directorate-General for Culture and Sport. The function of this entity is to devise annual implementation plans, approved by the regional board, that reflect the directives of the three-year programme. For the three-year period 2022-2024, the three-year programme under Law n. 22/2014 includes a special section dedicated to the topic of "Culture and social tourism". This section of the programme highlights the significance of integrating cultural engagement and production into the realm of physical well-being, with a particular focus on the needs of the elderly. The legislation also encompasses a comprehensive array of coordinated and integrated initiatives spanning various domains, including health, safety, civic participation, lifelong learning, employment, culture, social tourism, sport, leisure, civic engagement, and volunteering. In

[18] The Shared Manifesto for the Development of Cultural Welfare (own translation) is available at: https://manifestowelfareculturale.promopa.it/.

accordance with article 3 of the law, these initiatives are devised with the objective of fostering a novel culture of human relations and community that cultivates individual and collective resilience. Article 8 encourages form of social tourism and the promotion of socio-cultural innovation initiatives that improve social inclusion processes and foster a positive image of older people as valuable resources for the community. These initiatives include facilitating access to music, theatre, film, exhibition and museum events, as well as promoting the active involvement of older people in the enhancement of local history, culture and traditions.

2.6 Marche Region

From the conclusion of 2019 onwards, a bottom-up process was initiated in the Marche region, driven by the Municipality of Recanati in collaboration with Promo PA Fondazione, which provided strategic guidance, and AMAT (Associazione Attività Teatrali delle Marche) and the Department of Culture of the Marche region, which provided financial support (Massi, 2020; Promo PA Fondazione, 2021a; 2021b). In the period between 2020 and 2021, several activities were undertaken. These included the implementation of an exploratory survey, led by Promo PA Foundation, with the objective of mapping organisations and projects active at the regional level. It followed a capacity-building process with the aim of aligning the languages of the various actors involved. This action resulted in the establishment of a working table with the purpose of sharing projects and promoting system collaboration and define a proposal for the development of an intersectoral policy in the field of CW, for the Department of Culture of the region (Velani, 2023). This impulse led to the creation of a network for inter-sectoral and regional cooperation and in the CW field, “La rete del welfare culturale nelle Marche” (Ibidem). With the main objective of promoting a successful meeting between the cultural and social and health system, the region has created a permanent table with the collaboration of the Promo P.A. foundation and the municipality of Recanati. One of the most significant outcomes of this approach is the incorporation of a dedicated action on “Culture and Well-being” into the Triennial Plan of Culture 2021-2023 for the Marche region (Velani, 2022; Velani, 2023). This action aims to facilitate the implementation of innovative pilot projects that exemplify best practices, with the objective of triggering new processes of growth and renewal.

Furthermore, during the 2022-2023 academic year, a new course of study, entitled “Art and Culture for Well-Being and Health”, was introduced at the State Higher Education Institute “V. Bonifazi” in Recanati, emphasising the significance of education in the field of medical humanities. In conclusion, the Network for Cultural Welfare has consolidated its presence and influence, evolving into a formal association in 2024 (Velani, 2023). This development demonstrates the

maturation of a fruitful dialogue and the implementation of policies that recognise and value the link between culture, health and social well-being. In September 2022, a regional call was published to support cross-sectoral CW activities, intended for third sector organisations, and is financed under the 2021 Programme Agreement between the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and the Marche region. The total budget of over €700,000 is divided into two categories: 1) a single regional network project, which is worth 319,951 euros; b) 10 *area vasta* projects, each of which is worth €40,000, for a total of €400,000 (*Ibidem*).

2.7 Piemonte Region

The region is distinguished by its rich and enduring tradition of social innovation, a phenomenon that is shaped by a complex interplay of historical factors. These elements have exerted a profound influence on the societal fabric and interactions among various sectors, including health, social, and cultural. The driving forces behind this vitality can be attributed to the sustained and impactful actions of the Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo and the Cultural Welfare Centre (CCW). In 2024, the Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, in collaboration with CCW, presented the findings of its research on the north-west, entitled "Culture, Health and Well-being". This is an update of the initial mapping of 2020 on CW practices in Piemonte, Liguria and Valle D'Aosta. It aims to highlight the ongoing evolution and future challenges regarding the role of participation and cultural expression in the construction of individual and collective identities. In the three years following the former mapping (2021-2023), the Foundation established an experimental laboratory, the Cultural Wellbeing Lab (CWLAB), with the objective of developing an experimental route in the north-west. This involved the design, research and training of practitioners from a range of disciplines on CW from a systemic perspective. The initiatives in the north-west of Italy demonstrated the potential for significant positive impacts on community welfare through the formation of synergies between different sectors. In particular, the ten-year collaboration between the region and the Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo has resulted in the implementation of several notable projects, including "Nati per leggere" and the most recent initiative "Cultura per Crescere" which is an integral component of the Regional Prevention Plan (Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo & Cultural Welfare Center, 2024).

Concurrently, the regional agreement involving the Department of Health, Education and the Regional School Office facilitated the implementation of the "Scuole che promuovono salute" programme, which is focused on the well-being of children and adolescents within the school settings (*Ibidem*). These initiatives serve as exemplary models of cross-sectoral collaboration, meticulously planned and executed with remarkable success. While not all of the challenges are

addressed through structured and systemic collaborations within the Prevention Plan, the current scenario could certainly facilitate the development and strengthening of such collaborations (*Ibidem*).

2.8 Puglia Region

The Strategic Plan for Culture 2017-2026, through the Regional Programme ESF 2014-2020 − Action 6.7, has resulted in the allocation of funding to four areas of action: a) Community Library; b) Cultural Experience Workshops; c) Historical Theatres; d) Emporiums of creativity. In 2022 through regional deliberation n. 1736, the regional board approved the inauguration of an experimental path for co-design, selection and financing, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of significant cultural and methodological interventions to be conducted in cultural sites that are already undergoing restoration and valorisation. Furthermore, the regional board approved the amendment to the 2022 and 2022-24 budget of forecast, establishing a regional fund for CW and social and cultural innovation support actions for the enhancement of cultural places. The total amount of this amendment is €700,000 to be sourced from the autonomous budget. This amendment establishes two specific voices, one for current expenditure and one for capital expenditure, related to regional initiatives for CW and the valorisation of cultural places.

In December 2022, the regional council passed resolution N. 1932, which approved a scheme of cooperation agreement between the region and the Teatro Pubblico Pugliese Consorzio Regionale per le Arti e la Cultura. The agreement outlines the intention of the parties to make available to the regional cultural offer system the human and structural resources necessary for the execution of activities that will be jointly carried out as part of an experimental path for the design, selection and financing, monitoring and evaluation of major cultural and methodological interventions to be carried out in cultural sites, already subject to action of restoration and valorisation called “Regional initiatives for cultural welfare and the valorisation of cultural places”. In the context of this project, in addition to providing support for existing experimental initiatives and facilitating training and seminar events, the establishment of a working group to draft regional guidelines for promoting CW is also planned. The objective is to disseminate the working guidelines to all public and private cultural and social institutions, with a view to initiating a regional funding line for CW projects.

The most recent step is that of 25 June 2024, when the resolution of the regional board, n. 895, approved the “Manifesto Pugliese per il Welfare Culturale” (Regione Puglia – Dipartimento Turismo, Economia della Cultura e valorizzazione territoriale & Comune di Monte Sant’Angelo, 2024). This was promoted by the Presidency of the Region of Puglia, the Regional Department of Culture, Protection and Development of Cultural Enterprises, Migration Policies, Legality and

Antimafia, and the Municipality of Monte Sant'Angelo, which is the Capital of Culture in Puglia for 2024. Furthermore, the manifesto was presented and discussed in peripheral territories of the region, specifically in Castelluccio Valmaggiore on 12 December, during the event "Valle del Celone e Area Interna dei Monti Dauni. I Borghi: manifesto del welfare culturale e le persone che fanno comunità"[19] focusing on the opportunities of CW for inner areas of the Monti Dauni.

2.9 Toscana Region

The region, with the assistance of the regional Department of Culture, is developing a programme initiated in 2013 for the training of operators within the Musei Toscani per l'Alzheimer (MTA) network[20]. This system was formalised in 2020 with the leading organisation L'Immaginario and currently comprises 70 members, offering programmes dedicated to individuals living with Alzheimer's and their caregivers (Velani, 2022; Fondazione Symbola, 2024). The accreditation process for museum services has enabled museums to assume an active role, rather than being regarded as mere venues where external entities, accredited to provide personal services, conduct their activities (Velani, 2022).

In line with the Regional Development Programme 2021-2025, in implementation of the National Dementia Plan, the Region adopted a Council Resolution in November 2023 (Fondazione Symbola, 2024). The Resolution was drafted by two Directorates: Direzioni: Beni, Istituzioni, Attività Culturali e Sport[21] jointly with Sanità, Welfare e Coesione Sociale[22]. The resolution was accompanied by a document that defines the key characteristics for museum programmes dedicated to people with dementia and their caregivers, in accordance with the requirements of the "Other Personal Services" category of the integrated social system (*Ibidem*).

In 2023 the NOI Foundation – Legacoop Toscana promoted a training-action path between welfare and culture[23] to be followed by an experimentation phase at regional level. The training involved about twenty co-operatives from the Welfare and Culturmedia Departments, with the objective of experimenting a training activity on three levels: acquisition of new knowledge, meeting and exchange, building experimentation in the field.

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[19] Own translation: "Celone Valley and Monti Dauni Inner Area. The Hamlets: manifesto of cultural welfare and the people who make community". More information on the event are available here: https://www.foggiatoday.it/attualita/castelluccio-valmaggiore-centro-diurno-polivalente-inaugurazione.html

[20] Own translation: Tuscan Alzheimer Museums Network

[21] Own translation: Directorate: Cultural Goods, Institutions, Activities and Sport.

[22] Own translation: Health, Welfare and Social Cohesion.

[23] More details are available here: https://www.fondazionenoi.it/progetti/alleanze-culturali/

Furthermore, the region has launched a collaboration protocol for evaluation research with the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze and IRPET (Istituto Regionale Programmazione Economica della Toscana), thanks to which all the initiatives of the Cultural Welfare programme[24] launched in 2024 will be subject to evaluation in 2025 (Sciascia, 2024). The cross-sectoral Cultural Welfare programme has been operational since 2021. Its purpose is to guarantee the right to enjoy museums and art for the elderly and those with physical and cognitive disabilities, particularly those with autism or specific learning disabilities, dementia, Parkinson's and other neurodegenerative diseases.

The programme is made possible by the joint efforts of the Fresco Parkinson Institute, L'Immaginario Associazione Culturale, Associazione VersiliaDanza, and MUS.E, in collaboration with the municipality of Florence, AUSL Toscana Centro, the Bargello Museum Centre and the Galleria dell'Accademia. In this context, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze is cooperating between MTA and the Fresco Parkinson Institute Foundation with the objective of developing a complementary intervention and therapy model to combat the loneliness of fragile elderly people, integrating the languages of dance, music and singing (Symbola Foundation, 2024).

Moreover, as previously outlined in the section on Emilia-Romagna, Toscana contributed to the formulation of the joint Manifesto condiviso sullo sviluppo del Welfare Culturale[25], which represents a significant commitment to promoting cultural access and participation as pillars of social well-being (Promo PA Fondazione *et al.*, 2024).

Furthermore, Tuscany has recently initiated projects aimed at inner areas of the region, with the objective of promoting CW practices also in these marginal territories. This intervention is included within the ROP ESF+ and will be presented in the following section on inner areas and CW.

2.10 Umbria Region

In addition to the experience of "Nati per leggere", which is supported by the triennial Regional Reading Plan (DGR 1187, 2021), the Umbria region has also initiated a programme of CW for social growth in 2022. This programme aims to promote intersectoral and multi-channel cooperation between museums and other places of culture, encouraging the development of networks with third sector entities and with the world of health. The objective of this programme is to combat the marginalisation and hardship of the most vulnerable (Symbola Foundation, 2024).

[24] Programme website: https://fondazionecrfirenze.it/en/progetti/welfare-culturale/.

[25] The Shared Manifesto for the Development of Cultural Welfare (own translation) is available at: https://manifestowelfareculturale.promopa.it/.

In 2022 was activated, with funds of the Regional Law 24/2003, the "Museums and cultural welfare" call, with which the region has supported projects related to the promotion of museums and cultural sites to encourage participation by disadvantaged or vulnerable families and individuals (Sciascia, 2024). The call, which was issued in two editions[26] during 2023, involved 11 projects for a total amount of about € 175,000, amount that ensured 80% of the cost of projects implemented (Campana *et al.*, 2023).

In the 2023, resources from the Regional Plan ERDF 2021-2027 were allocated to the support of 12 projects. The total amount of resources allocated to these projects was €400,000, and they were selected through the "Call for projects in the field of Cultural Welfare – 2023" (Symbola Foundation, 2024).

Lastly, the Umbria Region presented already active policies aimed at its inner areas, with the objective of promoting CW practices also in these marginal territories. These interventions were piloted in one single inner area within the POR FSE Umbria 2014-2020 and are now replicated for all the five inner areas of the region in the 2021-2027 planning period, as will be presented in the following section dedicated to inner areas and CW.

2.11 Veneto Region

As highlighted by Fausta Bressani (Directorate of Heritage, Cultural Activities and Sport of Veneto) in the concluding session of Ibridazione[27], held in Venice on 10 November 2023, the region has a new Law for Culture (Regional Law n. 17/2019) that has been in effect since 2019. This legislation has reduced the previous fragmentation and facilitated processes of hybridization and intersectoral collaboration.

The inaugural three-year plan for culture was adopted in 2021 and is implemented on an annual basis. The strategic lines presented included the cultural-based regeneration of the territory, the integration of different sectors, and the promotion of public-private partnerships. In the years 2022, 2023 and 2024, the annual plans also included a regional call on the theme of CW and cultural-based regeneration. In 2024 this call was named "Welfare activities and human regeneration"[28], and aimed at providing grants to support CW and human regeneration interventions, understood as promoting the well-being and health of individuals and communities through practices based on

[26] The first edition approved by D.D. n. 8249 of 8/11/2022 and the second by D.D. n. 9551 of 9/21/2022.

[27] "Ibridazione – Nuove politiche per la rigenerazione culturale dei luoghi" (own translation: Hybridization – New policies for the cultural regeneration of places), is a project by the Ministry of Culture – General Directorate for Contemporary Creativity, the network Lo Stato dei Luoghi and the U-Rise Master of the IUAV University of Venice.

[28] The call is supported by the Regional Law 17/2019, articles n. 17, 26, 31,35.

visual arts, performative and cultural heritage, to be carried out in institutions and cultural places or, in collaboration with them, in places of care, medical care and social assistance, retirement homes, detention facilities.

In the RP Veneto ERDF 2021-2027 the region expressed the intention to strengthen the role of culture and sustainable tourism in social inclusion and innovation, starting from the regional heritage of UNESCO sites, promoting the regeneration of sites and cultural heritage by actively involving local communities in a Cultural Welfare perspective (4.6.1 Actions.in favour of UNESCO sites).

While in Priority 5[29], at the specific objective RSO5.1. ("Promoting integrated and inclusive social, economic and environmental development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security in urban areas"), the region affirmed its intention to proceed with the recovery, promotion and valorisation of urban areas, and to support in parallel enhancement actions, which can improve the levels of use, inclusion, and cultural promotion, also delivering forms of CW, understood as contribution of culture to social health.

Finally, the region added a reference to CW also related to inner areas.

In the specific objective: RSO5.2, at the point dedicated to the recovery, promotion and enhancement of inner areas through interventions with high cultural impact, CW is one (c) of the strategic measures proposed for the sustainable development and promotion of tourism in these areas, together with:

a) development projects aimed at supporting the creation and development of art residences, also international in character, integrated with territorial and social fabric;
b) development and promotion of widespread eco-tourism for the protection of cultural and natural heritage, connector of local entrepreneurship;
c) cultural welfare interventions, understood as the contribution of culture to social and health welfare;
d) the creation and start-up of other infrastructures; and public facilities, such as: squares and other meeting spaces, civic centres, libraries, meeting rooms, conference rooms;
e) spaces for services of specific interest for the internal area, also in synergy with any interventions related to essential services;
f) infrastructure for hospitality services widespread, typical catering, craft shops, natural shopping centres.

[29] A Europe closer to citizens through the promotion of sustainable and integrated development in all types of territory and local initiatives.

At the time of the research, concerning this action aimed at inner areas, no specific regional calls from the Veneto region were identified. It thus follows that this case will not be addressed in the following section, as it still lacks the operational and broader dimensions necessary for a more in-depth analysis.

3. Exploring the Margin: Pathways and Obstacles to Cultural Welfare in the Inner Areas

> Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
> Article 27, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948)

> From the remote island to the hamlet; from the village to the town; from the suburb to the metropolis; equality of opportunity to participate in the cultural life of our community should not be defined by where we choose to live nor our ability to travel.
> (Voices of Culture, 2020, p. 5)

In this context of regional fragmentation, the challenge of territorial inequalities represents a significant obstacle to the pursuit of an egalitarian vision of CW. The lack of a national strategy to develop a broad policy, in conjunction with the regions, is certainly the first barrier to achieving this goal. This absence creates a confronting void that cannot be adequately addressed through the efforts of the relevant interested sectors and civil society alone, especially when considering the application of CW in marginal inner areas. In these territories −which are situated away from major urban centres, significant cultural institutions, and foundations (which have invested considerable effort in this field) − it becomes evident that numerous additional obstacles and structural deficiencies present significant challenges to the design and implementation processes.

In total, these areas span 60% of the national territory, encompass 52% of the total number of municipalities, and represent 22% of the population. Italy's inland areas are defined by the SNAI (Italian National Strategy for Inner Areas) as those territories that are distant from the main centres of supply of essential services, including local public transport, education and social and health services (UVAL, 2014). According to the updated map of Inner Areas, which depicts the availability of services at the conclusion of 2019 and was produced by Istat (2022): 3,834 Italian municipalities (48.5% of the total) are *internal areas* (*intermediate*, *peripheral*, and *ultraperipheral*); 3,828 (48.4%) are defined as *waist*; 241 are classified as *pole* (182) or *intermunicipal pole* (59).

In summary, the term "inner areas" is used to describe territories that are characterised by:

- a considerable distance from the principal centres of essential services (education, health and mobility) that are determinants of the quality of life of the people who live there, thereby ensuring the full enjoyment of citizenship rights;
- a high availability of significant environmental resources (water resources, agricultural systems, forests, natural and man-made landscapes) and cultural resources (archaeological heritage, villages, museums, events);
- a complex territory in terms of both settlement and intercultural dynamics.

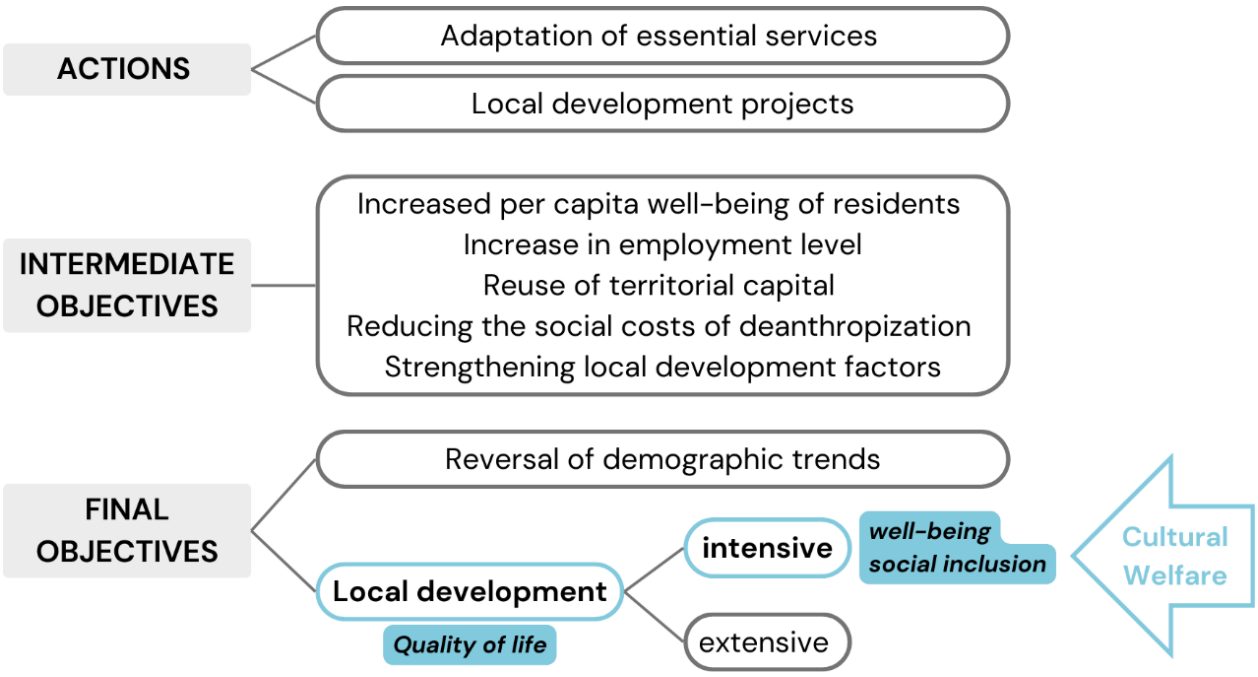
The SNAI's two intervention cycles, 2014-2020 and 2021-2027[30], have pursued a dual objective through two classes of action: the promotion of local development projects, primarily financed by European Structural Funds[31], and the implementation of interventions for the adaptation and improvement of essential services, utilising national resources (Moscarelli & Fera, 2024). This strategy is coordinated through a multi-level governance model involving the State, Regions, and Municipalities, ensuring a collaborative approach to addressing the unique challenges faced by Italy's internal areas. The overarching goal of this strategy has been to facilitate new opportunities for local communities, ensuring their capacity to maintain a population size commensurate with the specific area in question. The Strategy prioritised improvements in the quality of life for local communities. This entailed a dual focus on intensive development, aimed at enhancing the well-being and social inclusion of residents in these areas, and extensive development, which sought to stimulate demand for employment and utilise the region's human and physical resources.

In the framework outlined by the SNAI, as illustrated in the subsequent figure, it becomes evident that there is an opportunity for CW to make a significant contribution to the ultimate goals of local development, particularly intensive development, by acting on matters pertaining to well-being and social inclusion via the cultural "active principles".

[30] In the initial phase of the SNAI, a total of 72 project areas were identified (this selection was completed in 2017), encompassing 1,060 municipalities and affecting approximately 2 million inhabitants. In the second cycle of the SNAI, which spans the period from 2021 to 2027, the strategy entails the expansion and continuation of the initiative, with a projected addition of 56 new zones and the confirmation of 67 of the original 72 zones, amounting to a total of 124 project areas. This expansion will bring together 1,904 municipalities with the objective of impacting approximately 4,570,731 inhabitants.

[31] The European Structural Funds include ERDF (European Regional Development Fund), ESF (European Social Fund), EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development), and FEMP (European Maritime and Fisheries Fund).

Fig. 4 Overview of the SNAI structure and points of contact with Cultural Welfare (own elaboration)

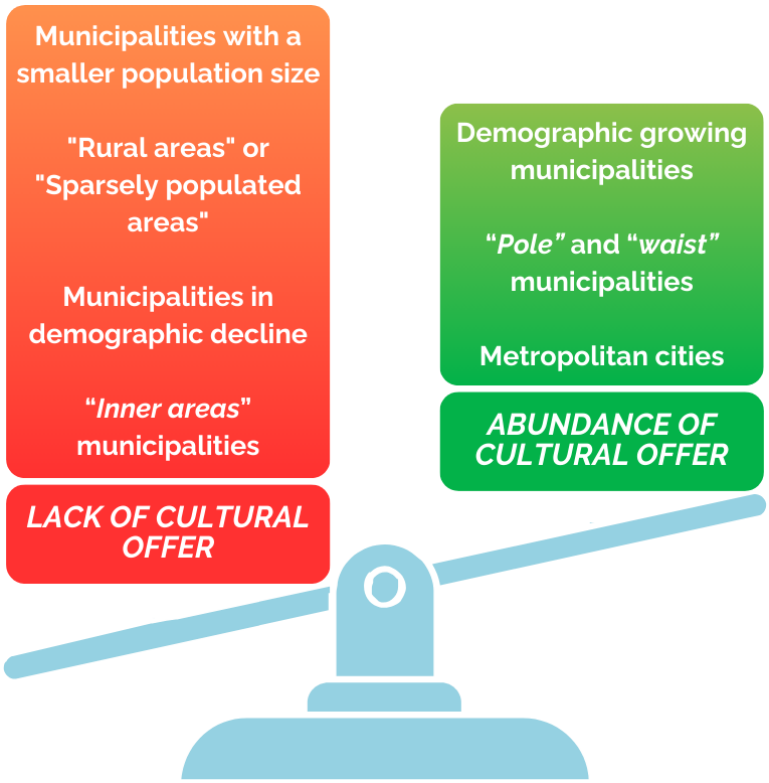


From their very definition, inner areas are endowed with significant cultural and natural heritage, however, this does not necessarily imply the automatic occurrence of cultural offer.

Truly, an analysis of Istat surveys conducted over the past two decades on cultural statistics reveals trends that prompt reflection on the evolution of the phenomenon of cultural fruition, supply, and participation in Italy (Caramis, 2023a, 2023b). Indeed, the phenomenon exhibits a number of critical trends, as elucidated by Alessandro Caramis, a researcher at the Central Directorate for Environmental and Territorial Statistics (Istat), in his presentation, "A Country at Different Speeds: Inequalities and Gaps in Cultural Supply, Participation, and Consumption", delivered within the panel "National and Regional Programming on European Funding for Cultural Heritage and Activities in the Programming Cycle 21-27", held in Bari during ArtLab. Caramis drew attention to the phenomenon of a "cultural drought", which can be defined as the uneven distribution of cultural offerings across Italy. This phenomenon encompasses areas where, as Caramis asserted during ArtLab, "it does not rain culture": municipalities where there is a dearth of cultural institutions, including museums, similar institutions, publicly accessible libraries, bookshops, and cultural events. In 2021, there were 1,243 municipalities (with approximately 1.6 million inhabitants) with no cultural offer. The absence of cultural offer concerns 15% of Italian municipalities and 2.8% of the population (*Ibidem*). The geography of these areas reflects not only the traditional socio-economic disparities between the South, Centre and North, but also inequalities that transcend administrative borders. The "cultural drought" has a particularly detrimental impact on municipalities experiencing demographic decline, as well as inner areas and rural or sparsely

populated regions. In these areas, cultural disadvantage is compounded by a multitude of additional factors that contribute to social and economic vulnerability (*Ibidem*).

Fig. 5 Types of municipalities according to the presence of cultural offer (own elaboration of the image presented in Caramis, 2023a, 2023b)



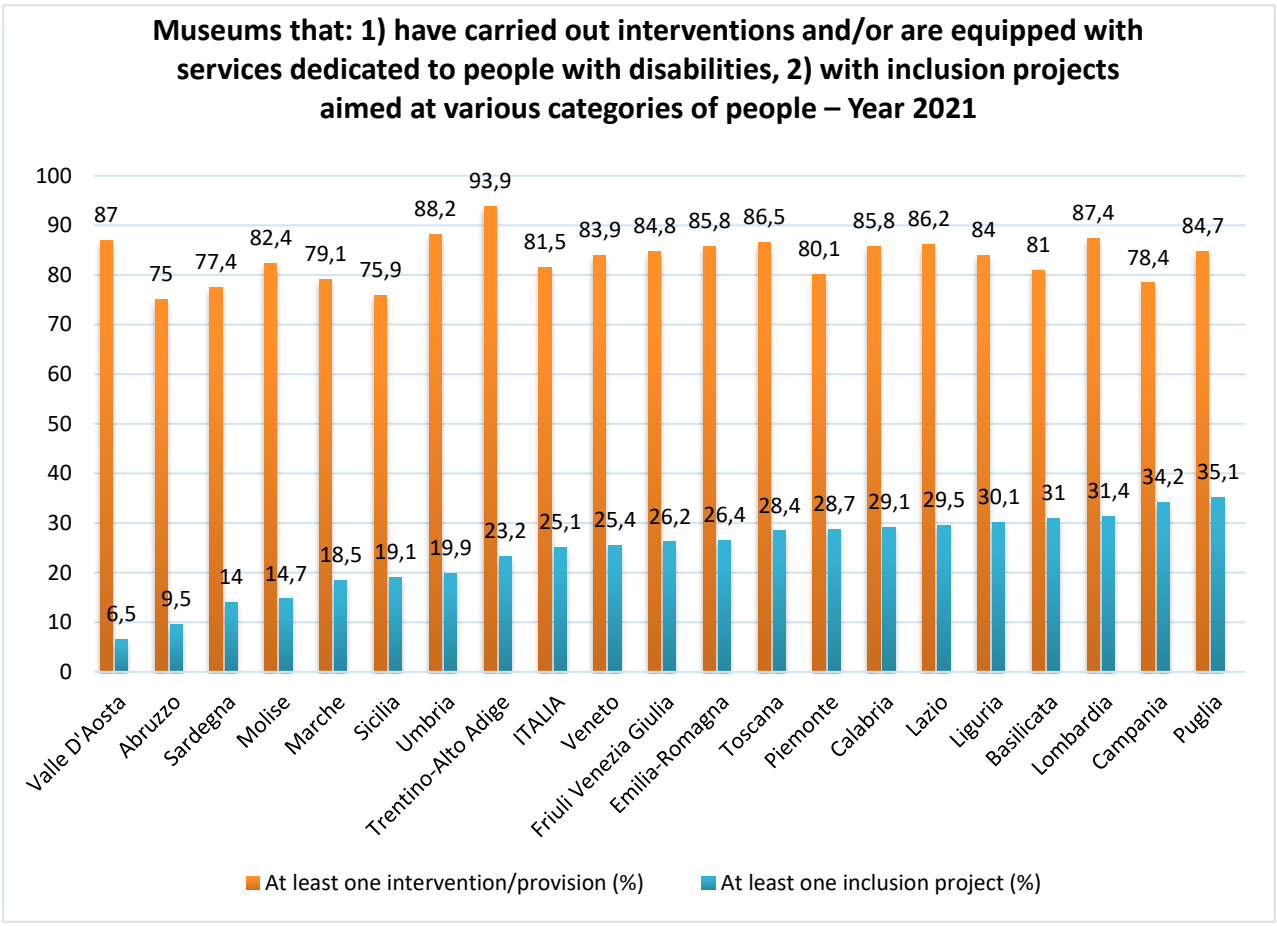
Nevertheless, Caramis highlighted a favourable finding derived from the results of two surveys carried out by Istat: a) the survey on museums and similar institutions[32]; b) the census on public and private libraries[33]. The positive element that emerged from this analysis is the widespread presence of museums and similar institutions, as well as accessible libraries in inner areas. In 2021 there were, on average, two museums for every 100 square kilometres and one for every 14,000 inhabitants. Of these, 39% were in inner areas. Similarly, there were, on average, three libraries for every 100 square kilometres, with one for every 7,000 inhabitants, 33% of which were in inner areas. In the most peripheral areas, the ratio between facilities and population in 2020 was 1.7 museums and 2.1 libraries per 10,000 inhabitants in the peripheral municipalities, and 2.8 museums

[32] This survey is conducted out by Istat, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Regions and Autonomous Provinces. Data available here: https://www.istat.it/microdati/indagine-sui-musei-e-le-istituzioni-similari/

[33] This census is undertaken within the framework of the 'Memorandum of Understanding for the development of the integrated information system on institutes and places of culture', signed with the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism (Mibact), the Regions and Autonomous Provinces, and in close cooperation with the ICCU - the Central Institute for the Single Catalogue of Italian Libraries and Bibliographic Information - and the CEI - the National Office for Ecclesiastical Cultural Heritage and Worship Buildings. Data available here: https://www.istat.it/microdati/censimento-sulle-biblioteche-pubbliche-e-private-microdati-ad-uso-pubblico/

and 3.5 libraries in the ultraperipheral municipalities (Istat, 2022, p. 9). As stated in the 2022 Istat report on the geography of inner areas in 2020: "it is acknowledged that these values may be influenced by the relative weight of these municipalities; however, they nevertheless provide compelling evidence of the potential for development and repopulation of the inner areas" (*Ibidem*).

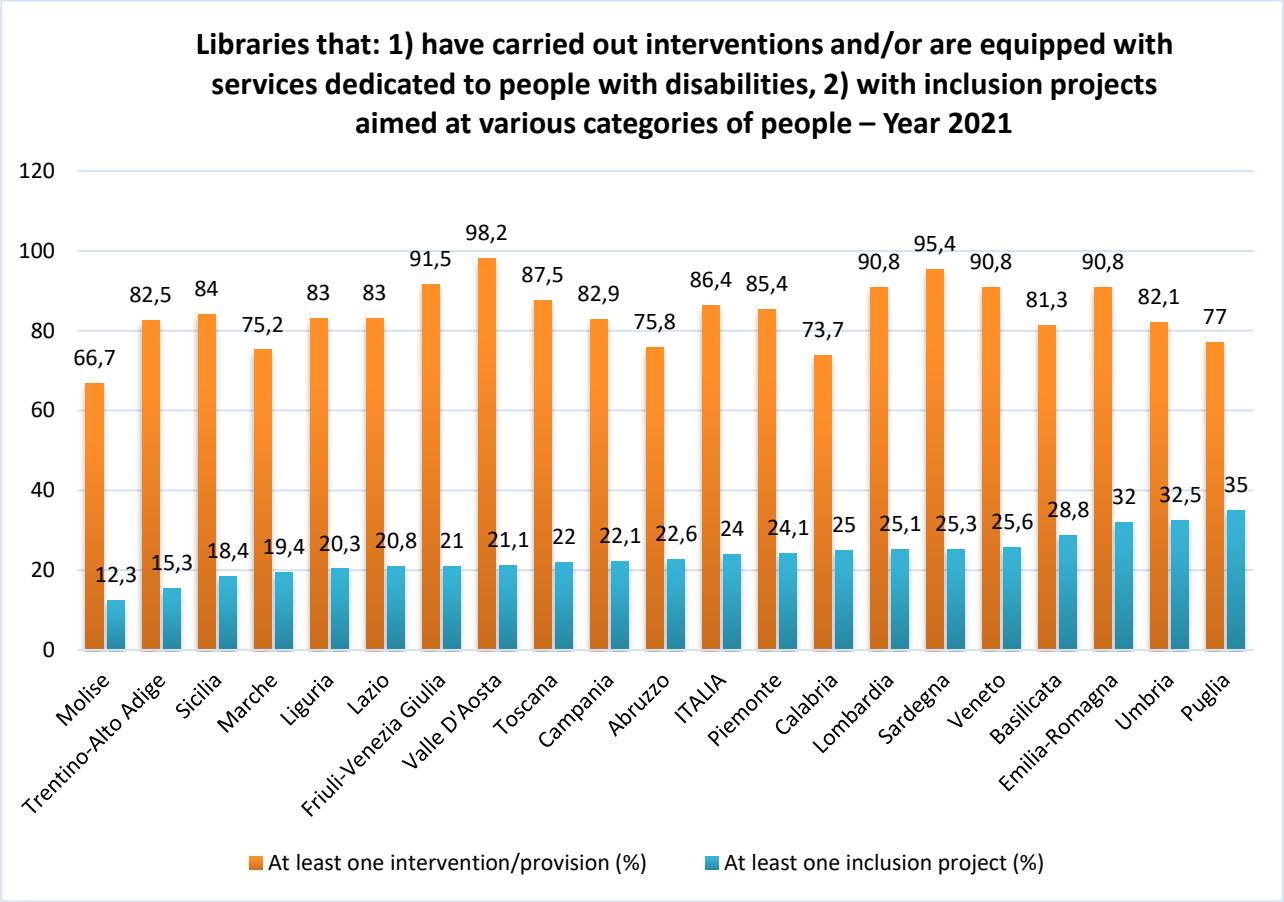
Furthermore, Caramis highlighted that the two surveys revealed that the percentages of museums and libraries (grouped by region) that in 2021 have carried out interventions and or equipped services dedicated to people with disabilities is particularly high: with minimum percentages of 75% in Abruzzo for museums (Graph. 1) and 66.7% in Molise for libraries (Graph. 2), up to peaks of maximum 93.9% of the Umbrian museums (Graph. 1) and 98.2% of the libraries in the Valle d'Aosta (Graph. 2).



Graph. 1 Museums that: 1) have carried out interventions and/or are equipped with services dedicated to people with disabilities, 2) with inclusion projects aimed at various categories of people – Year 2021 (own elaboration from data presented in Caramis, 2023a, 2023b)

The high and positive percentages just presented are unfortunately not repeated in the percentages of inclusion projects targeted at different categories of people, both in libraries and museums. In this realm of certainly more complex implementation, the scores are lower: the percentage values for museums and similar institutions range from 6.5% (Valle d'Aosta) to 35.1%

(Puglia), while for public and private libraries this range starts from 12.3% (Molise) and reaches 35% (Puglia).



Graph. 2 Libraries that: 1) have carried out interventions and/or are equipped with services dedicated to people with disabilities, 2) with inclusion projects aimed at various categories of people – Year 2021 (own elaboration from data presented in Caramis, 2023a, 2023b)

As described in the graphs, despite the considerable number of interventions and services designed to enhance accessibility and utilisation by individuals with disabilities, the capacity to develop inclusive initiatives for diverse categories remains limited and poorly spread.

Nevertheless, the distinctive capillary presence of Italy's cultural heritage (Golinelli, 2008), particularly of institutions such as museums and libraries, demands the introduction of novel functions to enhance the utilisation and social value of these spaces. The proposed application would transform these cultural institutions into "Cultural Welfare Centres of Proximity", thereby enabling three principal beneficial actions to be undertaken. The first of these is related to the use of place-specific cultural and natural resources and spaces. The second is connected to the improvement of the quality of life of local communities and individuals. The third is linked to the interplay between CW and the Faro Convention's principles, which is particularly evident in its

ability to trigger new "heritage communities" and foster responsible forms of tourism (Council of Europe, 2005).

Firstly, initiating a CW initiative in inner areas necessitates a multifaceted approach that considers the needs and desires of targeted people, as well as the availability of local resources, both tangible and intangible, including cultural and natural heritage. Such an approach could also prompt a critical reflection on the current absence of natural heritage from the CW scenario. Integrating the natural component into the CW planning would facilitate the enhancement of culture's multidimensionality and the importance of a holistic approach, showing the interplay between cultural, natural and landscape elements, also highlighted in the Italian Codice dei Beni Culturali e del Paesaggio[34] (Legislative Decree 42/2004). This could result in the creation of an overarching agenda that seeks to integrate two distinct approaches, namely Nature Prescribing[35] and the Social Prescribing (World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific, 2022), under a unified conceptual umbrella. Such integration, which has already been implemented in practices such as the "Creative Green Prescription"[36], would serve to elucidate the interconnections between these two approaches and highlight their respective advantages in a holistic framework. In addition, it would encourage the arising of actions that wisely combine the two dimensions, perhaps by promoting a future unified prescription and searching for new "impact pathways"[37] to explore. This collaborative alliance in inner areas would also enable cultural institutions to convey the narrative of the local cultural heritage by underscoring its continuity with the natural heritage, promoting outdoor activities within their offers. Indeed, recent ISTAT data indicates that the overall incidence of protected natural areas is higher in the inner areas than in the centres. Specifically, 23.8% of the total area of the inner areas falls within the Natura 2000 network, in comparison to 12.6% of the centres (Istat, 2022, p. 8). Moreover, it would facilitate the narration of the ongoing dialogue that has often been established between natural resources, cultural production and the shaping of the landscape by human action. Finally, the integration of these elements would serve to initiate a

[34] Own translation: "Code of Cultural Heritage and Landscape".

[35] Nature Prescribing is a health intervention in which health care providers recommend or prescribe spending time in natural environments to improve physical and mental well-being. It is based on a growing body of evidence suggesting that exposure to nature can have therapeutic effects, such as reducing stress, improving mood, enhancing cognitive function and supporting overall physical health (Kondo *et al.*, 2020; Nguyen *et al.*, 2022; Tate *et al.*, 2024).

[36] As evidenced by Thomson *et al.*, 2020: "creative green prescription programmes, using a combination of arts- and nature-based activities, present distinct synergistic benefits that have the potential to make a significant impact on the psychosocial wellbeing of adult mental health service users" (Thomson *et al.*, 2020, p.1). The authors suggest that cultural institutions such as museums with parks and gardens should consider integrating creative outdoor and indoor activity programmes inspired by the collections, allowing for a combined engagement with nature, art and well-being.

[37] According to Sacco, 2023, clear impact pathways are one of the four key steps to achieve an integrated welfare system between the cultural, health and social sectors. The four points highlighted are: the need for clear impact pathways, precise intervention protocols, stable partnerships and effective policies.

profound discourse on matters pertaining to environmental sustainability and the conservation of natural resources, landscapes, and biodiversity.

This first benefit in object was related to the use of place-specific cultural and natural resources and spaces. With regard to the cultural assets dimension at the local level, the implementation of people-centred CW activities could facilitate the recognition of forms of cultural expression that may be marginalised by broader discourses. This could include knowledge related to oral and traditional culture as well as the more modest tangible heritage of remote settlements. Such an approach would facilitate a stronger connection between the local population and these elements, thereby transforming often underused and neglected cultural spaces into more welcoming places that serve as catalysts for greater social value within communities. In this way, CW would not only respond to people's immediate needs but would also promote the conservation and enhancement of cultural and natural heritage, multiplying their functions and uses, thereby encouraging a responsible and sustainable use and safeguarding of these resources. To illustrate, the revitalisation of a modestly attended museum or library in a remote setting into a versatile facility offering a variety of CW activities has the potential to infuse local communities with vitality and a new, or renewed, sense of belonging. A facility of this nature has the potential to evolve from an unfrequented space into a dynamic hub for residents, facilitating social interaction and engagement with the surrounding environment. Unfortunately, however, it is evident that this action is a significant challenge for cultural institutions, where staffing levels are often inadequate and available personnel are generally not trained in CW. Therefore, the centrality of the issue of the education and training chain, which has already been highlighted as a priority by several regional documents[38], is once again raised.

Secondly, the potential positive effect in terms of improving the quality of life of individuals and communities living in these territories would be enhanced. This action would be perfectly aligned with the objectives of intensive local development outlined by the SNAI, improving community services and quality of life. Indeed, health and welfare services lacking in these areas, could gain a greater proximity to communities relying on capillary spread cultural institutions. This partnership can significantly improve the quality of life of the local population and reduce mobility issues related to the fruition of services. Indeed, solutions should be implemented to mitigate the difficulties of accessing services in larger centres, due to mobility problems and efficient connection (e.g., considerable distances, inadequate and limited public transport, unfavourable weather

[38] See sections related to: Emilia-Romagna, Toscana, Puglia, Marche.

conditions). For example, a biblio-bus[39] can promote reading from 0 to 6 years in remote areas reaching families otherwise excluded from this service, making it more accessible to the community also in terms of mobility.

Finally, the potential of CW is also linked to the concepts and trajectory identified in the Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2005). A CW programme has the potential to implement the democratic principle of equality in participation by enabling diverse individuals and groups to experience culture according to their needs, possibilities, and aspirations. Consequently, such participatory action has the potential to foster the formation or consolidation of "heritage communities", unified by a sense of shared responsibility and a commitment (*Ibidem*). Moreover, this would facilitate experimentation with intangible heritage in CW, thereby fostering unique community interactions through novel forms of cultural engagement and innovative "cultural active ingredients" (Sacco, 2023, pp. 15-16; Warran et al., 2022).

Furthermore, this condition would serve to redefine local heritage from a bottom-up perspective, in accordance with the values and interests of the communities that identify with it. In doing so, it would facilitate the establishment of a local presidium that would promote sustainable development built around "heritage communities" (Council of Europe, 2005, p.2). This is a pivotal step in mitigating the adverse effects of tourism on inland destinations. Indeed, the involvement of local communities in the protection and enhancement of local heritage serves to safeguard the heritage itself from potential fetishisation for tourism purposes.

Concerning the main challenges associated with the design of CW programmes in inner areas, three are the key issues to tackle with attention.

The first issue pertains to geography and is linked to the inadequate public transportation infrastructure and the settlements fragmentation that characterised these territories. The design of CW actions for inner areas must necessarily consider the mobility issues that are characteristic of such spaces, especially if the participants concerned do not have the autonomy or self-sufficiency to move. In this context, the necessary relocation of beneficiaries and/or their support networks (e.g., caregivers) may prove to be a significant obstacle, and even a stress factor, influencing the decision to participate or not.

Secondly, an additional challenge, frequently overlooked, is the issue of reaching a critical mass in low population density contexts. The presence of a limited number of individuals belonging to the same group, whether defined by age or affected by conditions such as frailty or pathology, can

[39] A biblio-bus is a mobile library that could serve different territories. It is a solution adopted in an inner area of the Umbria region, that will be presented in the next section related to the actions already in place in inner areas.

impede the implementation of targeted actions aimed at a single group since the necessary critical mass is not reached. Consequently, the design of CW actions in inner areas may be required to prioritise initiatives aimed at a plurality of target groups, thereby enhancing the feasibility and sustainability of such actions. In this regard, for projects that address this challenge, it is essential to draw upon the existing literature, including both scientific and grey literature, to identify and examine effective practices that document actions carried out with heterogeneous groups, or that combine different targets (for instance, caretakers and caregivers). Related to this issue is the topic of possible forms of resistance from local communities: new initiatives might face scepticism or resistance from inhabitants, especially if not familiar with a certain type of offer or service.

The last challenge addressed in this section is linked to the sustainability of CW actions in inner areas. Indeed, the barriers due to the lack of essential services in inner areas added to the phenomenon of "cultural drought" make it even more difficult to design CW projects without the support of a systemic integration that can guarantee quality and continuity over time. Indeed, it is clear, as Annalisa Cicerchia and Francesca Velani have argued in numerous public events and presentations, that an integrated system is needed to move from scattered and ephemeral projects to the configuration of real services in this field. This is a necessary step towards an equitable configuration of CW as a service for society, especially for the most vulnerable and fragile groups for whom continuity over time is essential. The instability of funding is the first threat to continuity and consistency. It is not possible for a service to display erratic behaviour; doing so increases the risk of generating significantly more negative consequences than the desired positive ones.

In conclusion, a warning that it is essential to remember. Especially in the delicate context of inner areas, it is of the utmost importance that CW is not employed to disguise the alarming deterioration of essential services, particularly in the health and welfare sectors, which are experiencing significant challenges in inland regions. Culture should not become a mere tool to mask the effects of deprivation. To this end, it is imperative that we continue to mitigate inequalities and pursue the achievement of the Essential Levels of Performance (LEP) across all the Italian territory. Otherwise, there is a risk of perpetuating a manipulative use of culture, when it should, in fact, represent a vital resource for these areas, strengthening social cohesion and fostering new forms of well-being. The utilisation of culture as a resilience-building instrument for an already highly impoverished and deprived population represents a potential pitfall of the aforementioned rhetoric, as previously cautioned by Merli in 2002: "making deprivation more acceptable is a tool to endlessly reproduce it" (p. 5). This form of resilience, an interesting and most definitely popular concept, is often celebrated as if it were a virtue, rather than recognised as an inevitable consequence, a survival response in the face of progressive neglect in terms of services and rights.

As emphasised in the Italian definition of Cultural Welfare (Cicerchia *et al.*, 2020), culture cannot substitute for social policies. It is only through structural interventions that structural deficiencies can be addressed, and culture can play a constructive role in this process of human and social development, with a commitment to care, sharing, and innovation.

3.1 Cultural Welfare Regional Actions for the Inner Areas

The present section aims to isolate and present regional initiatives within the framework of CW policies specifically aimed at inner areas. As the analysis presented in the second section of this chapter has shown, there are several Italian regions that are already active in this field, but very few that have tailor-made interventions for inner areas. Certainly, there are various and different bottom-up initiatives throughout Italy and, as Sacco has pointed out, this is the specificity and strength of the Italian context compared to those countries where measures are more mature but exercised exclusively in a top-down manner (Sacco, 2017). Nevertheless, these practices, as numerous as they are, remain ephemeral and unstable and certainly merit public policies to ensure their widespread diffusion throughout Italy and a clear guidance in term of design and evaluation.

In 2024, administrative attention to the subject has certainly increased. In regions such as Puglia, which recently adopted its manifesto, CW is also being discussed in the hinterland. For instance, the manifesto was presented in Castelluccio Valmaggiore in December 2024, during the event "Valle del Celone e Area Interna dei Monti Dauni. I Borghi: manifesto del Welfare Culturale e le persone che fanno comunità"[40] in the inner area of the Monti Dauni.

Another recent initiative that underscored growing attention towards the application of CW in marginal areas was the one organised by the Toscana region and Anci Toscana. This initiative aimed to present the funding opportunities around CW promoted by the region, which will be presented below. Another case that will be analysed is that of the Umbria Region, which implemented pilot CW actions, between 2021 and 2022, in the inland area of south-west Orvieto.

Both the Umbria and Tuscany actions are part of the broader National Strategy for Inland Areas (SNAI), in particular these examples were supported by European structural funds. The action in Umbria Region, under the ROP ESF 2014-2020[41], has been completed late due to the pandemic in 2021-2022, and has been used to shape the subsequent strategic actions aimed at all the Umbrian

[40] Own translation: "Celone Valley and Monti Dauni Inner Area. The Hamlets: manifesto of cultural welfare and the people who make community". More details on the event are available here: https://www.foggiatoday.it/attualita/castelluccio-valmaggiore-centro-diurno-polivalente-inaugurazione.html

[41] Umbria Regional Operational Programme European Social Fund for the period 2014-2020 is available here: https://www.regione.umbria.it/por-fse/por-fse-2014-2020

inner areas for the programming cycle 2021-2027; while the action in Toscana Region, planned under the RP ESF+ 2021-2027[42], has not yet started.

Nevertheless, regional initiatives remain relatively limited in number and scope, underscoring the need for greater coordination. The absence of other regional examples that explicitly refer to CW actions in their regional programmes for inland areas is indicative of a lack of widespread maturation in the Italian territory regarding the importance and potential of these practices. This lack of maturity is not only true regarding the missing integration of sectoral policies at the national level, but also to the targeted resolution of cross-cutting issues, such as territorial imbalances and disparities within Italy, including the issue of inner areas, which represent 58.8% of the national territorial surface.

3.1.1 Toscana Region: action 3.k.3 in the RP ESF+ 2021-2027

In the context of Italian regional initiatives for CW, the pioneering Tuscan experience is undoubtedly one of the most developed and structured. As outlined in the second section on the present chapter, several initiatives have emerged over time in this region. The first of these can be traced back to 2013, and it has since evolved into the current network of Musei Toscani per l'Alzheimer (MTA), which was formally established in 2020. In addition to the fundamental Council Resolution of November 2023, which established rigorous standards for museum services designed for individuals with dementia, it is also noteworthy to mention the cross-sectoral Cultural Welfare Programme, which has been operational since 2021. This is now accompanied by a collaboration protocol for evaluation research, which has been developed involving foundations and local research institutes. Furthermore, the region has also contributed, together with Fondazione PromoPA and the Emilia-Romagna Region, to the creation of the joint "Manifesto condiviso sullo sviluppo del Welfare Culturale"[43]. The regional focus on CW is also directed at inner territories, as illustrated by the webinar "Welfare culturale, una nuova opportunità per le aree interne toscane"[44], held on 21 October 2024 and organised by Anci Toscana with the Toscana Region.

During the online event, Elisa Marchesini, from the Regional POR ESF Managing Authority, presented the funding opportunities available to CW projects in inner areas within the ESF+ 2021-

[42] Toscana Regional Programme for the European Social Fund Plus for the period 2021-2027 is available here: https://www.regione.toscana.it/-/programma-regionale-toscana-fse-2021-2027-i-documenti-del-programma

[43] The Shared Manifesto for the Development of Cultural Welfare (own translation) is available at: https://manifestowelfareculturale.promopa.it/.

[44] Own translation: Cultural Welfare, a New Opportunity for Tuscany's Inland Areas. More detailes are available here: https://ancitoscana.it/il-welfare-culturale-per-le-aree-interne/.

2027 Regional Programme framework. The ESF+ Regional Programme plays a pivotal role in this endeavour, working in concert with the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which also prioritises inner areas. The ESF+ programme has a total budget of 6.6 million euros. The programme has identified two specific objectives for allocating funds, namely, the first, inclusive and quality education and training (4.6[45]), and the second, quality health services and social protection systems and inclusion (4.11). The specific objectives target various disadvantaged groups, with resources being distributed equitably across the six inner areas[46], each of which will receive €1,100,000.

The distribution of financial resources between the two specified objectives was equitable, with €3.3 million allocated to each objective in the regional plan. It should be noted, however, that this allocation represents merely a suggestion from the regional authorities to the relevant areas and is not legally binding. Indeed, in order to facilitate the territories in defining tailored projects based on their specific needs, the six areas can decide independently how to utilise the funds between the different lines of intervention. This signifies that each region is allocated €1,100,000, which could be distributed equally between the two objectives (€550,000 each) or allocated in a manner that differs from the aforementioned distribution among the various lines.

Regarding the objective pertaining to education and training, three principal lines of action have been delineated[47]. With respect to the second objective, which encompasses CW, five lines of action have been identified[48]. The line designated as 3.k.3 is exclusively dedicated to CW and is limited to a maximum of €400,000 per area.

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[45] Specific Objective 4.6 aims to ensure equitable access to and completion of inclusive, high-quality education and training for all, particularly targeting disadvantaged groups. This objective spans from early childhood education and care to general and vocational training and extends through to tertiary education and adult learning. It also emphasises enhancing learning mobility for everyone and improving accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

[46] The six areas identified for the Toscana Region in the SNAI 2021-2027 programme are:

1. Garfagnana, Lunigiana, Media Valle del Serchio, and Appennino Pistoiese (already included in the 2014-2020 SNAI cycle);
2. Valdarno, Valdisieve, Mugello, and Val Bisenzio (already included in the 2014-2020 SNAI cycle);
3. Casentino and Valtiberina, designated as Toscana d'Appennino Monti dello spirito (already included in the 2014-2020 SNAI cycle);
4. Alta Valdera, Alta Valdicecina, Colline Metallifere, and Valdamrese;
5. Amiata Valdorcia, Amiata Grossetana, and Colline del Fiora;
6. Valdichiana Senese.

[47] Activities for Specific Objective 4.6

- 2.f.10 Facilitate the acquisition of skills by the adult population: the role of libraries and archives.
- 2.f.12 Support for the provision of educational services for early childhood (3-36 months).
- 2.f.13 Zonal Educational Projects (Progetti Educativi Zonali − PEZ) aimed at combating educational dropout.

[48] Activities for Specific Objective 4.11

- 3.k.1 Social inclusion and presidium to promote active citizen participation and ensure greater safety conditions.

Through activity 3.k.3, the provision of activities of general interest, social utility and CW is supported under specific objective 4.11[49].

The programme's objective is to actively engage third-sector organisations and voluntary organisations in the implementation of projects that offer not only cultural opportunities but also facilitate the social integration of the target group.

The primary beneficiaries of these interventions are the municipalities or unions of municipalities that form local coalitions through which the initiatives are implemented.

The programme's goal is to engage individuals in disadvantaged situations, including those with disabilities or social vulnerability, as active participants in the cultural activities proposed. "*Active participation*" is an essential criterion for project funding, as emphasised by Elisa Marchesini during the webinar. The European Commission has strongly insisted that final recipients should not merely be passive consumers of cultural activities but should become active participants. To clarify this requirement, Marchesini provided an illustrative example: for a group of disabled individuals, it is insufficient to have them passively attend theatrical performances. While such an activity might be part of the project, it should serve a complementary role. Instead, it is crucial to actively involve these individuals in theatre workshops, allowing them to be direct contributors to the creative process in an active way.

Furthermore, the target of the interventions must include individuals in disadvantaged conditions, with an expansive and adaptable definition that allows local coalitions to identify and address various types of disadvantages, whether they are socio-economic, related to disabilities, or other specific social vulnerabilities. In this sense, the type of recipient will obviously also depend on the strategy of the area itself, responding to the specific and timely need to support some specific disadvantaged subjects compared to others.

The case of the Toscana region is of interest for several reasons.

- 3.k.2 Participatory, innovative, and inclusive paths for urban regeneration.
- 3.k.3 Support for the provision of activities of general interest, social utility, and cultural welfare, also through the involvement of third sector entities, volunteer organizations, etc.
- 3.k.5 Active inclusion and promotion of sports practices for socially fragile subjects, people at risk of social exclusion, and people with disabilities.
- 3.k.7 Support for people with limited autonomy and their families for access to health and social care services.

[49] Specific Objective 4.11 is aimed at improving equitable and timely access to quality, sustainable, and affordable services, including those that promote access to housing and people-centered care, even in the healthcare sector; modernizing social protection systems, also by enhancing access and focusing particularly on minors and disadvantaged groups; and improving the accessibility, effectiveness, and resilience of health systems and long-term care services, also for people with disabilities.

Firstly, it illustrated how a region with a high degree of maturity in the field of CW can advance a strategy for inner areas in alignment with the objectives of SNAI and the plans of the European Cohesion Funds. Secondly, it outlined one of the primary challenges confronting the ESF+ and the broader European funding system: the necessity to conceptualise initiatives no longer with an audience in mind, but with active participants. Indeed, final beneficiaries, are both those who stand to gain from the project's successful completion and those who are expected to play an active role in its delivery. Lastly, they are also the best, or worst, ambassadors of the project itself. This represents the logical progression, and solid manifestation, of the longstanding European position on cultural participation. As Sacco also notes in the 2011 EENC paper, "Culture 3.0: A new perspective for the EU 2014-2020 structural funds programming", active cultural participation generates economic and social benefits, including the fostering of innovation, social cohesion and personal development. This ultimately depicts active cultural participation as a welfare mechanism (Sacco, 2011).

Thirdly, this region, which has prior experience of CW programmes, and the actors involved demonstrated the significance of administrative capability in the development of CW projects. In this regard, the inner area of the Valdichiana Sienese, included in the second SNAI programming cycle (21-27), offers a compelling illustration of how territories with existing strong administrative networks and robust design capabilities can expeditiously respond to this new call. The proposal put forward by the Valdichiana Senese area for the current ESF+ funding 2021-2027 is discussed in greater detail in the box at the end of this chapter.

The project presented is still in its embryonic stage and needs to rely on already proven evidence regarding the use of certain "cultural active ingredients". However, if properly reinforced in this sense with the literature and especially implemented with cross-sectoral co-design, involving actors from the social and health sectors, it can reach a promising configuration. From a broader perspective, the proposal put forth by the Union of Municipalities is founded upon a central tenet: the importance of CW as a fundamental aspect of the quality of life in a given territory. This vision, in conjunction with policies designed to guarantee the provision of essential services, is regarded as a pivotal element in the pursuit of comprehensive and sustainable development of inland areas. The resulting framework is aligned with the actions outlined by the SNAI itself, namely, the adaptation of essential services and the realisation of local development projects (with regard to its intensive scope).

This example, although virtuous, represents a good practice in the development of a CW proposal for inner areas that is out of reach for many Italian inner areas. It is certainly a source of inspiration and a model in terms of methods.

Nevertheless, to attain an adequate degree of strategic planning, evaluation and monitoring capability, it is imperative to devise a national campaign on CW potentials for inner areas. This will assist in avoiding any potential confusion surrounding the topic or the inability to execute a project due to a lack of expertise or knowledge in this domain (risks that are also present in projects that are promoted in other contexts).

Regional Programme ESF+ 2021-2027, specific objective 4.11, line of action 3.k.3. An overview of the preliminary proposal of the Union of Municipalities Valdichiana Senese
The example of the Union of Municipalities Valdichiana Senese is undoubtedly a particularly virtuous experience of cooperation between administrations. Indeed, as emphasised during the event by Agnese Carletti (President of the Union of Municipalities Valdichiana Senese and Mayor of San Casciano dei Bagni), this Union of Municipalities provides an illustrative case study of how inter-municipal collaboration can facilitate the development of substantial projects for inner areas. The geographical overlap of the inner area with the Union of Municipalities has provided a distinctive advantage in the formulation and implementation of dedicated proposals. This area, comprising ten administrations, has exhibited a unified commitment to the effective planning and management of local policies. The already mentioned SNAI has been a catalyst, providing a solid basis for the implementation of new and existing initiatives. Among these was a proposal submitted in the competition for designation as the Italian Capital of Culture for 2026. Despite being among the ten finalists, this proposal was not selected for designation. Consequently, it is currently seeking alternative sources of funding to implement the 78 projects included in its submission. Of the projects, three will be submitted for the financing of Measure 3.K.3, of the regional plan ESF+, namely those focused on three distinct areas: a) music; b) theatre; and c) archaeology. The music-centred project will facilitate the involvement of local music associations, including the Fondazione Cantiere Internazionale d'Arte di Montepulciano and the municipal philharmonics, in the provision of music courses to residents. The objective is to enrich the local musical tradition and reinforce the social fabric. Theatre workshops will be designed to explore and narrate the dynamics of inner areas, employing theatre as a vehicle to enhance cultural awareness and identity within local communities. The last project will concentrate on archaeology, with the assistance of local archaeological groups. The objective is to actively engage citizens in the excavation processes and the fruition of archaeological sites, thereby promoting education and community involvement, as is already occurring in the Municipality of San Casciano with the communities' archaeological walks.

3.1.2 Umbria Region: from Best Practices 2014-2020 to Strategic Project 2021-2027

The application of CW to the inner areas of the Umbria Region[50] is related to an action promoted in the inner area of Southwest Umbria Orvietano[51] within the framework of the SNAI (area identified in the first cycle of 2014-2020 and reconfirmed in the second of 2021-2027), and financed with resources POR FSE Umbria 2014-2020[52]. Within the Strategy, projects related to the social sphere, and in particular those concerning CW, play a key role in placing the community at the centre. The project "Improvement of Access to Socio-cultural and Educational Services" aimed to enhance the quality of the services offered and further strengthen these services. With funding of €400,000 from the PO Umbria ESF 2014-2020 (p.i.9.4), the initiative covered all 20 municipalities in the Southwest Orvietano inner area. The main goal was to increase accessibility and quality of socio-cultural and educational services, ensuring that residents of this area could benefit from improved opportunities equitably and extensively.

This intervention was structured along two main actions. The first one was the improvement of socio-cultural educational services by expanding service hours and opening schedules, and by adding further activities such as after-school programs, workshops, community education centres, etc. These services also utilised cultural venues such as libraries, reading centres, small museums, parks, and gardens. The second was related to the creation of proximity kindergartens, a service aimed to implement community-based early childhood services in the territorial dimension closest to the citizens.

The activities implemented were grouped into five categories:

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[50] Inner Areas of the Umbria Region already identified in the 2014-2020 programming period and confirmed:

- South West Orvietano: 19 municipalities (Orvieto – lead municipality, Monteleone di Orvieto, Montegabbione, Parrano, San Venanzo, Ficulle, Fabro, Allerona, Castel Viscardo, Castel Giorgio, Porano, Baschi, Montecchio, Guardea, Alviano, Lugnano in Teverina, Attigliano, Giove, Penna in Teverina);
- North East Umbria: 10 municipalities (Gubbio – lead municipality, Pietralunga, Montone, Scheggia e Pascelupo, Costacciaro, Sigillo, Fossato di Vico, Gualdo Tadino, Nocera Umbra, Valfabbrica);
- Narni-Amelia: 14 municipalities (Narni – lead municipality, Cascia, Cerreto di Spoleto, Monteleone di Spoleto, Poggiodomo, Preci, S. Anatolia di Narco, Scheggino, Vallo di Nera, Ferentillo, Arrone, Polino, Montefranco, Sellano)

New Inner Areas added in the SNAI cycle 2021-2027:

- Union of Municipalities of Trasimeno: 8 municipalities (Castiglione del Lago, Città della Pieve, Paciano, Piegaro, Panicale, Magione, Passignano sul Trasimeno, Tuoro sul Trasimeno);
- Middle Tiber Valley: 8 municipalities (Todi – lead municipality, Collazzone, Fratta Todina, Monte Castello di Vibio, Avigliano Umbro, Acquasparta, Montecastrilli, San Gemini).

[51] The inner area of South-West Orvietano is composed by 20 municipalities: Orvieto (leade municipality), Allerona, Alviano, Attigliano, Baschi, Castel Giorgio, Castel Viscardo, Città della Pieve, Fabro, Ficulle, Giove, Guardea, Lugnano in Teverina, Montecchio, Montegabbione, Monteleone d'Orvieto, Parrano, Penna in Verteina, Porano, San Venanzo.

[52] Further details are available here: https://www.regione.umbria.it/strategia-aree-interne-2014-2020

1. Biblio 6.0;
2. Ancora Nido;
3. Libri e Giochi in Tour;
4. AttivaMENTE;
5. Baby Hub.

The action, entitled “Biblio 6.0”, addressed the scarcity of cultural and library services available for children aged between 0 and 6. The initiative aimed to enhance the library services by improving and expanding the range of cultural offerings. This entailed an extension of the opening hours of the Children’s Section of the Municipal Library in Orvieto, with the objective of providing a more convenient schedule for children and families. The enhanced service included activities focused on reading and books, with the objective of fostering early literacy and engagement with literature.

“Ancora Nido” was an action driven by the limited availability and precarious sustainability of educational services for early childhood in the smaller centres located in the more peripheral areas of the region. The proposed activity aimed to extend the opening hours of the “L’Altalena” in Castel Viscardo and “L’Acquerello” in Guardea kindergarten by three afternoon hours, for five days a week.

The third activity “Libri e Giochi in Tour” addressed the scarce availability of recreational experiences and territorial animation that foster community building. This initiative involved the deployment of a Bibliobus and a Ludobus that travel across the area, aiming to reduce the cultural and educational opportunity gap between peripheral and central areas by focusing on reading and play activities. The Bibliobus and Ludobus stopped in all municipalities involved in the project, providing children and families with playful experiences and territorial animation inspired by outdoor education. These activities were planned to take place during events and gatherings in squares, parks, community gardens, schoolyards, and kndergarten, covering all project-involved towns.

“AttivaMENTE” was motivated by the limited access to socio-cultural and educational services for children at risk of poverty, educational disparity, and social exclusion, particularly affecting families in especially challenging circumstances. This action involved the activation of workshop experiences aimed at countering the risk of poverty and social exclusion through educational and social interventions. These were designed to enhance the educational offerings and develop the social, cognitive, and emotional competences of minors. Activities were held in libraries, theatres, sports centers, multipurpose halls, parks, school facilities, and kindergartens within the participating municipalities. The action encompassed the testing, validation and implementation of these out-of-

school experiences, all aimed at increasing socio-educational and learning opportunities and promoting autonomy and relational well-being in the 0/6 age group, also supporting families with work-life balance considerations and helping to combat depopulation by attracting new residents.

The last action was the "Baby Hub", which established three baby hubs, conceived as both physical and virtual communal spaces designed for families and the wider community across the three territorial zones of the area. Motivated by the limited opportunities for parents to access support for parenting, share experiences with their children, and network with other families, and groups, the project successfully activated these hubs. These spaces, which could be indoor or outdoor, public or private, owned or managed by proposing organisations or other network entities, were dedicated to sharing, dialogue, training, organising events, parties, and meetings.

The network-based approach, grounded in collaboration, dialogue, and the enhancement of diverse skills, was structured into three main phases: a) planning; b) execution; c) evaluation, monitoring, and reporting[53].

Intervention strategies were developed along three main axes:

- Playful-Educational, offering opportunities for cognitive and social growth, particularly through activities focused on play and fun, as well as reading and cultural stimulation.
- Informative-Educational, providing exposure to new knowledge and the acquisition of new skills through sensory stimulation, hands-on activities, and problem-solving.
- Inclusive and Participatory, employing a work mode based on listening, observing, discussing, collaborating, and building meaningful relationships.

The tools used included: books and reading[54]; nature and environment[55]; graphic-art techniques and theatre[56]; and use of the body in the space with or without music[57].

The Umbria region has identified several key strengths in relation to this project, highlighting the overall benefits it brings to the community. The project's free access policy ensured that all activities were available at no cost to participants, making it widely accessible. One significant strength was isolated in the cooperatives' ability to create effective networks and connections,

[53] Additional information on the evaluation findings are presented in the document "La strategia delle aree interne quale strumento di rafforzamento dei legami di comunità Rete dei servizi socio-educativi e culturale" available here: https://www.regione.umbria.it/strategia-aree-interne-2014-2020.

[54] The book was the "stimulus instrument" that accompanied and guided the activities carried out:stories and fairy tales, illustrated books and *kamishibai*, tactile and paperback books, silent books and audiobooks, poems and rhymes.

[55] Observation, research and manipulation of natural materials and recovery (outdoor education), gardening, sensory paths, micro-orienteering, excursions.

[56] Graphic-art techniques: drawing, painting, sculpture, dripping, collage. Theatre and dramatisation, small sets, construction, assembly, land art.

[57] Yoga, motor coordination, rhythm, music and sounds.

improving the project's reach and impact across different demographic groups. In addition, the availability of qualified personnel and experts in different disciplines ensured high-quality service provision. The project also extended to small rural centres far from large urban areas, thus promoting inclusiveness and ensuring that benefits were widely distributed. In addition, common spaces were strategically used as social centres, to foster community support and interaction. The last positive feature was the innovative use of co-design as a tool bridges the gap between the third sector and public bodies, facilitating an effective strategy and improving the overall effectiveness of the project.

Conversely, several aspects of the project that could be enhanced to augment its efficacy and consequence were also discerned. One such area for improvement is the extension of the project's timetable. Indeed, activities were concentrated in just over a year, which could have been extended to allow for more detailed development and implementation (from October 2021 until December 2022). Another crucial enhancement would be the reinforcement of both institutional and collaborative communication strategies, with the objective of optimising the dissemination of project proposals through the utilisation of all available communication channels. Such an approach would serve to enhance public awareness and involvement.

Furthermore, there was a consensus that families should be more closely involved in the initial stages of the project and that the range of services and resources available to them should be expanded. In terms of evaluation, it was recommended that the number of respondents to the quality perception questionnaire be increased (287 completed questionnaires) in order to facilitate the collection of more comprehensive feedback to inform further refinement. Ultimately, it was deemed crucial to guarantee supplementary resources to guarantee the continuity of activities, ensuring the support and commitment required to achieve long-term objectives.

This is a best practice that the Umbria Region has then extended for the second cycle of the SNAI 2021-2027 in a project strategy in all five inner areas (see footnote 50). The "INSIEME: percorsi inclusivi e intergenerazionali nelle Aree Interne della Regione Umbria"[58] project, which has been funded by the ERDF[59] and the ESF+[60] for the 2021-2027 period with a total of €5.34 million for the five inner areas of the Umbria Region, has the objective of addressing the high risk of marginalisation among children, youth, and the elderly. The project's objective is to facilitate the

[58] Own translation: INSIEME: Inclusive and Intergenerational Paths in Inner Areas.

[59] The specific objective 4.6 of the PR Umbria ERDF 2021-2027 programme has been allocated €3,00 million in funding.

[60] The specific objective k (ESO4.11) of the RP Umbria ESF+ 2021-2027 initiative has a total budget of €2,34 million.

restoration and reuse of public heritage spaces, including those of a cultural, historical and artistic nature. These spaces will serve as the physical locations (“containers”) for a range of recreational activities and cultural initiatives (“contents”). The objective is to reanimate these spaces by fostering integration and inclusion through intergenerational collaboration and celebrating diversity as a mutual enrichment. The combined utilisation of ERDF and FSE+ resources will facilitate the implementation of a dual strategy at the level of both the “container” and the “content”, with the objective of reinforcing the sense of community, which constitutes the added value of the territories of the internal areas.

Part 2
Participatory Processes for a Multi-stakeholder Perspective

Chapter II − Towards Participatory Governance: Strategies and Tools for Community Engagement in the Cultural and Creative Sectors

1. Introduction

Participation is a pivotal concept in the contemporary discourse concerning the Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCSs). Indeed, in recent decades, there has been a shift in society from top-down models to more collaborative and participatory practices, which has led to a redefinition of the role of communities in decision-making and operational processes. Participation has assumed increasing relevance as a fundamental condition to promote social inclusion, sustainability and shared governance. This phenomenon is indicative of a broader paradigm shift in global social, economic, and political dynamics.

In this context, CCSs are regarded as a particularly suitable domain for the implementation of participatory approaches in cultural experiences. This is attributable to their multicomponent and inherently relational nature and their capacity for social transformation, characteristics that are also evident in the CW field (Fancourt & Finn, 2019). Indeed, the rise of concepts such as "Cultural Democracy" and "Culture 3.0" underscores the significance of communities playing an active role in shaping cultural content (Belfiore *et al.*, 2023; Sacco *et al.*, 2018). These individuals and communities do not merely engage with cultural content as users; rather, they increasingly adopt the role of co-creators and decision-makers (*Ibidem*). Indeed, for the CCSs, the use of participatory processes has several positive aspects. They can generate multi-dimensional impacts on communities, individuals, organisations, and governance systems (Cornwall, 2008). These approaches seek to overcome conventional hierarchies, thereby promoting community empowerment and fostering the establishment of sustainable and resilient cultural ecosystems. Furthermore, the adoption of participatory processes aligns with the people-centred approach characteristic of CW projects, which possess the capacity to generate optimal outcomes that address pressing needs. The realisation of this potential is achieved through the incorporation of co-creation

processes, which involve various stakeholders and beneficiaries from the initial stages of action definition until the final evaluation stage. This process will be presented in the final chapter, which is dedicated to the proposed evaluation framework[61].

The scientific literature has extensively explored participatory dynamics and practices, outlining theoretical and operational models to understand their complexity and impact (Jones, 2019). Among these, Arnstein's "Ladder of Participation" (1969) and the contributions of Hassenforder *et al.* (2015) provide useful analytical tools to classify and evaluate participatory practices according to the degree of involvement and outcomes achieved. Concurrently, the adoption of international conventions, such as the Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2005), has underscored the necessity for a more democratic and inclusive approach to cultural heritage management, acknowledging the pivotal role of communities in shaping cultural policies and interventions.

Despite much progress, significant challenges remain. Issues such as lack of representativeness, power conflicts and difficulties in assessing the impact of participatory practices limit the effectiveness and equity of such processes. Nevertheless, the systematic analysis of participatory tools and their applications offers a fundamental contribution to the overcoming of these critical issues and the promotion of more sustainable, inclusive and effective governance models, especially for the development of people-centred CW practices.

The present chapter has been developed for the purpose of exploring the topic of participation in the CCSs through a Structured Literature Review (SLR) (Tranfield *et al.*, 2003; Armitage & Keeble-Ramsay, 2008; Gunnarsson, 2019). The study explores the selected body of evidence which comprises a total of 45 scholarly contributions, including 40 papers and 5 book chapters. The purpose of this examination is to explore the evolution of the concept of participation, its practical applications, and its implications for management. Moreover, a key research objective is the identification of emerging tools and strategies for stakeholders' engagement.

The chapter is structured as follows. Section 2 delves into the theoretical framework, providing a comprehensive overview of the key concepts and approaches that underpin the analysis of participatory practices in the CCSs. Section 3 details the methodology, illustrating the Structured Literature Review (SLR) process, the criteria for document selection, and the analytical framework adopted. Section 4 presents the results, highlighting trends, recurring themes, and the classification of participatory tools identified in the literature. Section 5 discusses these findings considering

[61] The theme under discussion occupies a pivotal position within the framework delineated in Chapter V. A thorough exploration of the subject matter is undertaken in the initial sections entitled "1. Guiding Principles and Main Objectives of the HECWA Framework" and "2. The Three Axes of the HECWA Framework" (with particular attention to sections 2.1 and 2.2).

broader theoretical and practical implications, addressing both opportunities and challenges in participatory governance. Finally, Section 6 offers conclusions by summarising the key insights, outlining the limitations of the study, and suggesting directions for future research to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of participatory processes in cultural management.

2. Theoretical Background

Participation is a broad and multidimensional concept, which finds expression through different perspectives and levels of complexity (Rosetti, 2022). As highlighted in the literature, it can be analysed in relation to three fundamental dimensions: *quality*, *dynamics* and *multidimensionality* (*Ibidem*). The *quality* of participation is based on three key factors: inclusivity, which implies the involvement of all stakeholders affected or impacted by heritage management processes, including communities, groups and individuals (Ababneh *et al.*, 2016; Blake, 2018; Paddison & Biggins, 2017); modes of participation, which vary from passive to more active levels, often described through scaling models (Della Lucia & Franch, 2017; Halim & Ishak, 2017); and timing, with involvement expected to begin at the early stages of the process and continue throughout its phases (Chami, 2018; Dragouni *et al.*, 2018). Concurrently, participatory *dynamics* reflect the roles assumed by different actors and are divided into the following categories: top-down initiatives, promoted by government institutions with centralised control; bottom-up initiatives, led by citizens and local organisations; and public-private partnerships, based on shared management (Arthur & Mensah, 2006; Goh *et al.*, 2019). The *multidimensionality* of participation is manifest in a wide range of activities, as evidenced by the broad spectrum of activities observed in the CCSs. These activities encompass a diverse array of roles, from conservation and promotion to planning, management, policy co-creation, event enjoyment, and shared decision-making power. This observation underscores the remarkable adaptability and flexibility of participation, which can evolve in response to the unique characteristics of diverse cultural and social contexts (Han *et al.*, 2016; Magi & Nzama, 2009).

Whilst the three aforementioned dimensions are beneficial in providing a general overview of participation, they are insufficient in themselves to comprehensively grasp the intricacies and implications of the phenomenon. The heterogeneity of forms and contexts demonstrates that participation is not a uniform phenomenon; rather, it manifests itself through various configurations and degrees of involvement. In order to further explore this intricacy, scholars have developed theoretical models capable of analysing its structural, relational and functional aspects.

One of the best-known models in this field is the “Ladder of Participation” proposed by Arnstein (1969). It classifies levels of participation into eight steps, distributed across three main categories. The first category, “non-participation”, includes manipulation and therapy, where citizens are only formally involved to legitimise decisions taken elsewhere. The second category, “symbolic participation”, includes information, consultation and placation, where citizens can express opinions, but without real impact on final decisions. The final category, “genuine participation”, encompasses partnership, delegation of power and community control, where stakeholders possess decision-making authority and can meaningfully contribute to the process. This model offers a critical foundation for analysing participatory practices, emphasising the limitations of symbolic approaches and underscoring the significance of genuine stakeholder empowerment.

A further significant contribution is provided by Hassenforder *et al.* (2015), who propose an analytical framework with three main components. The first component is the context, which analyses the initial conditions and relationships between stakeholders, including factors such as the pre-existing level of trust and available technical knowledge. The second component is the process, which focuses on the selection of participants, the methods used and the overall duration of activities, emphasising transparency and inclusiveness. The third component focuses on outputs and outcomes, considering immediate results and long-term impacts on stakeholders and governance systems. This integrated framework provides a comprehensive understanding and evaluation of participatory processes, both from a procedural perspective and in relation to concrete outcomes.

Weaver and Cousins (2004) also offer relevant insights, emphasising the distinction between formal participatory approaches, which are driven by organisational bodies with structured processes, and informal ones, which emerge spontaneously from communities, often with greater flexibility and adaptability. Furthermore, Cornwall (2008) and Gaventa & Barrett (2012) highlight how participatory processes can promote social cohesion, strengthen communities’ capacity for self-management and contribute to more inclusive and transparent public policies.

In the CCSs, participatory processes have assumed a central role in reshaping cultural policies and institutional practices, due to their complex and multidimensional nature. Indeed, since the 1960s and 1970s, countercultural movements have challenged traditional cultural hierarchies, pushing for a redefinition of the role of cultural institutions and an increased focus on community participation (Belfiore *et al.*, 2023). This shift has precipitated a profound re-evaluation of cultural policies and practices, favouring inclusive approaches that actively engage communities (Belfiore *et al.*, 2023). According to Bonet and Négrier (2018), the participatory turn in cultural policies is indicative of technological, social and political transformations that have reconfigured the global cultural landscape. These dynamics have precipitated the adoption of new participatory models that

prioritise dialogue and cultural co-creation between citizens and institutions (Bonet & Négrier, 2018).

In particular, the concepts of Cultural Democracy represented a paradigm shift in the management of cultural policies, with the focus shifting from the Democratisation of Culture towards more equitable and direct participation in decision-making processes (Belfiore *et al.*, 2023). This shift entails a transition from the dissemination of cultural content through a top-down approach to the promotion of equitable access and direct involvement in cultural decision-making. Consequently, innovative concepts, such as Culture 3.0, underscore the potential for communities to evolve into active contributors of cultural value (Sacco *et al.*, 2018; Boehm, 2021).

However, it is important to clarify that participation in the cultural sector should not be limited to the creation of content but should also extend to the management and evaluation phases. Indeed, this focus is certainly growing in the design of evaluation processes. Although the adoption of these approaches in evaluation contexts entails some obstacles – including a greater expenditure of economic, human, and time resources –, its multifaceted advantages cannot be overlooked (Smits *et al.*, 2009; Ledwith & Springett, 2010; Thomson & Chatterjee, 2013; Badham, 2015; Morse *et al.*, 2020; Gratton & Reynolds, 2022). Welcoming communities in the entire management process, without neglecting evaluation, represents the paradigm shift needed to practice deep-rooted forms of participation capable of generating change. The evaluation must, therefore, be a reflection tool for cultural and creative organisations, but also an interface for dialogue with communities, so that they can highlight the parameters they consider necessary to assess activities. Additionally, citizens' discussion and definition of cultural indicators is an effective measurement tool and a powerful means of engagement to potentially influence local change (Fischer, 2012; Badham, 2015). As Borin and Donato highlighted (2022), communities' involvement not only promotes empowerment but also contributes to building sustainable and resilient cultural ecosystems.

A decisive aspect of this turn is the recognition of everyday cultural practices as a fundamental element of overall cultural value. This requires a participatory approach that integrates both traditional and emerging forms of expression, overcoming the dichotomy between traditional artistic expression and other cultural practices (Belfiore, 2020). As Miles and Gibson (2016) pointed out, these are key elements in understanding overall cultural value. In order to foster real equity in cultural decision-making, incorporating such practices and promoting more inclusive participatory approaches is essential. However, Bonet and Négrier (2018) highlighted the limitations of some participatory strategies, which risk perpetuating pre-existing cultural hierarchies. The authors suggest that mediation could be an effective solution to redress these inequalities.

In addition to scientific research, a vital contribution to the debate on participation in cultural heritage comes from the Faro Convention (2005). It represents a fundamental turning point in the debate on participation in cultural heritage, emphasising the need for active and democratic involvement of communities. The Convention shifts the traditional top-down approach, replacing it with a bottom-up model oriented towards participatory governance and shared responsibility. This change fosters the concept of cultural heritage not only as a fundamental right, but also as an opportunity to strengthen social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and sustainable development (Cornwall, 2008; Gaventa & Barrett, 2012). Indeed, the Convention fosters the implementation of culture-led participatory approaches to address place-specific needs and enable local communities to become active players. In this context, the concept of democratic participation emerges as central, as it considers cultural heritage a common good, requiring the maximum involvement of citizens in the exercise of cultural citizenship. This right, considered essential to human dignity, emphasises the central role of culture and heritage in the construction of individual and collective identities (UNESCO, 2007; Meyer-Bisch, 2009).

A key element of the Convention is the recognition of "heritage communities", groups that value cultural heritage and actively participate in its identification, conservation and enhancement. Participation should, therefore, not be limited to ensuring access and enjoyment but involve citizens in decision-making and setting priorities for sustainable heritage use (Council of Europe, 2005b). This approach promotes collaboration between all stakeholders – public institutions, private individuals, NGOs and citizens – and stimulates synergies that strengthen awareness of the value of cultural heritage, reducing the risk of excessive or inappropriate use of shared resources (Ravello Lab, 2015). The Faro Convention, therefore, promotes a broad and proactive form of participation, in which individuals are encouraged to apply their skills and become co-creators of value, building and strengthening their cultural and social identities and communities. Consequently, continuous learning and social interaction are identified as pivotal mechanisms to stimulate authentic involvement, thereby instigating a virtuous cycle of cultural participation and valorisation (Sacco, 2011). Indeed, one of the main innovations of the Convention is its people-centred approach, with people themselves becoming performers, recipients and decision-makers (Cerquetti & Romagnoli, 2022, p. 42). Citizens are no longer individual and passive spectators but are now organising themselves into dynamic and changing communities that can play an active role in the management process of cultural and creative activities, from its design to its evaluation. Furthermore, it is crucial to remove barriers and ensure accessibility and inclusion for all parts of society as a first and mandatory step, recognising the central role of cultural participation in improving the lives and well-being of people and communities (Fancourt & Finn, 2019).

Despite the increasing attention paid to participatory processes, there are still numerous challenges that limit their effectiveness. In this regard, Bonet and Négrier proposed a discussion on whether participation strategies merely replicate the criticisms of cultural democratisation by maintaining existing hierarchies and excluding marginalised groups. They suggest that mediation may be a way to address and potentially balance these inequities (Bonet & Négrier, 2018). Another issue is the lack of representativeness: it is often difficult to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are adequately involved in decision-making processes, with the risk of excluding significant voices (Glicken, 2000). Furthermore, power conflicts between institutions and communities can hinder a real sharing of control, leaving decision-making power predominantly in the hands of the authorities (Belfiore, 2020). A further obstacle concerns impact evaluation: measuring the concrete results of participatory practices on cultural and social outcomes often proves to be complex and not very standardised (Rosetti, 2022).

On the other hand, participatory processes also offer significant opportunities to innovate cultural and creative policies. First, they facilitate cultural co-creation, promoting active collaboration between institutions and communities, with the aim of generating new cultural meanings and practices (Bonet & Négrier, 2018). They also strengthen the empowerment of communities, allowing them to directly influence cultural policies and manage resources autonomously (Hassenforder *et al.*, 2015). Finally, participatory processes contribute to social and environmental sustainability by integrating cultural values into sustainable development processes and promoting a holistic view of heritage and cultural resources (Rosetti, 2022).

This brief reflection on participation in the CCSs has highlighted how this concept, while widely recognised, comes in different forms and levels of complexity, influenced by structural, relational and functional factors. Participation offers significant opportunities to promote, among others, cultural co-creation, community empowerment and sustainable development. However, the critical issues encountered, such as lack of representativeness, power conflicts and the difficulty of assessing the real impact of participatory practices, require a more structured and systematic approach to ensure their effectiveness (Glicken, 2000; Belfiore, 2020; Rosetti, 2022). Furthermore, as posited by Manzoli and Paltrinieri (2021), contemporary discourse frequently employs the term “participation” to denote processes that are confined to the initial stages of consultation or collaboration, failing to attain authentic shared decision-making authority.

In this context, there is a need to map and classify the participatory tools currently described in the literature for the CCSs. These tools, often applied in a piecemeal and uncoordinated way, need to be systematically analysed in order to identify good practices, and maximise their potential. This perspective not only helps to overcome cultural hierarchies and access barriers but also allows to

build a clear and structured picture of existing practices and to integrate them into more inclusive and sustainable participation models (Bonet & Négrier, 2018; Manzoli & Paltrinieri, 2021).

In light of these considerations, the following research question is at the heart of the study.

RQ1: What participatory tools are currently described in the literature for the CCSs, and how can they be systematically classified to provide a clear and structured picture of existing practices?

The aim of this research is not only to contribute to the theoretical and applied understanding of participation, but also to make a practical contribution to improving cultural policies and creative processes by promoting more equitable management models that are representative and able to respond to contemporary challenges.

3. Methodology

The research adopted the Structured Literature Review (SLR) methodology to systematically analyse the relevant scientific literature. This approach, characterised by a rigorous procedural structure, ensures completeness, transparency, and replicability of findings (Tranfield *et al.*, 2003; Armitage & Keeble-Ramsay, 2008; Gunnarsson, 2019). In interdisciplinary fields such as cultural and creative management, SLR allows for mapping existing knowledge, identifying gaps in the literature and suggesting new avenues of research.

Data collection was carried out via the Scopus platform, which was chosen for its broad coverage of international scientific literature and the possibility of filtering results according to specific criteria. The search was carried out on 27 June 2023 using a custom search string with the use of Boolean operators ("OR", "AND") and truncation (i.e., *) to include an extended range of related terms. The string used was as follows: *("cultural heritage" OR "cultural and creative sector") AND ("participatory tool*" OR "communit* engagement" OR "participatory governance" OR "participatory process*").*

The initial result of the query returned 689 documents. To ensure a selection relevant to the focus of the study, a filter was applied to narrow the corpus down to 404 documents. The inclusion criteria were:

- Language: articles written in English in order to ensure broad academic accessibility.
- Subjects: contributions from the social sciences, economics, econometrics and finance, and business, management and accounting, which were considered relevant to the context analysed.

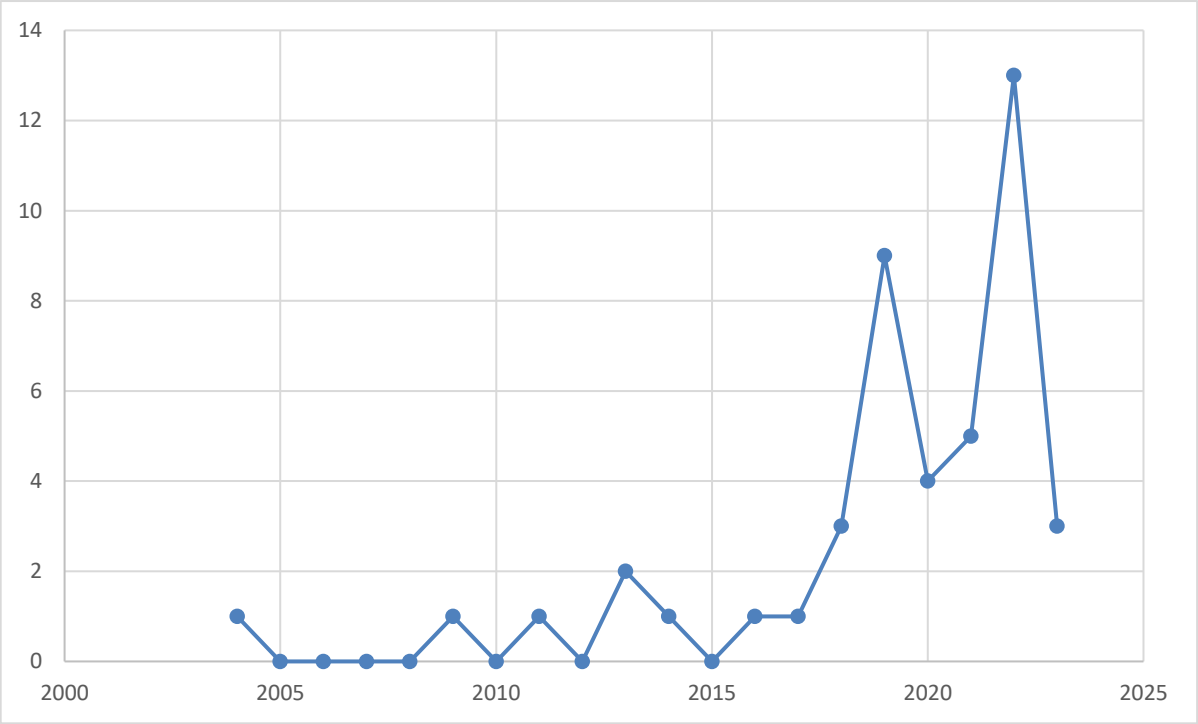
A further selection was then made by analysing the abstracts, which reduced the number of contributions to 108. This skimming process allowed the exclusion of contributions that discussed

the importance of participation but did not present concrete participatory tools. The full texts of the 108 contributions were examined, resulting in the identification of 45 papers relevant to the literature review. These 45 papers encompassed 40 papers and 5 book chapters. The final selection, therefore, focused on articles providing operational evidence and practical tools useful to apply participatory processes in the CCSs.

The selected body of articles was then subjected to a detailed analysis according to a multi-dimensional analytical framework. The research questions, research hypotheses, methodology, sample and results were analysed. In addition to the descriptive analysis, a thematic analysis was carried out to classify the studies according to the type of participatory tools presented. This approach makes it possible to highlight recurring patterns, methodological innovations and emerging trends in the participatory management of CCSs.

4. Results

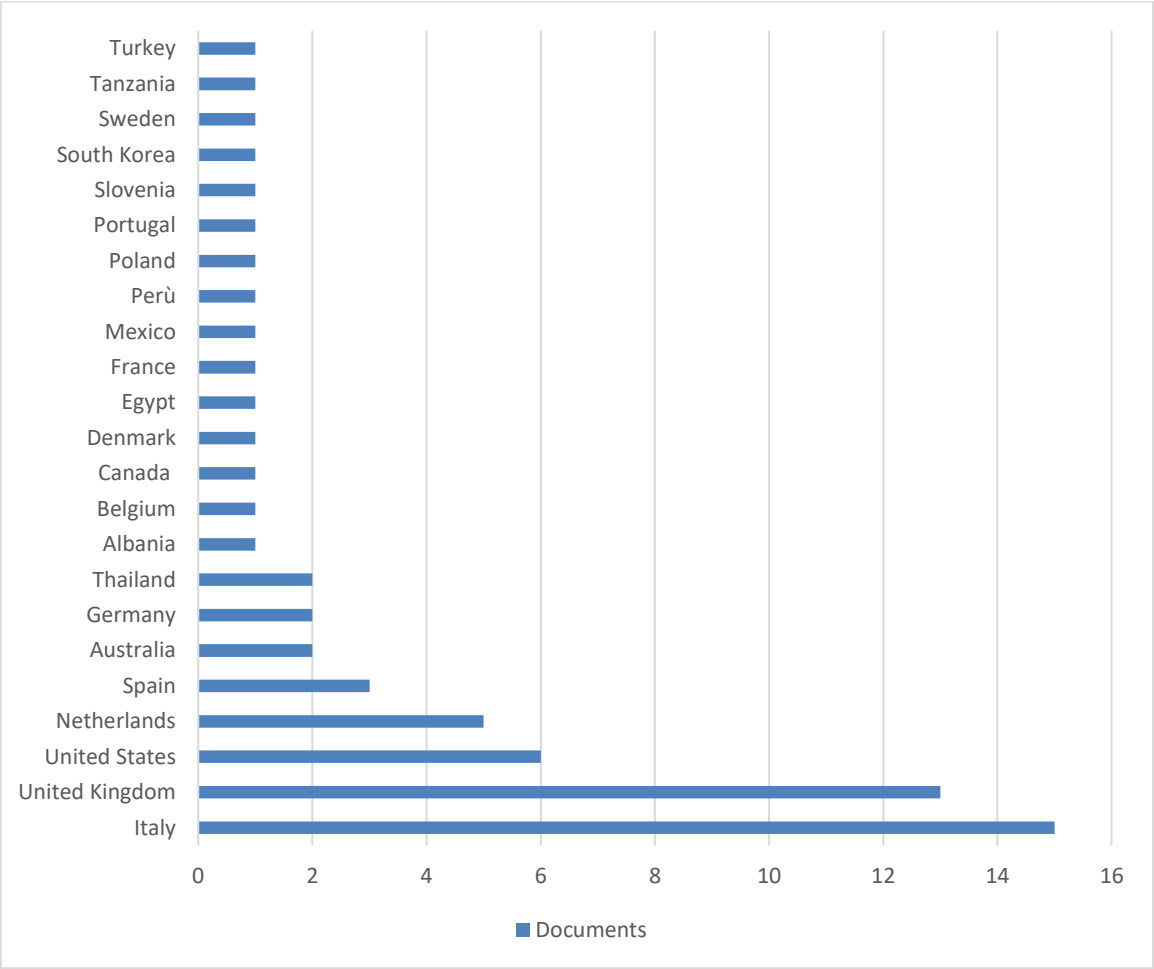
The 45 papers selected for this literature review, covering a time span from 2004 to 2024, demonstrate a notable increase in academic interest over the past decade, as illustrated in Graph. 3.



Graph. 3 Distribution of publications over time (own elaboration)

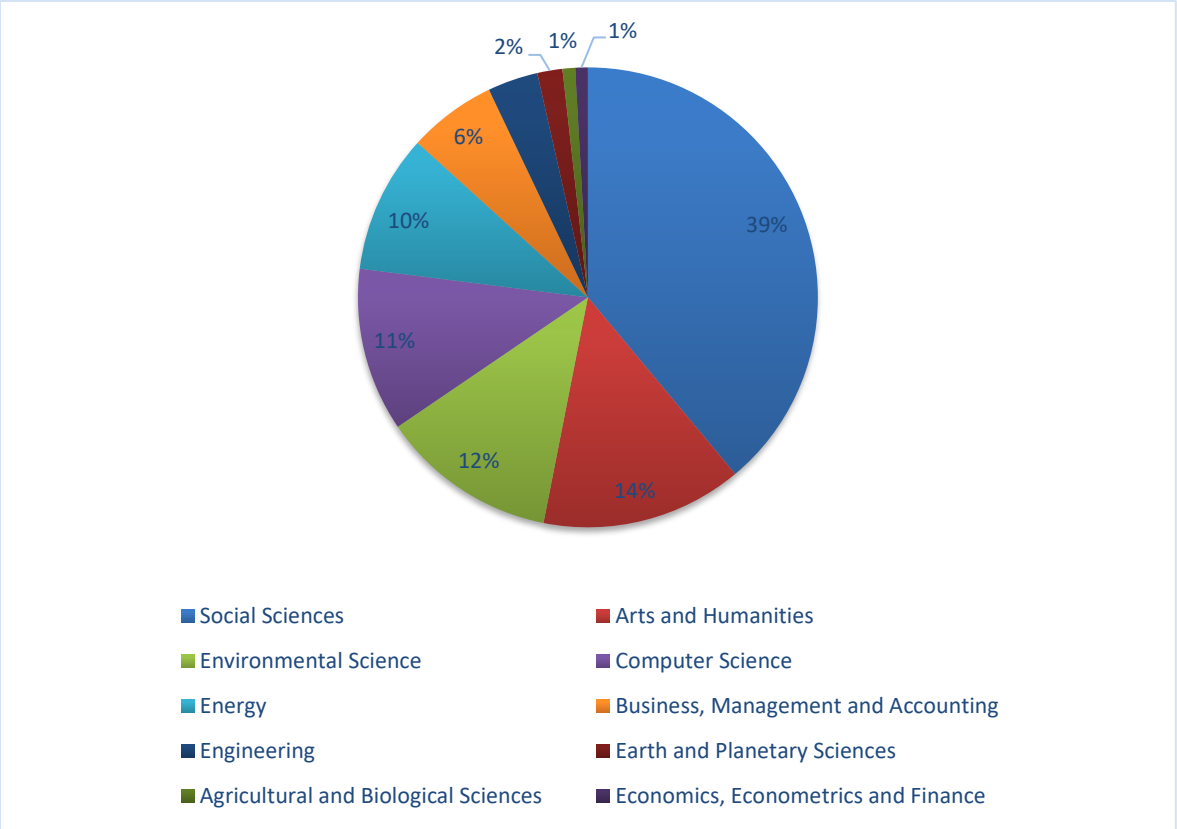
The geographical distribution of authors' affiliations, as illustrated in Graph. 4, highlights a relevant concentration of contributions from Italy and the UK, followed by the United States and the Netherlands. Spain and Germany show a moderate level of publication activity, while other

countries, such as Albania, Canada, Egypt, Mexico, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden, and Turkey, have a more marginal presence.



Graph. 4 Geographical distribution of publications (own elaboration)

Graph. 5 shows the distribution of the papers analysed by discipline. Most of the papers (39%) belong to Social Sciences, indicating a strong focus of the literature on aspects related to social and cultural dynamics. This is followed by Arts and Humanities (14%) and Environmental Sciences (12%), reflecting a growing interest in issues related to cultural heritage and sustainability. Other disciplines such as Computer Science (11%), Energy (10%) and Business, Management and Accounting (6%) contribute less, suggesting a multidisciplinary approach. The remaining fields, including Engineering, Earth and Planetary Sciences, Agricultural and Biological Sciences and Economics, have a marginal presence.



Graph. 5 Distribution of publications by subject area (own elaboration)

As shown in Tab. 1 several recurring themes emerge in the literature reviewed, with a notable emphasis on cultural heritage. Key areas of focus include Archaeology (5 papers), Landscape (5 papers), and Urban Landscape (4 papers). Additionally, Digital approaches feature prominently, with 6 papers, alongside Rural Heritage and Intangible Heritage, each addressed in 4 papers. Less prominently, topics of Tourism, Archives, Libraries and Ecomuseums together with approaches such as crowdfunding are addressed within a limited number of papers. A significant contribution stems from initiatives like UNESCO programmes and projects such as Ruritage, which connect localised and specific actions with a broader capacity to drive scientific inquiry. These initiatives not only catalyse an extensive production of literature but also underscore their role in advancing knowledge and fostering innovation in fields related to heritage preservation and rural regeneration. However, their prominent visibility and institutional support often result in a disproportionate focus on these programmes, potentially overshadowing equally valuable but less-publicised grassroots initiatives or alternative approaches. This dynamic, while beneficial in amplifying certain narratives, risks narrowing the scope of academic and policy attention, diverting resources and recognition away from less high-profile efforts that might also yield impactful outcomes. Conversely, the growing presence of the Faro Convention in academic discussions highlights the increasing attention to the debate initiated by the Council of Europe in 2005. This convention, with

its people-centred principles, emphasises the active involvement of communities in recognising, managing, and valorising cultural heritage. Its prominence in the literature demonstrates a heightened focus on heritage as a shared resource and a driver for social cohesion and sustainable development, showcasing its enduring relevance in both academic and policy contexts.

The resulting scenario highlights a broad diversification of the topics addressed and the varied scientific backgrounds of the authors, with a clear emphasis on themes centred around the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage.

Recurrent Themes	N° of documents	Paper
Digital Tools	6	Bonacini, 2023; Chiabai *et al.*, 2013; Giglitto *et al.*, 2019; McCandlish & McPherson, 2021; Park, 2014; Tait *et al.*, 2013.
Archaeology	5	Ellenberger & Richardson, 2019, Jameson, 2019; Nava & Hofman, 2018; Weaver *et al.*, 2022; Mwitondi *et al.*, 2021.
Landscape	5	Caspersen, 2009; Álvarez Larrain & McCall, 2019; Pappalardo, 2020; Shirvani Dastgerdi *et al.*, 2022; Aimar *et al.*, 2022.
Urban Landscape	4	Aureli & Del Baldo, 2022; Cerreta *et al.*, 2021; Polat & Özge Tümer Yıldız, 2019; Shirvani Dastgerdi *et al.*, 2022.
Rural Heritage	4	Bindi *et al.*, 2022; Martin *et al.*, 2021; de Luca *et al.*, 2021; Tamborrino *et al.*, 2022.
Intangible Heritage	4	Bainton *et al.*, 2011; Giglitto *et al.*, 2019; Park, 2014; Weaver *et al.*, 2022.
Archives and Libraries	3	May, 2017; Park, 2014; Tait *et al.*, 2013.
Tourism	3	Chauhan, 2022 ; Chiabai *et al.*, 2013; Esichaikul & Chansawang, 2022.
Crowdfunding	1	Borin & Fantini, 2023.
Ecomuseum	1	Pappalardo, 2020.
UNESCO	7	Aimar *et al.*, 2022; Alonso González *et al.*, 2018; Aureli & Del Baldo, 2022; Li *et al.*, 2020; Magliacani & Francesconi, 2022; Polat & Özge Tümer Yildiz, 2019; Rosetti *et al.*, 2022.
Faro Convention	4	Bonacini, 2023; Cerreta & Di Girasole, 2020; Chauhan, 2022; Iaione *et al.*, 2022.
RURITAGE Project	3	De Luca *et al.*, 2021; Martin *et al.*, 2021; Tamborrino *et al.*, 2022.

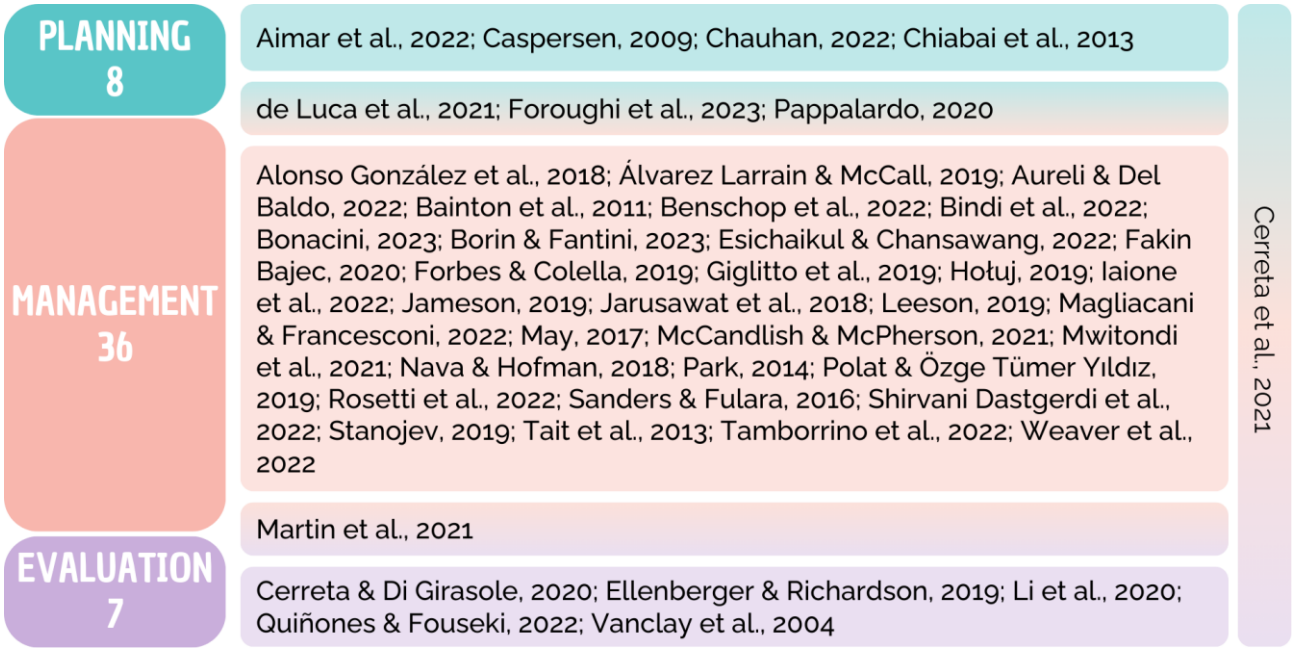
Tab. 1 Recurring themes in the literature analysed (own elaboration)

The analysis of the 45 selected documents made it possible to identify a variety of participatory instruments used in the cultural and creative sectors. In particular, a thematic analysis was carried out in order to classify these instruments according to the management phase in which they were applied. As shown in Fig. 6 Distribution of bibliographic sources by management phase categories:

Planning, Management and Evaluation (own elaboration), the instruments identified fall into three main categories:

- "planning and decision-making" phase presents participatory tools used in the definition of strategies and decisions at organisational or political level.
- "management" phase includes tools used in the conservation, enhancement, funding and management of cultural projects and initiatives.
- "measurement and evaluation" phase encompasses both tools for conducting participatory evaluations and methods for evaluating participatory processes, aimed at measuring the effectiveness of practices implemented in previous phases.

Fig. 6 Distribution of bibliographic sources by management phase categories: Planning, Management and Evaluation (own elaboration)



The function and context of use of each tool were subjected to detailed analysis, thereby facilitating the mapping and understanding of the areas in which these tools were most commonly deployed.

The "planning and decision-making" phase of participatory tools is distinguished by its emphasis on community engagement and collaborative processes, aimed at shaping effective policies and strategies. Tools in this phase prioritise inclusivity, enabling communities and stakeholders to actively influence decision-making rather than passively accept outcomes. For instance, the Community-Based Heritage Management and Planning Methodology (CHMP), developed within the RURITAGE project (de Luca *et al.*, 2021), illustrates how participatory approaches empower rural communities by integrating their perspectives into strategic heritage planning. Similarly, the Participatory Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (Caspersen, 2009) engages stakeholders in

planning processes that align with local environmental and cultural values, ensuring landscapes are managed sustainably and inclusively. Technological innovations also play a pivotal role, as demonstrated by the E-participation Model Framework (Chiabai *et al.*, 2013), which combines ICT tools with focus group techniques to enhance stakeholder engagement in cultural tourism planning. Beyond rural and tourism contexts, urban settings benefit from tools such as Play ReCH (Re-use Cultural Heritage) (Cerreta *et al.*, 2021), which promotes collaborative planning for the adaptive reuse of heritage sites, leveraging participatory evaluation to align community objectives with project goals.

A key strength of these tools lies in their adaptability to diverse settings. In both urban and rural contexts, methods like participatory mapping and focus groups form the foundation for capturing local insights and integrating them into policy frameworks. Long-term initiatives, such as the decade-long partnership exemplified by the Simeto River Agreement (Pappalardo, 2020), underscore the value of sustained collaboration in building trust and achieving shared goals in heritage planning. At a broader scale, institutional frameworks like the Institutional Analysis and Development Network of Adjacent Action Situations (IAD-NAAS) (Chauhan, 2022) offer theoretical and practical models for assessing participatory governance in tourism and heritage management. These tools reflect the evolution of participatory planning, redefining the community as an active, indispensable agent in decision-making processes rather than a passive recipient.

Despite their diversity, these tools share a common focus on fostering shared ownership and accountability. By engaging communities directly, they enhance the legitimacy of policies, ensuring they are both locally relevant and broadly sustainable. These approaches underscore the importance of tailoring participatory tools to specific contexts, balancing inclusivity with the strategic demands of planning. However, there are again critical areas, including ensuring the representation of marginalised voices and integrating technology in under-resourced contexts. Tab. 2 presents the tools that emerged from the analysis, showcasing a diverse range of participatory approaches, underscoring the significance of engaging communities not only as users but also as active agents in the decision-making process. The planning and decision-making phase demonstrates how participatory tools can align community aspirations with institutional objectives, establishing a collaborative foundation for effective heritage management.

Planning and decision-making phase			
Document		Field	Tool
1.	Aimar *et al.*, 2022	Landscape	Declarations of Public Interest: citizen participation in proactive landscape management.

2.	Caspersen, 2009	Landscape	A Participatory Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) with a stakeholders activation process.
3.	Cerreta *et al.*, 2021	Landscape	Play ReCH (Re-use Cultural Heritage).
4.	Pappalardo, 2020	Landscape	Community-based processes for revitalizing heritage: the experimental practice of ecomuseums.
5.	Chauhan, 2022	Tourism	Institutional Analysis and Development Network of Adjacent Action Situations (IAD-NAAS).
6.	Chiabai *et al.*, 2013	Tourism	E-participation model framework: two-step approach (ICT tools with specific focus group techniques).
7.	de Luca *et al.*, 2021	Rural areas	Community-based Heritage Management and Planning methodology (CHMP) developed within the RURITAGE project.
8.	Foroughi *et al.*, 2023	Participation in Heritage planning	Theoretical Framework of factors (and sub-factors) in participatory practices processes.

Tab. 2 Analysed literature in the "planning and decision-making" phase (own elaboration)

The management phase of participatory tools showcases an integration of collaborative governance, technological advancements, and sustainability-focused strategies, addressing the evolving demands of managing cultural and natural heritage. Collaborative frameworks such as the Participatory Governance of Cultural Heritage (PGCH) (Iaione *et al.*, 2022) and UNESCO's Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach (Aureli & Del Baldo, 2022) emphasise the critical role of public-private-community partnerships, fostering shared ownership and inclusive decision-making. These frameworks bring together diverse stakeholders, from residents and community groups to institutional actors, ensuring that management processes are equitable and reflective of the broader societal context. Technology plays an equally transformative role, as illustrated by tools like the RURITAGE Resource Ecosystem (RRE) (Tamborrino *et al.*, 2022), which combines digital innovation with participatory methods to enhance stakeholder engagement and facilitate heritage-led regeneration. Similarly, Participatory Geographical Information Systems (PGIS) (Álvarez Larrain & McCall, 2019) and digital cultural asset mapping approaches (McCandlish & McPherson, 2021) provide communities with user-friendly platforms for data sharing, mapping, and decision-making, enabling greater transparency and inclusivity in heritage management.

The adaptability of participatory tools to diverse local contexts is a defining feature, ensuring their relevance across varied settings. Tools like the Participatory Urban Design Guidance (PUrDeG) (Polat & Tümer Yıldız, 2019) address the specific challenges of urban heritage management, while rural and indigenous contexts benefit from initiatives such as Participatory Mapping (Álvarez Larrain & McCall, 2019) and the decade-long Simeto River Agreement (Pappalardo, 2020), which has fostered sustained collaboration and community-led heritage management. Additionally, participatory tools increasingly address intangible and less-known heritage, amplifying marginalised voices and cultural identities. Approaches like Digital

Storytelling (Bonacini, 2023) empower communities to share their narratives, while the Double Diamond Model (Giglitto *et al.*, 2019) provides structured methodologies for collaborative heritage creation and mutual learning.

Innovative funding mechanisms have also emerged as crucial enablers of participatory management. Crowdfunding for cultural heritage (Borin & Fantini, 2023) offers an inclusive approach to financing, enabling communities to directly support projects that align with their priorities, fostering a deeper sense of ownership and responsibility. Sustainability is a recurring theme in this phase, as seen in tools like the Culturally Sustainable Development (CSD) Model (Magliacani & Francesconi, 2022) and the RURITAGE My Cult-Rural Toolkit (Martin *et al.*, 2021), which integrate participatory strategies into long-term environmental, social, and economic goals. In conclusion, the tools identified in the management phase, presented in Tab. 3, highlight their transformative potential to foster collaboration, empower communities and ensure resilient heritage management practices adapted to the complexities of the current scenario. These tools are rooted in collaborative approaches that actively involve communities, local and institutional actors, demonstrating adaptability to different contexts such as landscapes, urban and rural environments, archaeology and art.

Management phase				
Document		Process	Field	Tool
1.	Alonso González *et al.*, 2018	Management	Participation	ParticiPat: Heritage and Social Participation: Methodological Proposal and Critical Review. A general discourse about participation within the heritage management (resources and risks) Grammar of Participation (Kelty, 2017).
2.	Álvarez Larrain & McCall, 2019	Management	Landscape	Community-based cartography, participatory mapping (PM) and Participatory Geographical Information Systems (PGIS).
3.	Aureli & Del Baldo, 2022	Management	Urban landscape	Participatory governance in the implementation of the HUL (Historic Urban Landscape) approach (UNESCO). The six implementation steps have been developed to help design a UNESCO site management plan.
4.	Bainton *et al.*, 2011	Management	Intangible heritage	The Stepping Stones for Cultural Heritage program. This consultative process is innovative in both Melanesia and the context of resource extraction, but also more generally within the field of cultural heritage.
5.	Benschop *et al.*, 2022	Management	Participation	Participatory Practices in Art and Cultural Heritage Learning Through and from Collaboration.

6.	Bindi *et al.*, 2022	Management	Rural	Focus groups, as a way to develop and implement community participation and a multi-actor research perspective.
7.	Bonacini, 2023	Enhancement	Digital storytelling	Digital storytelling: participatory strategies in multimedia audio-guide co-production, a co-creative process within a regional-scale with local stakeholders.
8.	Borin & Fantini, 2023	Funding	Equity crowdfunding	Crowdfunding could promote a participatory approach to cultural heritage development, empowering cultural heritage communities in supporting initiatives they care about, and ensuring a sense of ownership over the heritage resources that matches the participatory approach to the needs for heritage funding.
9.	Cerreta *et al.*, 2021	Planning management / Evaluation	Urban landscape	Play ReCH (Re-use Cultural Heritage).
10.	de Luca *et al.*, 2021	Planning / Management	Rural	Community-based Heritage Management and Planning methodology (CHMP) developed within the RURITAGE project.
11.	Esichaikul & Chansawang, 2022	Management	Tourism landscape	Guidelines for enhancing community involvement in cultural heritage management of the park were proposed.
12.	Fakin Bajec, 2020	Management	Heritage management	informal occasions to build multi-level community networks which were practiced and analysed through different heritage projects.
13.	Forbes & Colella, 2019	Management	Participation	the REACH Participatory Framework. The five constellations of participatory approaches have been classified either in relation to groups of beneficiaries (2.1 and 2.2) or according to modalities of social participation (2.3, 2.4 and 2.5).
14.	Foroughi *et al.*, 2023	Planning / Participation	Participation	Theoretical Framework of factors (and sub-factors) in participatory practices processes.
15.	Giglitto *et al.*, 2019	Management	Intangible heritage	The Double Diamond four-stage model – Discover, Define, Develop, and Deliver – applied to a summer school designed to create a cultural experience for the Bedouins and the students based on mutual learning and understanding facilitated by participatory approaches to technology design.
16.	Hołuj, 2019	Management	Heritage management	The institution of community custodians of heritage sites.
17.	Iaione *et al.*, 2022	Management	Governance	Participatory governance of cultural heritage (PGCH) through public-private-community partnership (PPCP).
18.	Jameson, 2019	Management	Archaeology	Community involvement has encompassed stakeholder meetings and significant time commitments of local community volunteers, high school and higher

				education academic communities, and local and regional special interest groups.
19.	Jarusawat *et al.*, 2018	Management	Collection management	A process model of community participation in palm leaf manuscript (PLM) management (image).
20.	Leeson, 2019	Management	Socially engaged arts	Close collaboration between local people, activists and artists led to a range of interventions implemented over a ten year period that included a series of large-scale photo-murals, travelling exhibitions, initiatives and events such as the People's Armadas to Parliament and the People's Plan for the Royal Docks.
21.	Magliacani & Francesconi, 2022	Management	Community engagement	Conceptual model: culturally sustainable development (CSD) design, implementation, evolution. Community engagement: - Focus groups - Permanent Working tables - Storytellings.
22.	Martin *et al.*, 2021	Management [Evaluation]	Rural heritage	RURITAGE My Cult-Rural Toolkit.
23.	May, 2017	Conservation / Digital preservation	Libraries	Indiana Digital Preservation (InDiPres), a community-based collaborative to furnish an affordable and sustainable digital preservation solution for under-resourced small- to midsized cultural heritage organisations.
24.	McCandlish & McPherson, 2021	Management	Community engagement	digital cultural asset mapping and digital storytelling to reveal hidden heritage and engage the local citizen's voice.
25.	Mwitondi *et al.*, 2021	Conservation / Management	Community engagement	Site Community-Based Management and Conservation Plan (SCMCP). Archaeology.
26.	Nava & Hofman, 2018	Management	Archaeology	Community engagement throughout the scientific research process: in the research design, data collection, data analysis, dissemination and subsequent actions, including public engagement.
27.	Pappalardo, 2020	Planning / Management	Landscape	After a first community mapping experiment the partnership has gone through a decade-long process: 2010–2013: The university-community partnership continued the mapping process. 2013–2015: based on the first Memorandum of Understandings, the university–community partnership—plus a group of elected officials of the Municipalities along the Simeto River—applied for the National Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI). 2015–today: in February 2015, the Participatory Presidium was born as an umbrella organisation grouping about 60

				community-based organisations. 2015–today: each year, the Community Planning and Ecological Design Summer School (CoPED) takes place in the valley. 2016–today: In addition, in the framework of the Simeto River Agreement, a biodistrict was established.
28.	Park, 2014	Conservation	Digital archives	Ichpedia, a web-based Intangible Cultural Heritage encyclopedia and archive.
29.	Polat & Özge Tümer Yıldız, 2019	Community engagement	Urban landscape	Participatory Urban Design Guidance (PUrDeG) model for cultural heritage sites.
30.	Rosetti *et al.*, 2022	Management	Participation	Definitions of the forms of participation. Source: adapted from IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, 2018.
31.	Sanders & Fulara, 2016	Management	Civic engagement	Chicago Cultural Alliance, CCA's Civic Engagement Model. Through its civic dialogue program (Talking About...) CCA provides a template for members to collaborate on cross-cultural programs which explore the intersection of contemporary civic issues with cultural heritage.
32.	Shirvani Dastgerdi *et al.*, 2022	Management / Conservation	Landscape	The bottom-up approach to participatory adaptation in cultural landscapes.
33.	Stanojev, 2019	Management	Participatory governance	European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018. European collection of different cases and type of participation in heritage.
34.	Tait *et al.*, 2013	Conservation	Archives	Developing digital archives in rural areas.
35.	Tamborrino *et al.*, 2022	Management	Rural	RURITAGE. Users engagement. The resource ecosystem (RRE) was conceived to provide local stakeholders with new methodologies and user-friendly tools based on bottom-up processes for identifying and actioning heritage and territorial feature.
36.	Weaver *et al.*, 2022	Management	Archaeology	Keeping the Conversation Going: Engaging Multiple Publics through Web Initiatives, 2020.

Tab. 3 Analysed literature in the "management" phase (own elaboration)

In the "measurement and evaluation" phase, participatory tools are categorised into two approaches: participatory evaluation, which integrates stakeholders directly into the evaluation process, and evaluation of participatory processes, which assesses the effectiveness of participatory practices already implemented. Participatory evaluation emphasises inclusivity and shared accountability, as seen in tools like Play ReCH (Cerreta *et al.*, 2021), which engaged communities in assessing urban landscape reuse strategies, and the RURITAGE My Cult-Rural Toolkit (Martin *et al.*, 2021), combining digital and physical tools to evaluate rural heritage regeneration projects. Similarly, the integration of Faro Convention criteria (Cerreta & Di Girasole, 2020) offers a hybrid

model of participatory and self-evaluation, employing twelve criteria aligned with community-driven heritage management goals. These tools ensure that stakeholders are active agents in assessing the success and relevance of the initiatives.

Conversely, tools focused on the evaluation of participatory processes emphasise the assessment of how participatory practices function and their overall impact. For instance, Ellenberger and Richardson (2019) provide a methodological reflection on evaluating participation in public archaeology, stressing the importance of iterative refinement to improve future practices. The Community Participation Assessment Framework (Li *et al.*, 2020) employed a detailed structure of 23 indicators across four criteria to systematically measure the extent and quality of community involvement in heritage management. Similarly, Quiñones and Fouseki's conceptual framework (2022) assesses the social impacts of participatory heritage conservation, shedding light on broader societal benefits. Vanclay *et al.* (2004) extended this focus to museums, evaluating participatory outreach and educational activities to enhance audience engagement.

Together, these tools reflect a dual focus on embedding evaluation into participatory practices and systematically measuring their impact, fostering both iterative improvements and long-term sustainability. By engaging stakeholders as co-evaluators and applying structured methodologies to assess the effectiveness of participatory practices, these tools ensure that actions are both meaningful and impactful. They highlight the growing recognition of evaluation not merely as a final step but as an integral component of participatory practices, ensuring accountability, inclusivity, and continuous refinement in cultural heritage management. These tools, presented in Tab. 4, are considered among the most relevant to ensure the effectiveness and impact of participatory practices in cultural and creative contexts.

Measurement and Evaluation phase				
Document		Field	Participatory evaluation/ Evaluation of the participation	Tool
1.	Cerreta *et al.*, 2021	Urban Landscape	Participatory Evaluation	Play ReCH (Re-use Cultural Heritage)
2.	Cerreta & Di Girasole, 2020	Faro Convention	Participatory Evaluation	An integration of the evaluation process identified by the Faro Convention (12 criteria) with self-evaluation indicators
3.	Ellenberger & Richardson, 2019	Public Archaeology	Evaluation of the Participation	Methodological reflection about evaluation in public archaeology
4.	Li *et al.*, 2020	Cultural Heritage Management	Evaluation of the Participation	Assessment framework of community participation for cultural heritage management 23 indicators (4 criteria)

5.	Martin *et al.*, 2021	Rural Heritage	Participatory Evaluation	RURITAGE My Cult-Rural Toolkit, (physical and digital tools)
6.	Quiñones & Fouseki, 2022	Social Impact Assessment in Heritage Conservation	Evaluation of the Participation	A conceptual framework for assessing social impacts of Heritage conservation
7.	Vanclay *et al.*, 2004	Museums	Evaluation of the Participation	Evaluation of the impacts of participatory practice in the outreach and educational activities of a museum

Tab. 4 Analysed literature in the "measurement and evaluation" phase (own elaboration)

5. Discussion

The analysis of the 45 results shows a growing attention of the scientific community to participatory processes in the CCSs, indicating an increasing relevance of these practices at both theoretical and application levels. The increase in publications over the last decade reflects not only the maturation of the academic debate, but also the emergence of new approaches and operational tools. This change signals a shift from traditional top-down models to more inclusive and collaborative approaches aimed at promoting the active involvement of local communities in decision-making and management processes.

An important aspect is the geographical distribution of authors' affiliations, which shows a clear predominance of contributions from Italy and the UK. This concentration suggests the central role of the Italian and English contexts in research on participatory processes in the CCSs. Other countries, such as Spain and Germany, have a significant but much smaller participation, while a smaller number of contributions come from countries such as Turkey, Albania and Mexico. The geographical distribution suggests that the debate on these issues, although global, is more prominent in the European political debate, particularly following initiatives such as the Faro Convention. This geographical distribution also shows that it could be more developed in national contexts with a well-established tradition in heritage management and participatory processes.

At a thematic level, contributions focus on areas such as archaeology, landscape and urban landscape, with tools such as participatory mapping and bottom-up methods (e.g. public archaeology) being widely used (Caspersen, 2009; Álvarez Larrain & McCall, 2019). In contrast, areas such as economics and management are less explored, suggesting potential areas for future research, particularly in relation to sustainable funding and economic impact assessment. This panorama highlights that the topic of participation is primarily rooted in the social sciences and humanities, but at the same time looks to other disciplines. This underlines the need for multidisciplinary approaches to address the complex challenges of CCSs.

Another important aspect is the use of digital tools, which is discussed in six papers (Bonacini, 2023; Park, 2014) that highlight the potential of technologies to facilitate documentation, storytelling and community participation. Tools such as digital storytelling and digital archives have been shown to be effective in promoting engagement. However, some critical issues emerge: many studies focus on local trials, limiting large-scale applicability, and the long-term sustainability of the technologies used remains under-researched.

References to international frameworks and projects, such as the Faro Convention (Bonacini, 2023; Cerreta & Di Girasole, 2020) and UNESCO initiatives (Aureli & Del Baldo, 2022; Rosetti *et al.*, 2022), underline the growing importance of global regulatory frameworks in promoting participation and guiding scientific research in the cultural and creative fields. These tools, thanks to their visibility and institutional support, tend to catalyse a vast production of literature and focus academic attention on limited and specific such as UNESCO sites. While this enhances the importance of these models, there is a risk that less publicised but equally significant initiatives will be overshadowed and not studied, thus limiting the diversity of perspectives analysed.

The counterbalance to this scenario could be found in the example of the European project RURITAGE, which is mentioned in three documents. This programme emerges as an exemplary model of participatory rural regeneration, combining bottom-up approaches with large-scale strategic planning. Unlike initiatives that focus on established and internationally renowned contexts, RURITAGE demonstrates how the valorisation of local communities can be the basis for innovative practices that can be replicated in other contexts. Its ability to link local action with a broader strategic vision makes it not only an important reference point in the academic literature, but also a case study for promoting inclusive and effective participation, even in less visible contexts.

At the same time, the growing presence of the Faro Convention in academic discussions highlights a renewed focus on cultural heritage as a shared resource and driver of social cohesion and sustainable development. The people-centred principles and active community participation promoted by the Convention represent a paradigm shift that is increasingly influencing academic debate and public policy. This focus translates into a more inclusive and forward-looking vision in which cultural heritage is not only an object of protection, but also a tool for building collective identities and promoting participatory practices.

Finally, from a methodological point of view, the management phase emerges as the most studied, with most of the reviewed documents emphasising the tools and approaches used in the conservation, exploitation and management of cultural heritage. The management phase includes collaborative approaches such as crowdfunding (Borin & Fantini, 2023) and participatory

governance (Iaione *et al.*, 2022), which respond to the needs of sustainable use of cultural heritage. These tools, which focus on conservation, use and management, are at the heart of participatory practices and demonstrate how active community participation can lead to operational and innovative solutions.

These approaches demonstrate how participatory practices can be translated into tangible solutions that empower communities to take an active role in the sustainable management of cultural resources.

In contrast, the planning and evaluation phases are significantly less represented, despite their critical role in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of participatory processes. The planning phase, which is fundamental to the design of inclusive and effective heritage strategies, appears to be undervalued, with only a few documented tools, such as Participatory Landscape Character Assessment (Caspersen, 2009) or Community-Based Heritage Management (de Luca *et al.*, 2021), offering important but isolated insights. The limited number of studies in this area suggests a missed opportunity to explore how participatory tools can be used systematically to ensure equity and inclusivity from the outset. This gap may also reflect the practical challenges of documenting and analysing long-term planning processes, which are often less visible and more complex than operational management.

Similarly, the evaluation phase receives relatively little attention, despite its key role in assessing the effectiveness and sustainability of participatory practices. Often seen as an ex-post reflection rather than an integral part of participatory processes, evaluation is rarely integrated as an integral part of participatory processes. The tools identified provide useful examples, but they are isolated examples, only 7, 4 of which focused on the evaluation of participatory approaches and 3 on effective participatory evaluation. This gap risks undermining the long-term effectiveness and adaptability of participatory tools, as lessons learned from evaluation are essential for continuous improvement and need-based future actions.

6. Conclusions, Limitations, and Further Research

The research has shown that participatory processes are becoming increasingly important in the cultural and creative sectors, reflecting a paradigm shift towards more inclusive and collaborative models. The analysis of the 45 contributions highlights the importance of systematically integrating participatory frameworks at all stages − planning, management and evaluation − to promote sustainable and inclusive approaches with the CCSs. It also identifies gaps in the literature, particularly at the planning and evaluation stages, where participatory processes remain under-

researched. These findings contribute to the theoretical understanding of participatory governance, highlighting the multidimensionality of participation and its capacity to create shared value. From a theoretical point of view, the research contributes to broadening the horizons of the discipline by mapping a variety of tools and reference frameworks and providing a basis for future theoretical advances.

The practical implications are particularly relevant to policymakers and cultural practitioners, offering concrete guidance on tools and strategies to enhance community participation in the CCSs. The findings provide actionable insights for policymakers and cultural operators, supporting the structural integration of participatory practices into all different stages. Indeed, policymakers can leverage these findings to design inclusive strategies that empower communities from the outset, ensuring shared ownership and long-term impact. Cultural practitioners are encouraged to use participatory tools more holistically, not only in the operational phases, but also in the design and evaluation of cultural initiatives. By integrating the different perspectives of stakeholders and using innovative tools such as digital storytelling and participatory mapping, organisations can improve the engagement, inclusiveness, creativity, and sustainability of their projects. These approaches have the potential to transform cultural governance, promoting practices that are both equitable and responsive to contemporary challenges and society's needs. The proposed approach, therefore, aims to build a holistic framework that reflects multiple perspectives and encourages co-design.

However, the research has some limitations. The reliance on a single database narrows the range of literature analysed. Non-English sources were not included in the review. The exclusive utilisation of the Scopus database resulted in the exclusion of contributions from grey literature, thereby disregarding the value of key non-academic initiatives and the expertise of practitioners.

Future research should address the gaps identified in the planning and evaluation phases of participatory practices. Greater focus on planning processes could shed light on how to build inclusiveness and shared ownership from the outset, while scoreboard research could improve understanding of long-term impacts and provide tools for continuous improvement. In addition, exploring the economic and technological dimensions of participation, such as the role of advanced digital tools in co-creation and evaluation, offers a promising avenue for innovation. Finally, the integration of non-academic perspectives, such as those of practitioners and community-led initiatives, would provide a more complete understanding of participatory practices and their diverse applications. Future research should focus on developing scalable and replicable models and evaluating the long-term impact of participatory practices. It will also be crucial to explore the currently under-represented design and evaluation phases to promote genuine co-creation processes and avoid purely formal or tokenistic approaches.

In conclusion, this research not only explores the potential of participatory processes, but also highlights their limitations and challenges, opening new directions for future research and operational implementation. By analysing some practices and identifying innovative tools, the study aims to promote inclusive and resilient CCSs, strengthen the dialogue between theory and practice, and support a holistic approach to value creation.

Chapter III − The Sustainability of Cultural and Creative Ecosystems through Participatory Processes: A Case Study of the Creative People and Places (CPP) Programme in England

1. Introduction

As the review presented in Chapter II shows, participatory and co-creative methodologies have emerged as key strategies in contemporary cultural discourse across a range of sectors. Recognising the growing importance of this phenomenon in the CCSs, researchers, politicians, and organisations have sought to identify effective tools and strategies for the application and management of participatory processes. Through participatory processes, communities can co-create, stimulate, and direct the local cultural offer, providing multi-dimensional impacts and ensuring greater sustainability and resilience of the local cultural and creative ecosystem in the long term. The project is part of the Creative People and Places England, a national audience development programme, hereinafter referred to as CPP. The programme is designed to enhance cultural engagement in areas traditionally presenting lower levels of cultural participation. Appetite has employed participatory approaches during both the design and evaluation phases since its inception. This integration positions Appetite as an ideal candidate for identifying best practices and pinpointing critical issues associated with applying participatory methods to large-scale place-based programmes. This chapter employs a range of data sources, incorporating semi-structured interviews, observational studies and documentary analysis, to provide a comprehensive analysis of the perceptions of consortium members engaged in the participatory dynamics of this large-scale cultural project.

The study aims to provide insights to improve the inclusion of participation in the management of place-based cultural and creative activities, by exploring the contribution of participatory practices to the cultural and creative ecosystem. In alignment with De Bernard, Comunian, and Gross (2022, p. 340), it is imperative to explicitly delineate the conceptual framework being employed when utilising the term “cultural and creative ecosystem” in order to facilitate coherent discourse. In this case, we are referring to an organisational approach to cultural programming (*Ibidem*), namely that of Appetite, which is framed within the CPP programme. In line with Borin and Donato’s findings, this ecosystem aligns with the concept of a culture-led ecosystem, in which cultural organisations play a leading role in driving change processes (Borin & Donato, 2022, p. 29). Accordingly, this research delineates a culture-driven ecosystem comprising the following

entities: a) cultural and creative organisations; b) civil society and communities; c) higher education institutions; d) local government; and e) funders.

The research specifically examines best practices and challenges encountered in the implementation of participatory processes, delving into the immediate and lasting effects on consortium members and the wider communities they engage with. Highlighting both positive and negative outcomes, the analysis seeks to offer a comprehensive understanding of how participatory methods impact cultural initiatives and improve their sustainability and community engagement or generate new challenges for the culture-driven ecosystem under analysis.

The findings reveal that while participatory methods significantly enhance community engagement and project sustainability, they also bring to light substantial challenges such as resource distribution and stakeholder alignment. This aspect is particularly relevant in light of global demands for more inclusive and sustainable approaches to cultural development.

By offering a detailed qualitative analysis of the Appetite project, this chapter makes a novel contribution to the literature on participatory and co-creative processes within the UK's cultural sector. The insights gained are poised to guide policymakers, cultural practitioners, and community leaders in refining and effectively implementing participatory strategies. This chapter not only broadens the understanding of participatory practices already presented in Chapter II but also provides actionable recommendations that address their benefits, challenges, and potential limitations in cultural policymaking.

Moreover, this research aims to offer valuable insights into the academic discourse on participatory cultural processes and their practical implications for policy and community engagement. It provides a link between cultural studies and public policy, offering empirical evidence and theoretical interpretations that can influence both spheres. By analysing the implementation and outcomes of participatory practices, the study contributes to the ongoing dialogue on cultural policymaking, funding allocations, and community-led cultural initiatives.

Building upon the theoretical framework established in Chapter II, the case study discussed in this chapter will be presented as follows. Section 2 introduces the research context of the Creative People and Places programme and the Appetite initiative in Stoke-on-Trent. Section 3 describes the research methodology, a single case study combining multiple sources of data. Then, the findings are presented and discussed in sections 4 and 5. The last section outlines the research limitations, implications, and future perspectives.

2. Research Context: Creative People and Places in Stoke-on-Trent, Appetite (England)

Looking at the European context, England certainly hosts one of the most heated and long-running debates on the redistribution of cultural value and Cultural Democracy (Belfiore, 2020; Belfiore *et al.*, 2023). During the 1960s and 1970s countercultural movements in the UK challenged traditional hierarchies between elite and popular tastes, as well as between different art forms (Belfiore *et al.*, 2023). In England, this contrast led to a "reluctant engagement of the Arts Council with the community arts movement" (Belfiore *et al.*, 2023, p. 3). Consequently, during the 1970s, the idea of "Cultural Democracy" began to spread within traditional arts policies, thus overcoming the top-down principle of the "Democratisation of Culture", which until then had been designed to make excellence accessible. Furthermore, in examining this phenomenon, it is imperative to reflect on the topic of cultural value creation, and the processes through which certain forms of culture are legitimised, while others are not (Bourdieu, 1984; Belfiore, 2020). As Belfiore observed, the absence of acknowledgement of the power imbalance resulted in the UK adopting the "deficit model" (Miles & Gibson, 2016, p. 151), namely patronising rhetoric of "disinterested and disengaged targets" when widening participation in cultural initiatives.

Indeed, Arts Council England (ACE)'s approach to its cultural policy has seen a remarkable paradigm shift in the last decade, aimed at greater inclusion of participatory, place-based, and bottom-up forms in national policy (Jancovich, 2017). The results of this reversal are clear in the new ten-year strategy document, Let's Create (Arts Council England, 2020), as well as the ACE's support for Cultural Compacts, an outcome from its 2018 commissioned Cultural Cities Enquiry.

Therefore, this chapter intend to focus on what can be defined as the seed of this new national strategy: a ten-year ACE intervention, namely CPP, a place-based audience development programme started in 2012 and funded by the National Lottery and the UK Government. CPP's final aim is to enable more people to experience and be inspired by the arts, with investment focused on parts of the country where arts engagement is significantly below the national average[62]. CPP was developed as a participatory action research (PAR) programme, with a continuous evaluation and a peer-learning programme. The programme, started in 2012 with 21 projects, is now in its fourth funding round, with a total expenditure over the past ten years of £108 million (Figure 1). The CPP was arguably the first of the three pillars of large-scale ACE-supported place-based arts

[62] The engagement data are provided by the Active Lives Survey, a Sport England-led survey about people' participation in leisure and recreational activities, including sport, physical activity, and culture (Arts Council England, n.d. b).

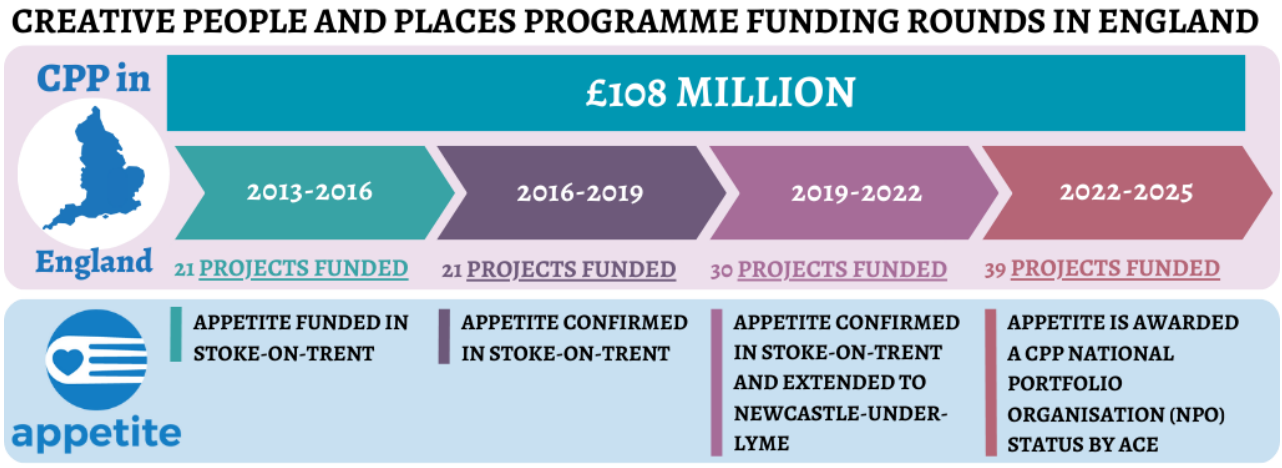
initiatives, with Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs), being launched in cooperation with the Department for Education (DfE) in 2015, aiming to align cultural education of young people, and Cultural Compacts, being recognised officially in 2019.

As for 2023, there are currently 39 CPP programmes active in the UK, 140 LCEPs and more than 50 Cultural Compacts covering the whole of the UK, all three focusing on place-based approaches to arts and culture (Arts Council England, 2023).

2.1 Appetite, Stoke-on-Trent's Creative People and Places project

Although there has been a much longer tradition of co-creative approaches to arts, crafts and culture in Stoke-on-Trent, the research discussed in this paper focuses on Appetite, a project active for ten years and among the 21 funded at the program's launch in 2012 (Ecorys UK, 2016). Appetite, one of the West Midlands consortia, initially targeted the Stoke-on-Trent area and later, in 2019, was extended to include the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme. It was also awarded the status of National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) in 2022 by ACE, confirming funding for its activity in both areas for three years (Fig. 7).

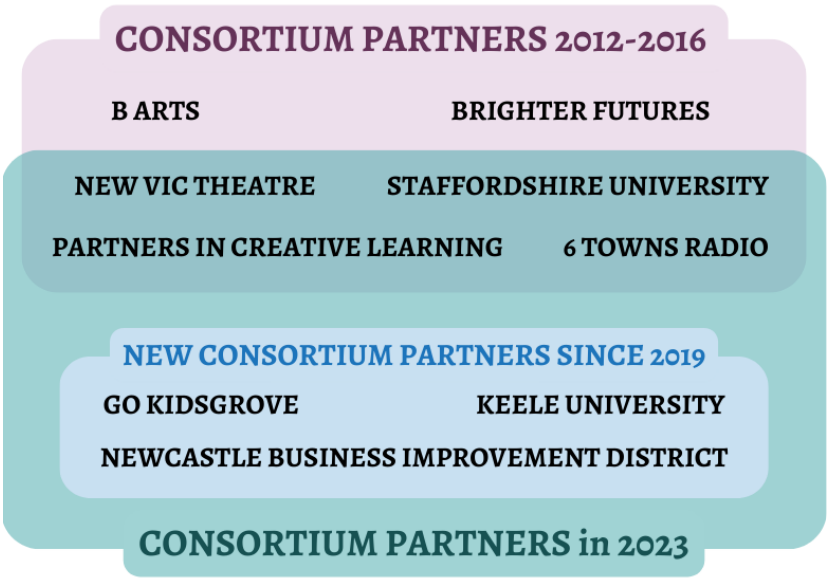
Fig. 7 Overview of Creative People and Places funding rounds in England, and Appetite's funding history within the programme (own elaboration)



The consortium was led by the New Vic Theatre, with a partnership that has evolved over time and that, at the time of this research, involved: Partners in Creative Learning, 6Towns Radio, Staffordshire University (SU), Newcastle Business Improvement District (BID), Go Kidsgrove, and Keele University (KU) (Appetite, n.d.).

Appetite began providing his 10-year vision by putting on a Taster Menu[63] in Summer 2013 to engage and inspire local communities in the Six Towns[64] area.

Fig. 8 Evolution of Appetite consortium from 2012 to 2023 (own elaboration)



Over the past eleven years, Appetite has engaged 2,099,735 audiences, 55,910 participants, 1,149 artists and 1,875 volunteers, working closely with community decision-makers at the Supper Club.

This article focuses on the initial life phase of Appetite, between 2012-2016, in which Staffordshire University (SU) carried out the project evaluation, applying "Get Talking", a participatory-research approach (PAR) (Gratton & Reynolds, 2022). Based on co-production principles, this approach was designed and applied by the SU Creative Community Unit (CCU) (Emadi-Coffin, 2008; Gratton & Reynolds, 2022). Originally developed as a Community Consultation course (Emadi-Coffin, 2008, p. 30), it was later accredited as a short course for continual professional development (Gratton & Reynolds, 2022).

Over the years, Get Talking has been used in various contexts in the UK to train community members and organisations in creative and participatory consultation and evaluation. The consortium welcomed the proposal to use it for Appetite's evaluation due to the participatory nature of the method, which was considered perfectly in line with the programme's philosophy[65].

[63] Taster Menu was a curated programme of free high-profile artistic experiences, designed to raise the profile of the project in the first year. Between April and October 2013, Appetite attracted more than 16,000 people to their Taster Menu.

[64] The urban area consists of six towns. In 1910, they were united to form a single city called Stoke-on-Trent, that encompasses Burslem, Fenton, Hanley, Longton, Stoke-upon-Trent, and Tunstall.

[65] For further details of the participatory research approach used in Appetite, see the paper by Gratton and Reynolds (2022).

Over the ten-year programme, ACE's evaluation of all CPP projects, including Appetite, assessed each funded project against three core questions: whether the programme has resulted in more people experiencing and being inspired by the arts; how well the CPPs have achieved excellence in both arts and community engagement; and which approaches to participation, inspiration and excellence have been successful. The Audience Agency's evaluation required the timely collection by Appetite of demographic and postcode data on quarterly monitoring forms, covering a congruent representative sample of audiences for all types of activities and events held (events, festivals, exhibitions, outdoor performances, etc.). Furthermore, the evaluation required accurate information regarding the age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status of the sample. In the first year of Appetite, an evaluation team from the CCU was appointed, consisting of one project manager and one academic researcher. The evaluation was based on the involvement of all consortium members, who employed twelve Appetite builders[66], community researchers who worked with the community groups identified in the Six Towns area. The CCU team has trained not only Appetite staff members on Get Talking, but all consortium partners and builder.

Get Talking has certainly shaped the programme. According to Gratton and Reynolds (2022), the participatory principles at its heart still positively impact Appetite's work with communities.

This contribution wants to investigate the possible short and long-term effects that the use of Get Talking may have produced on the members of the Appetite consortium, on their knowledge and use of participatory approaches, and how they collaborate and with their reference communities.

Given these premises and focusing on the perception of consortium partners, the research questions are the follows:

RQ1: What are the best practices and issues that emerged in adopting a participatory approach?

RQ2: What are the positive and negative short- and long-term impacts that the participatory approach generated on consortium members and communities?

3. Research Methodology

The study applied a qualitative methodology, the single case study, combining multiple data sources, including semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentary analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989; Baxter and Jack, 2008; Stake, 2008; Creswell, 2009; Yin, 2018). The six months spent in the Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme areas were crucial for a better understanding of the

[66] Of these twelve, four were Appetite builders and eight volunteers, motivated by their interest in art or their communities.

research object. From February to July 2023, a desk analysis was also conducted, collecting and studying materials produced by the programme, at national and local levels. The documentary study was principally based on scientific publications on the subject, augmented by documents elucidating the operational mechanisms of the programme. A total of approximately forty discrete contributions were gathered, collectively serving to delineate the research context previously outlined. At the national level, the report for the tenth anniversary of the programme proved to be a privileged driving instrument (Robinson, 2022). It contained references both to the learning of the participatory research programme (PAR) and to the results of the local and national evaluation of the programme. It should be noted that the ACE website provided useful strategic and operational documents on project requirements and evaluation, while it lacked an up-to-date archive of research programme outputs. Fortunately, the Culture Hive blog by the Arts Marketing Association, which collects several publications in a section dedicated to CPP, was invaluable for the retrieval of the documents of interest.

In parallel with the study of these documents and scientific publications on the programme, it has been possible to make a first-person observation of the local cultural and creative ecosystem. In this sense, it was particularly useful to follow the work of the local emerging Cultural Compact[67], Stoke Creates, whose board includes members of Appetite and its consortium, such as SU, KU and The New Vic Theatre. Cultural Compacts emerged in 2018 from the ACE commissioned Cultural Cities Enquiry, as an acknowledgment that what was needed was a step-change in cross-sector partnership and leadership. Stoke Creates, incorporated as a Community Interest Company (CIC) in 2021, reinforces a horizontal leadership mechanism to influence co-creation to make a positive change to regenerative place-making across the city and its region. An Away Day of the Board of Directors, Staff and Associates of Stoke Creates was held on 3rd of February 2023. Taking part in this meeting, it was possible to identify the connections between the different organisations that collaborate to this joint effort and the common aims that move the cultural and creative sector in this area. It was also useful to better understand the recent local history, strongly linked to the failure in the competition for the City of Culture in 2021, and the consequent reflections made, and challenges faced.

Lastly, the research included semi-structured interviews with the consortium partners (Table 1). For a comprehensive understanding, we invited both current and past consortium members to

[67] Cultural Compacts emerged in 2018 from the ACE commissioned Cultural Cities Enquiry as an acknowledgment that what was needed was a step-change in cross-sector partnership and leadership. Stoke Creates, incorporated as a Community Interest Company (CIC) in 2021, reinforces a horizontal leadership mechanism to influence co-creation to make a positive change to regenerative place making across the city and its region.

participate in the research. Indeed, the consortium is led by the New Vic Theatre, with a partnership that has evolved over time. Some organisations, such as B Arts and Brighter Future, involved in the first phase, 2012-2016, are no longer consortium partners. Current consortium partners are Partners in Creative Learning, 6Towns Radio, SU, Newcastle BID, Go Kidsgrove, and KU. Five partners out of nine participated in the study. However, the total number of Key Interviewees (KI) was six, as the sixth interviewee, a former Appetite builder, was also part of B Arts, already represented among the five interviewed partners.

Table 1 – Interviews

	Partner	**Role**	**Date**	**Length**	**Modality**
KI-1	Appetite	Director	26/05/2023	1 h 16 m	In person
KI-2	Keele University	Development Manager for Arts & Public Engagement	05/06/2023	46 m	In person
KI-3	B Arts (Beavers Arts ltd)	Artistic and Executive Director	06/06/2023	1 h 32 m	In person
KI-4	B Arts (Beavers Arts ltd) /Appetite	Creative Producer at Barts and Appetite Builder (2013-2016)	07/06/2023	1 h 9 m	In person
KI-5	Staffordshire University	Associate Professor (of Community and Civic Engagement)	12/06/2023	1 h 10 m	In person
KI-6	GoKidsgrove	Volunteer coordination	14/06/2023	1 h 5 m	Online

The interviews were conducted in English between May 2023 and June 2023 and lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour and 32 minutes. They were held in person, with one exception online, and the audio was recorded, transcribed, and analysed manually.

The interviews aimed to investigate the following five aspects:

- *General Perception of Appetite*: All respondents were asked to describe their perception of the work done in the ten years of activity and to describe it by choosing only three adjectives.
- *The role and impacts of Participatory Design*: We explored interviewees' understanding of participatory design and its pros and cons in the Appetite project. Participants were asked about short-term and long-term effects on communities and consortium members, and whether their organisation had used a participatory approach before Appetite.
- *The role and impacts of Participatory Evaluation*: We first clarified each respondent's idea of participatory evaluation and discussed its pros and cons. Then, we explored its

short- and long-term effects on communities and consortium members. Finally, we asked whether their organisation had used participatory evaluation before.

- *The role of the Universities within the consortium*: Considering the partnership with SU, since 2013, and KU, since 2019, the intention was to deepen the perception of this collaboration by the other partners.
- *CPP evaluation compared with other ACE evaluation approaches*: This aspect was not explored with all respondents, due to its specificity.

4. Research Results

Field research has returned the image of a context populated by different actors from different areas of society. In agreement with Borin and Donato's findings, the cultural ecosystem described in this paper falls within the definition of a "culture-led" ecosystem, in which cultural organisations can play a leading role in change processes (Borin & Donato, 2022, p. 29). The current ecosystem includes citizens and communities as "active partners of cultural organisations in steering an emerging culture-led environment", and no longer "simply stakeholders of the cultural ecosystem" (Borin & Donato, 2022, p. 27).

Fig. 9 Overview of the proposed Appetite Cultural-led Ecosystem (own elaboration)

Thus, this research outlines a cultural-led ecosystem that includes, as shown in Fig. 9: a) Cultural and Creative Organisations; b) Civil Society and Communities; c) Higher Education Institutions; d) Local Government; e) Funders. In this scenario, two key events were the recent history of the area: Appetite's project and the bid for the UK City of Culture. This second moment represented a key

turning point that consolidated the cooperation between diverse local actors and left a cohesive momentum, which survived failure and was still traceable.

For clarity, the interview results presented and discussed below were organised by topic, as presented in the methodology section.

4.1 General Perception of Appetite

Interviews showed a positive overall perception of the programme, both in terms of benefits for the local context and in relation to the results established and achieved by the project itself. Indeed, the work done by Appetite was described as: a) innovative and transformative (KI-2; KI-3; KI-5; KI-6); b) engaging and accessible (KI-2; KI-1); c) entertaining and spectacular (KI-4; KI-6).

All interviewees identified the primary goal of the programme, namely, to encourage greater participation in arts and culture through a community-focused and place-based approach. One respondent advanced a critical perspective on the national narrative, suggesting that the lack of cultural engagement was due to systemic disinvestment rather than disinterest from the people (KI-3), reframing the issue.

Among the limitations that emerged, was the impossibility of covering the entire area with the same success (KI-1). Moreover, the Taster Menu was a source of friction during the initial phase of the project, mostly related to the co-creation level to adopt (KI-4). One of the most complex concerns raised by an interviewee concerned the exploitative and "extractive" nature of the partnership relationship (KI-3). The issue was explained by reporting the episode when one of the local actors, already engaged in co-creative practices, identified a community need and brought it back to Appetite; this latter took charge of the issue and did not consider the possibility of responding to that need by collaborating with the partner who had reported it. The relationship established was perceived as not good and has led to a break within the first configuration of the consortium. The resulting scenario was defined by the respondent as a "pots of plants" approach, in contrast to their personal "forest" approach (KI-3). The metaphor wanted to describe how the use of the funds, which arrived in the area thanks to CPP, resembled the practice of beautifying the avenues with some pots of plants. These activities were not rooted in the area; they were self-sufficient, thanks to national support, so they were not searching for a mutual exchange with the local context to guarantee their long-term sustainability. Conversely, the image of the forest wanted to convey the multifaceted and living ecosystem structure of exchanges, contamination, and mutual support that should characterise the local sector, according to the interviewee.

To conclude, the findings showed that Appetite was perceived as innovative, transformative and highly beneficial in promoting cultural engagement through a community-focused approach.

However, challenges and issues were highlighted, such as uneven success across areas, initial tensions in co-creation practices and concerns about the ability to develop integrated and sustainable partnerships.

4.2 The Role and Impacts of Participatory Design

The interviewees shared a general understanding of what participatory design meant and how it was applied to Appetite. However, it was possible to highlight the difficulty in separating the design phase from the evaluation phase. The two moments were perceived as a whole and often interchanged with each other, and so were the different tools and approaches applied to each one.

This section presents the perceived positive and negative aspects of participatory design, followed by the effects on communities and partners.

A positive factor was the sense of ownership developed by the people involved (both consortium partners and communities), and the consequent greater inclination to actively engage in the project (KI-1; KI-2), whose participatory design has been described as "very inclusive" (KI-6). However, at the same time, participatory processes can never reach the entire community, leading to the risk of making someone feel excluded and losing trust (KI-1; KI-2; KI-6). Among the downsides was mentioned also the greater expenditure of economic, human, and temporal resources (KI-4) poured into a programme from the delivery neither easy nor fast (KI-5). Indeed, according to one interviewee, in the first three years, the programme has been characterised by a large investment, which allowed to cover the expenses for unprecedented research and the involvement of participants in co-creative practices, leading to a great understanding of community's needs (KI-4). The interviewee recalled that "luxurious" moment, rich in possibilities, as unusual compared to typical working conditions characterised by scarce resources (KI-4). However, the consequent challenge was how to make that structure sustainable in the long term and maintain that level of quality even after the end of the project in the absence of resources.

Partners whose work was already based on co-creative practices have felt a kind of divergence in the initial phase setting. As mentioned above, the choice of the Taster Menu has been perceived as a deviation from the community-driven approach, and this friction has determined a first divergence between consortium members. From another point of view (KI-5), the Taster Menu, despite initial hesitation, was subsequently acknowledged as the optimal solution.

According to one respondent, the longevity of the programme was crucial to creating long-term effects on participants (KI-2).

Considering the effects on communities, the short-term effects were related to: a) the creation of a new mental openness towards "all the different types of art's experiences that are out there" (KI-

2); b) a shared sense of appreciation, belonging, and empowerment (KI-1; KI-4). Interviewees also highlighted several long-term impacts on communities, noting a growing sense of ownership, belonging, and empowerment together with behavioural changes and increased confidence among residents (KI-1). In addition, locals have gained confidence in their area's ability to host excellent art forms and now "expect to see more of them in the future" (KI-6).

Subsequently, the effects of the programme on consortium members were discussed. According to one interviewee, the consortium structure implemented the confidence of some smaller partners, who felt equally involved in the dialogue and as peers from the very beginning. It was shared that the programme has allowed expanding horizons, thanks to the mutual exchange of knowledge between the various members of the consortium, leading to a consequent general growth (KI-1; KI-2; KI-5; KI-6). In the case of SU, for example, the application of Get Talking in such a large project made it possible to understand the possible limitations of the tool and how to improve it (KI-5).

One respondent reported that because of Appetite's experience, which was not entirely satisfactory for them, they decided to create a new consortium independently. When describing this effect, the respondent said it was an "unintended consequence" that shaped the future of the organisation (KI-3).

Finally, one respondent reported how working as an Appetite builder provided an in-depth understanding of the needs of the area and its communities. Although it was a personal experience not entirely satisfactory, the interviewee claimed to have learned "a huge amount very quickly", and to have transferred this learning and competence into individual practice (KI-4).

In conclusion, the participatory design of Appetite has fostered a strong sense of ownership and involvement among community members and consortium partners, contributing to long-term impacts such as empowerment, increased confidence and behavioural changes in the community. However, several challenges were also identified, including a) the difficulty of providing initial support for practices that require resources; b) the challenge of reaching all members of the community inclusively; and c) the challenge of aligning partners' different expectations. In conclusion, the longevity of the programme and the mutual exchange between members of the consortium were instrumental in promoting growth and learning. Indeed, some partners even adapted their practices and created new initiatives based on their experiences.

4.3 The Role and Impacts of Participatory Evaluation

The topic of participatory evaluation needs a brief reminder of how evaluation has evolved within the project. Appetite first started with a strongly qualitative co-created evaluation, which characterised the first three years of the project. As mentioned in the research context, this

evaluation failed to meet the demands of large numbers of quantitative data requested by ACE, necessitating a change towards more quantitative data collection.

Among the six respondents, only one respondent (affiliated to a new consortium member) was unable to give an immediate definition of participatory evaluation and requested further clarification on the question. When recalling this first phase of the evaluation, one of the respondents pointed out that it was a sort of victory to see for the first time legitimised that type of evaluation, which they, as an organisation, had "always wanted to do", and had always done (KI-3). Another said it was nice to see the "creative outcomes" of the evaluation (KI-4). Moreover, it emerged also a perception of the participatory tool as a means of redistribution of power, which moved from a pyramidal configuration to a circular one; a change that was possible only if the tool was used genuinely and not tokenistic (KI-3).

Another interviewee noted that the participatory approach to such a large-scale programme risks disappointing participants and failing to meet their expectations. One of the early events illustrates this tension: the local population expressed a desire to self-create artworks, but this request from ACE was rejected, as the programme was not conceived as a participatory art initiative but as an audience engagement programme. This response led to a significant loss of public trust and damaged the credibility of the programme, reinforcing the perception that participation was merely tokenistic (KI-5).

In brief, the advantages of participatory evaluation, as perceived by the sample, were its accessibility and capacity to engage hard-to-reach groups, foster trust and encourage participation in evaluation (KI-1; KI-2; KI-6). It was "quick" and "fun" and stimulated contributions, overcoming participants' mistrust by integrating evaluation into the creative process (KI-1; KI-4; KI-6). It encouraged listening, open dialogue, critical thinking, and active engagement (KI-1; KI-2; KI-4; KI-6) and facilitated a city-wide conversation about the arts (KI-5). Furthermore, it was deemed suitable for longitudinal studies (KI-3).

The interviewees identified several potential weaknesses in participatory evaluation. These included the risk of not obtaining sufficient data and not gathering demographic information (KI-1), the possibility of the process being perceived as "tokenistic" (KI-5), and the overwhelming sense of responsibility and accountability on the part of evaluators towards communities (KI-5). It demanded considerable financial, temporal, and human resources (KI-1; KI-2; KI-4). Furthermore, some initial creative tools were perceived as "childlike" and this could alienate participants from the evaluation or diminish its credibility (KI-5). However, this risk was mitigated by the involvement of professional artists (KI-5). Yet, when participatory evaluation involved an artistic product, it had to be in line with the spirit of the event, thereby intensifying the workload (KI-1).

Regarding the impact of the participatory assessment on the members of the consortium and communities, one of the respondents had recently had a meeting with the trainer of the Appetite builders, who stated that one of the builders still used what learned during that training (KI-1). The same respondent also knew that other partners treasured and still used some of the methods learned and implemented during the project. This idea was confirmed by two other interviewees (KI-3; KI-4).

The effects of participatory evaluation on communities and partners were mostly perceived as positive, and useful "in building critical thinking in the community", and "better social connections" (KI-1).

From the point of view of the internal management of the organisation, the adoption of these tools then led Appetite to always look for a way to collect that kind of knowledge from participants and partners and consequently incorporate it into the mechanism of continuous improvement (KI-1). One of the partners said they benefited from the evaluation done by Appetite to better understand the local context and "implement their own practice" (KI-4).

Finally, one interviewee emphasised how the existence of Appetite led to a strong awareness in the area and how, together with the presence of BCB[68], it made the subsequent competition for the City of Culture possible. The respondent pointed out that "having those things" demonstrated that the "city could deliver large-scale programmes" and that, locally, there were "tried and tested tools in terms of engaging communities in conversations about culture" (KI-3).

In conclusion, the results of this section demonstrated that participatory assessment within Appetite has yielded considerable benefits, including a) the promotion of trust; b) the encouragement of participation; c) the development of critical thinking; and d) the fostering of social connections within the community. This approach has been demonstrated to be accessible and engaging, integrating evaluation into the creative process and supporting continuous improvement. Nevertheless, the potential for tokenism, the necessity for resources and the initial alignment with community expectations highlighted the difficulties of implementing large-scale participatory approaches. Notwithstanding these challenges, implementing participatory evaluation has reinforced the local cultural infrastructure, enhanced the quality of practice among partners, and contributed to the area's capacity to host large-scale cultural programmes.

[68] British Ceramics Biennal.

4.4 The Role of the Universities within the Consortium

The participation of the two universities was different in terms of both time and content of the partnership (KI-1; KI-5). SU played a key role in the first 6 years of the programme in which it took care of the evaluation and "shaped the methods of consultation with communities" (KI-1). To date, SU's contribution to the consortium is not as clear as it was in the first six years, and it can be "more fruitful" and engaged (KI-5; KI-6).

On the other hand, KU only joined the consortium in 2019 and aspired, through its work with Appetite, to connect the university (campus, students, and staff) to the city and communities of Newcastle-under-Lyme (KI-1; KI-2). As one interviewee stated, it was about "positioning the university more in a community and a cultural place in people's minds" (KI-4).

Even if a partner acknowledges that "as an organisation", they "haven't particularly benefited from the university's involvement", they still thought that it was "invaluable to have them as part of" the consortium (KI-6).

Collaboration with universities brought several positive aspects, such as reaching a wider audience and gaining greater visibility (KI-1; KI-3; KI-5; KI-6), adding "gravitas" and reliability to the project (KI-1; KI-2; KI-3), and creating new opportunities by diversifying funding possibilities (KI-2).

However, there were also difficulties in engaging with universities, such as the complexity of interacting with such large organisations and their agendas. Furthermore, there was the risk of the relationship becoming perceived as "extractive" due to a non-cooperative way of working that drives the university and the individual dimension of research and its impact (KI-3).

The findings of this section demonstrated the distinct contributions of the two universities involved in Appetite. SU assumed a pivotal role in developing evaluation and consultation methods during the initial stages of the programme, whereas KU joined at a later stage and has concentrated its efforts on fostering connections between the university and the local community. Collaboration with universities has resulted in notable benefits, including enhanced visibility, credibility, and diversified funding opportunities. Nevertheless, the difficulties of aligning with the agendas of larger institutions and the risk of perceived extractive relationships demonstrated the complexities inherent in university partnerships. Notwithstanding these difficulties, the involvement of academic institutions was considered a vital asset for the consortium.

4.5 CPP Evaluation Compared with Other ACE Evaluation Approaches

Due to its specificity, this aspect was investigated with a limited number of respondents. Consortium members from the early days showed greater awareness around evaluation requirements from ACE, whereas newer Appetite partners lacked this understanding. The ACE's demand for extensive quantitative data was perceived as challenging for the consortium (KI-1).

Additionally, learning on participatory practices, produced within CPP, was shared by ACE only between CPP projects and not with the whole sector or with NPOs (KI-3).

A significant limitation was linked to the financing structure: Appetite was part of a funding plan for audience development, and this made it impossible to pursue some of the lines that emerged from the wishes of the community, such as actively engaging in the arts, because CPP was not a participatory arts development programme (KI-3; KI-5). This division in the funding scheme was functional and necessary, but the resultant obstacle was not easy to communicate to participants and generated a loss of hard-won trust.

One interviewee affirmed that CPP ended up "creating clones", as ACE, instead of consulting the participatory knowledge already consolidated in previous experiences, preferred to build an audience development programme from scratch, leading to redundancy in many areas (KI-3).

The 10-year consistency of the three core evaluation questions[69] was regarded as a positive aspect, as it has facilitated the continuity of the work and enabled the data to be comparable over time (KI-3; KI-5).

Finally, comparing the CPP evaluation with the one required for the NPOs, the perception was that the attention given to the qualitative dimension of CPP projects was then absent in the NPO assessment. According to one interviewee, that kind of conversation should also happen around the work of NPOs (KI-3).

A final reflection about the new ACE's strategy, Let's Create, has been made by one of the interviewees, regarding the strong focus on "co-creation and working with people who've been traditionally excluded and not represented in the arts". The respondent argued that, despite this attention, ACE is still monitoring and evaluating with a kind of "one-size-fits-all" approach, just looking at tickets, reservations, and numbers; then, the interviewee added how strange it was that

[69] The ACE's general evaluation of the national CPP programme was guided by three core questions, namely: 1) Are more people from less committed places experiencing and being inspired by the arts through CPP? 2) To what extent has the aspiration of CPP for excellence in the arts and excellence in community engagement been achieved? 3) Which approaches to involvement, inspiration and excellence have been successful?

they do not realise the contradiction that this evaluation created with the mission of the strategy itself (KI-4).

This concluding section of the results elucidates the principal challenges and opportunities inherent in comparing CPP evaluation with other ACE evaluation approaches. While the consistency of the ten-year CPP evaluation questions was commended for facilitating continuity and comparability, the demand for extensive quantitative data and the disconnection between funding structures and community aspirations were identified as significant challenges. Furthermore, the lack of wider dissemination of participatory knowledge beyond CPP projects and the perception of redundancy in ACE's audience development programme were identified as additional limitations. In addition, the qualitative focus used in CPP evaluations is not found in NPOs' evaluations, suggesting a lack of opportunity for wider sectoral learning. These insights underscored the necessity for ACE to align its assessment methodologies more closely with its mission, as reflected in the Let's Create strategy, in order to prevent contradictions between its objectives and monitoring practices.

5. Discussion

The research results show a rich and interconnected cultural-led ecosystem that certainly places Appetite among its cornerstones as one of the earliest learning initiatives into participatory approaches for content production and evaluation.

In the next section, following our research questions, we return to what emerged on good practices, challenges, and impacts generated by the programme, classifying this information according to the different spheres of the previously presented cultural-led ecosystem. Indeed, Appetite has had a demonstrable influence on various sections of society, including a) Creative and Cultural Organisations; b) Civil Society and Communities and c) Higher Education Institutions, Funders and Local Government.

5.1 Creative and Cultural Partners

The programme has benefited partners and provided a step change in confidence in embedding participatory approaches in various processes for cultural initiatives. Appetite consortium obtained knowledge and competence in using participatory approaches. This learning would have been unattainable without the CPP extraordinary investment.

As Gratton and Reynolds (2022) already pointed out, the interviews also showed challenges in using Get Talking for Appetite. First, the highly creative and qualitative nature of the method was

unsuitable to meet the demands of a large sample of data desired by ACE. Secondly, evaluating many activities in a short time required a huge commitment from the people involved, very often volunteers who felt subjected to a lot of stress. Thirdly, the small community research team could not engage at all stages of the evaluation, and ended up mostly participating in the data collection, which is the listening phase of Get Talking. Consequently, because of these difficulties, the method was first implemented and adapted in the second and third years and finally replaced in subsequent evaluations.

From the interviews, it emerges that the co-created approach, first rooted in Appetite, was seen to lose its central role and was consequently perceived to be adopted as a philosophy rather than as an operational paradigm. The risks associated with adopting participatory processes are not limited to the tensions when needing to respond to requests of funders. Indeed, the controversy around the Taster Menu illustrates the inherent complexity and delicacy of aligning the diverse perspectives of consortium members and the funder on the concept of co-creation and its practical implementation. The risk of projecting a potentially controversial image of the project, unfaithful to professed principles and tokenistic in its use of participation, reduced to a buzzword. The already present and deep-rooted knowledge about the use of co-creative practices made local actors, involved in the consortium, very competent and raised their expectations for participating in the project. This might have led to a naturally occurring divergence and a subsequent split that can be perceived as a weakness of Appetite or, alternatively, as a source for evidencing the polyphony of needs and desires generated in the area.

However, in the competitive context created, Appetite is seen as a two-faced Janus. On the one hand, its beneficial contribution to the area is undisputed and acknowledged, while on the other, its limits in terms of impact on the ecosystem are under the spotlight. The programme is sometimes perceived as an advantaged competitor in the local context, which benefits from substantial national investment to deliver a product whose vision is close to other cultural actors in the region, often competing for the same central funding.

This polarisation is triggered by the mechanism of the extraordinary funding programme, which leads to intense competition in a context that was not only suffering from prolonged structural disinvestment but also labelled as a low cultural engagement area according to the “deficit model” (Miles & Gibson, 2016, p. 151). This context would, perhaps, benefit more from widespread reinvestment rather than a massive flow of funds focused on a single actor. Undoubtedly, in this framework, Appetite proves to be a great showcase for the area, which, through the great lens of CPP, can put in place a great project and can rehabilitate itself as a place of culture and creativity, to gain new visibility in the national landscape.

Finally, a reflection on the approach to the evaluation emerges from the study. The ability to build a conversation through results, without limiting it to mere numerical data, seems to be the wish of all. The consortium members and the NPOs interviewed liked a way of working that involves starting with a dialogue with ACE, focusing on measuring long-term changes and making them feel part of a sector that compares and grows together, caring for the qualitative as well as the quantitative.

5.2 Civil Society and Communities

The following reflection on Communities and Civil Society is limited in scope as it is based solely on the present research, which did not focus on this aspect. However, it is important to note that this perspective should be thoroughly studied in the future.

From the point of view of consortium members, it emerges that the application of participatory tools, both for design and evaluation, has led to a good level of co-creation since it allowed to reach and engage groups otherwise cut off, to create an equal and collaborative atmosphere, and to build a shared place-based project with the communities involved. The role of Appetite builders emerges as fundamental in bridging cultural organisations and communities. They fulfilled a mediating role (Bonet & Négrier, 2018), facilitating the reporting of the cultural aspirations of the communities and their actualisation, thanks to Appetite, and fostering a process of Cultural Democracy. It is recognised that participatory evaluation has the potential to be a tool of democracy, able to collect feedback from all, tearing down access barriers that are embedded in other tools, such as surveys or formal evaluation. Increased ownership and a renewed sense of belonging and identity are among the benefits triggered by the participatory processes used. However, participatory tools have their limitations, as they can only involve a small number of people to be sustainable, which creates a risk of excluding a part of society and generating disappointment. Transparent protocols and clear communication processes are useful tools to mitigate this risk. Nonetheless, they cannot guarantee the avoidance of a tokenistic perception of participation.

5.3 Higher Education Institutions, Funders and Local Government

That Appetite has made an impact on the perceptions of place is evident in the reflections made on the City of Culture competition (2021), which stressed that having had the experience of Appetite, alongside the British Ceramics Biennial (BCB), has provided immense credibility to the area without which competing for City of Culture would not have been possible. Thus, Appetite represented a step change in the adoption of and the normalisation for embedding participatory

approaches, also raising expectations of partners, cultural actors, civil society, and anchor institutions such as universities, as well as, to a certain extent, local government.

Due to this increasing confidence in embedding and demanding participatory, culturally oriented place-based arts initiatives, large-scale partnerships that addressed these ways of working emerged.

In 2019, a large partnership consortium emerged to secure Arts-Council funding as its largest senior leadership programme for cultural actors focusing on placemaking and co-creation. Create Place, the co-creation and placemaking leadership programme was led by SU and was run by a large project consortium of 16 partners, that included all NPOs of both Stoke-on-Trent and Cheshire East at the time, the city councils, chambers and both Universities, as well as Appetite (Stoke-on-Trent region) and Spare Parts (Cheshire region) as two non-constituted participatory-oriented initiatives. This leadership programme ran for three years, supporting another step change in confidence, sharing knowledge and skills for cultural leaders desiring to work this way. The leadership programme itself was designed with an underpinning concept that was aligned to Culture 3.0, that of Boehm's University 3.0 (Boehm, 2022). This in turn applied co-creation of knowledge and learning in its central design ethos.

In 2020, various partners came together to form a Cultural Compact, finally being incorporated in 2021 as a CIC (Community Interest Company). With almost the same partners as the Create Place leadership forum or the City of Culture bid consortium, now adding the YMCA and the Local Cultural Education Partnership to the group. Thus, the Cultural Compact had all three pillars of ACE-supported place-based initiatives (CPP, LCEP, Cultural Compact) represented, in addition to local authority representatives, NPOs, chambers and universities. Stoke Creates quickly became the major consortium-based entity to be given the confidence to handle large-scale, levelling up investments that individual organisations would have more difficulties in applying for. By 2023, it had successfully secured ca £2 Million of investment, working with many smaller cultural organisations in the region.

In October 2023, the city, led by Stoke Creates, submitted to become World Craft City, an initiative seen as the next internationally strategic, city-wide cultural act to make its confident mark on the world.

This trajectory of "learning into" Stoke-on-Trent's strength of participatory, co-creative and co-production practices started long before Appetite emerged on the streets of the 6 towns of Stoke-on-Trent, but it demonstrably signified a step change in awareness of what participatory processes could do for the city's arts-led re-envisioning of this place. Other organisations, not just cultural ones, were also adopting rigorous participatory models.

Both universities in the area, KU and SU, had their own trajectories that were given additional buoyancy through the Appetite programmes.

KU established its Community Animation and Social Innovation Centre (CASIC) in 2014, in collaboration with the New Vic Theatre, the organisation that hosted and led the initiation of the Appetite programme. The centre developed its own unique methodology of knowledge co-production, branded Cultural Animation[70]. Its legacy lives on in its current Co-Create Centre[71], continuing where CASIC left off in 2021/22. Along the way, these initiatives also fed into Keele Deal Culture (2019), a unique expression of the university's commitment to culture-led, place-based strategies as part of Keele's civic university mission.

SU has had a long history of socially engaged practice and projects. The CCU had been working in this area since ca. 2005, with the Get Talking method being developed in a project in Shelton and continued to be applied by Quality Streets in 2010. It became a go-to method for community researchers, with external organisations commissioning the CCU to evaluate many of their projects, such as, for instance, First Art of Creative Black Country in the first 10 years of Get Talking's development. Moreover, the ArtCity project mentioned earlier, funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, used Get Talking as part of its methods. The CCU unit closed in 2018, but the main actors spread those methods throughout the university, with Gratton taking the lead in developing the University's Civic University Strategy by connecting it to a Connected Communities Framework[72].

Beyond this, the demonstrability of using participatory processes in both the design, delivery and evaluation has had a bidirectional influence on the Arts Council ways of supporting cultural activity itself. The learning made in the various CPP programmes, including Appetite, allowed ACE to much more confidently understand how co-creative and participatory elements in a cultural policy are demonstrably linked to positive impact and can achieve quality at the same time (Blackman, 2022).

Co-creation, participatory ways of working, Culture 3.0 conceptualisations of cultural engagement are here to stay, and its working practices include the dimensions of ideation, curation, content production, delivery, research, and evaluation. The Appetite programme, together with its engagement in participatory approaches, contributed significantly to embedding these kinds of

[70] https://www.keele.ac.uk/casic/#
[71] https://www.keele.ac.uk/cocreate/
[72] https://blogs.staffs.ac.uk/connections/connected-communities-at-staffordshire-university/

approaches in the region, which is now nationally increasingly known for its socially engaging cultural ecosystem.

6. Conclusions

The study presents some limitations. Firstly, not all consortium partners participated in the study, potentially influencing the comprehensiveness of the findings. Moreover, the interested communities have not been the subject of the study, while their points of view deserve a proper deepening.

Despite these limitations, the implications drawn from the study are noteworthy. The research highlights the benefits and risks of applying participatory tools to large-scale programmes, with consequent managerial implications. In particular, the research examined the point of view of heterogeneous governance, contributing to a wider understanding of the potential impact of participatory processes.

Undoubtedly, exploring community perspectives and a multiple-case analysis can enhance our knowledge of community-based participatory research within CPP. Moreover, the role of universities in contributing to participatory approaches merits further investigation to strengthen the basis for future collaborative efforts.

Part 3
Bridging Theory and Practice: From Existing Models to a New Framework for Cultural Welfare Evaluation

Chapter IV − Towards a Holistic Evaluation Framework

This chapter outlines the development of an integrated framework for the evaluation of Cultural Welfare Activities, henceforth referred to as CWAs. The term CWAs encompasses a vast array of cultural activities that have been demonstrated to "support illness prevention, health promotion, and management and treatment of illnesses" (Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023–2026 2022/C 466/01, 2022, p. 7). Using the term "cultural active ingredient", we are describing more than one hundred specific identified cultural factors that are directly responsible for the achievement of health and well-being outcomes (Sacco, 2023, pp. 15-16; Warran et al., 2022). The pharmaceutical metaphor of the "active ingredient" emphasises "that there is something particular − some property, some dynamic − in the arts experience itself which enables certain outcomes to occur, and which are inseparable from the experience" (Aesop & BOP Consulting, 2018, p. 7).

The argument is put forth that to gain a full understanding and accurate evaluation of the holistic contribution of CWAs, it is necessary to move beyond siloed metrics and adopt a more comprehensive approach that considers the economic, social, cultural, environmental and individual dimensions. This implies adopting a holistic model that allows organisations to gain a greater understanding of the effects of their work and to rely on a framework to guide them strategically in the deployment of participatory approaches at different stages of the activity, from its design to evaluation.

The initial part of the chapter presents a reflection on the concepts of *culture*, *value* and *evaluation* that form the basis of the subsequent contribution.

The second section begins with an excursus on the affirmation of a holistic approach within the field of evaluation, at different scales and for different purposes, focusing on its application to assessing the contribution of culture to society. It then moves on to a concise examination of the interconnection between the notions of well-being and health, and their progressively pivotal role in the domain of cultural assessment. Subsequently, the rationale for adopting a holistic approach is exposed, not only in the broader field of culture, but more particularly in evaluating CWAs.

The third section presents the methodology employed to identify existing holistic models developed in the cultural sector.

The fourth and last part is dedicated to a comprehensive review of three holistic models and frameworks identified as key references for the aim of the present research, namely Impacts 08, SoPHIA Model, and Dunphy's Holistic Framework for Evaluation of Arts Engagement. Their key and critical features were observed through the lenses of Cultural Welfare (CW), to serve as a starting point for the design of a holistic framework for the assessment of activities in the CW field.

1. Shaping Evaluation by Reflecting on Value

> Impact evaluation and measurement in the cultural field are not as developed as in other areas of social work, such as health, education or social care. This is true beyond Italy and in part it can be traced to the greater "philosophical" difficulty to describe the impact of cultural activity on people and communities.
>
> (Ratti, 2015, p.39)

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the verb *to evaluate* means "to assess the quality, importance, amount, or value of someone or something". This definition demonstrates that the evaluation process is inextricably intertwined with the concept of value. Understanding this link is essential when assessing the contribution of culture, a complex activity that necessitates a preliminary shared knowledge of key concepts such as *culture*, *value*, and *evaluation*.

First, the term *culture* is a multifaceted concept, both familiar and elusive, that challenges a singular definition (O'Brien, 2014, p. 2; Rosenstein, 2018, in Cerquetti & Romagnoli, 2022, p. 33). One of the earliest and most widely used definitions in anthropology is that of Tylor, who provided an individual-centred definition of culture as "the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1871, p. 1). Later, in 1952, Kroeber and Kluckhohn photographed the multiplication and diversification of the concept of culture, resulting in a collection of no less than 164 different definitions in "Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions" (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). MacDowall (2015, p. 2) posited that culture is characterised by two distinct yet complementary aspects. Firstly, it can be defined as a specific set of human-made activities. Secondly, in a more comprehensive sense, culture is defined as the totality of everyday activities, encompassing their diverse social, economic, and political manifestations. The two definitions share a common recognition of culture as a process of legitimisation and affirmation. This process has been unidirectional and top-down for an extended period in history. The prerogative of delineating what constituted culture and what did not, particularly in the context of cultural heritage and artistic

production, was a favoured domain for exerting power. This terrain was challenged since the 1960s, with the emergence of the processes of democratic public participation (Arnstein, 1969). A phenomenon that has had a pervasive impact on all spheres of society, including those pertaining to cultural and artistic production, as well as the definition of cultural heritage. In those years, as pointed out by Belfiore *et al.* (2023), countercultural movements in the UK challenged traditional hierarchies between elite and popular taste, as well as those between different art forms. Consequently, during the 1970s, the idea of "Cultural Democracy" began to spread within traditional arts policies, thus overcoming the principle of the "Democratisation of Culture", which until then had sought to make accessible "an accepted standard of high culture" (Bennett, 2001, p. 5, in Belfiore *et al.*, 2023). The traditional top-down approach, which is safeguarded by gatekeepers and oriented towards disseminating a pre-established elitist culture, is no longer the dominant paradigm. Conversely, there is an increasing receptivity to plural expressions, which has the potential to provide a comprehensive and nuanced representation of the diversity that permeates society. As Bennett pointed out, Cultural Democracy aims "for dispersed patterns of support based on an acceptance of a parity of esteem for the aesthetic values and tastes of different groups within culturally diverse societies" (*Ibidem*). This approach enabled the inclusion of previously marginalised or neglected manifestations, thus challenging the status quo and promoting a more inclusive and pluralistic representation. Furthermore, the growing participation in cultural production and consumption is also highlighted in the framework proposed by Sacco *et al.* (2018) on the evolution of socio-technical regimes of social and economic value creation through culture. It illustrates how culture moved from an elitist niche commodity (Culture 1.0) to the emergence of cultural markets and creative industries in the 20th century (Culture 2.0). Lastly, it portrays how digital technologies have emerged, democratising cultural production and enabling novel forms of collaboration and co-creation, thereby blurring the boundary between producer and consumer (Culture 3.0). Moreover, the active component added by Culture 3.0, enables even more capacity building (already activated in the passive cultural access mode typical of Cultures 1.0 and 2.0). Cultural access thus became a fundamental right not limited to the sphere of leisure and entertainment, but a pillar of everyday practices in all areas of human activity (Sacco *et al.*, 2018, p. 7). The 1997 report of the European Task Force on Culture and Development stressed that arts, cultural and creative activities and industries include a wide range of creative expressions, that extend beyond the traditional or "high" arts (The European Task Force on Culture and Development, 1997, p. 28). As stated in the report, the "arts, media and heritage should not be seen as a separate sphere of activity, but as a nexus of interactions which reaches from its creative and reflective core into people's everyday life" (*Ibidem*).

In this scenario, CW practices possess extraordinary potential for momentum. Indeed, their democratic power is inextricably linked to the ability to tap into a diverse range of cultural and artistic assets that can improve health and well-being. In this way, an open human-centred framework is established, capable of reformulating the very perception of culture and its role in society. The centrality given to the so-called "final beneficiaries" of the intervention has the capacity for a plural representation free from the limitations of the dominant cultural modes, and capable of responding to the specific needs and interests of the beneficiaries involved. Additionally, the centrality of culture in health-related fields underlines its contribution not only to disease management, but also to improving education, self-confidence, social cohesion and health and subjective well-being, a broader and multifaceted concept that will be elaborated upon subsequently (Oakley *et al.*, 2013). These features can be highlighted by the evaluation, which, to capture these intended outcomes, must be properly planned. Furthermore, as argued by MacDowall (2015, p. 2), sophisticated approaches that insist on the specificity of culture and its complex relationship to ethnicity, identity and indigeneity allow us to question dominant cultural modes.

This multidimensional nature of CW allows another reflection on the very concept of *value* itself, which aligns with the conceptualisation of value put forth by Montella (2009, 2016), who argued that value is never intrinsic but rather extrinsic and subjective: a construct that necessitates validation by an external subject. Typically, intrinsic values are associated both with artistic content, and with the subjective effects of art forms on individuals, encompassing intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions (Throsby, 2001; Holden, 2004). This view suggests the existence of an a priori, universal, and automatic capacity of the arts and culture to exert an influence on individuals who engage with them. A perspective that has historically contributed to the cultural sector's myopia about its mission and its interlocutors, assuming the existence of universally recognised intrinsic values, when in fact many of these were values determined by a section of society, that has first defined their existence and then guaranteed their maintenance. It should be noted that additional groups exist within society who, although not encompassed by the initial category, demonstrate appreciation, recognition, and pursuit of these cultural manifestations (Cicerchia, 2021, p.182). In addition, it is not uncommon for these groups to espouse and endorse these "authorised heritage discourses", aspiring to achieve the same status as those who initially defined the category in question (Smith, 2006). This point inevitably evokes Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the strategic deployment of the arts to reinforce an elitist distribution of power: "art and cultural consumption are predisposed, consciously and deliberately or not, to fulfil a social function of legitimating social differences" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 7). This perspective constrains and imposes a singular top-down interpretation of culture. Indeed, by claiming that intrinsic value is an innate, intangible, and

automatic quality, those who do not perceive, understand, or experience such value are excluded. Conversely, the numerous dimensions of cultural value are closely intertwined with the diversity of stakeholders with whom culture engages. It is crucial to acknowledge that this recognition is not contingent on utilisation. Value can be found also in the non-use of heritage. One illustrative example is the acknowledgement of a particular category of goods as merit goods (Musgrave & Musgrave, 1989; Throsby, 2001). These are assets that, even by those who have no intention of using them, are nevertheless recognised as worthy of public support, to be preserved and passed on to future generations. In relation to the debate between intrinsic and instrumental value, Dunphy's position has been a valuable synthesis, reframing the dimensions traditionally considered intrinsic, by Throsby (2001) and McCarthy *et al.* (2004), as instrumental (Dunphy, 2015, p. 245-249). The redefinition is carried out by Dunphy using the framework of Hawkes (2001), which is based on four pillars (social, cultural, economic and environmental). This framework is implemented with two additional domains using the model of Jim Ife (2002), namely civic engagement and personal well-being-spiritual. This integration allows Dunphy to cover all the intrinsic dimensions enumerated. In particular, she associated Throsby's intrinsic values − aesthetic, spiritual, historical, symbolic, and authenticity (Throsby, 2001, pp. 28-29) − with Hawkes' cultural domain, while situating his social value within the social domain. Additionally, she mapped the intrinsic values emerged from *Gifts of the Muse* (McCarthy *et al.*, 2004), including "enhanced empathy for other people and cultures" and "social bonds" into the social domain. While the more elusive dimensions presented by the scholars were integrated within Ife's supplementary domains. Particularly, the concepts of "understanding of the world" and "expression of common values and community identity" were found to align with the domain of civic engagement, while the dimension of "pleasure and captivation" was situated within the domain of personal-spiritual well-being (Dunphy, 2015, pp. 245-249). By employing this multidimensional framework, Dunphy illustrated how these values could be evaluated, integrating theoretical paradigms with practical applications and enhancing the assessment of cultural initiatives within a broader societal context.

It is not my intention to linger overly on the categorisation of cultural values; rather, I would like to focus on the points made by Holden in relation to his proposed categorisation of value, which he sets out as intrinsic, instrumental or institutional (2004). He posits that these three perspectives are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary. Nevertheless, while I must respectfully disagree with the categorisation presented, I find Holden's concluding remark on this subject particularly noteworthy. It suggests that, depending on who you are, these viewpoints "are *more*, or *less*, important" (Holden, J., 2013, p.24). Accordingly, it is evident that the subjective determinant of value is related to a series of factors connected with the external validator, including the context in

which the interaction takes place, the characteristics of the service in question, the needs and wishes of users, and the resources they have for benefiting from a service (Montella, 2016, pp. 109-110).

The design of CW practices necessarily entails a meticulous examination of the context, resources, needs and desires of the participants. They, in turn, can offer a subjective interpretation of the values associated with the cultural activities in which they engage, thereby co-creating them. The inclusion of this perception is imperative to the advancement and assessment of these activities. As they are designed to enhance the health and well-being of the participants (e.g., physical and mental health, social integration, combating social isolation, trauma recovery, etc.), it is paramount to provide an appropriate setting for the collection of data and feedback, which are crucial for the improvement of the service. Indeed, as Cerquetti pointed out: "to say that *something* has a good or bad value, *someone* has to establish it" (2017, p. 121). Considering this elucidation, a theoretical framework capable of accommodating these distinct instances is required to assess the contribution of culture to value creation in different dimensions and from different perspectives. The multidimensional nature of value will be a recurring theme throughout this chapter, and will be further explored in subsequent sections, particularly those on evaluation and the holistic approach. I will now temporarily conclude this section with a reference to the argument put forth by cultural analyst Hawkes (2001), who argued that intrinsic and instrumental categories exist only because instruments have not yet been identified to measure what we consider intrinsic and intangible values.

This brings us to the final topic under examination in this section, namely that of *evaluation*. In accordance with what is outlined in the previous paragraphs, it is evident that evaluation cannot be confined to a specific sector or limited to the narrow scope of economic and monetary considerations (Redden, 2015, p. 31). Indeed, several scholars, including Hewison (2006) and Holden (2004, 2006), have challenged the use of economic evaluation techniques by governments. Leaning on the theories of Throsby (2001; 2003) and Selwood (2001; 2002), they have argued that governments should assess a wider range of values than those that can be easily measured, namely instrumental ones. Indeed, the application of a single lens to estimate the value of culture gives rise to a potentially problematic phenomenon: the idea that value has inherently a single dimension, specifically monetary, is reinforced, while the capacity to discern the multifaceted impact of the intervention is diminished. As Cicerchia observed, this perspective has become the dominant one since the 1980s, when the decline of the consensus regarding the need for culture in society has tied its survival to its proven usefulness (2021, p. 183). The rationale for public investment in culture was subsequently linked to its instrumental social and economic benefits (*Ibidem*). The consequence of this was the preferential, almost exclusive, use of economic methodology in

evaluation, as it provided a major decision point for governments (O'Brien, 2010). The spread use of SROI to assess social impacts in monetary terms is a clear example of this trend. Such a phenomenon gives rise to a kind of "linguistic barrier" that can render these evaluations inaccessible, both in terms of production and interpretation, to those who are not conversant with the chosen methodology. Additionally, it is essential to consider the limitations of this approach when applied at a smaller scale. In this regard, as Donovan observed in the 2013 report "A Holistic Approach to Valuing Our Culture: A Report to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport", economic evaluation techniques can furnish valuable evidence to corroborate substantial large-scale investments in the cultural sector. Nevertheless, these techniques are costly, time-consuming, and necessitate a high degree of expertise, rendering them unsuitable for utilisation by small-scale enterprises and projects (Donovan, 2013, p. 5). Additionally, they are inadequate for evaluating the efficacy of cultural organisations' performances (Boorsma & Chiaravalloti, 2010, p. 306, in Cerquetti, 2022, p. 67).

It is evident that there is no single, or definitive, method for evaluating the impact of cultural initiatives. Instead, a multifaceted approach is required to address the multidimensional nature of cultural efficacy. Conversely, it is vital to subject certain pivotal elements to scrutiny if an effective evaluation strategy is to be devised. As Cicerchia stated, it is of paramount importance to ascertain the specific object of examination, the rationale behind it, the scope, the methodology employed (sectorial or multidimensional), and the intended purpose and end-user of the assessment (2021, p. 37). This latter aspect is crucial to establish if the evaluation adopts a multifocal perspective and, thus, whether it espouses a participatory approach over a top-down methodology.

The evaluation process is not without its pitfalls. To illustrate, a first risk is that of generating contradictions by keeping the objective of the evaluation at a narrow level and giving excessive weight to indicators which may determine the "corruption" of the very phenomenon being observed. The risk in question pertains to the phenomenon elucidated by Goodhart's law, a concept initially established for banking policy, but which is also applicable in other domains (Crease, 2013), including the cultural one (Cicerchia, 2017, p. 183). To illustrate, in the context of assessing the impact of CWAs, an indicator that demonstrates the extent to which the action fosters participation could be the number of distinct groups and minorities it has brought together. The utilisation of this indicator could prompt enablers to increase this number without genuinely engaging with these interlocutors in a participatory mechanism. Alternatively, they may attempt to attain the desired outcome through token participation, strictly aimed at achieving the desired result in terms of people involved, without any significant change being produced in their lives.

A final critical warning, highlighted by Merli (2002) and firstly presented by Landry *et al.* (1993), is the knowledge gap between evaluators and respondents. To ensure the accuracy and reliability of our assessments, it is essential to formally collaborate with our informants to define the concepts under consideration, identify the key dimensions associated with them, and determine their relative importance in the context of the respondents' experience.

Thus, again, the key to cultural evaluation lies in the subjective nature of value. If the evaluators determine which dimensions should be assessed without first ascertaining whether these aspects are salient to the respondents or whether their definitions are collectively accepted, the fundamental goal of the assessment process will be undermined.

2. Why is a Holistic Evaluation Needed for Cultural Welfare?

> The «creative health movement» Howarth asserted: …is part of a wider movement which demands justice − health justice, racial justice, social justice and climate justice.
>
> (Williams, 2023, p. 7)

For a long time, evaluation and impact assessment have been characterised by a clear, almost impenetrable, delineation of the areas of investigation; impacts have been divided in sectors: social, cultural, economic, or environmental (Cicerchia, 2012, p.201). Because of this sectorial feature, evaluation practices, borrowed from other sectors to the cultural one, were often limited to a single domain − social, cultural, economic, or environmental − losing sight of the interconnections and mutual influences between the different impact spheres of these activities. Consequently, cultural impacts have often been evaluated through a narrow lens rather than adopting a holistic framework to understand its effects. In more recent times, evaluation tools designed at the intersection of different areas of investigation have begun to emerge, aligning with the recommendations outlined in Europa Nostra's report "Cultural Heritage Matters for Europe" (CHCfE Consortium, 2015, pp. 17, 97-102). This report highlighted the importance of adopting a holistic four-domain approach − social, economic, cultural, and environmental − in cultural impact assessment. It reflected the recognition of culture as a fourth pillar of sustainable development, alongside the economic, social, and environmental pillars, as articulated in the Hangzhou Declaration "Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Policies" (UNESCO, 2013). A similar perspective was advanced, in 2001, by Australian cultural analyst Jon Hawkes in his book for the Cultural Development Network (Vic), "The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's Essential Role in Public Planning" which explores the role of culture in ecologically sustainable development (ESD). Hawkes addressed the challenge of evaluating cultural outcomes, particularly the perceived intangibility and

immeasurability of intrinsic value. He proposed that almost all value derived from arts engagement is instrumental and can be evaluated within four given domains: social equity, economic viability, environmental responsibility, and cultural vitality (Hawkes, 2010, p. 25).

The considerable influence of the cultural and creative industries beyond their traditional scope has been acknowledged and characterised as a "crossover" phenomenon by numerous European institutions and cultural organisations (Council of the European Union, 2015; European Commission. Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs & KEA European Affairs, 2019; NEMO, 2018). This acknowledgement has also been employed by European institutions to promote the implementation of a holistic vision for evaluating the impact of culture (Council of Europe, 2017; European Commission: Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2019).

Simultaneously, a significant reorientation towards a more holistic vision has occurred in the methodologies employed by states to evaluate and monitor economic performance, social progress, human well-being, and development (Dunphy, 2015, p. 249). As Cicerchia (2017, p. 183) remarked, after the publication of the report "The Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress Revisited" efforts have been made to move beyond GDP because, as Stiglitz *et al.* (2009, p. 4) asserted, "policies should be aimed at increasing social welfare and not GDP". The discussion led to the formulation of a quality of life indicators scoreboard by Eurostat, which in turn informed a number of initiatives aimed at improving the methodologies used to assess progress and well-being, as the OECD's "How's Life? 2013: Measuring Well-being" (OECD, 2013) and the Italian "Equitable and Sustainable Well-being" (Istat, 2016). These preliminary experiments have furnished a domain-based methodology for addressing intricate phenomena, meticulously delineating and dissecting their complexities along distinct parallel pathways (Cicerchia, 2017, p. 185). However, the inability to synthesise the iterations and integrations in a comprehensive, holistic manner persists (*Ibidem*).

Concurrently in the scientific debate, the growing recognition of the vast array of societal impacts of culture has led to an increased interest in focusing on a broader area of investigation when searching for the contribution of culture to society.

The discussion paper by the UK cultural research organisation Comedia, commissioned by the Arts Council of England in 1993 (Landry, Bianchini *et al.*, 1993), initiated a two-year empirical research project titled "The Social Impact of Artistic Programmes". This project, coordinated by François Matarasso for Comedia, culminated in the seminal report "Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts" (Matarasso, 1997). The report identified 50 social impacts of participation in the arts, including health and well-being, as well as the following: personal

development, social cohesion, local image and identity, imagination and vision, community empowerment and self-determination. The study has served as a groundbreaking reference point in the ongoing discourse on this subject, despite the acknowledged limitations and shortcomings, including certain methodological concerns as previously highlighted by Merli (2002) and Belfiore (2002; 2006). The debate that has emerged can be used to derive useful future directions, to identify key areas for evaluation based on the results of Matarasso, and to leverage the criticisms offered to refine the evaluation process, thereby enhancing its reliability and robustness.

Meanwhile, the number of scientific contributions on the subject has grown exponentially. Thus, when analysing cultural policies and activities promoted by cultural organisations, scholars have devoted increased attention to the impact of culture on the quality of life, health and well-being, as well as on the economy and society at local, national and international levels (Bollo, 2013; Brown, 2019; Cicerchia, 2017a, 2017b, 2022; Cicerchia & Bologna, 2017; Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016; Dunphy, 2015; Gariboldi & Marconi, 2021; Grossi *et al.*, 2011; Lee, 2013; McCarthy *et al.*, 2004; Oakley *et al.*, 2013; O'Brien, 2015; OECD & ICOM, 2018; Ratti, 2015; Redmond *et al.*, 2018; Scott, 2013).

Among the extensive list of benefits associated with culture, the concept of well-being is arguably one of the more complex and multifaceted to unpack and comprehend. As Cicerchia suggested, the phenomenon of well-being typically demands a holistic perspective to be fully appreciated and understood (Cicerchia, 2021, p. 210). To gain a deeper understanding of this concept, particularly within the present context, it is essential to examine its evolution, and its interconnection with the notion of health. Well-being is a multidimensional concept that encompasses every aspect of the life of individuals and communities. Swarbrick (2006) identified eight dimensions of well-being: physical, spiritual, social, intellectual, emotional/mental, occupational, environmental, and financial. In the current scenario, the acknowledged link between well-being and health results from the revolution that has transformed the concept and definition of health itself (Cicerchia, 2022). Indeed, the shift from the bio-medical model to the bio-psycho-social model represented a fundamental change in the way health and illness were understood and approached (Engel, 1977). This model expanded the focus, previously centred on purely biological factors, by incorporating psychological and social factors into understanding health and illness, highlighting how an individual's well-being depends on all three spheres. Indeed, the concept of health has enlarged its horizons since the World Health Organization (WHO) provided a definition in 1948 that has remained unchanged ever since: "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 1948, p. 1). This definition of health rooted within society and culture, influenced by internal and external determinants,

together with the salutogenic approach introduced by Antonovsky (1996), provided a new framework to understand and promote factors that contribute to health and well-being. In 2020, WHO added that health and well-being are influenced "by a range of biomedical, psychosocial, social, economic and environmental factors that interconnect across people in differing ways and at different times across the life course" (WHO, 2020, p. 39).

The assessment of CWAs has frequently concentrated on the timely evaluation of the impact of culture on health improvement, disease management, treatment, and well-being augmentation in its various forms (from resilience promotion to trauma recovery). However, to obtain a comprehensive understanding of an intervention within a specific context and involving a particular set of actors, the scope of the evaluation must be expanded in several ways. This naturally necessitates the maintenance of a rigorous and validated methodology for assessing health and well-being impacts, which must be contextualised within a wider framework. Ultimately, knowing the four possible areas of intervention highlighted in the WHO report 67/2019 (Fancourt & Finn, 2019), a significant gap emerges in the current evaluation regarding the contribution of culture to promotion and prevention actions. The current body of knowledge and the availability of ready-to-use tools in this field are effectively suited to the analysis of the contribution of culture in the treatment and management of disease. However, the other two main fields − health and well-being promotion and illness prevention − remain without an overarching assessment that can effectively articulate the value generated by such actions. Indeed, these actions often demonstrate long-term impacts, yet their immediate health impacts are frequently challenging to quantify. For example, the "*Nati per Leggere*" programme, as Annalisa Cicerchia sustained at the event "*Welfare Culturale e Musei*" held in Rome on 13 October 2024, will yield results that will be visible after decades. It is evident that it is imperative to develop holistic methodologies that encompass their multifaceted contributions, also in the short-term and in various domains. Furthermore, such a framework could be universally applicable to all forms of CWA. In addition, a holistic framework can more easily integrate a polyphonic structure that includes the active and co-creative contribution of different stakeholders and responds in a timely manner to the evaluation needs of CWAs (Cerquetti, 2022, p. 66).

The need for a holistic approach within the cultural sector has been emphasised for many decades now (CHCfE Consortium, 2015; Donovan, 2013; Florman *et al.*, 2016; McCarthy, *et al.* 2004; UNESCO, 2013; White & Rentschler, 2005).

To conclude, it is beneficial to recall Small's assertion that any argument put forth to support culture must be plural (2013) and avoid the risk of focusing on a narrow scope. It would be erroneous to assume, particularly in the context of CW, that there is a "silver bullet" in which culture impacts people (Small, 2013, in Ratti, 2015). Although the documented specific effects of

certain cultural practices are well established, their “applications” are subject to the variables of the context in which they are embedded. The ability to discern such factors, to implement adjustments where and when feasible, and to mitigate the risks of those elements beyond one’s control is essential to ensure that the “cultural active ingredient” can fulfil its intended function.

3. Methodology

The research was developed by adopting a narrative critical review (Álvarez Larrain & McCall, 2019; Ferrari, 2015; Grant & Booth, 2009; Green *et al.*, 2006; Pautasso, 2019). Both scientific literature and international documents were thoroughly examined. In addition to scientific databases such as Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar, grey literature was also reviewed, focusing on around 40 contributions describing operational tools in detail. Even if the narrative review is more likely to introduce bias because it includes only research selected by the authors, in this case, it was preferred because it allowed the authors to include policy documents, green papers and project reports that are not retrieved by academic databases.

Given the variety of methods and approaches across disciplines, tools were categorised according to their primary domain: social, cultural, economic, or environmental. Special emphasis was placed on cross-domain or holistic approaches, as the main objective was to identify frameworks that could inform the development of a holistic model for evaluating CWAs. For this reason, the tools were grouped according to the area in which they were mainly developed, and which characterises their “language”: social, cultural, economic, and environmental. As the main objective was to trace holistic approaches that could serve as benchmarks for developing a subsequent holistic model for evaluating CW activities, only those few that were identified as cross-domain or holistic were selected and examined in depth. Key contributions informing the synthesis came from the SoPHIA project, particularly its deliverable 1.2, “Concise Essay mapping existing Gaps, Issues and Problems”, which provided a comprehensive understanding of the landscape of impact assessment approaches.

4. A Galaxy of Evaluation Tools: Isolating the Constellation of Holistic Models

The main tools and methodologies encountered in the research are presented in However, the analysis returned by SoPHIA does not consider a fundamental approach to the benchmarking

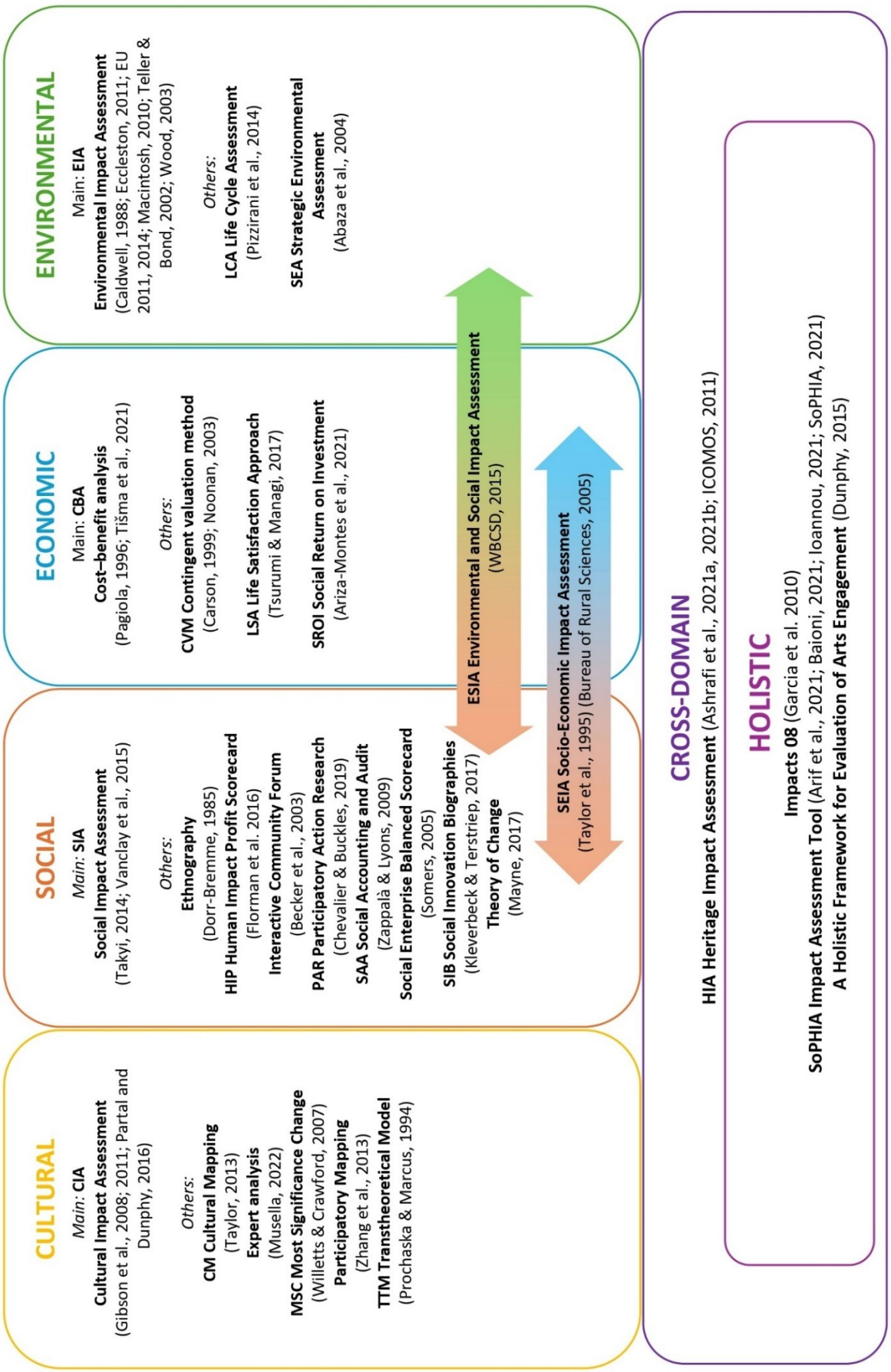
analysis of holistic evaluation approaches, namely the Holistic Framework for Evaluation of Arts Engagement proposed by Dunphy (2015).

Fig. 10. The figure is not intended to provide an overview of all existing tools in the different domains but was designed to isolate and analyse tools that take a cross-domain, holistic approach to evaluation. The galaxy of impact assessment is populated by different approaches, many of which adopt a single field "language" to describe phenomena that have effects in different spheres. This is the case of the Life Satisfaction Approach (LSA), a quantitative tool developed in economics that provides a monetary valuation as an output. Through a survey, LSA provides information about respondents' life satisfaction, their degree of participation and engagement in the arts and cultural activities, and other socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the respondents. Tools such as this do not adopt an integrated and interconnected view and do not align with the holistic vision.

The SoPHIA's deliverable "A concise essay mapping existing gaps, issues, and problems" (2020) provided a useful overview of tools and methods developed in four domains: social, cultural, environmental, and economic. A total of 42 different methods were collected. These methods are presented according to their respective domains: 14 in cultural, 24 in social, 4 in economic, 3 in environmental, and 4 are related to two or more domains. In particular, among these 42 methods, 6 are used in two different domains, but they are characterised by a single-field approach (e.g., economic methods applied to the social dimension, such as SROI − Social Return on Investment), 2 of them are classified as attempts to create synergies between methods of two domains (i.e. SEIA − Socio-Economic Impact Assessment and ESIA − Environmental and Social Impact Assessment), and finally 2 of them are labelled as cross-domain methods, namely HIA – Heritage Impact Assessment, and Impacts 08.

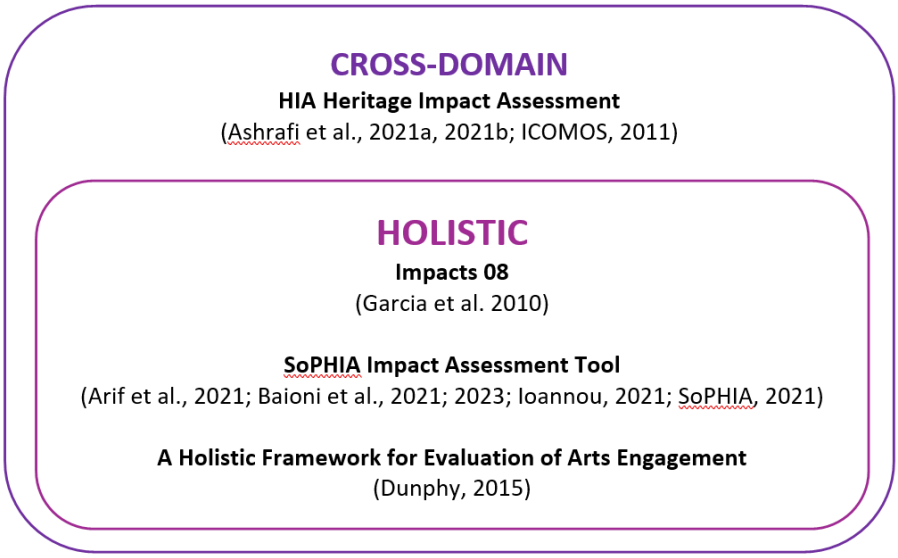
However, the analysis returned by SoPHIA does not consider a fundamental approach to the benchmarking analysis of holistic evaluation approaches, namely the Holistic Framework for Evaluation of Arts Engagement proposed by Dunphy (2015).

Fig. 10 Impact Assessment Methods divided by domain (own elaboration implementing the initial classification provided by the SoPHIA project, 2020)



Some reflections can be made, focusing on the cross-domain (HIA), and holistic tools and framework collected, namely: Impacts 08, SoPHIA Holistic Impact Assessment Tool, and Dunphy's Holistic Framework for Evaluation of Arts Engagement (Fig. 11).

Fig. 11 Overview of the tools identified as cross-domain or holistic (own elaboration)



Firstly, it should be noted that despite the identification of HIA as a cross-domain approach, it does not provide a comprehensive methodology for the assessment of cultural impact across all societal dimensions. As pointed out by Ashrafi *et al.* (2021a, 2021b), HIA has been developed by ICOMOS within the framework of EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment to measure the potential impact of a proposed development on cultural and historical resources, such as archaeological sites, historical buildings, or cultural landscapes − with specific recommendations to mitigate any negative impacts (ICOMOS, 2011). It is also worth mentioning that HIA is increasingly required to analyse the possible effects and consequences of development on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of World Heritage Sites. Indeed, the very vocation of the "HIA Guidance" developed by ICOMOS (2011) is to provide a methodology for assessing the potential impact of a change or development on OUV attributes as part of a broader EIA process. This characteristic means that it often refers to a well-defined and delimited area of action, UNESCO sites, making its application in other contexts challenging and often inappropriate. Furthermore, this method does not offer useful tools to investigate the impact of culture on well-being. Indeed, this example shows a common obstacle when addressing the topic of cultural impact assessment, namely the risk of encountering tools that assess the impacts of a proposed development only on cultural heritage. As a result, this tool can provide information only limited to the enhancement and conservation activity of the site under analysis as it focuses on safeguarding cultural heritage rather than on the impacts it may have on the society that hosts it.

4.1 Impacts 08

The first holistic method presented is Impacts 08, a holistic longitudinal impact analysis. It was successfully used to assess the economic impacts of Liverpool European Capital of Culture (ECoC) 2008 (Garcia *et al.* 2010). Impacts 08 developed a holistic approach by focusing on five areas: 1) cultural access and participation; 2) economy and tourism; 3) cultural vibrancy and sustainability; 4) image and perception; 5) governance and delivery process. As pointed out by Baioni *et al.* (2021, p. 15), Impacts 08 has been able to incorporate policy objectives and address the different imperatives relevant to cultural intervention in each sector analysed. Beyond quantitative metrics, Impacts 08 adopted qualitative methods, considering the lived experience of residents as an essential component of the study and providing insights about positive and negative aspects from residents' perspectives. What emerges is that the tool's nature, that is, being designed to evaluate Liverpool's experience as ECoC, weakens the holistic approach of the evaluation. Indeed, due to the context in which it took shape, this assessment paid strong attention to outputs, particularly visitor flows and tourism, and demonstrated a slight concern for sustainable development issues in the city. The report provides insights on dimensions related to human well-being (e.g., occupational well-being, cultural engagement and participation, sense of belonging, local identity), but fails to mention environmental impacts directly. Overall, this example contributes fundamentally to applying the holistic approach in the sector. Indeed, the experience of Liverpool was integrated into a "European Capitals of Culture Policy Group", which was established with the objective of developing a model for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the impact of cultural investments in cities selected in the ECoC programme (Allam & Thompson, 2013). This model delivered a framework based on six thematic clusters, accompanied by a small core set of indicators: 1) cultural vibrancy and sustainability; 2) cultural access and participation; 3) identity, image and place; 4) the philosophy and management of the process; 5) European dimension (Allam & Thompson, 2013, pp. 20-23). While this framework has been adapted, and not entirely applied, by the winning cities, it represented a significant contribution to a comprehensive evaluation of a system of cultural actions occurring over a defined period of time (Cicerchia, 2021, p. 135). It is evident that it was developed and designed with a specific focus on urban contexts and events of exceptional scale, supported with a significant investment of resources, such as ECoC. It is therefore deemed more appropriate to gauge the impact of analogous occurrences in an urban setting than to evaluate the impact of culture in other contexts and at different geographical scales. Nevertheless, the structure of the model is regarded as a potentially valuable contribution to the field of CW assessment. In particular, its emphasis on: the delivery process and governance philosophy; the cultural vibrancy, in terms of collaborative and innovative artistic production; the

visibility and reputation of the action; the ability to create partnerships and cooperation at different territorial and organisational levels. A potentially valuable contribution to the field of CW assessment is also the combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies for data collection, together with the attention paid to stakeholders' perceptions.

Impacts 08 − Overview	
References	Garcia *et al.* 2010
Theory	ECoC Impact Assessment
Aim	The longitudinal Liverpool Model for cultural impact assessment measures and analyses the socio-economic and cultural impacts of Liverpool European Capital of Culture (ECoC) 2008. Impacts 08 is a five-year joint initiative between the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, commissioned by Liverpool City Council for the period 2005 to 2010.
Context	City/Large Event
Domains	Cultural Access and Participation
	Economy and Tourism
	Cultural Vibrancy and Sustainability
	Image and Perceptions
	Governance and Delivery Process
Tools	Quantitative and Qualitative Methods
Outputs	Report
Cultural Welfare Lens	
Key Features	- A combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies (People's Perspective) - Cultural Vibrancy and Sustainability (collaborative and innovative artistic production) - Governance and delivery process domain - Dimensions of human well-being (e.g., occupational well-being, cultural engagement and participation, sense of belonging, local identity) - Focus on the European dimension of the action (partnerships) - Identity and image (visibility of the action)
Critical Features	- Appropriate for large events on an urban scale (ECoC) - Governance and delivery process domain is mainly focused on budgeting rather than on developing a participatory integrated governance - Poorly focused on negative aspects - Poorly focused on environmental issues - Strongly focused on visitor flows and tourism

Tab. 5 Overview of Impacts 08 through the Cultural Welfare lens (own elaboration)

4.2 SoPHIA Holistic Heritage Impact Assessment Model

The Holistic Impact Assessment Model proposed by SoPHIA represented a key contribution to spreading a holistic approach in the cultural heritage field. SoPHIA Social Platform for Holistic Heritage Impact Assessment is a project funded by the European Commission under the H2020 work program. The project started at the beginning of 2020 with the aim to develop a holistic, multi-domain, and intersectoral impact assessment model to evaluate interventions on cultural heritage (Baioni, 2021). The SoPHIA model is not a "ready to use" tool that can be applied universally; instead, it is a "conceptual model" that must be transformed and customised into an operational framework (Arif *et al.*, 2021, pp. 87-88).

One of the most valuable contributions of SoPHIA is its emphasis on the role of indicators and qualitative measures, which are systematically organised in themes and subthemes but not limited to these sectors. Indeed, their utility extends beyond the specific areas to which they pertain, proving instrumental in evaluating transversal aspects of cross-cutting issues. In addition, the model differs from other impact assessments as it responds to the needs of three different categories: policymakers (from local to European level), managers and practitioners, and institutional observers and independent researchers (SoPHIA, 2021). SoPHIA model adopts an approach developed on three axes: 1) domains, represented by issues organised by themes and interconnected subthemes; 2) people, divided between promoters of the assessment and stakeholders involved in the evaluation process (e.g., policymakers, local communities, civic society); 3) time, represented by the balance between current need and legacy but also related to the moment in which the assessment happens (ex-ante; on-going; ex-post) (Arif *et al.* 2021, p. 77; Baioni *et al.* 2021, pp. 17-20). The multi-domain axis encompassed six different themes − further divided into subthemes, for a total of twenty-eight − which a cultural intervention can potentially impact. They were organised as: 1) social capital and governance; 2) identity of place; 3) quality of life; 4) education, creativity, and innovation; 5) work and prosperity; 6) protection. Themes and sub-themes were described, along with their cross-cutting issues and counter-effects. The assessment was developed thanks to quantitative indicators, and the perspective of people − direct beneficiaries and workers engaged in the initiative − on the intervention's quality (Arif *et al.* 2021, p. 75).

As Arif *et al.* (2021) pointed out, the repetition of indicators among themes and subthemes was an obstacle to the development of the model, which caused redundancy. This issue was addressed through the testing phase by implementing a clear differentiation of themes and subthemes. Topics affected by this phenomenon more often were those related to social capital, prosperity and attractiveness, and well-being (Arif *et al.* 2021, p. 71).

One of the main holistic features of this tool is the ability to show interconnections between various areas thanks to cross-cutting issues and counter-effects described for each sub-theme. The theme of Quality of Life, originally named Well-being/Quality of Life (Ioannou, 2021), was a privileged viewpoint to observe counter-effects; for this reason, it has been lightened, leaving the dimension of well-being in the dimension of counter-effects.

The SoPHIA model offers several robust features that make it valuable for developing a model for CWA assessment. First, its multidimensional framework integrates, like Impacts 08, both quantitative indicators and qualitative data, grounded in people's perspective. By organising holistically these indicators into clear themes and subthemes, the model ensures a structured and systematic evaluation process while maintaining the flexibility to address specific sectorial questions. In addition, many of the subthemes of SoPHIA can be used effectively to assess the impact of CWA. For example, insights derived from the theme "Social capital and governance" could be applied in assessing good governance of CWA, also through the implementation of teamwork between sectors or a participatory approach. The three-axis model further emphasises the adaptability of holistic assessment within participatory practices and involves the active engagement of multiple stakeholders. The structure by which subthemes are detailed (description, people's perception, cross-cutting issues, counter effects) is a useful example of how to structure information clearly while maintaining the connotation of integration proper to the holistic approach. Themes such as "Education, Creativity and Innovation" can provide insights on the educational value of CWA, its capacity to foster creativity, and its potential to promote innovation, particularly in the field of social innovation, so crucial to foster need-based and place-specific solutions. To conclude, the theme of "Work and Prosperity" offers a basis for assessing the economic impact of CWA, while the theme of "Protection" encourages reflection on conservation and sustainability in an ecological dimension.

SoPHIA Model − Overview		
References	Arif *et al.* 2021; Baioni *et al.*, 2021, 2023; Ioannou, 2021; SoPHIA, 2021	
Theory	Not specified	
Aim	SoPHIA model aims to assess the contribution of cultural heritage to sustainable development and its resilience through change. It provides an adaptable conceptual and practical framework that can be implemented by different users and can grasp the characteristics of different cultural interventions' impacts under a holistic perspective. In Baioni *et al.* 2023, SoPHIA is applied to Sustainability Reporting.	
Context	Cultural Heritage Interventions	
Domains and	Social Capital &	- Inclusive Access

Subdomains	Governance	- Participation and Engagement - Social Cohesion - Partnerships and Cultural Cooperation - Good Governance
	Identity of Place	- Cultural Landscape and Aesthetics - Identity and Memory - Visibility and Reputation - Heritage-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-Use
	Quality of Life	- Living Conditions - Peace and Safety - Social Life - Environment - Regional and Local Development
	Education, Creativity & Innovation	- Education - Awareness Raising - Research - Digitization, Science & Technology - Arts and Creativity
	Work & Prosperity	- Employment - Local cultural production - Tourism Economy - Economic Attractiveness - Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship
	Protection	- Safeguarding against environmental risks - Safeguarding against human-related risks - Green Management and Development - Use of resources
Tools	Quantitative and Qualitative Methods (Quantitative Indicators; People's Perspective)	
Outputs	Report	
Cultural Welfare Lens		
Key Features	- The three-axis model (Time; People; Domains) - Some features of the subdomain's breakdown (Description; People's Perspective on the Quality of Intervention; cross-cutting Issues; Counter-effects) - Social Capital & Governance subdomains (Partnerships and Cultural Cooperation; Good governance) - Identity of Place subdomains (Identity and Memory; Visibility and Reputation; Heritage-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-Use) - Education, Creativity & Innovation subdomains (Education; Research) - Work & Prosperity and Protection subdomains	
Critical Features	- Time's axis could be explored further - Governance must be implemented to fit the needs of CW design - Cultural dimension could be further developed - Personal well-being could be more addressed and explored from different perspectives.	

Tab. 6 Overview of SoPHIA Model through the Cultural Welfare lens (own elaboration)

4.3 A Holistic Framework for Evaluation of Arts Engagement

The last model presented is the Holistic Framework for Evaluation of Arts Engagement, proposed by Dunphy (2015). The author, adopting the Most Significant Change (MSC) approach (Davies & Dart, 2005), examined the activity of arts organisations and proposed a model based on three ingredients.

The first focused on the *perspective of change*, namely, who is perceiving and experiencing the change. To offer a clear definition of the possible points of view, Dunphy provided a list of different categories of stakeholders in arts engagement initiatives, such as participants, audience members, artistic leaders, host organisations, funders, and wider community (Dunphy, 2015, p. 252).

The second ingredient was related to the *dimension of change*. To provide a reliable scheme of possible dimensions of change, Dunphy made use of the domains set out by the CIV (2014) and modified them in two main respects. The area of personal well-being, based on O'Toole (2014) and Seligman's (2011) theory of well-being, has been given more space due to its centrality and has been listed separately. The second aspect is related to the choice of using the term *ecological* instead of *environmental*, as recommended by the Global Cities Compact Program (GCCP, 2013), to emphasise the inclusion of all lifeforms as part of the natural world (Dunphy, 2015, p. 253). Accordingly, Dunphy put forth a proposal comprising six distinct domains: 1) Cultural domain: culturally rich and vibrant communities; 2) Social domain: healthy, safe, and inclusive communities; 3) Civic domain: democratic and engaged communities; 4) Economic domain: dynamic, resilient local economies; 5) Ecological domain: sustainable built and natural environments; 6) Personal wellbeing domain: flourish and fulfilled individuals.

For each domain, seven outcome indicators were presented. As already specified above for personal well-being, they have been informed by theory from diverse sources, such as: the UCGL (2010) for the cultural outcomes; CIV (2014) and GCCP (2013) for the social, civic, and ecological outcomes; the economic sub-domain was informed by UNESCO (2009; 2014) and Cultural Ministers Council Statistics Working Group (CMC-SWG, 2010).

The third and last aspect was connected to the *degree of change* experienced by the different stakeholders. The change that has occurred is measured on a nine-point rating scale, physically visualised through a pictorial framework in which it is possible to track both expected and achieved results for each evaluation item. Change can be reported along a spectrum from most negative through neutral to most positive. This choice allowed for a systematic measurement of even subjective judgements, such as pleasure and fun (Dunphy, 2015, pp. 254-257).

Due to its complexity, this model requires specialised expertise to conduct surveys or interviews with stakeholders, to translate qualitative data into quantitative terms, and to perform expert

analysis. Furthermore, applying numerical values derived from the judgments of experts to represent the qualitative body of knowledge may be perceived as an arbitrary and unreliable method for transposing the collected information from the different categories of stakeholder samples.

However, the valuable narrative lens of the MSC, also applicable to the field of CW (Cicerchia, 2021, p.185-190), is oriented to the subjective evaluation of personal perceptions and does not include any form of quantitative evaluation. Indeed, the model was concerned with the dimensions of outcomes and impacts, whereas the evaluation of outputs was not comprised. Besides, the narrative approach of MSC does not seem to fit adequately, for example, to the measurement of economic indicators proposed by Dunphy, such as direct employment, indirect employment, visitor direct expenditure, visitor indirect expenditure and local business stimulation. These items would require a quantitative and objective assessment of results. The same reasoning applies to the outcomes presented in the ecological domain, such as carbon emissions generated, use of resources, and priority on local resources.

Notwithstanding the limitations, Dunphy's approach enables the observation of the multidimensional and instrumental value of culture, situating her contribution within the debate on the intrinsic and instrumental values of culture. Adopting the framework put forth by Hawkes (2001) and integrating it with that of Jim Ife (2002), Dunphy illustrated that the values postulated as intrinsic by Throsby (2001) and McCarthy *et al.* (2004) can, in fact, be reframed as instrumental (Dunphy, 2015, pp. 245-249).

This model offers several other features that make it valuable within the CW field. First, its pictorial framework simplifies complex assessments by making it accessible and user-friendly. It also allows comparisons between expected and achieved results, supporting strategic planning and a logic of continuous improvement. The domain division is based on the four pillars of sustainability (cultural, economic, ecological, social) and its implementation, which includes the domain of personal well-being and the civic dimension, provides a comprehensive approach to assess the multidimensional impacts of CW. Furthermore, the implementation of the most significant change (MSC) methodology permits the incorporation of diverse perspectives from a multitude of stakeholders. The adaptability of its outcome indicators ensures the capacity to adapt to varying evaluation contexts, thereby allowing for the exclusion or replacement of indicators as required. Dunphy's framework is, therefore, an interesting point of reference, especially if implemented and adapted within a theoretical framework that is not entirely reliant on the MSC.

Holistic Framework for Evaluation of Arts Engagement − Overview	
References	Dunphy, 2015

Theory	Most Significant Change (Davies & Dart, 2005)	
Aim	To evaluate the activity of arts organisations and arts engagement by adopting a multi-stakeholder perspective	
Context	The activity of arts organisations	
Domains and Subdomains	Cultural domain: culturally rich and vibrant communities	- sense of connection to the past (history, heritage, identity) - respect for diversity and difference enhanced - aesthetic pleasure experienced - knowledge and new ideas generated and shared - expression of communal meanings (sense of connection to something greater than oneself, including spiritual, transpersonal connection) facilitated - creativity stimulated - creative or symbolic expression enabled
	Personal wellbeing domain: flourish and fulfilled individuals	- pleasure and fun experienced - emotional wellbeing, including opportunity for emotional expression and sense of emotional strengthened - physical wellbeing, including the sense of physical safety, strengthened - psychological wellbeing strengthened - confidence in capabilities expanded - life satisfaction increased - sense of freedom to live the life you wish enabled
	Economic domain: dynamic resilient local economies	- employment-enhancing skill development facilitated - individual economic impact experienced - direct employment provided - indirect employment stimulated - visitor direct expenditure made - visitor indirect expenditure made - local businesses patronised
	Ecological domain: sustainable built and natural environments	- positive sense of place engendered - contribution to neighbourhood character, including regeneration, made - positive connection to the natural world inspired - awareness of ecological issues raised - carbon emissions generated - resources proportionate to outcomes used - priority on local resources made
	Social domain: healthy, safe, and inclusive communities	- equality of opportunity for all people in the community experienced - recognition from valued others experienced - social capital – bonding (positive connection to like others) increased - social capital – bridging (positive connection to unlike others) increased - inter-generational connections (positive connection between people of different generations) - equality of men and women in social life - satisfying relationships, including friendships, developed

	Civic domain: democratic and engaged communities	- sense of community belonging achieved - active citizenship (positive engagement with wider communities outside personal social networks) stimulated - membership in local organisations and decision-making bodies encouraged - opportunity to have a say on important issues enabled - sense of engagement in political processes enabled - sense of a positive future inspired - collaboration between groups in the community stimulated
Tools	- Surveys - Likert Scales - Focus Groups - Interviews - Art-Based Methods	
Outputs	A Pictorial Framework	
Cultural Welfare Lens		
Key Features	- It is based on the instrumental value of culture (Hawke, 2001; Ife, 2002) - It adopts a user-friendly pictorial framework - It allows to compare expected and achieved results - The proposed domains division follows and implements the structures of the four pillars of sustainability: Cultural, Personal wellbeing, Economic, Ecological, Social, and Civic - The adoption of the MSC consents to assess multi-stakeholder perspectives - Flexibility of the outcome indicators that could be replaced or not used	
Critical Features	- It evaluates only outcomes and impacts, and it does not consider outputs - It is limited to subjective point of view about the perceived changes, it does not contemplate the quantitative measurement of objective data, and it results unsuitable to assess some of its indicators (see in the paragraph above the observation on the ecological and economic domain) - It requires specialised expertise to conduct the evaluation - The use of expert judgement can represent an arbitrary and unreliable method for transposing the collected qualitative information into numerical assessment.	

Tab. 7 Overview of the Holistic Framework for Evaluation of Arts Engagement Model through the Cultural Welfare lens (own elaboration)

4.4 Frequent Topics Emerged from the Subdomains Analysis

The three analyses presented above demonstrate that, at present, there is no holistic tool designed specifically for CW nor one which fully meets the requirements for evaluation in this field. The following chapter will therefore address this lacuna by proposing a holistic and multi-stakeholder framework. The adoption of the CW lens in the previous analysis has facilitated the identification of the key and critical features of each tool, thus enabling the gathering of the necessary components to establish a solid basis for a holistic model specifically designed for the CW. Among the observed characteristics, those pertaining to the domain classifications proposed by these tools are of

particular interest. The following overview presents a categorisation of the topics addressed by each model, arranged according to areas of pertinence.

Since Impacts 08 model was not articulated in clear subdomains as the other contributions presented, the following solution has been adopted. The items in its column are predominantly associated with the list of subthemes and areas of assessment presented in the ECoC document "An international framework of good practice in research and delivery of the European Capital of Culture programme", henceforth ECoC Framework (Allam & Thompson, 2013; pp. 22-23, 36-39). In the same column are presented also the themes of Impacts 08 and, when available, the subthemes, or general indicators categories, used in the assessment process of Liverpool ECoC, (García *et al.*, 2008). In order to facilitate the distinction between the data presented by Impacts 08 and that derived from the general ECoC framework, the former are presented in *italics* within the table.

The topics of pertinence that emerged from the transversal comparison have been associated with colours, as follows: purple for Cultural, orange for Social and Civic, red for Economic, green for Ecological, blue for Health and Well-being, and finally pink for Governance. These colours were subsequently employed to delineate the domains presented in the HECWA framework, proposed by the author, in the next chapter.

	SUBDOMAINS		
TOPIC OF PERTINENCE	SoPHIA Model	Dunphy's Model	ECoC Framework *Impacts 08*
Identity and memory	Identity and Memory	Sense of connection to past (history, heritage, identity); Expression of communal meanings (including spiritual, transpersonal connection)	
Culture-led regeneration	Heritage-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-Use		
Knowledge creation and sharing	Education	Knowledge generated and shared	
Research	Research		
Digitization, science & technology	Digitization, Science & Technology		
Arts and	Arts and Creativity	Creative stimulation	Level of Cultural Offer;

creativity		engendered; Opportunity for creative or symbolic expression	Innovative artistic productions; Innovative productions/lasting impacts on cultural operators
Aesthetics experience	Cultural landscape and Aesthetics	Aesthetics pleasure experienced	
Inclusivity and equality	Inclusive access	Equality of opportunity for all; Gender equality	Breadth of cultural participation; *Cultural Access; Demographic Breakdown of Participants and Audience*
Participation and engagement	Participation and Engagement	Active citizenship stimulated (positive engagement with wider communities outside personal social networks); Membership of local organisations and decision-making bodies encouraged	Number of participants and events generated by ECOC activity; Breadth of cultural participation; Number of volunteers *Cultural Participation in Liverpool European Capital of Culture; Local Interest in Culture and Cultural Events; Volunteering in Liverpool 08*
Social cohesion	Social Cohesion	Social capital: Bridging (positive connection to like others); Social capital: Bridging (positive connection to unlike others); Respect for diversity and difference; Inter-generational connections; Friendships developed	
Social life	Social Life	Sense of community belonging achieved; Membership of local organisations and decision-making bodies encouraged; Sense of a positive future inspired; Collaboration between groups in the community stimulated	Number of volunteers; *Volunteering in Liverpool 08*
Civic life		Active citizenship (positive engagement with wider communities outside personal social networks)	*Volunteering in Liverpool 08*

		stimulated; Opportunity to have a say on important issues enabled; Sense of engagement in political processes enabled;	
Employment	Employment	Employment-enhancing skill development; Individual economic impact; Direct employment; Indirect employment	Increases in jobs, training and investment in the Creative/ Cultural Sector; Jobs created in relevant sectors; *Employment and Skills Levels; Shape of the Sector; The Liverpool Culture Company's Contribution*
Local cultural production and business stimulation	Local cultural production	Local Business stimulation	ECoC development of the Creative/Cultural Sector; Attitudes and perceptions towards arts/culture in the city; *Sponsors and Partner Involvement*
Tourism economy	Tourism Economy	Visitor direct expenditure; Visitor indirect expenditure	Additional visitor expenditure; Number of visitors; Hotel rooms occupancy rates and new stock; *Impacts on Tourism*
Economic attractiveness	Economic Attractiveness		Number of arts and cultural facilities; new facilities; *The Liverpool Culture Company's Contribution*
Social innovation and entrepreneurship	Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Local Business stimulation	
Safeguarding against environmental risks	Safeguarding against environmental risks		*Culture Company Activity to Minimise Environmental Impact*
Safeguarding against human-related risks	Safeguarding against human-related risks		Environmental measures/mitigation
Green management and	Green Management and	Carbon emissions generated; Positive sense	*Culture Company Activity to Minimise*

development	Development	of place; Positive connection to the natural world; Awareness of environmental issues	*Environmental Impact*
Use of resources	Use of resources	Use of resources; Priority on local resources	
Environmental	Environment	Positive connection to the natural world; Positive sense of place; Awareness of environmental issues	*Mitigating environmental impact*
Awareness raising	Awareness Raising	Awareness of environmental issues	
Emotional well-being		Emotional wellbeing strengthened (including the opportunity for emotional expression and sense of emotion)	
Physical well-being		Physical well-being strengthened (including the sense of physical safety)	
Psychological well-being		Psychological well-being strengthened	
Self-empowerment		Confidence in capabilities expanded	
Sense of freedom		Sense of freedom to live the life you wish enabled	
Life satisfaction		Life satisfaction increased	
Living conditions	Living Conditions	Contribution to neighbourhood character	
Pleasure and fun		Pleasure and fun experienced	Audience satisfaction
Peace and safety	Peace and Safety	Sense of physical and emotional safety	
Partnership and international collaborations	Partnerships and Cultural Cooperation		European collaborations; European perception; *Sponsors and Partner Involvement*
Governance	Good governance		Budget: public and private investment and earned income; Expenditure;

			Governance and delivery process
Regional and local development	Regional and local development	Contribution to neighbourhood character	Local, national, international significance of the programme; European audience in the city; Associated Infrastructure Development; *Economy and tourism*
Visibility and reputation	Visibility and Reputation		Numbers and value of published articles and media; National image of city; Audience satisfaction; *Image and Perceptions; Print and Broadcast Media Discourses*

Tab. 8 Overview of all frequent topics emerged from the analysis of the selected holistic tools (own elaboration)

Chapter V − A Proposal for the Holistic Evaluation of Cultural Welfare Activities: HECWA Framework

This chapter presents the proposed holistic framework for CWA, hereafter referred to as HECWA, Holistic Evaluation for Cultural Welfare Activities.

HECWA is a holistic framework designed to address all the specific requirements of CW projects and programmes, particularly in inner areas facing socio-economic and environmental challenges. HECWA design was informed by the analysis of existing holistic models and frameworks (described in Chapter IV), namely Impacts 08, SoPHIA Model, and Dunphy's Holistic Framework for Evaluation of Arts Engagement. Their critical analysis through the lens of CW has revealed several key and critical features, along with the lack of a suitable model for conducting the assessment of CW activities.

The initial section of Chapter V delineates the fundamental principles and main aims that inform HECWA's evaluation philosophy. This section also presents the choices made in the design of the framework to meet the needs of inner areas, as identified in Chapter I. This is followed by three sections that explore the framework's three pillars.

First, the Time axis is presented. The *ex ante*, *in itinere* and *ex post* phases are displayed as a pathway to illustrate the theory embedded within the framework, specifically the Theory of Change.

The second section is devoted to the categories of stakeholders involved in CWAs, which fall under the domain of People. The selection of a multi-stakeholder approach is inextricably linked to implementing a comprehensive vision, which would be incomplete without the combination of diverse perspectives. This section will also highlight aspects related to the subject of participation, following on from the topics covered in Part 2 of this thesis.

The fourth and final section is the most comprehensive in terms of both the scope and number of topics covered, as it provides a detailed examination of the identified six domains and twenty-three subdomains implemented in HECWA. It is divided into six main sections, one for each domain: 1) Cultural Domain; 2) Social Domain; 3) Economic Domain; 4) Ecological Domain; 5) Well-being, Health & Quality of Life Domain; 6) Governance and Delivery Process Domain. The latter domain will once again address the topic of participatory process implementation, in conjunction with the issues of multi-level engagement and disciplinary convergence. An integrated solution for the assessment of these approaches will be presented, adopting the working principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) Compass guiding framework (European Commission, 2022).

1. Guiding Principles and Main Objectives of the HECWA Framework

> "What I do is support the people working in this sector to practice well, by facilitating creative approaches to reflection, learning, and evaluation. And I have been interested in evaluation for many years now and through that work I got really curious about quality. What is it? In a Creative Health Sector? We all do different things, in different ways, with different people in different context. So what does quality means to us?"
>
> Jane Willis presenting the Creative Health Quality Framework
> (Arts Development Company, 2024, 1:00)

The HECWA framework offers a conceptual basis for reflection on the contribution of CWAs and their assessment. Starting from the analysis of existing holistic models and frameworks analysed in Chapter IV, a customised framework for the CW field was formulated. Adopting a managerial point of view, this framework proposes a holistic and multi-stakeholder approach to evaluation. HECWA adheres to the principles put forth by the Creative Health Quality Framework, which posits that quality is achieved when the action is shaped after eight deeply interconnected core principles (Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance, 2023). In accordance with the Quality Framework, CWAs should aspire to value lived experience and enable potential (person-centred) by working towards a more just and equitable society (equitable), ensuring safety and managing risk (safe) while engaging, inspiring, and igniting change (creative); collaborating with others to develop joined-up approaches (collaborative), being realistic about what can be achieved (realistic), reflecting, evaluating, and learning (reflective), and working towards a positive, long-term legacy for people and planet (sustainable).

HECWA emphasises the importance of assessment as a core strategic and reflective practice that informs and underpins the entire process flow, facilitating a continuous learning and improvement process (Cerquetti, 2022, p. 67). Its ethos is to support cultural practitioners, managers, researchers, and, in broader terms, teams and organisations with an interest in the development and assessment of cultural programmes designed to improve health and wellbeing. It may also be of benefit to health commissioners, territorial health agencies, third sector organisations, trainers, funders, decision makers, commissioners, researchers and other relevant parties. It presents a multi-stakeholder structure that allows for adaptability to the objectives, purposes, and requirements underlying the evaluation.

This framework acknowledges the pivotal role of the CWA's team − especially of those responsible for facilitating participatory processes − within the context of the CWA. It consequently

adopts a managerial focus, conceptualising the stakeholders' ecosystem as an orchestra and presenting a framework that will serve as a guide for orchestrators (Biondi *et al.*, 2020).

The final objective in terms of governance is to offer a common methodology that is scalable and useful for the creation of a territorial knowledge base. In this sense, this thesis aims to respond also to the need for a reference framework to guide regional action in supporting initiatives and their evaluation. This need was already expressed in the "*Protocollo per l'adesione alla Rete per il welfare culturale nelle Marche*[73]", drawn up by the Marche Region, the Municipality of Recanati, and Fondazione Promo P.A. in 2021, and was reiterated both in the document "*Per un manifesto condiviso sullo sviluppo del welfare culturale*[74]" presented in October 2024 by Fondazione Promo P.A. with the Regions of Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna, as well as in the "*Manifesto pugliese per il Welfare Culturale*[75]" signed by the Puglia Region on 3rd October 2024.

The necessity to develop a tool for the evaluation of diverse interventions across extensive regional territories prompted the selection of a bold approach that could amplify the voices of disadvantaged areas. Indeed, the framework considers the case of inner areas as a privileged setting to identify the contribution of CWAs to mitigating territorial inequalities and to understand their ability to operate in a place-specific manner. The framework has been designed with these contexts in mind, as it is assumed that they represent the baseline against which reflection should be initiated. If the evaluation is designed to track the capacity of action to improve services, their dissemination and accessibility in disadvantaged contexts, then that very lens can be used to evaluate the same contribution in less disadvantaged contexts. Indeed, an evaluation designed to address the needs of urbanised, served, and lively contexts would have failed to identify − and showing the CWA capacity to address − the structural deficiencies that contribute significantly to the geographic gap experienced by citizens of rural and inner areas. Indeed, marginal areas are those territories situated at a considerable distance from major urban centres, where it is challenging to ensure the delivery of essential levels of performance (LEP) of services related to health, education, and transport. These three pivotal themes serve to define the subdomain of "Living Conditions" in the framework. In addition to these three key areas identified by the SNAI[76] (UVAL, 2014), a fourth issue is central to this subdomain, that of "cultural drought" (Caramis, 2023a, 2023b). This phenomenon, as identified by Istat, illustrates the unequal distribution of cultural resources and opportunities across the territory. The joint analysis reveals the existence of geographical areas

[73] Own translation: "Protocol for joining the Network for Cultural Welfare in the Marche Region".
[74] Own translation: "For a common manifesto on the development of cultural welfare".
[75] Own translation: "Apulian Manifesto for Cultural Welfare".
[76] Own translation: "National Strategy for Inner Areas".

within the country where no infrastructure or resource among those deemed fundamental for the cultural vitality of the local community is present during the reference year. The "cultural drought" reflects the traditional socio-economic divides (South-Centre-North) but also reveals inequalities that transcend administrative boundaries and affect, for example, municipalities experiencing demographic decline, inner areas, rural or sparsely populated areas, i.e., locations where cultural disadvantage is compounded by additional factors of social and economic vulnerability (*Ibidem*).

The emphasis on inner territories has also highlighted the significance of landscape, both in these specific territories and from a broader perspective, as a feature not yet enhanced in the CW scenario. Indeed, inner areas are distinguished by their richness in cultural and landscape heritage, resources that are pervasive yet overlooked. The interrelationships between the cultural and natural dimensions of heritage could be more effectively harnessed in the cultural sector, and this could also be the case in the field of Cultural Welfare[77]. Moreover, the incorporation of the natural element into the CW field would facilitate the transition to a One Health-oriented vision, recognising that human health, animal health and ecosystem health are inextricably linked (WHO, 2017). Indeed, as Smith observed (2023, p. 30):

> Another expanding area of research is the linkage of arts and health with research into the environment/one health approaches to public health. For example, Thompson *et al.* (2020) found that engagement with horticulture, artmaking and museum collections had benefits for some with mental health conditions. The authors suggest that there are distinct synergistic benefits when arts- and nature-based interventions are used together and call for museums to consider integrating creative activities with engagement with nature to benefit wellbeing. Moula, Palmer and Walshe (2022) conducted research into interconnections between arts and nature, and the impact that this has on the health and wellbeing of children and young people. They found 11 studies that looked at the link between art and nature, and found that in addition to increasing environmental awareness and pro-environmental behaviours, linking arts-based interventions with nature was helpful in reducing eco-anxiety.

Considering the above reflections and the fragilities of inner areas also in terms of environmental risk and depopulation, HECWA calls for an assessment of the contribution of CWAs to the valorisation and preservation of cultural and natural heritage, both tangible and intangible, as well as CWAs' capacity to promote an integrated ecological approach and to foster strong, equal and

[77] The potential intersection of natural and cultural components in a CWA has been addressed in Chapter I, section three, entitled "Exploring the Margin: Pathways and Obstacles to Cultural Welfare in the Inner Areas". In particular, the theme of the Nature Prescription (Kondo *et al.*, 2020; Nguyen *et al.*, 2022; Tate *et al.*, 2024) and the innovative "Creative Green Prescription" were discussed. The latter represents a new field of research that combines arts- and nature-based activities (Thomson *et al.*, 2020, p.1).

lively societies. This is achieved through the examination of cross-cutting issues and challenges, as well as within specific subdomains. These include “Enhancement of Local Cultural and Natural Resources”, “Cultural-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-use”, “Education, Training and Research”, “Artistic and Creative Vibrancy”, all three subdomains of the “Social & Civic domain”, “Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship”, “Safeguarding against Environmental Risks”, “Green Management and use of resources”, “Awareness Raising on Environmental Sustainability” and finally the previously mentioned “Living Conditions”.

The lens of inner areas selected here is not meant to be prescriptive; rather, it is a “posture” to be taken in order to examine design and evaluation from a viewpoint that is not typically considered. By adopting this approach, the aim is to foster greater sensitivity to the diversity that characterises the territories and the people who inhabit them, as well as more effective and responsive place-specific planning.

Indeed, one of the main characteristics of HECWA is its adaptability to the dimension of the project and its scalability, which is essential given the diversity of contexts, durations, actions and stakeholders. The evaluation of CWAs is not a process that can be conducted in a “one-size-fits-all” manner. Conversely, HECWA acknowledges the necessity for a diverse range of evaluation approaches and methodologies to assess complex interventions straddling culture and well-being. For these reasons, the framework is not intended to be a rigid, prescriptive, step-by-step guide to evaluation. Rather, it serves as a flexible tool to support a strategic holistic approach within the CWA. The evaluation strategy for any CWA may focus on one or more areas, depending on the specific objectives of the initiative, still the holistic lens is the recommended approach. For several CWAs, the main interest may be around health and well-being outcomes, although other areas may have varying degrees of interest. Users are encouraged to select only those subdomains that are most relevant to the aspects they wish to assess. In addition, users can adapt the framework by adding new subdomains to address specific aspects of an initiative that are not covered by the existing categories, allowing for a tailored and context-sensitive evaluation. Furthermore, given the wide range of variables in the CW design, it has been decided not to provide a set of specific indicators, leaving the evaluation team free to define their own indicators, tailoring them to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART).

Prior to embarking upon a detailed examination of the evaluation process, it is prudent to define it in accordance with four fundamental questions: 1) What is the subject of the examination? 2) What is the rationale for this examination? 3) On what theoretical approach is the impact being analysed? 4) For whom this analysis is being conducted? (Cicerchia, 2021, pp.37-38). Moreover, it is necessary to determine whether the requisite skills to apply a given technique are available within

the organisation, or whether external consultants will need to be engaged (Donovan, 2013, p. 20). Once the object of the analysis, its purpose, and the way it is carried out have been clarified, it will be possible to determine which anchoring pivots of the HECWA framework are most appropriate for defining the evaluation strategy of action under analysis.

Despite the acknowledged uniqueness of each CWA, they share several common challenges that need to be questioned each time when defining the evaluation process. To delineate a reference guide for CW in this sense, the following set of five questions was reformulated, based on the four questions structure proposed by Skingley *et al.* (2011, p. 78)[78] and Sacco's suggestion regarding the necessity of protocols in this field (2023, p. 16):

- What constitutes our "cultural active ingredient" and what evidence exists to suggest that it is associated with "health and well-being"?
- What is meant by "health and well-being" in this context, and how can they be assessed?
- What constitutes evidence that can be used to assess the extent to which the set goals have been achieved?
- Which intervention protocol should support the implementation?
- What are the most appropriate methods for the collection and communication of data and results?

Regarding the latter question, the range of evaluation tools and methods available for investigating each of the dimensions is wide. Both quantitative and qualitative data may be gathered through a variety of instruments and methods, including:

- Surveys
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Observational checklists and rating scales
- Participatory Action Research (PAR)
- Narrative methods (i.e. MSC; Narrative Medicine)
- Creative and arts-based methods[79]

[78] The original set of four questions proposed by Skingley *et al.* (2011, p. 78) was articulated as follow: "1) What do we mean by 'the arts' and what is their 'value'? 2) What do we mean in this particular context, by health and how can it be measured? 3) What counts as 'evidence', by which to judge the success of outcomes in arts and health initiatives? 4) What are the most appropriate methods of collecting data and communicating findings within this field?"

[79] Creative and art-based tools include techniques such as "photography, film, visual arts, poetry, creative writing, music, drama and dance can be used to support evaluation" (Public Health England, 2016, p.10). They help to strengthen the voice of participants by revealing hidden perspectives. Furthermore, they are highly effective in disseminating evaluation and research results, making them more accessible to an audience that extends beyond traditional academic and policy circles (Ibidem).

- Diaries or journals

As Merli (2002) observed qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, are invaluable tools for obtaining nuanced insights that surveys often fail to capture. The author emphasises the significance of this approach, particularly in the context of participatory arts that occur within a cultural deprivation setting (Merli, 2002, p. 8):

> Also, involvement in participatory arts is a cultivated cultural need and not a primary need, thus asking people whether they are satisfied with participatory arts programmes is arguably not fair unless those who are being surveyed are fully aware of their cultural deprivation. Yet because of the particular characteristics of awareness of deprivation identified by Bourdieu, it is probably not correct to use questionnaire surveys to assess whether socially deprived people are satisfied with participatory arts programmes. In-depth interviews might prove to be a better tool because they offer chances to compensate, though only in part, for distortions in communication, allowing the interviewee to ask questions and obtain information from the researcher, and enabling the researcher to understand − and not simply to measure − the ideas and the feelings of the interviewee. In-depth interviews also allow the researcher to control the effects of the research relationship, "to perceive and monitor on the spot, as the interview is actually taking place, the effects of the social structure within which it is occurring" (Bourdieu, 1993; 1999, p. 608). Finally, such methodological tool can make interviewees feel free to express and explain ideas and opinions which are not being asked to them, thus revealing aspects unforeseen by the researcher.

As with the framework proposed by Fancourt and Joss for developing and researching arts in health programmes (2015), HECWA can be used in conjunction with other frameworks, methods, and techniques to enhance comprehension and utilisation of intervention design, research methodologies, and project reporting and implementation. In broad terms, the assessment of each domain can be enhanced through the utilisation of different methodologies that are specifically designed to meet the requirements of the evaluation process. These include tools and techniques that have already been adopted by organisations for similar purposes, including Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA), Social Return On Investment (SROI), Organisational Social Reporting, or Carbon Footprint, to name but a few. The framework has been devised to represent a compass in assessment, capable of accommodating a variety of evaluation methods. Indeed, one of the framework's key strengths is its ability to integrate the assessments generated by these tools within the framework itself, thereby facilitating the analysis of insights through the lenses of cross-cutting

issues and drawbacks. This feature of HECWA was designed to address the need identified by Dunphy (2015, pp. 249-250) for an evaluation of outcomes carried out in a centre for indigenous art, which considered a range of dimensions, including economic, social, artistic and personal well-being (Cooper *et al.*, 2012). The issue that arose was due to the absence of interconnection between the models employed, namely Return On Investment (ROI) and Indicators of Community Strength.

In conclusion, the framework advocates a methodology based on collaboration with several stakeholders, in accordance with the participatory approach investigated in Chapters II and III, since participation in design − and evaluation − can be the key to providing a link between health and arts activity (UK HEA, 2000). In this regard, the selection of the Theory of Change as a theoretical framework within HECWA is intended to facilitate a people-centred and participatory approach within the design of CWAs and their evaluations.

2. The Three Axes of the HECWA Framework

The framework is inspired by the mythological figure of the Greek deity Hecate, whose statues were traditionally placed at crossroads. This positioning earned her the epithet Hecate *Trivia*, meaning "at the intersection of three roads". Hecate's liminal nature, her status as a boundary-crosser, is particularly useful in outlining the holistic nature of the framework, which is to bridge established boundaries, intersecting points of view, and provide a capacity for synthesis that can only be achieved by considering multiple perspectives and diverse dimensions. Furthermore, the pronunciation of this acronym is reminiscent of the Italian word "*equa"*, meaning fair or just. This is in alignment with the CW's intrinsic mission, which is to facilitate access to cultural resources and to ensure the participation of all members of the community in cultural activities, thereby fostering more just "well-being societies" (WHO, 2021).

The Hecate figure inspired the creation of a structure with three faces, represented by the three fundamental pillars proposed in the SoPHIA model. HECWA adopts and implements them:

1) Time;
2) People;
3) Domains.

In the following table a complete overview of the framework is provided, briefly presenting the theory, aim, context, structure, domains, subdomains, tools, and output (Tab. 9). The following main three sections of this chapter present the three axes in detail.

HECWA Holistic Evaluation for Cultural Welfare Activities − Overview

Theory	Theory of Change (Rogers, 2014)	
Aim	It is a multi-stakeholder framework that provides a holistic conceptual approach for assessing the multidimensional contribution of Cultural Welfare Activities. It promotes a holistic approach to evaluation, developed along the whole project cycle and embedded in the fabric of the cultural and creative organisation as a vehicle for continuous learning and improvement.	
Context	Cultural Welfare Actions, programmes and/or projects, pursued by teams, organisations and/or cultural, social and health sector bodies.	
Three Axes Structure	Time*: Ex ante*; *In itinere*; *Ex post*. People: final beneficiaries; intermediate beneficiaries; enablers; decision makers; wider beneficiaries. Domains: six thematic dimensions.	
Domains	Cultural Domain	Identity and Connection to the Past
		Enhancement of Local Cultural and Natural Resources
		Cultural-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-use
		Education, Training and Research
		Artistic and Creative Vibrancy
	Social & Civic Domain	Inclusive Access and Equality
		Participation and Engagement
		Social Cohesion
	Economic Domain	Employment
		Local Cultural Production
		Tourism Economy
		Economic Attractiveness
		Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship
	Ecological Domain	Safeguarding against Environmental Risks
		Green Management and Use of Resources
		Awareness Raising on Environmental Sustainability
	Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life Domain	Individual Well-being, Health, and Life Satisfaction
		Living Conditions
	Governance &	Good Governance

	Delivery Process Domain	Visibility and Reputation
		Participatory Processes
		Multi-level Engagement
		Disciplinary Convergences
Tools	Quantitative and Qualitative Methods	
Outputs	Report	

Tab. 9 Overview of the proposed framework HECWA Holistic Evaluation for Cultural Welfare Activities (own elaboration)

2.1 Time – Exploring the Theory

The Time axis is related to the project flow, from its design to evaluation. The HECWA approach differs from the Dunphy's framework, which focuses on the assessment of outcomes and impacts via the Most Significant Change. MSC is a form of participatory monitoring and evaluation that eschews the use of indicators and is based on the systematic selection of the most significant stories of change, by panels of designated stakeholders or staff (Davies & Dart, 2015, p.8). It entails the involvement of a diverse range of stakeholders in both the *in itinere* and *ex post* phases and is exclusively focused on intermediate outcomes and impacts (Cicerchia, 2021, p. 186).

Instead, HECWA adopts the ToC, Theory of Change (Rogers, 2014), which allows to emphasise inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts, still maintaining a multi-stakeholder perspective.

As Ratti pointed out (2015, p. 41), the process begins with collecting inputs, which are used in activities. The outputs that are produced immediately by activities, while the resulting changes in the lives of beneficiaries are called outcomes. The impact is the residual effect that remains when the results are purified of all elements that are not directly attributable to the work in question, and that are, in fact, the result of other concomitant circumstances. Ratti presents a useful reminder, namely that the impact assessment should at least focus on outcomes, while most of the evaluations produced on the effectiveness of cultural activities refer to outputs (e.g., number of visitors), failing the purpose of assess and communicate the change generated thanks to the activity (2015, p.41).

For this reason and to better focus the aim and the path of the activity, it is recommended the adoption of a ToC, which to be properly formulated "should describe the desired change that a project seeks to make and identify the steps involved in making that change happen" (Public Health England, 2016, p.9).

The ToC is particularly suitable as a theoretical basis in the CW field, as it urges us to first make the objectives explicit by focusing not on what we will do, but on what effects it will have. The intervention logic, the manner in which an intervention is anticipated to attain the desired results,

encompasses the underlying assumptions regarding the causality and interaction along the intervention's flow, its inputs, activities, results, outcomes and impacts, within the context of the intervention (OECD, 2023, p. 40).

ToC is a customisable and easily scalable tool that lends itself well into the project dimension. It is also noteworthy that the approach is particularly welcoming towards co-created methodologies that involve the input of both internal and external stakeholders.

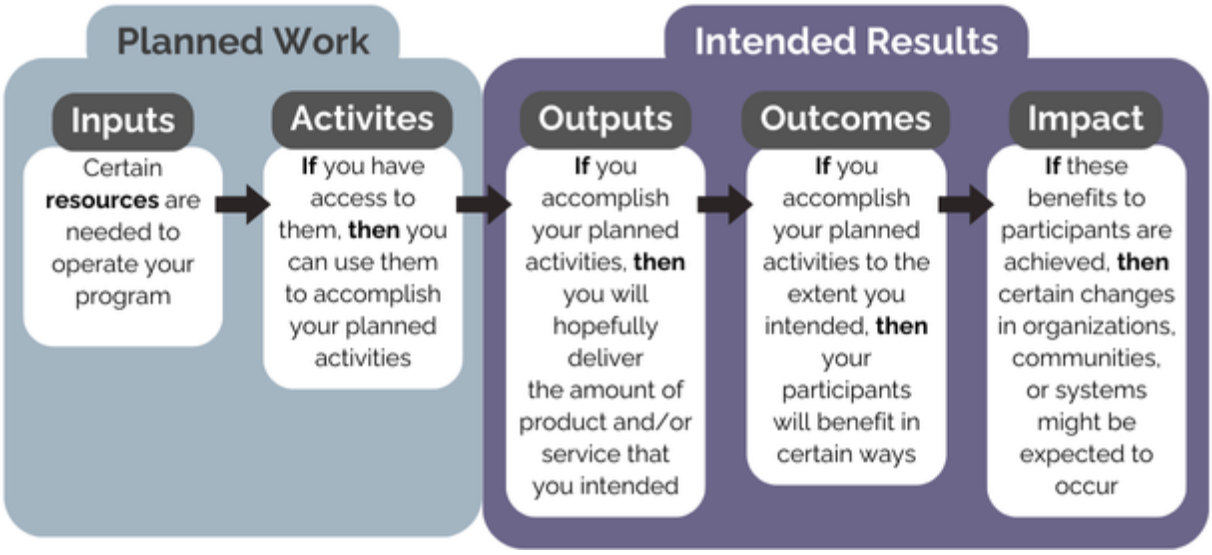
The application of ToC from the initial stages of the activity's conceptualization is particularly beneficial, as the causal model enables the formulation of intended outcomes, both immediate and long-term, that can be achieved through the activity's implementation. Below is an example of primary and intermediate outcomes framed in the ToC for a CW project, presented in the evaluation framework proposed by Public Health England (2016, p. 11):

> Consider the example of a singing project for older people. Here, the primary goal (based on a local needs assessment) may be to reduce loneliness and social isolation in this group, which may in turn be linked with other benefits such as reduced risk of mental health problems, improved mobility and improved management of physical and mental health conditions. The intermediate outcomes, or the things that need to happen in order for the primary outcome to be achieved, might include the provision of an enjoyable and accessible activity where people can increase their confidence and connect with others.

The ToC is particularly conducive to the implementation of a circular revision process. Once monitoring and evaluation data have been obtained, it is possible to modify the theory in accordance with the evidence, thereby adapting it to meet the new identified needs.

The planning of evaluations, including the budgeting of funds for their implementation, represents a fundamental aspect of effective project management. It is therefore essential that this process is initiated at the earliest stages of the project. To optimise the evaluation, it is essential to align the entire workflow with the relevant evaluative principles. It should be noted, however, that this does not imply that the project should be solely based on the results obtained, nor that the organisation should become obsessed with them. Rather, this approach entails the representation of the pathway of change, the results chain, within a logic model that lists all constituent elements as shown in Fig. 12 (Kellogg Foundation, 2004).

Fig. 12 Own elaboration of the figure "How to Read a Logic Model" (Kellogg Foundation, 2004, p.3)



A logic model is a management tool that facilitates planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of an intervention (OECD 2023, p. 43). In its 2023 Glossary, the OECD provided detailed and clear definitions for key terms of assessment and results-based management. These include definitions for the following core elements of a logical framework: inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, impact.

Inputs are defined as the financial, human, material (in-kind), and institutional resources, including technological and informational elements, utilised in an intervention. These inputs are not limited to the resources of a single funding or implementing organisation; they encompass the collective contributions from all involved entities, the community, and the local environment. (OECD, 2023, p. 39).

Activities refer to the actions or work performed using the mobilised inputs, such as funds, technical assistance, and other resources, to achieve specific objectives. These activities represent the processes through which resources are transformed into deliverables that contribute to the intervention's goals (OECD, 2023, p. 19).

Outputs are the tangible products, capital goods, or services resulting directly from an intervention. These may include immediate changes, such as improvements in knowledge, skills, or abilities, generated through the activities. Outputs are within the control of the implementing team and attributable to it (OECD, 2023, p. 45).

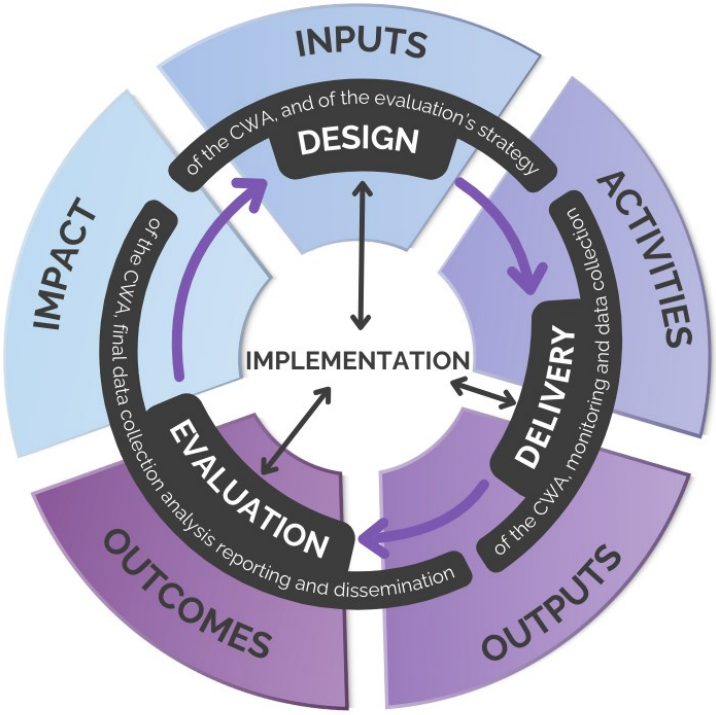
Outcomes are the short- and medium-term effects arising from an intervention's outputs. They often involve changes in institutional capacities or behavioural conditions that occur in the transition from output generation to achieving broader impacts (*Ibidem*).

Finally, impact examines the broader, long-term effects of an intervention, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended. It addresses the transformative significance of the intervention, encompassing social, environmental, and economic effects that extend beyond immediate results. Impacts are holistic, enduring changes in systems or norms that potentially enhance people's well-being, promote human rights, advance gender equality, or protect the environment. The concept of impact emphasises the far-reaching consequences of an intervention beyond its direct sphere of influence (OECD, 2023, p.36).

The use of a descriptive logic model can help in summarise a complex ToC into basic categories.

It is therefore recommended that a ToC of a manageable scope for the CWA be delineated, ensuring that stakeholders articulate the necessary actions for the objectives to be achieved and the causal links underlying their achievement. Consequently, this theory can be succinctly summarised in a logic model, which will also facilitate communication.

Fig. 13 HECWA cyclic framework (own elaboration)



The figure above illustrates the proposed cyclic framework for the implementation and evaluation of the CWA. The cycle emphasises the importance of feedback and continuous improvement, with arrows indicating the two-way relationship between the various stages of the process, namely implementation, design, delivery and evaluation.

To conclude, the ToC theoretical framework will provide a comprehensive understanding of the essential elements for evaluation and will enable the organisation to assess the viability of the evaluation process.

Accordingly, the following paragraphs identify pertinent tools and methodologies that may facilitate the design and delivery of an efficacious evaluation strategy, with a particular focus on each phase of the workflow: 1) *ex ante*; 2) *in itinere*; 3) *ex post*.

2.1.1 Ex ante

In the process of planning a CW intervention, it is of paramount importance to initially ascertain the existing knowledge pertaining to the "cultural active ingredient", including any identified benefits and specific needs that it is designed to address (Sacco, 2023, pp. 15-16; Warran et al., 2022). Concurrently, when working with a specific target group, it is imperative to be cognizant of the specific needs and evidence-based practices pertinent to that target, whether people with aphasia, elderly, adolescents and so on. The preliminary stage of the process entails a comprehensive review and examination of the available evidence concerning the effect of the "cultural active ingredient" and the existing literature on the target group. Additionally, an investigation into the potential interaction between these two elements should be conducted. Evidence may be derived from a variety of sources, including needs assessments, expert opinions, or reviews of similar cultural interventions. If available, a systematic review, which involves a formal literature search and analysis of results, can provide a comprehensive view of the impact of the intervention. Nevertheless, in some instances, systematic reviews of a singular "cultural active ingredient" designed for a particular target group may not be accessible. In such instances, a more flexible methodology may be employed, utilising in-depth research techniques in conjunction with data derived from the narrative presentation of the findings of previously conducted projects (Public Health England, 2016, p.10). This initial stage facilitates the definition of the project's development and evaluation by undertaking a synthesis of a large body of existing data.

In addition to this fundamental initial action, one of the most common activities performed in the pre-intervention phase is the SWOT analysis. This strategic approach allows for a comprehensive assessment of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the activity, with the objective of maximising potential and minimising risks within a precise context of intervention. By understanding the internal strengths and weaknesses, managers can maximise their advantages and remedy any shortcomings. At the same time, identifying external opportunities and threats enables

the intervention to adapt to its environment, exploit favourable conditions and mitigate potential challenges. This analysis contributes to a more informed and site-specific decision-making process.

Simultaneously, the application of the personas tool can be very beneficial in imagining one or more possible target users of the CWA (Salminen et al., 2022). Personas represent an exercise in user experience, whereby fictional ideal users are profiled based on research: in this scenario, personas represent a particular target group of users interested in the activity in question. A key benefit of adopting a personas-based approach is that it enables the designer to envisage potential strengths and weaknesses of the activity, as well as potential obstacles or facilitating factors that may influence the experience of the selected target. This exercise is particularly relevant when planning in disadvantaged areas, such as rural and inner regions. In these areas, the user may encounter a series of obstacles that are more significant than those encountered in an urbanised context. Primarily, the mobility of individuals in these territories is often more challenging. The second area where this tool is particularly useful is in the specificity of user's targets. The tool can also be used as a synthesis of a preliminary research activity that may have gathered information and preferences of the target group in question. Unfortunately, the tool has limitations that are mainly related to the presence of bias on the part of those carrying out the exercise. Therefore, it is recommended that the personas be profiled by a composite group with different backgrounds, perhaps in synergy between representatives of the different affiliation sectors supporting the implementation of the project, to minimise the risk of bias.

One particularly successful participatory design strategy for introducing a co-creative approach into the action is to conduct shared reflection workshops starting from the initial project formulation phase. This exercise constitutes an effective means of self-affirmation, reflection and abstraction. It is therefore recommended that not only the facilitators but also the final and intermediate beneficiaries be involved in the exercise, to build the action plan on their needs and aspirations. The suggestion is to use the questions contained in each subdomain – in the People's perspective box – to co-define expected outcomes of the actions with participants, or the detailed objectives of the ToC together with the CWA Team and funders or decision makers. Each subdomain could serve as a basis for reflections, which can be shared with a variable geometry of stakeholders according to their needs and possibilities. This step is pivotal in developing an effective evaluation and in defining the chain of results and objectives. It is imperative to recognise that in order to confirm the attainment of a goal, it is first essential to ascertain how that goal is defined by the individual with whom one is dialoguing and to what extent it has meaning in their life (Landry *et al.*, 1993). It is essential to ensure that the concepts under discussion, whether they relate to the quality of life, perceived well-being or cultural identity, are defined in a way that is understood by all those taking

part in the conversation. A comprehensive evaluation is contingent upon a shared lexicon, which necessitates the establishment of a common vocabulary with the individuals involved in the evaluation process. This entails soliciting their definitions of the evaluated objects and ascertaining their relevance to them. Additionally, it is essential to identify any aspects that may have been overlooked and warrant further attention.

Creative and art-based tools might be used to implement this approach, allowing different participants to contribute in a very accessible way and revealing hidden perspective. They include techniques such as "photography, film, visual arts, poetry, creative writing, music, drama and dance can be used to support evaluation" (Public Health England, 2016, p.10). Creative methods can be useful for collecting qualitative data and can work very well in a project, partly because they are less demanding and more engaging than traditional methods (Museums Association, 2023, p. 25). Additionally, they can help in removing some cognitive barriers becoming perfect allies in CWA design and evaluation. Furthermore, they are highly effective in disseminating evaluation and research results, making them more accessible to an audience that extends beyond traditional academic and policy circles (Public Health England, 2016, p. 10). However, the utilisation of these techniques necessitates the investment of skills, time and resources, and their implementation should be pursued in a manner that is aligned with the requirements and capabilities of the facilitators responsible for their delivery.

The *ex ante* phase is also the appropriate time to conduct fundamental considerations, primarily regarding the personnel responsible for conducting the assessment, whether they are internal or external staff, directly involved in the CWA or not (Donovan, 2013, p. 20). Secondly, a risk assessment should be conducted, which involves a detailed examination of the potential hazards that could cause harm to individuals engaged in a specific activity or situated in a particular environment, thereby enabling the implementation of appropriate preventive measures (Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance, 2023). Ultimately, this is also the time to evaluate the necessity of an ethics committee to guarantee the integrity of the intervention or the necessity to engage a critical friend from outside the action. This external individual could provide an objective and honest perspective on the CWA.

All activities that are to be carried out for the comprehensive evaluation must be scheduled within an evaluation timeline. This timeline should indicate the timing, collection mode, sample, analysis phase and final report for each activity. The extent of the evaluation of results is contingent upon the level of data required, the timing of the evaluation, and the implications in terms of the resources and expertise required (Public Health England, 2016, p. 13). If basic data is to be collected, it is imperative that this occurs before the intervention is initiated, with a subsequent

evaluation conducted upon completion. Additionally, long-term follow-up can be planned after the intervention is completed, with pre-established deadlines.

2.1.2 In itinere

The monitoring and timely data collection phase commences concurrently with the implementation of the activities. It should be noted that this step does not necessarily coincide with the project implementation phases. Rather, it can be transferred to the preliminary design stages of the proposal, particularly if participatory approaches are adopted and then intended to be highlighted in the final feedback phase.

In this phase, it is crucial to gather fundamental data, including the number of individuals involved and their characteristics, and to follow the evaluation timeline previously defined. Indeed, in order to gain insight into the radius reached by the project and to assess the extent to which the target population has been engaged, it is essential to record demographic information, including data on age, gender, place of residence, education level, income, citizenship, languages spoken, as well as data on visible and non-visible disabilities and experiences of social exclusion.

The collection of personal data from individuals must comply with data protection legislation. Prior to the collection of personally identifiable data, a data protection statement and informed consent should be acquired from participants. The data protection statement should provide a comprehensive explanation of the personal data stored, the reasons for its storage, the locations where it is stored, and the individuals or entities with access to it. It should also delineate the intended uses of the data and the level of visibility it will be subjected to be clearly outlined. For the Italian context, for example, the treatment of the data should be processed in accordance with Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No. 679/2016 and D.L. 196/2003, as well as adjusted to D.L. 101/2018 in the field of personal data protection.

In order to facilitate the timely implementation of corrective action, the monitoring phase should be designed in a manner that provides feedback on problematic information in a prompt and efficient manner, allowing for the rapid resolution and implementation of necessary remedies during the delivery of the action when feasible.

Finally, the data collection must be friendly for feedback providers, but also for those who oversee the evaluation, in terms of collection and analysis of data. In relation to the latter aspect, it is fundamental to plan with accuracy the data collection and analysis to not overcharge with duties the people who are performing the activities.

2.1.3 Ex post

The final stage of the HECWA assessment process comprises the final collection, interpretation and presentation of data. The analyses should provide a comprehensive account of the methodologies employed for each assessment component, accompanied by an objective recognition of the constraints of the research.

The integration of SoPHIA's methodology within the HECWA framework permits the utilisation of cross-cutting issues and drawbacks to illustrate the interconnections between the six distinct domains, searching for recurring and recognisable themes. Once these results have been isolated, any imbalances between the impact domains can be highlighted, thus providing insight into the potential challenges to the sustainability and success of the intervention. The intention is to identify factors of success or failure, to assess the sustainability of results and impacts, and to draw conclusions that may inform both CWA's management improvement and future other interventions.

The dissemination of results, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned from experience need to be tailored to different audiences and may address both those directly concerned by the intervention as well as other relevant parties, including funders, professionals, implementers, decision-makers, wider public and other stakeholders (OECD, 2023, p. 33). Dissemination strategies should ensure that evaluation findings contribute to a wider understanding of the role and impact of CW practices. This may include a series of reporting and dissemination activities, such as publications, conference presentations, multimedia outputs, public performances and direct engagement with stakeholders (Public Health England, 2016, p. 21).

It is suggested to show how the learning derived from the evaluation will be embedded in programme delivery and provide recommendations for changes in future actions and evaluation approaches (*Ibidem*). Connected to this aspect there is an additional critical component, namely the ability to reflect on potential areas for improvement. This reflection allows for the enhancement of future evaluations by identifying shortcomings and determining how to address them.

2.2 People – For, With, and By Whom?

The People axis concretises the multi-stakeholder approach, which is based on the identification of key players, both internal and external to the organisation providing the CWA.

The SoPHIa "Toolkit for Stakeholders" (2022) highlights that criteria used to assess targets are often defined unilaterally by those who support the assessment process. However, in order to carry out a holistic assessment, it will be essential to consider the perspectives and objectives of the various actors involved (*Ibidem*). As observed in "Arts for health and wellbeing: An evaluation

framework", stakeholder views must inform evaluation design (Public Health England, 2016). Consultation with them "will identify resources and support shared understanding and agreement about evaluation aims, priorities and methods. It can help to ensure that all stakeholders have realistic expectations of what kind of data will be needed and what the evaluation can achieve" (Public Health England, 2016, p. 8). Public Health England's proposal is for an effective consultation process that will yield results and impacts relevant to all stakeholders. My preference would be for a co-designed evaluation, which would enable the stakeholders to define objectives and indicators to assess them (Badham, 2015).

People axis encompasses five categories of stakeholders, characterised by different levels and types of engagement with the activity, namely:

1. final beneficiaries (audience members; participants);
2. intermediate beneficiaries (support networks, i.e. families, groups, delimited communities);
3. enablers (host organisation, educators, artistic/cultural workers, social workers, health workers, logistic partners; volunteers);
4. decisionmakers (funders, policymakers);
5. wider beneficiaries (local and non-local population, NGOs, third sector, institutions, companies, local activities).

First, in considering the variability and wideness of CWAs, no distinction is made between active participants and passive audiences; instead, both categories are grouped together as final beneficiaries[80]. This inclusive approach emphasises the importance of recognising the different experiences and contributions of final beneficiaries, without categorising these experiences in a hierarchical manner that privileges "active" participation over "passive" reception. Furthermore, in the present context, the clear differentiation between passive and active forms of participation is no longer a reliable indicator. Cultural participation exists on a continuum, where individuals can simultaneously engage in both "passive consumption" and "active creation", thus challenging the distinct separation (Jenkins, 2006; Jenkins *et al.*, 2009). The complexity of cultural engagement and the sharp division between active and passive participation have been subjected to scrutiny by numerous scholars who have investigated the ways in which visitors, audience members and participants engage with heritage sites, museums and cultural activities (Smith, 2006; Mc Macdonald, 2011). Such critiques frequently emphasise the intricate nature of engagement,

[80] This choice is consistent with the findings of the WHO report 67/2019, in which evidence is demonstrated for both "active and receptive engagement" (Fancourt & Finn, 2019, p.1).

proposing that even those visitors who are typically regarded as passive can assume active roles in the processes of meaning-making and cultural interpretation. For this reason, and for the variety of possible CWAs recipients, the final group of beneficiaries brings together both categories of "audience members" and "participants", breaking the hierarchical paradigm and rejecting the separation in the stakeholder model proposed by Dunphy (2015). To illustrate the practical implications of this decision, the following example is presented. According to Dunphy's stakeholder model, "participants" are those who engage directly with the activities. This is the case of *Dancewell*[81], which is a programme designed to promote dance as a therapeutic practice for individuals with Parkinson's disease[82]. In contrast, Dunphy's "audience members" category might refer to audiences or visitors. An example of this would be initiatives like *Sciroppo di Teatro*[83], which offers theatrical shows for children thanks to a paediatric prescription, fostering their engagement with the performing arts. It is evident that both active and receptive participants represent the final beneficiaries of the CWAs in object, and both are deriving benefits from distinct "cultural active principles" that engage them in various ways. For these reasons and from a broader perspective, in HECWA's stakeholder model, they are referred to as the same group of final beneficiaries, encompassing all the different approaches embraced by CWAs, also allowing the evaluation activity to grasp impacts that might be otherwise overlooked in the regular evaluation of the so-called "passive participation". The choice of presenting both types of beneficiaries in the same group is also motivated by the reflection presented in a dedicated box following this section, entitled: A reminder on Accessibility, Participation and Cultural Welfare.

The intermediate beneficiaries represent a category of paramount importance in the context of CW interventions. They are peers in relation to the final beneficiaries and they can play a reinforcing role to the action. They constitute the support networks of participants, including families, groups, and delimited communities with which the final beneficiaries have relations.

The third category comprises facilitators, including host organisations, educators, artistic and cultural workers, social workers, health workers, volunteers, and logistical partners.

The fourth category of stakeholders encompasses those responsible for making decisions, including funders and policymakers.

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[81] This practice falls under the sphere of action related to illness "management and treatment", according to the WHO Report 67 (Fancourt & Finn, 2019, p. 8).

[82] The case described herein is intended as an illustrative example. Indeed, it should be noted that this approach is not exclusive to this target group; rather, it is widely employed in the context of heterogeneous audiences or specific targets that differ from those affected by Parkinson's disease.

[83] This action belongs to the category of actions aimed at "prevention and promotion" according to WHO Report 67 (Fancourt & Finn, 2019, p. 8).

To conclude, the final category encompasses the broader beneficiary groups, including the local and non-local population (such as tourists or non-stationary inhabitants), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), third-sector organisations, institutions, companies, and local activities.

A reminder on Active Participation and Cultural Welfare

A word of caution on this point. For some decades now, the European Commission has shown a strong tendency to support initiatives that involve the active participation of the beneficiaries. In the case of CW for inner areas, an example of this phenomenon is the regulation of the ROP ESF+ 2021-2027[84] funding of the Tuscany Region. In fact, in measure 3.k.3 for the implementation of CWAs, one of the mandatory requirements presented by the European Commission for obtaining funding is that the final beneficiaries must be "active participants", and not just "passive users" (e.g., theatre workshops instead of just attending shows).

While acknowledging the significant benefits of fostering a culture of active participation within CW practices (Fancourt & Finn, 2019), it is also prudent to carefully consider and manage the potential risks and benefits, ensuring that this approach supports positive outcomes in such a sensitive context.

The first point is related to the challenges this new human-centred paradigm poses to cultural institutions such as museums, galleries, archives, libraries and archaeological sites. These actors should not be unprepared for this call, especially by virtue of the path already indicated by the Faro Convention, now almost twenty years old (Council of Europe, 2005). Yet we know how complex the implementation of this reversal, from object to people, is to date. Thus, this phenomenon could lead to another step change in the sector and, if not properly implemented by cultural institutions, would condemn these actors to be left behind.

Connected to this category, there is also a second issue to address. The risk of what I call the "setting syndrome", namely, the scenario in which the sole contribution of cultural institutions is that of acting as hosts, perfect and beautiful settings in which to carry out activities. It would be a missed opportunity not to create a union that enhances the cultural and natural heritage resources within the CW revolution. Otherwise, the Italian scenario will be crowded with cultural institutions still firmly planted on the pedestals of Culture 1.0 (Sacco *et al.* 2013) hosting programmes but unable to channel in them the multidimensional values of the heritage they aim to

[84] ROP ESF+: Programma Operativo Regionale del Fondo Sociale Europeo Plus

preserve. This is a warning for mobilisation not a wish for failure!

Secondly, the issue of accessibility must be addressed, as it is a fundamental principle that underpins all CW design. The application of the accessibility principle does not always align with the conventional definition of "active participation", which definition, among other aspects, tends to emphasise physical, cognitive, and sensory engagement. Consequently, the imposition of a singular design mode over another could potentially impede the tailored and punctual design that is so highly sought after for CWAs. It is important to note that evidence indicates that CW interventions yield results through both receptive and active engagement (Fancourt & Finn, 2019; Damaso & Zbranca, 2023). Moreover, it is essential to consider the potential for a regressive shift towards an ableist perspective, particularly among policymakers and funders, who are often detached from the practicalities of operational planning with marginalised or fragile groups. Indeed, the way active participation manifests in the reality of CW project can diverge significantly from the idea traditionally associated with the definition of active participation. This could result in a catastrophic outcome: in trying to establish a participatory paradigm, there is a risk of perpetuating a further form of discrimination.

To mitigate this issue, two strategies may be pursued. The first is to transfer to decision-makers and funders a profound understanding of the nuanced definition of "active participation" in the realm of CW, with the aim of preventing the inadvertent introduction of bureaucratic barriers to the implementation of actions. The second solution put forth is the co-design of CWA. The needs and aspirations of the beneficiaries must be placed at the core of the process, enhanced within a logical framework based on the competencies of the three sectors involved, those of culture, health and social care. This framework should be continuously shared with decision-makers and funders, and its results must be disseminated to wider society to mitigate the isolation of discriminated groups of society.

2.3 Domains – Navigating Multidimensionality

The Domains axis has six dimensions, which are based on an implemented version of the structure provided by Dunphy (2015), which was articulated as follow: 1) Cultural domain: culturally rich and vibrant communities; 2) Personal wellbeing domain: flourish and fulfilled individuals; 3) Economic domain: dynamic resilient local economies; 4) Ecological domain: sustainable built and natural environments; 5) Social domain: healthy, safe, and inclusive communities; 6) Civic domain: democratic and engaged communities.

HECWA opts to combine two of Dunphy's proposed dimensions, "Social" and "Civic", leading to the definition of five domains to which a sixth new domain is added, "Governance & Delivery

Process", which draws inspiration from the domains proposed by SoPHIA, "Social Capital & Governance", and the one included in Impacts 08, "Governance and delivery process".

In conclusion, the final list of domains, as set forth in the HECWA, comprises the following:

1. Cultural Domain;
2. Social & Civic Domain;
3. Economic Domain;
4. Ecological Domain;
5. Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life Domain;
6. Governance & Delivery Process Domain.

The six domains are comprised of numerous subdomains, amounting to a total of twenty-three. As a piece of a larger mosaic, each subdomain brings its own sectoral perspective that, when combined with all the other tiles, creates a wider and more complex picture that can only be understood in its entirety and with the help of each individual tile (Cicerchia, 2021, p. 202).

Generally, each subdomain conforms to a specific structure as indicated in Tab. 10, preceded by a long description. This structure was inspired by that of the SoPHIA model, in which the subdomains were described through the following sections: 1) description; 2) quantitative indicators; 3) people's perspective on the quality of intervention; 4) cross-cutting issues; 5) counter effects (SoPHIA project, 2021).

Subdomain					
Short Description	People's Perspective	Tips for Evaluation	Cross-cutting Issues	Drawbacks	SDGs 2030

Tab. 10 Subdomains structure (own elaboration)

The long description is preceded by an introduction in italics, which highlights the principal references used to form each subdomain's description and table. These are drawn mainly from the holistic tools presented in the previous chapter, namely SoPHIA's model, Impacts 08, and Dunphy's framework. In the case of the final domain about the Governance & Delivery Process, the NEB Compass is also included as main reference for three subdomains[85] (European Commission, 2022).

The "People's Perspective" section encompasses questions relating to the perspectives of the different stakeholder categories. Some of these questions are original, while others, marked with one or two asterisks[86], were inspired by those presented in the SoPHIA model (SoPHIA project,

[85] Which are: "Participatory Process"; "Multi-level Engagement"; "Disciplinary Convergences".

[86] In each table, questions inspired by existing models are marked with an asterisk: one * for questions from SoPHIA's "People Perspective on the intervention" (SoPHIA project, 2021)., and a double asterisk (**) for those

2021) and in the working principles of the NEB Compass (European Commission, 2022)[87]. These insights underwent a substantial process of remodelling and revision to yield new questions aligned with CW evaluation requirements.

Regarding the contribution of the NEB Compass to the HECWA framework, the ambitions delineated in the questions section of the three working principles of the tool have been adopted in the three subdomains that the Compass has inspired[88]. In particular, the subdomains reproduce the three sets of ambitions listed for each working principle. The first of these is the working principle of "Participatory Process", which is presented alongside the ambitions: 1) to consult; 2) to co-develop; 3) to self-govern. The second one is the working principle of "Multi-level Engagement", which encompasses the ambitions: 1) to work locally; 2) to work across levels; 3) to work globally. Lastly, the working principle of "Transdisciplinary Approach", which contains the ambitions: 1) to be multidisciplinary; 2) to be interdisciplinary; 3) to be beyond-disciplinary (*Ibidem*).

In the section entitled "Tips for evaluation", the most important points are highlighted, with the aim of attracting the attention of those responsible for formulating the evaluation strategy around these subjects.

Broadly, whenever the word People is mentioned, it means that the proposed element can, and should, be observed from the point of view of different categories of stakeholders. The aim is to provide a flexible and adaptable framework for those designing evaluation, and to stimulate a mobile thinking not directed *a priori* towards specific categories. This intention is reflected in the tables' section "People's Perspective", in which guiding questions are provided to shape the evaluation of the subdomain and to suggest crucial areas of analysis. In alignment with the meticulously devised structure put forth by SoPHIA, "Cross-cutting Issues" are discerned for each subdomain. Similarly, the possibility of "Drawbacks" is highlight when needed.

Ultimately, the subdomains are linked to the pertinent sustainable development goals (SDGs) outlined in the United Nations Agenda 2030, thereby offering an additional framework for evaluating the generated contribution (United Nations, 2015). The following figure provides a

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inspired by the "Possible Guiding Questions" presented for each ambition of the working principles of the NEB Compass (European Commission, 2022).

[87] It is imperative to note that any reference to extant models (SoPHIA, Dunphy, Impacts 08, NEB Compass) employed in the formulation of each subdomain is italicised at the commencement of the paragraph for each subdomain. In particular, the elements presented in the subdomains of the SoPHIA model, and the working principles of the NEB Compass proved to be a valuable point of departure for the formulation of the questions presented in the "People's Perspective" section.

[88] The subdomains "Participatory Process", "Multi-level Engagement" and "Disciplinary Convergences" which are part of the Governance & Delivery Process Domain.

graphic overview of domains and subdomain, for a comprehensive overview of the brief descriptions of all subdomains, please refer to Tab. 11.

Fig. 14 Graphic overview of HECWA's Domains and Subdomains (own elaboration)

Domain	Subdomain	Short Description
Cultural Domain	Identity and Connection to the Past	The aim is to assess how the CWA facilitates the expression and formation of cultural identity, encompassing its symbolic and spiritual dimensions, both at the individual and collective levels.
	Enhancement of Local Cultural and Natural Resources	The aim is to assess how the CWA contributes to the enhancement of local heritage resources, while ensuring their conservation and preservation. The term "heritage" is here employed to denote both tangible and intangible cultural and natural assets, as well as landscape features.
	Cultural-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-use	The aim is to assess how the CWA promotes the use of spaces, cultural or otherwise, and whether it contributes to reinterpreting these spaces with new meanings and functions.

	Education, Training and Research	The aim is to assess how the CWA contributes to cultivate, augment and disseminate knowledge in three distinct yet interrelated fields: education, training and research.
	Artistic and Creative Vibrancy	The aim is to assess how the CWA contributes to artistic and creative vibrancy, both for creative/artistic stakeholders (e.g., enablers) and other categories of People (e.g., final beneficiaries).
Social & Civic Domain	Inclusive Access and Equality	The aim is to assess how the CWA fosters inclusive access for people involved.
	Participation and Engagement	The aim is to assess how the CWA encourages active participation and civic engagement both within and outside the proposed activities.
	Social Cohesion	The aim is to assess how the CWA promotes social cohesion by building relationships and mutual respect between individuals and groups.
Economic Domain	Employment	The aim is to assess how the CWA fosters fair employment, reduces gender disparities, and expands opportunities for disadvantaged individuals and younger populations.
	Local Cultural Production	The aim is to assess how the CWA facilitates local cultural production within the cultural sector, contemporary creative industries, and traditional craft industries.
	Tourism Economy	The aim is to assess how the CWA contributes to the tourism economy.
	Economic Attractiveness	The aim is to assess the CWA's ability to attract economic flows and diversified investments, generating a multiplier effect and fostering cooperation between the private and public sectors, as well as with the third sector.
	Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship	The aim is to assess how the CWA fosters social innovation and growth through the identification of social needs and the promotion of projects in collaboration with social entrepreneurs.
Ecological Domain	Safeguarding against Environmental Risks	The aim is to assess how the CWA implements and/or promotes protective measures against environmental risks that may threaten individuals and places.
	Green Management and Use of Resources	The aim is to assess how the CWA applies environmentally sustainable, effective and efficient management practices and resource use.
	Awareness Raising on Environmental Sustainability	The aim is to assess how the CWA fosters awareness on environmental sustainability and sustainable development matters by promoting conscious and sustainable practices and behaviours.
Well-being, Health, & Quality of	Individual Well-being, Health, and Life Satisfaction	The aim is to assess how the CWA contributes to the people's well-being, health, and life satisfaction.

Life Domain	Living Conditions	The aim is to assess whether the CWA contributes positively to the living conditions of individuals and groups engaged in the activity or impacted by its presence in the area.
Governance & Delivery Process Domain	Good Governance	The aim is to assess the good governance of the CWA, focusing on transparency, responsiveness, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency.
	Visibility and Reputation	The aim is to assess the visibility of the CWA, according to criteria established during the programming phase, and to ascertain whether the overall reputation of the intervention is favourable.
	Participatory Processes	The aim is to assess the degree (consultation; co-development; self-governance) to which people are involved in the design, implementation and evaluation phases of the CWA.
	Multi-level Engagement	The aim is to assess the CWA's ability to nurture effective exchange both horizontally and vertically, within a given local context, across different levels, and/or globally.
	Disciplinary Convergences	The aim is to assess the chosen approach (multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, or transdisciplinary) used by the CWA team to integrate diverse disciplines effectively.

Tab. 11 Overview of Domains and Subdomains with descriptions (own elaboration)

2.3.1 Cultural Domain

The analysis of cultural impacts presents a complex first challenge. In the field of CW, it seems inappropriate to adopt as a paradigm an incremental assessment of cultural knowledge in beneficiaries. This approach is inadequate for providing an eloquent picture of the action, particularly when examining the impact of interventions on vulnerable groups such as individuals with disabilities, dementia, cognitive impairments, or Alzheimer's disease. Moreover, such an approach can also led to blurring the experiences of people living in fragile conditions. This can generate frustration and estrangement, producing an effect contrary to that desired for action. Accordingly, this aspect is set aside, and the objective of the domain is to investigate other cultural dimensions of action.

Firstly, it examines how CWAs reinforce the connection to the local cultural and creative production, as well as cultural and natural heritage. The extent to which CWAs contribute to the construction or reinforcement of individual and collective identities.

Furthermore, the domain aims to investigate how CWAs facilitate the construction and dissemination of historical memory, by fostering interactions between demographic groups that are particularly vulnerable, such as the elderly and the young, migrants and local communities.

In parallel, there is a focus on the enhancement of cultural and natural resources; these latter might play a pivotal role in the evolving scenario of Italian CW. Indeed, landscape heritage could play a key role in future integrated strategies between social prescription and green prescription following a One Health perspective[89]. Such strategies could serve to reinforce a unified perception of heritage as a continuum between natural and cultural assets, thereby facilitating a more integrated approach to safeguarding and valorisation. Moreover, both resources, especially in inland areas, are considered distinctive territorial assets that can uniquely contribute to the development of CW practices in this extensive, yet marginalised, portion of the Italian country.

Subsequently, the subdomain examines the contribution of the CWA in increasing artistic and creative vibrancy, while also emphasising the potential dangers of alienation in artists and professionals, who sometimes perceive themselves as relegated to mere instruments for correcting social deficiencies. As Holden observes, "artists and professionals are alienated and find themselves being used as a means to correct social deficits" (2013, p. 28).

[89] A case in point is the ongoing initiative, launched by the ASO Mauritian Order of Turin in 2020, which has integrated elements of social theatre with activities related to horticulture. The project is entitled "Da Giardino del Rito Laico a Giardino Parlante di Cura" (From Garden of Laic Rite to Talking Garden of Care, own translation).

Finally, the issue of knowledge dissemination was considered and addressed from three perspectives: the educational sphere (formal, non-formal and informal) with a lifelong learning approach; the training realm; and the promotion of scientific research, both academic and non-academic.

In consideration of the aforementioned factors, the domain is comprised of five subdomains, which are described below: Identity and Connection to the Past; Enhancement of Local Cultural and Natural Resources; Cultural-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-use; Education, Training and Research; Artistic and Creative Vibrancy.

Identity and Connection to the Past

This subdomain combines the SoPHIA's subdomain "Identity and Memory" with those proposed by Dunphy "Sense of connection to past (history, heritage, identity)" and "Expression of communal meanings (including spiritual, transpersonal connection)".

The desire to combine these two aspects emerged from a reflection stimulated by the Fribourg Declaration on Cultural Rights (UNESCO, 2007). In the Declaration asserts that the "cultural identity[90]" is deeply interwoven with the ability to express, practice, and develop one's culture. Cultural rights are seen as the foundation for individuals and groups to preserve their traditions and develop new cultural forms, thereby allowing them to construct, maintain, and adapt their individual and communal identities over time. The concept of identity should not be conceived as a singular entity. Indeed, as Amartya Sen (2006) posits, everyone possesses the capacity to select their own identities. Reducing identity to a single construct represents a simplistic view that does not align with reality. This perspective is pivotal in reaffirming the agency of identity formation without perceiving it as a predetermined destiny or a divisive boundary that alienates and estranges from the other. It is widely acknowledged that radical identity drift can precipitate more intense and contentious conflicts (Sen, 2006). It is therefore crucial to conceptualise the expression of identities as a conduit for self-determination, symbolic and spiritual expression, tolerance and mutual understanding. In contemplating these aspects, it is vital to consider the possibility of a discordant and conflicting dimension emerging, which is nevertheless necessary to ensure the expression of unmet needs and to provide the necessary space to challenge "authorised heritage discourses" that tend to occupy all available space by marginalising other narratives (Smith, 2006).

[90] As stated in Article 2 letter b. of the Declaration: "The term "cultural identity" is understood as the set of cultural references by which a person, individually or with others, seeks self-definition, self-constitution, communication and recognition of his or her dignity." (own translation).

The table below, including the questions in the "People's Perspective" section, are an original product of the analysis and synthesis just presented; questions inspired by those of the model presented by the SoPHIA project (2021, p. 25) are shown in the table accompanied by an asterisk.

Subdomain	Identity and Connection to the Past
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA facilitates the expression and formation of cultural identity, encompassing its symbolic and spiritual dimensions, both at the individual and collective levels.
People's Perspective	- Does the CWA carry symbolic/spiritual values for different communities and collective/local/regional/national identities? * - How does individual memory relate to the CWA? * - How does social/ collective memory relate to the CWA? * - How does the CWA help me feel connected to the history and/or heritage of the place where it takes place? - Does the CWA allow me to affirm my own cultural identity? Also, in a symbolic and/or spiritual dimension? - Does the CWA respect the way I and others express our cultural identity? - Does the CWA promote hatred or intolerance towards my cultural identity or that of others? - Does the CWA help me to shape, maintain or adapt my identity? - Does the CWA help me feel connected to the heritage/history and foster a sense of communal meanings? - Does the CWA give me a new understanding of history and the past? - How does the CWA foster a sense of identity and belonging? How would it be described?
Tips for Evaluation	As the connection to identity is deeply personal, it may be useful to include indicators that capture emotional responses (e.g., sense of belonging, pride, bonding) and reflections on personal identity. Furthermore, to assess whether different identities and narratives are represented, create indicators that test whether marginal or alternative stories are included. This ensures that the evaluation captures whether the intervention respects and amplifies a wide range of cultural identities and histories.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Social & Civic**: the acknowledgement of diverse cultural identities will facilitate inclusive representation and access, thereby encouraging pluralistic narratives. These factors are essential for fostering greater engagement and participation, thereby advancing social cohesion objectives.
Drawbacks	**Social & Civic**: Some groups may feel excluded or inadequately represented within the activity. Moreover, there is a risk of conflict or insecurity among cultural minorities if they are situated in a context that is hostile towards them, whether due to historical reasons or otherwise.
SDGs 2030	SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 16 − Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Tab. 12 Overview of the subdomain Identity and Connection to the Past (own elaboration)

Enhancement of Local Cultural and Natural Resources

This subdomain was established with the specific intention of addressing the needs of inland areas, which are particularly vulnerable yet rich in cultural and natural resource, often undervalued. The objective is to assess the extent to which CWAs embed the enhancement of local heritage resources, encompassing both tangible and intangible cultural assets, as well as landscape features, while guaranteeing their conservation and safeguarding.

The term "heritage" is here employed to denote both tangible and intangible cultural and natural assets, as well as landscape features. The inclusion of natural resources in the Italian discourse on CW is crucial. Firstly the definition of heritage encompasses both cultural and landscape heritage, and they are regulated under the same law (D.Lgs. 22 Gennaio 2004, n. 42, Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio[91]). Secondly, it could facilitate greater awareness and dissemination of already widespread practices such as "green prescription", thereby fostering a virtuous relationship between cultural and natural assets. Lastly, in the context of inland areas, it is crucial to acknowledge the abundance of resources, including both natural and cultural, which should be enhanced and safeguarded in a place-specific logic.

Moreover, in alignment with the principles outlined in the Faro Convention, which emphasises the importance of community involvement in heritage preservation, this subdomain acknowledges the pivotal role of heritage communities and underscores the potential benefits that can be derived from their mobilisation (Council of Europe, 2005). The objective is to accord precedence to the pivotal role of local cultural and natural resources within these communities. This is with the intention of liberating them from a predominantly tourist orientation, which has recently become the prevailing, if not exclusive, interpretation of their significance. Indeed, local cultural assets possess considerable potential to foster collective identity and enhance community well-being and sense of belonging, if properly channelled. In this respect, the objective of the subdomain is also to ascertain the extent to which the CWA is capable of triggering or facilitating community-led initiatives for the preservation and enhancement of heritage.

However, it is essential to approach this enhancement with caution and balance to guarantee safeguarding and avoid overuse or commercialisation, which could jeopardise the very resources it seeks to valorise. Furthermore, if such enhancement is unable to produce sustainable forms of tourism, local communities may feel displaced or lose access to local heritage, overly focused on tourism or outside interests.

[91] Own translation: "Legislative Decree of 22 January 2004, No. 42, Code of Cultural Heritage and Landscape".

This subdomain is not based on specific subdomains presented in other models; therefore, the content that it incorporates is original.

Subdomain	Enhancement of Local Cultural and Natural Resources
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA contributes to the enhancement of local heritage resources, while ensuring their conservation and preservation. The term "heritage" is here employed to denote both tangible and intangible cultural and natural assets, as well as landscape features.
People's Perspective	- Does the CWA make use of local heritage in its implementation? - Does the CWA help appreciate the local heritage? - Has the CWA increased awareness of local heritage conservation? - Does the CWA inspire to contribute to the conservation and/or enhancement of local heritage? - Does the CWA support community-led initiatives to protect and/or enhance local heritage? - Does the CWA present a potential threat to the preservation of local heritage? - Does the CWA expose the local heritage to human-related risks? If so, how does it mitigate them?
Tips for evaluation	Before assessing the effective enhancement of the local cultural and natural heritage, it is necessary to meticulously map all the resources that will be included in the activity, such as: natural, built and archaeological sites, museums, monuments, works of art, historical cities, literary, musical, audiovisual and digital works, and knowledge, practices and traditions.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Social & Civic**: community participation and engagement with local heritage can contribute to long-term management and care, while strengthening local identities, a sense of belonging and pride. **Economic**: the enhancement of local heritage is of critical importance in the promotion of sustainable forms of tourism. By attracting visitors in search of authentic cultural experiences, it generates increased revenue for local businesses and stimulates job creation in tourism-related sectors. The promotion of craftsmanship and local manufacture serves to reinforce economic resilience. **Ecological**: the CWA can foster sustainable heritage practices, such as efforts to preserve historical sites or promote responsible tourism, ensuring long-term resource protection.
Drawbacks	**Economic**: An increased focus on local resources may result in overuse or wild commercialisation, which could potentially damage the resources themselves. Furthermore, if such enhancement is unable to produce sustainable forms of tourism, local communities may feel displaced or lose access to local heritage, overly focused on tourism or outside interests.
SDGs 2030	SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 13 − Climate Action SDG 16 − Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 13 Overview of the subdomain Enhancement of Local Cultural and Natural Resources (own elaboration)

Education, Training and Research

This subdomain is inspired by the SoPHIA subdomain "Education" and "Research", contained in the domain "Education, Creativity and Innovation", and Dunphy's subdomain: "Employment-enhancing skill development" in the "Economic domain".

This subdomain adopts a more wide-ranging perspective, focusing on the capacity of the CWA to cultivate, augment and disseminate knowledge. To achieve this, the subdomain brings together three distinct yet interrelated fields: education, training and research. In terms of the educational sphere, it is essential to consider the contribution of the CWA to all forms of education, including formal, non-formal and informal (Johnson & Majewska, 2022). CW protocols, such as the Pre-Text, have been effective in both therapeutic contexts, such as rehabilitation from mental health conditions, and in educational ones, for literacy and learning (Sommer & Mohamed, 2013; Sommer, 2021; Osborn *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, through this subdomain, it will be possible to assess the contribution of the CWA. both in spreading an inclusive culture of lifelong learning and in promoting the development of specific skills, such as digital literacy. The training aspect focuses on opportunities for individuals engaged in higher education or professionals to gain further skills, and training, particularly in the design and implementation of CWAs. Obviously, this concerns all sectors involved in the implementation of the action, namely cultural, social and health sectors. In conclusion, this subdomain also encompasses the research activity pursued by public and private bodies and individuals. Given the pivotal role of research in gathering and disseminating evidence in the domain of CW initiatives, it is imperative to incorporate this aspect into the evaluation phase. When examining the subject of research, it is essential to consider a number of key factors. These include the specific areas of focus, the interdisciplinary nature of the work, the availability of funding, and the eventual research outputs. This perspective emphasises the reciprocal nature of the relationship between the CW sector and the research domain, which are mutually reinforcing and facilitate each other's advancement.

The questions enumerated in the table are predominantly original, with the exception of those marked with an asterisk, which refer to questions from the subdomains of the SoPHIA model previously mentioned (SoPHIA project, 2021, pp. 38, 40).

Subdomain	Education, Training and Research
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA contributes to cultivating, augmenting and disseminating knowledge in three distinct yet interrelated fields: education, training and research.
People's	- In what ways does the CWA provide opportunities for education and skill development?

Perspective	- Are the educational/research resources provided open and accessible? * - Which groups of society are the CWA open to? * - What are the demographics of the People involved in learning/training? - Is the CWA carried out in cooperation with educational institutions? - What is the background of personnel in education? * - In what ways does the CWA facilitate knowledge transfer in different educational settings (formal, nonformal, informal)? What knowledge is shared? - Does the CWA encourage the development or use of innovative educational methods or tools to promote cultural engagement? - Does the CWA facilitate knowledge transfer between generations within the community? - Does the activity provide specific training for facilitators who deliver it? - How does the CWA contribute to professional development within the cultural, social, or health sectors? - Is the CWA open to research possibilities? * - How are People rewarded for participating in research? * - Is the CWA included in research projects addressing CW topics? - Does the CWA support interdisciplinary research? - What are the affiliations of the researchers? * - What are the sources of funding? * - Which is the total amount of research funds of the CWA?
Tips for Evaluation	In the area of training, an analysis should be made of the skills already possessed by the facilitators to assess their training needs and the actual increase in their skills and knowledge because of the action.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Social & Civic**: the implementation of education, training and research can promote social inclusion and empower communities, fostering an inclusive culture of lifelong learning and civic engagement. **Economic**: the implementation of education, training and research can contribute positively to improving employment levels. **Ecological**: education, training, and research initiatives focused on sustainable practices in the field of Cultural Welfare can enhance the conservation of cultural and natural heritage by aligning educational objectives with safeguarding. **Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life**: the acquisition of knowledge and competencies, can help mitigate barriers in access to services (e.g., a CWA that improve digital literacy of the elderly in remote areas can, among other effects, like reducing isolation, also improve their relationship with the health sector).
Drawbacks	**Social & Civic**: it is possible that the Research activity may be perceived as external to the action or extractive unless it is properly incorporated and adapted to the requirements of the CWA and participants themselves.
SDGs 2030	SDG 4 − Quality Education SDG 8 − Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 16 − Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions: SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 14 Overview of the subdomain Education, Training and Research (own elaboration)

Cultural-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-use

This subdomain is inspired by the SoPHIA subdomain "Heritage-led Regeneration & Adaptive Re-use" contained in the domain "Identity of Place".

This subdomain examines the relationship between CWAs and the use of spaces, considering both urban and rural contexts. It emphasises the capacity of CWA to reinterpret spaces, whether cultural or not, loading them with new meanings and uses. To give a relevant example, in the case of inner areas, this subdomain is useful to evaluate the ability of interventions to "inhabit" the architectural heritage, often poorly used and valued, that is spread across this territory, such as libraries and museums (Caramis, 2023a, 2023b).

The questions posed in the "People's Perspective" section are largely original, except for one question which reformulates a question from the subdomain of the SoPHIA model (2021, p. 28). This latter question is accompanied by an asterisk.

Subdomain	Cultural-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-use
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA promotes the use of spaces, cultural or otherwise, and whether it contributes to reinterpreting these spaces with new meanings and functions.
People's Perspective	- Is the CWA taking place in local spaces? - Is the CWA taking place in under-utilised spaces? - Has the CWA enhanced the functionality of local spaces (whether cultural or not)? - How does the CWA change the perception of used spaces? - Does the CWA encourage community engagement with previously underused spaces? - Does the CWA provide new uses for spaces that contribute to community well-being? - How does the CWA foster a sense of identity and belonging linked to transformed spaces? - What is the People's response to integrating the spaces hosting the CWA into their lives? *
Tips for evaluation	To effectively assess the impact of CWA on culture-driven regeneration, it is useful to track some quantitative output data such as the number of activities performed at a location and the increased liveliness and use of the same. On the other hand, it is important to collect qualitative data that will investigate in depth any variations in the community's perceptions of the spaces used.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Social & Civic**: Engaging communities in the reimagining of local spaces fosters social cohesion and a sense of ownership. For this reason, the participation of residents must be ensured in order to guarantee that the transformations undertaken reflect the needs and desires of those who will be affected by them.
Drawbacks	**Social & Civic**: The use of places for CW purposes should not preclude access to them, which must always be guaranteed in clear and sufficient ways to all.

SDGs 2030	SDG 9 − Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 13 − Climate Action SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 15 Overview of the subdomain Cultural-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-use (own elaboration)

Artistic and Creative Vibrancy

This subdomain is mainly inspired by the SoPHIA subdomain "Arts and Creativity", contained in the domain "Education, Creativity and Innovation"; however, it also draws inspiration from Dunphy's subdomains "Creative stimulation experienced" and "Opportunity for creative/symbolic expression".

The subdomain aims to assess how CWA promotes creativity and artistic vibrancy, both for creative/artistic stakeholders (this is the category of enablers, which includes, for example, artists, performers, facilitators, but also volunteers) and for other categories of People, among which the final beneficiaries will certainly be a privileged group for observation. Key aspects are the inclusion of creative/artistic activities in the CWA, or the ability to foster artistic expression for the workers involved in the delivery of the activities, but also the stimulation of creative and artistic expression for the participants and others.

The objective is to determine whether CWAs facilitate and encourage creative growth, thereby fostering a flourishing artistic ecosystem that enriches the professional and personal lives of all stakeholders. Moreover, it will be possible to identify, examine, and eventually address any sentiments of concern expressed by creative/artistic stakeholders and related to their artistic and creative expression. Indeed, those engaged in projects with a social impact orientation may perceive a restricted scope for artistic and creative expression (Schrag, 2018). As Holden argues, when the instrumental value is overemphasised, it can generate alienation in artists and professionals, who feel used to correcting social deficits (Holden, 2013, p. 28). Furthermore, as Sacco notes, if the cultural intervention is limited to a mere experimental stimulus, its efficacy may be diminished (2023, p. 16), and its expressive potential may also be constrained. Similarly, the European Dance Network report, entitled "Dance and Well-being, review of evidence and policy perspectives", emphasises the significance of "the quality of arts contents and the achievement of arts-related outcomes", as indispensable preconditions for the fulfilment of health and well-being outcomes (Baltà Portolés, 2021, p. 21).

In addition to the original questions enumerated in the table, four questions marked with an asterisk refer to questions from the subdomain "Arts and Creativity" (SoPHIA project, 2021, p. 42).

An Off-the-shelf tool is also provided in the last table, namely the Creative Achievement Questionnaire (CAQ), a self-report measure that assesses achievement across ten different domains of creativity (Carson *et al.*, 2005).

Subdomain	Artistic and Creative Vibrancy
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA contributes to artistic and creative vibrancy, both for creative/artistic stakeholders (e.g., enablers) and for other categories of People (e.g., final beneficiaries).
People's Perspective	- Do People consider the CWA to be inspiring? * - Do People consider the CWA to be a source of creativity? * - How does the CWA creatively engage People? * - How is the CWA a source of inspiration and/or creativity? - How does the CWA encourage personal creative expression? - Does the CWA offer professional development opportunities for artistic/creative actors? Are they free to express their creativity? - Does the CWA promote the development of new creative/artistic practices? - How does the CWA balance social impact with the need for freedom and artistic expression? - To what extent do tangible/intangible aspects of cultural and natural heritage serve as inspiration for creativity? *
Tips for Evaluation	It will be appropriate to set up participatory evaluation initiatives, in which we agree with our feedback providers first on what artistic and creative expression means for them. To facilitate this process, definitions may be suggested, perhaps extrapolated from the literature, to implement a rooted co-definition of these concepts. Also, monitoring the diversity of artistic productions and their frequency is recommended. This is the case of shows, exhibitions and community events, which influence the artistic and creative vitality of the reference context. It is also possible to understand whether the initiatives reach a different audience by analysing participation rates and demographics.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Social & Civic**: the promotion of artistic and creative vitality can strengthen social cohesion and fuel social life. It can promote a sense of belonging to the community by encouraging collective participation. Moreover, the use of creative tools, both within the action itself, but also in data collection and, therefore, evaluation, can break down some barriers to access by providing more accessible cognitive forms for certain categories. **Economic**: this promotion can enhance the contribution of creative/artistic actors by generating a consequent positive employment impact for the category. **Ecological**: creative and artistic practices might represent an effective medium to promote awareness of sustainability issues and promote environmentally friendly attitudes.
SDGs 2030	SDG 8 − Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities

Tab. 16 Overview of the subdomain Artistic and Creative Vibrancy (own elaboration)

Off-the-shelf tool: Creative Achievement Questionnaire (CAQ) (Carson *et al.*, 2005)
The Creative Achievement Questionnaire (CAQ), developed by Carson, Peterson and Higgins (2005), is a self-report instrument used to assess creative achievements across ten domains: visual arts, music, dance, architectural design, creative writing, humour, inventions, scientific discoveries, theatre/movies and culinary arts. Participants are required to rate their achievements on a scale that ranges from casual engagement to professional recognition. This enables both scope (in terms of the number of domains) and depth (in terms of the level of achievement) to be considered. The CAQ has been widely validated and is used in psychology and neuroscience to explore the links between creativity and personality, cognition and brain processes.

Tab. 17 Off-the-shelf tool: CAQ Creative Achievement Questionnaire (own elaboration, based on Carson et al., 2015)

2.3.2 Social & Civic Domain

The Social and Civic domain explores the interplay between inclusive access, active participation, and the resulting impact on social cohesion. The subdomains within this area can also be understood as a linear progression, with each step laying the foundations for the next. Ensuring inclusive access and equality is fundamental as it creates the necessary conditions for meaningful participation and engagement. Only by prioritising these principles initiatives can effectively foster connections, build trust and strengthen the fabric of social cohesion. This strand emphasises the importance of creating environments where diverse voices are heard and valued, and ensuring that all people, regardless of background or ability, have equal opportunities to engage. Participation is not seen as an end, but as a dynamic process that empowers communities and individuals, promotes shared decision-making and fosters a sense of collective responsibility. The goal is to contribute to developing resilient, interconnected societies capable of addressing complex challenges and pursuing common goals.

Considering the above-mentioned factors, the domain is composed of three subdomains, as detailed below: Inclusive Access and Equality; Participation and Engagement; Social Cohesion.

Inclusive Access and Equality

This subdomain draws inspiration by the SoPHIA subdomain "Inclusive Access", which is comprised in the domain "Social Capital and Governance", and Dunphy's subdomains "Equality of opportunity for all people in the community" and "Equality of men and women in social life".

It refers to the intentional efforts to ensure that everyone can fully participate in and benefit from cultural experiences and resources. The exclusion can be based on various factors and an intersectional perspective (Crenshaw, 2015) is suggested to fully acknowledge and address the unique struggles that different People involved in the CWA may experience (Holley *et al.*, 2016), adopting the points of view of both, beneficiaries and workers. Some of the factors affecting access are related to socio-economic background, age, education level, gender, visible and non-visible disabilities, health status, caregiving responsibilities, digital literacy and access, religion or belief system, criminal history, social marginalisation, ethnicity, or geographic location.

The aim of this subdomain is to assess the ability of the CWA to remove or mitigate barriers, whether physical, financial, cognitive, sensory, digital, cultural or linguistic, which prevent groups within society to engage in Cultural Welfare processes in different ways (Cicerchia *et al.*, 2024). An inclusive CWA ensures accessibility (physical, cognitive, psychological, etc.) and affordability for

all, regardless of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, ability, age, sexual or relational orientation.

When planning a CWA, it may happen that several categories of beneficiaries are targeted. This may be attributed to the fact that the objective of the action is to facilitate interaction between individuals from different categories (e.g., caregivers and caretakers; people with or without a specific condition). In other cases, this characteristic is more a design constraint than an intentional choice, as in the case of sparsely populated environments such as inland areas, where specific target groups do not reach the critical mass necessary to justify implementation of a tailored intervention for them. Therefore, in these circumstances, it may be useful to aggregate different categories of beneficiaries: people with or without health issues, people with different diseases or conditions, caregivers and caretakers, and so on and so forth. This choice, almost compulsory, brings additional challenges for an inclusive design of CWAs in disadvantaged contexts.

Questions presented in the "People's Perspective" that rely on those of the "Inclusive Access" subdomain are marked as usual with a single asterisk (SoPHIA project, 2021, p. 17).

Subdomain	Inclusive Access & Equality
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA fosters inclusive access and equality for people involved. Key issues include reducing barriers to access (financial, physical, architectural, and others) and ensuring accessibility for groups typically excluded from these contexts.
People's Perspective	- Who are the target groups and how are they reached? * - Is there a way to provide feedback on accessibility issues? - How accessible is the location for individuals with mobility difficulties and disabilities? - How is barrier-free access/aid for People with disabilities ensured? * - Is there a specific ticketing policy (tickets with subventions or discounts/free events/online events)? * - Did the cost of participating create a barrier? - Is information about the activity easy to find and understand? - Which languages are used for information material on and off site? * - Are support services (like interpreters) available if needed? - Are marginalised social groups included in the CWA? - Did People feel welcomed and included in the CWA? - If a one-size-fits-all approach is used to make the activity accessible to different categories, did it work? (e.g. caretakers and caregivers)
Tips for Evaluation	The search for possible indicators for evaluation is encouraged to focus on actual alleviation of exclusion rather than tokenistic data collection aimed at ticking as many boxes of marginality as possible. Examples as the following indicators are certainly useful, but they are meaningless if those "targeted" by our study do not experience a sense of inclusion through and/or within the CWA: 1) number of people with visible and non-visible disabilities participating in the CWA as final beneficiaries; 2) number of people with visible and

	non-visible disabilities conditions employed in the CWA. The issue of language must be addressed when dealing with people who speak languages other than those in which the CWA would normally be conducted.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: inclusive access is essential to ensure a plural cultural representation. **Social & Civic**: inclusive access is essential to foster a sense of belonging, collaboration, and participation and leads to social cohesion. **Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life**: inclusive access affects the individual well-being and leads to improved living conditions. **Economic**: inclusive access and equality must also be guaranteed in terms of employment (e.g., jobs).
Drawbacks	A choice that may be the most inclusive for a given target audience could prove to be detrimental to the needs of other stakeholders. Welfare activities that are often heavily tailored to the needs of very specific target groups may encounter difficulties in ensuring broad accessibility. **Ecological**: Access for all may conflict with the capacity of the place hosting the activity and compromise its protection from human risks (this is true for both museum spaces and natural sites).
SDGs 2030	SDG 3 − Good Health and Well-being SDG 5 − Gender Equality SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 16 − Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Tab. 18 Overview of the subdomain Inclusive Access & Equality (own elaboration)

Participation and Engagement

This subdomain is inspired by the SoPHIA subdomain "Participation and Engagement", pertaining to the domain "Social Capital and Governance", as well as Dunphy's "Civic domain: democratic and engaged communities", which includes "Active citizenship", "Membership of local organisations and decision-making bodies", "Sense of engagement in political processes".

Firstly, it seeks to evaluate the level of involvement in the proposed activities within the CWA, monitoring the participation rate in a manner that contextualizes it with respect to the target group under analysis: attendance of participants, volunteers and workers. Attention must be paid to the reliability of these indicators, as it is possible that participation rates may fluctuate for certain groups due to factors that are beyond the scope of interest but are related to personal health circumstances and conditions (e.g., caring responsibilities). Secondly, it aims to monitor the extent to which these activities contribute to the promotion of active participation in society and civic engagement. In this regard, the focus will be on how CWA stimulates individuals to participate in decision-making processes, join local organisations and contribute to civic life. If possible, it would be appropriate to consider not only the initial commitment, but also the lasting impact of these

activities on the sense of agency and responsibility generated. Indicators for this could include the frequency and depth of participants' involvement in local governance initiatives, their membership of community groups or organisations, and their sense of connection and contribution to the community at large. It may be useful to consider strengthening civic skills such as collaborative problem-solving, leadership and advocacy.

Connected to this second aspect is the theme of volunteering as a key pathway to promote civic engagement. Volunteering opportunities within CWAs can contribute to the creation of a culture of active participation and shared responsibility. To evaluate volunteer activities within the CWA, it is recommended to monitor the number and diversity of volunteers as well as track the type of activities in which they are involved. It is also recommended to consider the long-term commitment that these experiences can generate in the volunteers themselves (improved civic skills, strengthened social networks and involvement in community life). It is essential, however, to ensure that forms of volunteering do not result in exploitation of those with expertise in a particular field. The issue of skilled volunteering in the cultural sector represents a significant structural challenge. To perpetuate a cycle of this nature in CWAs would be a contradiction in terms, ultimately compromising the well-being of the very individuals whose work is required to sustain the sector.

Questions presented in the "People's Perspective", marked with a single asterisk, rely on questions from the "Participation and Engagement" subdomain (SoPHIA project, 2021, p. 19).

Subdomain	Participation and Engagement
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA encourages active participation and civic engagement both within and outside the proposed activities.
People's Perspective	- How and at what level are People invited to participate in the activity? * - Who is invited to participate in terms of age, sex, level of education, income, citizenship and languages spoken, visible and non-visible disabilities, social marginalisation? * - What is the motivation behind participation/volunteering? * - What is the experience of participation/volunteering? * - What is the process or methodology applied through which People participate? (e.g., a questionnaire, a full participatory workshop, etc.) * - Do People feel that their opinions matter? * - How does volunteering affect volunteers' relations with their/other groups? *
Tips for Evaluation	It is suggested to monitor the participation rate contextualised in relation to the target group analysed (participants, volunteers and workers), paying attention to the reliability of these indicators, since participation rates may vary for some groups due to factors outside the scope of interest but are related to personal health circumstances and conditions (e.g., care responsibility).
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: educational activities and some research activities (e.g., citizen science) can encourage participation and involvement.

	Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life: participation and engagement affect individual well-being and can lead to improved living conditions for people.
SDGs 2030	SDG 5 − Gender Equality SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 16 − Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Tab. 19 Overview of the subdomain Participation and Engagement (own elaboration)

Social Cohesion

This subdomain is inspired by the SoPHIA subdomain "Social Cohesion", which is contained within the domain "Social Capital and Governance", as well as Dunphy's subdomains "Social capital: Bridging", "Social capital: Bonding", "Recognition from valued others", "Respect for diversity and difference", "Inter-generational connections", and "Collaboration between groups in the community". By adopting a collective perspective, it focuses on the ability of an action to promote greater understanding, connection and sharing between different groups and members of society. It focuses on the role of CWAs in promoting social cohesion within communities, creating links between individuals, strengthening the sense of belonging and mutual support. As highlighted in SoPHIA, social cohesion is also promoted by diversifying the workforce. This subdomain also addresses changes in levels of communication between groups and promoting tolerance towards different cultures and lifestyles. It assesses whether the action encourages intergenerational ties that enable the sharing of knowledge, experiences and values.

Questions marked with a single asterisk, in the following table, draw upon questions from the "Social Cohesion" subdomain (SoPHIA project, 2021, p. 20).

Subdomain	Social Cohesion
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA promotes social cohesion by building relationships and mutual respect between individuals and groups.
People's Perspective	- To what extent is the exchange between different individuals/groups promoted? - Is intergenerational exchange promoted? How? - How are socially excluded individuals/groups reached and motivated to join/work/assist the CWA? * - What is the experience of People in terms of knowledge and perspective on other social groups? * - Did forms of self-organisation/relationships emerge after/during the CWA among individuals/ groups? - How People's degree of tolerance towards different cultures or lifestyles has changed? - What percentage of People involved in the CWA say they have developed a sense of pride in belonging to a particular social context?

Tips for Evaluation	As suggested by SoPHIA in this subdomain, it is of paramount importance to gather a broad knowledge of all stakeholders. It is, therefore, crucial to collect data on their demographics (age, gender, education level, income, citizenship and languages spoken, visible and non-visible disabilities and social exclusion).
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: establishing intergenerational connections also contributes to the promotion of a resilient community identity. Educational activities might foster social cohesion. **Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life**: to feel included in a cohesive social environment improves the living conditions of People and contributes to individual well-being.
SDGs 2030	SDG 5 − Gender Equality SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 16 − Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Tab. 20 Overview of the subdomain Social Cohesion (own elaboration)

2.3.3 Economic Domain

The Economic domain assesses the multifaceted effects of CWAs on local economies, with a particular emphasis on the generation of quality employment opportunities, the resilience of cultural production, and the attraction of investment to under-served areas. In drawing upon the "Work and Prosperity" domain of SoPHIA, this evaluation seeks to advance a sustainable and equitable economic vision that prioritises the well-being of People. It examines the interplay between these factors and considers the potential risks, such as precarious working conditions, inequality, gentrification, and unethical practices like artwashing and socialwashing. The objective is to ensure that CWAs align their economic outcomes with inclusivity and social equity. Furthermore, this domain examines the impact of CWAs on the tourism economy and the formation of inter-sectoral partnerships to promote sustainable growth. Social innovation and entrepreneurship are also significant elements, as CWAs facilitate collaborative, place-specific solutions that drive transformative societal change. These subdomains can be regarded as privileged lenses for conducting internal budgets, feasibility assessments, as well as CWA-related cost and benefits estimates.

In light of these considerations, the domain encompasses five subdomains, which are presented in the following paragraphs: Employment; Local Cultural Production; Tourism Economy; Economic Attractiveness; Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Employment

This subdomain is inspired by the SoPHIA subdomain "Employment", part of the "Work & Prosperity" domain, as well as Dunphy's subdomains "Direct employment" and "Indirect employment".

This subdomain focuses on the employment landscape directly and indirectly related to the CWA and the support and creation of quality jobs that it facilitates. The objective is also to assess how such employment opportunities are also stable and fair, which implies the improvement of working conditions, the promotion of fairer contractual conditions, security and adequate remuneration, and finally the creation of sustainable employment pathways that foster worker well-being and economic stability. The objective of the subdomain is also to evaluate the extent to which the CWA contributes to both the reduction of gender disparities, by fostering a culture of equal opportunity and balanced representation across roles and levels of responsibility, and to the expansion of employment opportunities for young people (population aged under 35, according to the Istat categorisation). Another crucial aspect to be considered is the creation of employment pathways for

disadvantaged individuals, including those experiencing disability, long-term unemployment, or other barriers. The capacity of the CWA to improve their working conditions would be a significant factor to evaluate, as it stimulates inclusive economic growth, social cohesion and inclusive access.

The three questions marked with a single asterisk, in the following table, are implemented from the "Employment" subdomain (SoPHIA project, 2021, p. 45).

Subdomain	Employment
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA fosters fair employment, reduces gender disparities, and expands opportunities for disadvantaged individuals and younger populations.
People's Perspective	- What are the working conditions at the CWA disaggregated by typology (stable; temporary; skilled; unskilled)? * - Have there been any working conflicts at the site/practice and what did they relate to? * - How do People perceive the quality and stability of the job opportunities offered in the CWA? - What are the views of People on how the CWA supports fair and adequately paid working conditions? - What is the employment policy in terms of diversity and equality of personnel? * - How is the impact of the CWA on gender equality in employment defined? - What are People's perceptions of the role of CWA in creating job opportunities for young people? What about disadvantaged individuals? - How satisfied are the CWA workers? - What is the rate of absenteeism among staff?
Tips for Evaluation	The CWA is frequently characterised by interdisciplinary teams comprising individuals with diverse backgrounds and affiliations, who collaborate in a partnership framework. It is imperative to devote particular attention to the collection of data pertaining to contracting arrangements, new hires and alterations in the roles of individuals involved in the CWA, to more effectively navigate the issues associated with this subdomain. Demographic data should also be collected to track the contribution of the action in relation to the employment of certain categories of interest (women, young people, unemployed, etc.).
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: the improvement of the quality and quantity of employment goes hand in hand with the development of skills in training, education, and research. **Social & Civic**: good working conditions and diversity of the workforce reinforce inclusive access and foster social cohesion. **Ecological**: Good working conditions can facilitate the continued and punctual training of employees, which may in turn encourage the awareness and adoption of sustainable behaviours among the workforces. **Governance & Delivery Process**: good working conditions and diversity of the workforce can contribute to the positive reputation of the CWA. **Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life**: good working conditions and diversity of the workforce can improve workers' well-being and general living conditions in the area.
Drawbacks	**Social & Civic**: fostering greater participation and engagement could lead to improper use of volunteering, replacing regular and skilled work.

SDGs 2030	SDG 1 − No Poverty SDG 5 − Gender Equality SDG 8 − Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 10 − Reduced Inequality

Tab. 21 Overview of the subdomain Employment (own elaboration)

Local Cultural Production

This subdomain is informed by the SoPHIA subdomain "Local cultural production", included in the domain "Work & Prosperity". This subdomain assesses the extent to which the CWA facilitates local cultural production within the cultural sector, contemporary creative industries and traditional craft industries. This entails an examination of the demographics of cultural and creative entities involved in the CWA, with a particular focus on their growth and resilience, if possible, across different temporal scopes (short, medium, and long-term). Additionally, the number of cultural places (e.g., museums, theatres, cultural spaces, libraries) that serve as active sites for local artistic production can be considered within this subdomain. It is strongly recommended to pay attention to the perspectives of local artisans and artists on the opportunities and challenges arising from the CWA's presence in the artistic and creative local scenario. Among the potential negative effects is the possibility that promoting local cultural production leads to gentrification phenomena.

The question marked with a single asterisk, in the following table, is implemented from the "Local cultural production" subdomain (SoPHIA project, 2021, p. 46).

Subdomain	Local Cultural Production
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA facilitates local cultural production within the cultural sector, contemporary creative industries, and traditional craft industries.
People's Perspective	- What opportunities and challenges, according to the People, has the CWA created for the local cultural and creative sector? * - Have there been any conflicts or discussions in the creative and artistic community because of the CWA? - How does the CWA contribute to the local cultural scene attractive and thriving? - How is CWA's contribution to local cultural production perceived?
Tips for Evaluation	It is strongly recommended to pay attention to the perspectives of local artisans and artists on the opportunities and challenges arising from the CWA's presence in the artistic and creative local scenario.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: Local cultural production may enable creative activities and learning opportunities in education, training and research. **Ecological**: craft and creative industries can be part of a circular economy fostering sustainable development. **Social & Civic and Governance & Delivery Process**: a recognizable local cultural production can represent an added value in terms of the competitiveness and visibility

	of the place.
Drawbacks	**Cultural**: there can be tensions between innovation and the preservation of tradition, especially in relation to local cultural identity. **Social & Civic**: the promotion of local cultural production (in the cultural sector, in contemporary creative industries and in traditional craft industries) can lead to gentrification phenomena.
SDGs 2030	SDG 8 − Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 9 − Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 10 − Reduced Inequality SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 12 − Responsible Consumption and Production

Tab. 22 Overview of the subdomain Local Cultural Production (own elaboration)

Tourism Economy

This subdomain draws inspiration from the SoPHIA's "Tourism Economy" subdomain, located within the "Work & Prosperity" domain.

In a broader and more general sense, CWAs are not designed for the tourist category[92], as the range of variables and the degree of tailoring required do not make them suitable for this specific group. However, some types of CWA could be attractive to potential tourists interested in visiting the place where the activities are carried out. These are often the most permeable and open CWAs, which can have a potential component of tourist attraction. Consider, for example, a weekly Dance Well session open to everyone, not just people with Parkinson's disease, in a context such as a museum. The presence of an open, free activity, different from the usual museum offer, could be a reason for interest for a tourist visitor. In order to capture this potential, a subdomain is proposed to track the contribution of CWAs to the tourism economy.

Questions in the following table are, with the exception of three questions marked with a single asterisk, original. The aforementioned asterisked questions are drawn from the "Tourism Economy" subdomain (SoPHIA project, 2021, p. 48).

Subdomain	Tourism Economy
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA contributes to the tourism economy.
People's Perspective	- How do People perceive the tourist attractiveness of CWAs? - What are main challenges stemming from tourists participating at the CWA for the

[92] In the proposed stakeholder model, tourists fall into the category of broader beneficiary groups, encompassed in the local and non-local population, together with the non-stationary inhabitants.

	local communities? * - What is the perception of tourists? * - What is the perception of inhabitants? * - What aspects of CWA are seen as most attractive or unique, and how do these compare with typical tourism offerings? - How do local tourism businesses (e.g., hotels, restaurants) perceive the impact of CWAs on attracting and retaining tourists to the area? - To what extent do tourists feel that CWAs enhance their cultural experience of the area? - How do People feel about the presence of tourists in CWAs? - Do tourists participating in a CWA stay in the area overnight and utilise local accommodation and hospitality facilities? - Are strategies put in place to avoid unmanageable tourist flows, which would make it impossible to carry out the action or damage the context where it takes place, also worsening the experience of those who live there?
Tips for Evaluation	It is recommended to collect feedback from local tourism and hotel businesses on the influence of CWA on visitor engagement and spending in the area. Furthermore, it would be useful to investigate how the CWA affects tourists' overall travel experience. Monitoring the metrics on a number of tourists overnight stays, and related expenses can help to measure the economic impact on the local tourism sector. Do not underestimate the view of residents regarding this dimension which can lead to friction and conflict.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Culture and Governance & Delivery Process**: tourism can contribute to maintaining local cultural production and local cultural and natural resources, thus contributing to their visibility and reputation. **Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life**: in urban peripheries and marginal areas, tourism can be considered as a potential source of income that can help to reduce economic/demographic imbalances and achieve new forms of sustainable economy, improving People's living conditions.
Drawbacks	**Social & Civic and Governance & Delivery Process**: attention to the tourism economy may conflict with access for other people, also influencing the place's reputation. **Social & Civic and Ecological**: in terms of protection against human risks, tourism economy may put excessive pressure on the environment and society, particularly in vulnerable areas lacking the necessary infrastructure to effectively manage tourist flows.
SDGs 2030	SDG 8 − Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 9 − Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 12 − Responsible Consumption and Production SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 23 Overview of the subdomain Tourism Economy (own elaboration)

Economic Attractiveness

This subdomain is inspired by the SoPHIA subdomain "Economic Attractiveness", within the domain "Work & Prosperity".

The allocation of public funds can initiate a virtuous cycle of economic growth, which may, in turn, encourage private investment from both small local enterprises and larger corporations. It is crucial to be aware of the potential issues associated with private funding, such as possible design constraints that may favour private interests over the pursuit of solutions that align with the needs of the various stakeholders involved, or the uncertainty about the long-term economic sustainability of the activity. Nevertheless, these wicked issues represent matters that, thus far, only those operating in privileged contexts have been able to address. Indeed, attracting private funding is a significant challenge in depopulated and marginalised inner areas that do not offer the same levels of appeal to private interests as other locations. Broadly, the aspiration to achieve economic attractiveness is undoubtedly a positive objective for the action, as it facilitates greater territorial integration and enhances the contribution in terms of governance and social impact. Concurrently, this mode of economic sustenance obligates CWAs to adhere to a rationale that is incongruous with their very nature. It is evident that the fluctuating nature of funding opportunities and the resulting economic and financial instability of CWAs give rise to an unstable and potentially dangerous scenario. It can be argued that a beneficial CW practice lacking long-term financial stability represents an unfavourable scenario. Such a situation would leave the beneficiaries in a vulnerable position, lacking the support structures necessary to ensure their well-being. In the Italian debate, scholars, such as Annalisa Cicerchia, not only advocate a systemic integration between the sectors involved in CW, but also the configuration of CWAs as the provision of stable, repeated welfare services over time[93]. It is evident, and desirable, that this situation calls for significant State involvement to guarantee the resilience and sustainability of CW services.

Returning to the specific objectives of this subdomain, they pertain to the capacity of the CWA to attract economic flows. The focus is on the potential multiplier effect and the presence of diversified investments, stimulated by cooperation between the private and public sectors, as well as with the third sector.

Finally, isolating the reasons for economic attractiveness also means identifying any risk of misuse, potential misuse or unethical practices in relation to them. In this sense, it is recommended to protect and pay attention to all aspects that could be used to distract or legitimise negative actions by potential funders, donors, sponsors, and supporters in general. Because of the virtuous missions

[93] The statements of Annalisa Cicerchia relate to moments of public debate and advocacy, including the event held in Rome on October 13, 2024, entitled “Welfare Culturale e Musei” which was promoted by Musei in Comune Roma, and the webinar promoted by Regione Toscana and Anci Toscana, entitled “Il Welfare Culturale per le Aree Interne”.

of CWAs, they can easily be vulnerable to phenomena such as artwashing, pinkwashing, socialwashing and greenwashing.

In the following table, two questions are marked with a single asterisk since they are those from the "Economic Attractiveness" subdomain of the SoPHIA's model (2021, p. 48). The remaining ones are original.

Subdomain	Economic Attractiveness
Description	The aim is to assess the CWA's ability to attract economic flows and diversified investments, generating a multiplier effect fostering cooperation between the private and public sectors, as well as with the third sector.
People's Perspective	- Are there different sources of funding used to support the CWA (government, donations, grants, fundraising, crowdfunding, subsidies etc.)? * - What are the experiences with cooperation and knowledge sharing between public and private actors? * - What are the perceptions of People involved about how the CWA is funded (positive aspects, limitations, and constraints)? - What are the perceptions of People about the economic attractiveness of the CWA? - What are the characteristics that made the CWA attractive for funders (private, public, third sector, donor)?
Tips for Evaluation	It would be prudent to identify any risk of misuse, potential misuse or unethical practices in relation to the CWA. In this sense, it is recommended to protect and pay attention to all aspects that could be used to distract or legitimise negative actions by potential funders and donors. Because of the virtuous missions of CWAs, they can easily be vulnerable to phenomena such as artwashing, pinkwashing, socialwashing and greenwashing.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: the ability to attract economic resources could bring benefits in enhancing heritage and stimulating culture-led regeneration. **Social & Civic**: the ability to attract economic resources can increase inclusiveness and the scope of actions, ultimately fostering social cohesion. **Ecological**: the ability to attract economic resources can improve the measures in place to protect against both environmental and human-related risks. **Governance & Delivery Process and Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life**: the ability to diversify economic resources could foster a resilient governance and promote the financial, economic and social return of the intervention, improving the quality of services and increasing activities' offer in the area.
Drawbacks	**Social & Civic**: the gratuitous nature of some services may be incompatible with the economic sustainability of the action, thus limiting de facto accessibility. **Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life**: economic attractiveness can lead to the reduction and/or suppression of unprofitable services. **Governance & Delivery Process and Social & Civic**: in terms of visibility and reputation, it is harmful to be the subject of unethical interests and phenomena such as artwashing, pinkwashing, socialwashing and greenwashing. The risk is that private financing will prioritise its own interests over the harmonisation of the needs of the various actors involved.

SDGs 2030	SDG 8 − Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 9 − Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 24 Overview of the subdomain Economic Attractiveness (own elaboration)

Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship

This subdomain is inspired by the SoPHIA subdomain "Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship", situated within the domain "Work & Prosperity".

This last economic subdomain aims to assess how CWA acts as a catalyst for social innovation and local economic growth by directly addressing People's needs and fostering collaborative partnerships with social entrepreneurs. For the sake of clarity, social innovation can be defined in terms of four key elements: the identification of a need, the formulation of a novel solution to satisfy the identified need, the generation of a change in social structures and relationships, and the strengthening of society's capacity to act (Portales, 2019, p. 4-5). By involving social entrepreneurs, the CWA can facilitate the development of sustainable solutions that are also locally relevant. Their involvement serves as a crucial indicator of the CWA's ability to facilitate transformative change. Such partnerships can facilitate alignment of intervention objectives with People's needs, thus ensuring that solutions are innovative and have an impact. Quantitative measures, including the number of social enterprises involved, or started after the CWA, and their demographic characteristics, can provide an overview of the extent of CWA. However, a deeper understanding requires a qualitative assessment of the effectiveness with which these interventions respond to the real needs of the intended beneficiaries. This involves an assessment of whether: 1) beneficiaries have been involved in the process of identifying needs; 2) interventions align with their activities; 3) interventions have led to significant and sustainable social transformations.

As shown in the table below, the majority of questions have been formulated by the author. Only two questions, marked with a single asterisk, are inspired by those in the "Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship" subdomain of the SoPHIA's model (2021, p. 48).

Subdomain	Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA fosters social innovation and growth by identifying social needs and promoting projects in collaboration with social entrepreneurs.
People's Perspective	- Who is involved in identifying needs and how? - What are the subjects of social innovation initiatives? * - How much do People think the CWA's interventions are in line with the real needs addressed? - What is the People's perception of the practicality and impact of CWA solutions in

	addressing local challenges? - How is the role of social entrepreneurs in the CWA considered in terms of social change and support for local growth? - What specific aspects of the CWA make it valuable to People? - How much confidence is there in the sustainability of the changes introduced by the CWA? - What actions are taken in order to support social innovation and entrepreneurs in the CWA? * - How has the CWA increased the People's ability to address social issues independently? - How satisfied are People with their involvement in CWA projects, especially in decision-making and solution definition?
Tips for Evaluation	It is advisable to map the context of action by identifying community organisations, local enterprises and social enterprises, in order to identify resources that can support or complement the initiative. In addition, documenting current levels of People involvement in decision-making provides a basis for assessing changes in power and involvement. This aspect can be investigated, for example, in relation to the decision-making process related to cultural offer, but also to health and social services.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Social & Civic and Governance & Delivery Process**: how to deal with social needs in the close area, through social innovation and entrepreneurships, may provide solutions to support inclusive access, participation and engagement and social cohesion. **Ecological**: in pursuing social justice objectives, it is possible to simultaneously achieve sustainability and ecological justice.
SDGs 2030	SDG 8 − Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 9 − Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 12 − Responsible Consumption and Production SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 25 Overview of the subdomain Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship (own elaboration)

2.3.4 Ecological Domain

This domain adopts in its name the terminology employed by Dunphy (2015), who followed the principles of the "Circles of Sustainability" proposed by the Global Cities Compact Program (GCCP, 2013, cited in Dunphy, 2015, p. 253). Notably, the term *ecological* is deliberately chosen over *environmental* to reflect a holistic understanding of the interconnectedness of living creatures, humans included, within the broader context of the natural world. This choice also aligns with the One Health approach, promoted by WHO, which seeks to enhance human, animal, and environmental well-being by integrating these fields rather than treating them as separate entities. This domain highlights the potential of CWAs to address environmental challenges, reduce ecological impacts, and encourage sustainable practices within communities. By prioritizing both ecological protection and human well-being, the Ecological Domain promotes a holistic approach to sustainability that benefits both local environments and the people who depend on them.

Based on these considerations, the domain is divided into three subdomains, which are discussed in detail below: Safeguarding against Environmental Risks; Green Management and Use of Resources; Awareness Raising on Environmental Sustainability.

Safeguarding against Environmental Risks

This subdomain is derived from the SoPHIA subdomain "Safeguarding against Environmental Risks", which is encompassed in the domain "Protection".

It aims to assess how the CWA implements and/or promotes protective measures against environmental risks that may threaten individuals and places. Environmental hazards encompass a wide range of factors, including climate-related phenomena such as extreme weather conditions, and natural geophysical events (e.g., earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, erosion, floods, droughts, storms, etc.), as well as issues such as pollution, habitat destruction, loss of biodiversity and others. To examine the contribution of CWA, one can assess its disaster risk reduction measures, the promotion of risk awareness and resilience.

Moreover, in the current scenario, this dimension is certainly not negligible, and can be a crucial component of action, especially in fragile contexts such as, but not limited to, inner areas.

An interesting example of this is the multiplier potential of a CWA. To exemplify, it is possible to cite the case of a small-scale European Cooperation Project funded by the Creative Europe Programme in 2024: ImproLANDS "Improvisational Theatre Techniques for Well-Being in Lands Affected by Natural Disasters, Depopulation and/or Solitude". The programme sheds light on four targeted inner areas across Europe, and in Italy it was implemented with civil protection groups in

the area affected by the 2016-2017 earthquake. What would appear to be an action aimed more at recovery from trauma or social cohesion hides the potential to increase the responsiveness and resilience of the volunteer group. Indeed, improvisational theatre trains effective non-verbal communication and improves the ability to coordinate as a group quickly and in a short time. The acquisition of these newly developed skills will provide individuals with valuable resources that may prove to be significant in future emergency situations.

A further example can be observed in the context of an action occurring in a location that is not typically utilised, such as vacant buildings or unmaintained natural environments. Through the use and maintenance of this location, for the explicit purpose of implementing the CWA, the potential risks associated with the abandonment of the site can be effectively mitigated, also contributing to the preservation of local identity, spreading a new sense of belonging, and supporting resource efficiency.

The financial commitments for these protective measures can be evaluated quantitatively, while qualitative insights are sought through the “People’s Perspective” section, which comprises original questions, except for a single question that was originally included in the SoPHIA subdomain “Safeguarding against Environmental Risks” (SoPHIA Project, 2021, pp. 52-53).

Among the cross-cutting themes, it is certainly evident how the protection from environmental risks positively affects the preservation of the cultural landscape and the identity of the area with its local natural and cultural resources. Another aspect is related to the research field which might help monitor and mitigate not only environmental risks but also risks to people, also implementing sustainable technologies and digital tools. Concerted governance between various stakeholders, including those engaged in environmental issues, also plays a pivotal role in enhancing preparedness and responsiveness.

However, access restrictions may sometimes be necessary to reduce environmental pressure and economic priorities, such as employment and tourism, may occasionally conflict with environmental objectives.

Nevertheless, there are potential counter effects. For instance, to reduce pressure on the environment and to minimise human-related risks, it may be advisable to limit access to places, both indoor and outdoor, affecting inclusive access possibilities. Furthermore, there are occasions when economic priorities, such as employment and tourism, may conflict with environmental objectives.

Subdomain	Safeguarding against Environmental Risks
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA implements and/or promotes protective measures

	against environmental risks that may threaten individuals and places.
People's Perspective	- How does the CWA promote protective measures against environmental risks? - What measures does the CWA implement to ensure protection against environmental risks? - Which pro environmental behaviours are supported via the CWA? * - How does the CWA promote awareness of risks related to environmental hazards among the People involved? - How does the CWA strengthen the resilience of People exposed to environmental risk? - Is the activity aimed at People affected by environmental disasters? Which tools does the CWA provide to them?
Tips for Evaluation	The effectiveness of CWA's efforts to increase awareness and responsiveness to environmental risks among participants may be challenging to assess; therefore, it is recommended to consider any educational programmes, information materials, and training initiatives that emphasise the significance of risk preparedness and reduction. The evaluation could also consider the various strategies employed by the CWA (partnerships, workshops, community initiatives, and public campaigns) to foster best practices for environmental risk reduction.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: the safeguarding of the cultural landscape is essential to preserve the identity of the area with its local natural and cultural resources. Also, research activity might help monitor and mitigate not only environmental risks but also risks to people, also implementing sustainable technologies and digital tools. **Social & Civic and Governance & Delivery Process**: good governance practices are essential for sustainable management of environmental risks. Collaborative partnerships and cooperative cultural initiatives can strengthen people's response and preparedness. **Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life**: safeguarding against environmental risks can improve the well-being of people who are exposed to them. For those who have already been affected by environmental extreme events, the action can facilitate the recovery process.
Drawbacks	**Social & Civic and Governance & Delivery Process**: in some cases, restricting access to places, both indoor and outdoor, may be necessary to protect environmental resources, which could limit inclusive participation. **Economic**: economic activities (e.g., employment, tourism) may sometimes contribute to environmental pressures, potentially conflicting with sustainability goals.
SDGs 2030	SDG 3 − Good Health and Well-being SDG 6 − Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 13 − Climate Action SDG 15 − Life on Land

Tab. 26 Overview of the subdomain Safeguarding against Environmental Risks (own elaboration)

Green Management and Use of Resources

This subdomain is inspired by SoPHIA subdomains "Green Management and Development", "Use of Resources" and "Safeguarding against Environmental Risks", which are included in the domain "Protection".

This subdomain focuses on how the CWA applies environmentally sustainable, effective and efficient management practices and resource use. This area of focus encompasses a comprehensive range of actions, including the implementation of green practices, the prudent utilisation of local and non-local resources, and initiatives aimed at reducing carbon footprints. Furthermore, it considers the efficiency of resource management, specifically the adoption of targeted approaches to re-use, share, re-cycle and up-cycle resources. It also places significant emphasis on the importance of waste management practices. Further attention should be given to the ability to create collaborations and partnerships with other stakeholders, to achieve better results in terms of environmental sustainability.

The evaluation of this subdomain encourages using indicators to track the impact and outcomes of green initiatives on cultural and natural resources over the long term. A quantitative evaluation will consider the number and type of actions promoting green, circular and local economic practices (including partnerships with local providers for tangible or intangible resources), as well as any funds allocated for green business practices and waste management. It will also be useful to consider the number of partnerships and agreements formed to optimise the use of tangible or intangible resources (food, materials, skills, labour). In the current scenario, it is crucial to consider the issue of carbon production alongside other environmental impacts, such as energy use, water consumption, waste, travel, freight and materials. Although these estimates are not always accessible to all entities engaged in a given activity, it is nevertheless recommended that they be evaluated and that mitigation strategies for emissions produced and induced by the CWA be implemented wherever feasible. It is therefore proposed an off-the-shelf tool that might be helpful for those who are willing to track their environmental impacts (Tab. 28).

From a cultural perspective, the adoption of greener management practices can play a pivotal role in the preservation of local cultural and natural resources. The implementation of sustainable practices will have a direct impact on people's quality of life. From an economic perspective, implementing green practices can affect job opportunities, and influence people's spending behaviour. Finally, adopting a green approach that is not fully consistent with the implemented actions could have a detrimental impact on its visibility and reputation. Similarly, establishing partnerships with other entities that also implement unethical greenwashing practices could result in reputational damage.

The thirteen questions collected in the "People's Perspective" section are primarily original, with seven questions (marked with an asterisk) drawn from the subdomains "Green Management and Development", "Use of Resources" and "Safeguarding against Environmental Risks" (SoPHIA Project, 2021, pp. 52, 55-56).

Subdomain	Green Management and Development
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA applies environmentally sustainable, effective and efficient management practices and resource use.
People's Perspective	- What actions does the CWA implement to be more environmentally sustainable? - Does the CWA promote sustainable practices related to local resources? How? - What efforts are made through the CWA to support local sustainable businesses and increase local job openings? * - What is the level of People's willingness to engage in greener practices? * - Are there any strategies in place to mitigate the CWA's carbon emissions? - Are these management practices economically and environmentally efficient and sustainable? - To what extent are renewable energy sources incorporated into the intervention? - Is the "reuse, share, recycle and upcycle" approach implemented in the CWA? - Are there efforts to share resources and reduce the carbon footprint in collaboration with others? * - What measures are taken to promote the reuse, share, recycle and upcycle of resources? * - What measures are taken to employ/use local resources (food, materials, skills, labour)? * - How are resources shared with other stakeholders/partners? * - What steps are taken for circular bioeconomy? *
Tips for Evaluation	It is suggested to include sustainability indicators to evaluate outcomes of eco-friendly practices and the long-term impact on cultural and natural resources. A quantitative evaluation will consider the number and type of actions promoting green, circular and local economic practices, as well as any funds allocated. It will also be useful to consider the number of partnerships and agreements that have been formed to optimise the use of material/other resources.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: adopting greener management can help to safeguard the local cultural and natural resources. **Health and Well-being**: sustainable practices will have a direct impact on people's living conditions.
Drawbacks	**Economic**: the implementation of green practices can affect job opportunities; and can also have an impact on people's spending behaviour. **Governance & Delivery Process**: the adoption of a green approach that is not fully consistent with the implemented actions could have a detrimental impact on its visibility and reputation. Similarly, establishing partnerships with other entities that also implement unethical greenwashing practices could lead to reputational damage.
SDGs 2030	SDG 6 − Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 7 − Affordable and Clean Energy SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities

	SDG 12 − Responsible Consumption and Production SDG 13 − Climate Action SDG 15 − Life on Land SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 27 Overview of the subdomain Green Management and Development (own elaboration)

Off-the-shelf tool: Creative Climate Tools by Julie's Bicycle[94]
Creative Climate Tools (CC Tools) are a free carbon calculator and Beyond Carbon impact tracker that enables artists and cultural organisations to track their environmental impact, record progress and make strategic changes. The Tools help organisations record, measure and understand the impacts of venues, offices, tours, projects, events or festivals and track a range of different impact areas including energy use, water consumption, waste, travel, freight and materials. In addition to this, they also include the interactive Beyond Carbon checklist to record environmental action beyond emissions, telling a richer story and prompting further change.

Tab. 28 Off-the-shelf tool: Creative Climate Tools by Julie's Bicycle (own elaboration)

Awareness Raising on Environmental Sustainability

This subdomain is inspired by Dunphy's subdomains "Awareness of environmental issues", "Positive sense of place", "Positive connection to the natural world", and by the SoPHIA subdomain "Awareness raising", contained in the domain "Education, Creativity & Innovation".

The objective is to evaluate how the CWA fosters awareness on environmental sustainability and sustainable development matters, also through the promotion of conscious and sustainable practices and behaviours. In this sense, the subdomain is concerned with the representation of sustainable development issues within the CWA and with the overall coherence of the intervention with sustainability objectives, also in terms of reputation and visibility. From a quantitative perspective, it is possible to consider the number of programmes, projects and educational initiatives related to sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been undertaken over a specified time frame, such as on an annual basis. From a qualitative perspective, the perception of People will be pivotal in gauging awareness of the issues under discussion. Furthermore, a comprehensive examination of long-term behavioural changes will offer insights into the efficacy of the intervention in terms of impacts.

The People's Perspective section presents three original questions, while the remaining seven, marked with an asterisk, are drawn from the subdomains entitled "Awareness raising" and "Safeguarding against Environmental Risks" subdomains (SoPHIA Project, 2021, pp. 39, 52-53).

[94] https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/creative-green/creative-climate-tools/.

Subdomain	Awareness Raising on Environmental Sustainability
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA fosters awareness on environmental sustainability and sustainable development matters, also through the promotion of conscious and sustainable practices and behaviours.
People's Perspective	- How do People perceive environmental issues before, during and after the CWA? - Do People feel a sense of responsibility in dealing with environmental issues? - What actions does the CWA implement to be more environmentally sustainable? - In which ways awareness was raised on sustainable development from the perspective of different People? * - How are issues of sustainable development represented in the CWA? * - What are the People's perceptions on climate change and their sense of accountability in dealing these issues before and after the CWA? * - What measures are in place to promote the "reuse, share, recycle and upcycle" approach? * - What pro-environmental behaviour is encouraged or modelled within the CWA? * - In what languages are the awareness raising activities taking place? * - How does the intervention become a voice for the marginalised? *
Tips for Evaluation	To ascertain the actual change in awareness among those involved, it is imperative to conduct a preliminary assessment of the existing level of environmental awareness within the target population. It is only by utilising this foundation that it will be feasible to quantify the resulting change.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: awareness raising on environmental sustainability and sustainable development can contribute to the conscious use and enhancement of local natural and cultural resources, strengthening the sense of belonging and protection towards the place. Environmental awareness initiatives can be supported by educational and research activities, and implemented through partnerships with academic institutions to provide training or carry out research projects focusing on local ecosystems and sustainability. **Social & Civic**: raising awareness on environmental sustainability and sustainable development can include issues of social justice, such as reducing inequalities. **Economic**: awareness raising and actions taken in line with sustainable development can also focus on social needs, thus supporting social innovation and entrepreneurship. The CWA can promote forms of responsible tourism by highlighting sustainable practices and raising awareness among tourists about the local environment. **Ecological**: awareness raising on sustainable development can include issues related to resource use and the green economy and management. **Health and Well-being**: sustainable practices can improve living conditions by promoting healthier environments, encouraging initiatives such as waste reduction or green infrastructure that directly benefit local communities. **Governance & Delivery Process**: awareness raising on environmental sustainability can be implemented through participatory planning or decision-making involving different stakeholders. The visibility of CWA's environmental commitment can build trust and attract supporters and partners and inspire similar initiatives.
Drawbacks	**Economic**: raising awareness on sustainable development issues can conflict with the promotion of tourism economy, regional and local development and can also have an impact on people's spending behaviour.

	Governance & Delivery Process: if the CWA focuses heavily on environmental messages without tangible and lasting actions, or its partners/funders do so, it risks being perceived as a greenwashing operation, provoking a negative impact on the visibility and reputational damage.
SDGs 2030	SDG 6 − Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 7 − Affordable and Clean Energy SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 12 − Responsible Consumption and Production SDG 13 − Climate Action SDG 14 – Life Below Water SDG 15 − Life on Land

Tab. 29 Overview of the subdomain Awareness Raising on Environmental Sustainability (own elaboration)

2.3.5 Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life Domain

Given the wide range of CWAs, and their related health and well-being field of intervention, the definition of this domain have presented considerable challenges. The objective of maintaining a framework suitable for the needs of a wide range of CWAs has led to a different choice in the definition of subdomains. In this domain only two subdomains are described, namely: Individual Well-being, Health, and Life Satisfaction; Living Conditions.

The choice is rooted in a need that emerged in the CW scenario, namely the need to adopt clear and validated protocols for collecting evidence of impact on health and well-being (Sacco, 2023, p. 16). The definition of common methodologies and the adoption of appropriate assessment tools, preferably validated and scientifically based, is the foundation on which any CWA must be built. This is why I felt it would be counterproductive to propose my own list of nuances on well-being and health. Rather, it is important to stress the importance of using validated tools developed by professionals, which, with the intervention of competent professionals, practitioners and scholars, can certainly be adapted to the specific needs of every CWA. For this reason, I have divided this area into two parts: the first one focuses exquisitely on individual impacts (both self-reported and observed), while the second one explores instead the living conditions. This latter subdomain, together with all the facets of the other sub-areas of the HECWA framework, is a key variable in contextualising impacts and a privileged lens to analyse the contribution of CWA to marginalised territories.

The first subdomain is dedicated to examining the "Individual Well-being, Health, and Life Satisfaction". The structure replicates just in part that of previous subdomains. Nevertheless, instead of a list of questions and tips, it was deemed essential to support a proper and tailored evaluation to present a set of "Off-the-shelf tools". These are validated scales, tools, and indices, which have been created or adopted in the context of CW practices (Tab. 31). Indeed, this scientific approach to evaluation has contributed to increasing the body of reliable evidence pertaining to the CW landscape, crucial to demonstrate the contribution of culture to well-being and to build a common evaluation ground between the cultural, health and social sectors (Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo & Cultural Welfare Center, 2024, p. 52).

On the other hand, the second subdomain adopts the usual structures of other subdomains and focuses on four aspects related to living conditions. This subdomain originates from an examination of the fragility of the inner areas and seeks to ascertain the extent to which CW initiatives can mitigate related discomforts. It spotlights three structural deficiencies of fragile internal territories:

health, education, and mobility. A fourth element is also considered, namely the presence and accessibility of cultural offerings.

Individual Well-being, Health, and Life Satisfaction

This subdomain aims to assess the contribution of the CWA to the individual well-being, health and life satisfaction of People involved in it. This assessment usually focuses exclusively on the group of final beneficiaries, but it has been decided to retain the term "People", as it is considered useful to also reflect on the impact of CWAs on those falling into other categories, one of the most important being that of enablers.

To perform an assessment of this subdomain, it is strongly recommended that the most appropriate tool be selected or developed by the interdisciplinary team responsible for the CWA. However, the expertise already developed in this field is priceless, and the compendium presented in Tab. 31 is intended as a brief, non-exhaustive, overview that may serve as a point of departure for exploring some tools that have already been used in CW contexts and might be ready to use in research and evaluation contexts. Indeed, as highlighted in the inquiry report "Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing", this substantial corpus of evidence encompasses both research and evaluation (APPGAHW, 2017, p. 34). Research typically entails the design of a project or intervention with the objective of testing a hypothesis or answering a question, while, evaluation involves the assessment of a specific project according to a range of criteria, both concurrently and/or retrospectively (*Ibidem*). This subdomain does not provide a detailed account of the rationale behind the decision to employ randomised controlled trials (RCTs). While RCTs are not always a viable option in terms of capacity, resources, time, and population, they are considered the "gold standard" for evidence in clinical research (Hariton & Locascio, 2018). In contrast, as highlighted by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing (APPGAHW), in the "Creative Health" report, it is crucial to re-examine the assertion that RCTs are inherently superior to good observational data. This is particularly pertinent in contexts like mental health, where outcomes are subjectively assessed and clinically meaningful health improvements may not be immediately apparent (APPGAHW, 2017, p. 34-35).

Generally, as mentioned above, it is recommended the use of validated tools chosen on agreement within the evaluation team and adapted, when possible, in accordance with the needs.

In addition, it is suggested that attention should be paid to the use of additional indicators to implement the tool-based assessment. For example, in the case of final beneficiaries, it could be risky to use attendance numbers as an indicator of well-being, since the target observed may have complex conditions that do not allow a continuous and consistent presence. On the other hand, the

absenteeism index may prove a valuable metric for gauging staff well-being (Cerquetti, 2022, p.71). Another element to consider is certainly the degree of overall satisfaction with the project. In view of these observations, it is advisable to choose indicators that offer a picture of the difficulties faced without affecting, however, with a partial view, the estimation of achieved results.

Subdomain	Individual Well-being, Health, and Life Satisfaction
Description	The aim is to assess how the CWA contributes to individual well-being, health, and life satisfaction of the People involved.
People's Perspective	Tab. 31
Tips for Evaluation	It is recommended the use of validated tools chosen on agreement within the evaluation team. In addition, it is suggested that attention should be paid to using other indicators to implement the tool-based assessment. For example, in the case of final beneficiaries, it could be risky to use attendance numbers as an indicator of well-being, since the target observed may have complex conditions that do not allow a continuous and consistent presence. On the other hand, the absenteeism index may prove a valuable metric for gauging staff well-being. Another element to consider is certainly the degree of overall satisfaction with the project. In view of these observations, it is advisable to choose indicators that offer a picture of the difficulties faced without affecting, however, with a partial view, the estimation of achieved results.
SDGs 2030	SDG 3 − Good Health and Well-being SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 30 Overview of the subdomain Individual Well-being, Health, and Life Satisfaction (own elaboration)

Tab. 31 presents a synthesis of different evaluation tools encountered during this three-year doctoral research and during the master, attended at Cultural Welfare Centre, between 2023 and 2024. Besides, the table incorporates contributions from documents with analogous intents, such as the 2016 "Arts for health and wellbeing an evaluation framework" by Public Health England, and the 2022 "A toolkit on how to implement social prescribing" by WHO (Public Health England, 2016, p. 13-14; World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific, 2022, p. 35). In the table and in the list below, all the tools which have been quoted, and briefly described, by Public Health England have a single asterisk after their names (*)[95], while those listed in the WHO toolkit have a double asterisk (**)[96].

[95] The document presents five examples of instruments assess mental wellbeing in arts for health and well-being projects. These include: 1) the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale; 2) the EQ-5D; 3) the Patient Health

The following list presents the thirty-six tools in alphabetical order:

1. ArtsObS The arts observational scale (*)
2. BIT Brief Inventory of Thriving (**)
3. CIT Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving
4. COOP – WONCA (**)
5. CORE-10
6. CORE-LD
7. CORE-OM Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation – Outcome Measure (*) (**)
8. CWS Canterbury Well-being Scale
9. EQ-5D
10. EQ-5D-3L
11. EQ-5D-5L
12. EQ-5D-Y-3L
13. EQ-5D-Y-5L (*)
14. GAD-7 General Anxiety Disorder-7 (**)
15. GHQ-12 General Health Questionnaire (**)
16. HADS Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (**)
17. MHC-SF Mental Health Continuum Short Form
18. MOS-SSS Medical Outcomes Study Social Support (**)
19. MQOL-R McGill Quality of Life Questionnaire-Revised
20. MYCaW Measure Yourself Concerns and Well-being (**)
21. Oxford Happiness Questionnaire – Short Scale
22. PGWBI Psychological General Well-Being Index
23. PGWBI-S Psychological General Well-Being Index Short
24. PHQ-9 Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (*) (**)
25. QOLS Quality of Life Scale (**)
26. RS-14 Resilience Scale

Questionnaire (PHQ) and GAD-7; 4) the Arts Observation Scale (ArtsObs); 5) the CORE Outcome Measure (CORE-OM) (Public Health England, 2016, p. 13-14).

[96] Examples of health and well-being assessment tools, which can be accessed freely online: 1) Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS); 2) Measure Yourself Concerns and Wellbeing (MYCaW);3) Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS); 4) General Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7); 5) Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9); 6) Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation-Outcome Measure (CORE-OM); 7) Work and Social Adjustment Scale (WSAS); 8) General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12); 9) COOP – WONCA; 10) Brief Inventory of Thriving; 11) Medical Outcomes Study Social Support (MSS-OSS); 12) The Quality of Life Scale (QOLS) (World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific, 2022, p. 35).

27. SF-12 Short Form Health Survey -12
28. SF-36 Short Form Health Survey - 36
29. SWEMWBS Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale
30. SWLS Satisfaction With Life Scale
31. UCL Museum Wellbeing Measures Toolkit
32. WEMWBS Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (*) (**)
33. WHO-5 The World Health Organization- Five Well-Being Index
34. WHOQOL-BREF
35. WSAS Work and Social Adjustment Scale (**)
36. YP-CORE

Academic resources and grey literature used to provide the description of the tools have been cited in the Tab. 31. Given the focus of this study, tools assessing levels of physical activity in children, youngsters and adults[97], or dietary habits[98], have not been included in the table.

In some cases, multiple versions of a tool or scale may exist, exhibiting variations in length, whether extended or reduced, or in the target group addressed, which may include elderly individuals, young people, or those suffering from chronic illnesses. When such instances arise, all versions are included within the same line, with the distinguishing features presented in the description. This occurs in the cases of: EQ-D5, CIT and BIT, CORE, and PGWBI.

The tools are classified according to their respective fields of study and are presented in a manner that reflects their thematic relevance. The initial column is arranged in alphabetical order, offering a comprehensive overview of the tools by topic. In instances where a tool offers insights pertaining to multiple topics, the primary focus is indicated as the first entry, with subsequent entries following.

The following topics have been identified as areas of investigation, in brackets are the number of tools associated with the topic (when a tool has multiple versions, it is counted once):

- Availability of Social Support (1);
- Functional Status (3);
- Resilience (1);
- Quality of Life (7);

[97] The level of physical activities in adults can be assessed using free tools such as the IPAQ, International Physical Activity Questionnaire, or the GPAQ, Global Physical Activity Questionnaire, by WHO. In youngers it can be applied the Physical Activity Questionnaire for Children and Adolescents (PAQ-C and PAQ-A).

[98] An example of a free dietary assessment questionnaire for adults is the Five-a-day Community Evaluation Tool (FACET).

- Health-related Quality of Life (2);
- Life Satisfaction (1);
- Impacts of Cultural Activities (2);
- Mental Health (5);
- Major Depressive Disorder/Depression (2);
- Anxiety Disorder/ Anxiety (2)
- Well-being (10);
- Mental Well-being (1);
- Psychological Well-being (3);
- Social Well-being (1);
- Emotional Well-being (1);

Some of the instruments presented adopt an inherently holistic approach, particularly those focused on QoL, which by nature explore a plurality of dimensions. A case in point is the WHOQOL-BREF, which asks respondents to rate their level of satisfaction in areas such as social life, relationships, civic engagement, economic status, housing, access to health services, mobility and transportation. The adoption of the WHO's tool demonstrates a clear cross-domain utility, as it facilitates the acquisition of pertinent data across a spectrum of related domains proposed by HECWA.

Off-the-shelf tools for Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life Domain			
Topic	Name	Short description	Costs and Rights
Availability of Social Support	MOS-SSS Medical Outcomes Study Social Support (**) (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991)	**MOS-SSS** measures the availability of support, if needed, in several domains. It is a 19-item multidimensional, self-administered instrument developed for patients in the Medical Outcomes Study (MOS), a two-year study conducted at RAND. Subscales are rated on a scale from 1 (none of the time) to 5 (all of the time) and refer to: emotional/informational support (8); tangible support (4); affectionate support (3); positive social interaction (3). Note that one item (item 13: someone to do things with to help you get your mind off things) is not included in any subscale but is included in the summary index. It is easy to administer to chronically ill patients, and the items are short, simple, and easy to understand. It may also be appropriate for use with other	Free to use.

		populations.	
Functional Status	COOP – WONCA (**) (Weel *et al.*, 1995)	**COOP/WONCA** charts measure six core aspects of functional status: physical fitness, feelings, daily activities, social activities, change in health and overall health. Each chart consists of a simple title, a question referring to the status of the patient and an ordinal 5-point response scale illustrated with a simple drawing (Weel *et al.*, 1995, p. 9). The charts are available in different languages, Italian included (Weel *et al.*, 1995, p.27-51).	Free to use. Information on the use condition can be found at the cited source (Weel *et al.*, 1995, p.22).
Health-related Quality of Life	EQ-5D EQ-5D-3L EQ-5D-5L EQ-5D-Y-3L EQ-5D-Y-5L (*) (EuroQol Research Foundation, 2024)	The EuroQol Research Foundation has developed the **EQ-5D family of instruments**, a standardised preference-based measure of Health-related Quality of Life (HRQoL) that is widely used in clinical trials, population studies and real-world clinical settings. Each EQ-5D instrument comprises a short descriptive system and a visual analogue scale (EQ VAS) that are cognitively undemanding and take only a few minutes to complete. They include five dimensions: mobility, self-care, usual activities, pain/discomfort, and anxiety/depression. When responses cannot be obtained directly from an individual (e.g., if they are too young or too ill to complete a questionnaire themselves), a third party can be asked to complete the questionnaire on their behalf. With paediatric-age populations, these "proxy respondents" are usually parents. **EQ-5D-3L** is an adult version. Recommended range: 12-15 years (could be used in some cases); 16 years and older. The instrument consists of two parts, the EQ-5D-3L descriptive system questionnaire and a visual analogue scale (EQ VAS). The EQ-5D-3L descriptive system comprises the following five dimensions (mobility, self-care, usual activities, pain/discomfort, and anxiety/depression). Each dimension has three response levels of severity: no problems, some problems, unable to/extreme problems.	It is necessary to complete the registration form available on the EuroQol website. No license fee will be charged for non-commercial use of any scale, but applicants are asked to agree to EuroQol's Terms of Use. For all other applications, the EuroQol Office will communicate the terms and conditions, including licensing fees (if applicable).

		EQ-5D-5L is an adult version. Recommended range: 12-15 years (could be used in some cases); 16 years and older.It was developed to further improve on the EQ-5D-3L's sensitivity and to provide respondents with a wider range of options to describe their health. This version has five response levels, compared to the previous one with three levels. **EQ-5D-Y-3L** is a youth version. Recommended range: 4-7 years (administered by interviewer); 8-11 years (self-reported); 12-15 years; if the sample is all under 18 years. It is the EQ-5D version for younger respondents (initially named the EQ-5D-Y) with three response levels. It has a descriptive system that comprises the same five dimensions as the two adult versions, but uses more appropriate, child-friendly wording. It allows younger respondents to directly self-report their HRQoL without having to rely on reports from intermediaries. **EQ-5D-Y-5L** is a youth version. Recommended range: 4-7 years (administered by interviewer); 8-11 years (self-reported); 12-15 years; if the sample is all under 18 years. It is the five-response level version of the youth instrument, and it has been developed to provide respondents with a wider range of options to describe their health.	
Impacts of Cultural Activities	ArtsObS The arts observational scale (*) (Fancourt & Poon, 2015)	**ArtsObs** is a non-intrusive mixed-methods tool to evaluate performing arts activities in health care settings, with participants unable to complete questionnaires and implements unobtrusive observation by supervisors or staff. It focuses on the arts activities' impact. Assessment covers mood scores, organization-specific criteria, project-specific flexible criteria, and qualitative feedback and case studies. The tool can be used in a multitude of contexts (including hospital wards, nursing homes and communities) with individuals of different age groups, from infants to the elderly, and with a wide range of arts projects (from monitoring	Free to use.

		patient reactions to live performances of music, theatre or dance to monitoring active patient participation in arts interventions or therapies). The proposed scales can be assessed before, during and after sessions.	
Impacts of Cultural Activities Well-being Psychological Well-being	UCL Museum Wellbeing Measures Toolkit (Thomson & Chatterjee, 2013)	**UCL Museum Wellbeing Measures Toolkit** is a set of measurement scales that can be used to assess levels of psychological well-being arising from participation in museum, gallery and heritage activities. The Toolkit is open, flexible and inexpensive and it supports a "pick and mix" approach. It can be used for a one-off activity or programme of events. The Toolkit consists of two Generic Wellbeing Questionnaire (short and full versions), four Well-being Measures Umbrellas (positive, negative, older adult and younger adult) with instructions on the same page and a separate sheet for comments (Thomson & Chatterjee, 2013, p.3). It can be distributed as part of an initial, intermediate and final assessment to monitor changes in experienced well-being over time (Cicerchia, 2017b, p.7).	Free to use.
Life Satisfaction	SWLS Satisfaction With Life Scale (Diener, *et al.* 1985)	**SWLS** is a 5-item scale designed to measure global cognitive judgments of one's life satisfaction (not a measure of either positive or negative affect). Participants indicate how much they agree or disagree with each of the 5 items using a 7-point scale that ranges from 7 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree. The score is obtained by summing up the scores for each item, and some threshold values are provided to be used as benchmarks.	Free to use.
Mental Health Anxiety Disorder	GAD-7 General Anxiety Disorder-7 (**)	**GAD-7**scale is an anxiety measure developed after PHQ. It is a self-reported anxiety questionnaire that is often used in primary care and mental health settings as a screening tool and symptom severity measure for the four most common anxiety disorders (Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorder, Social Phobia and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). It is used to objectively determine initial symptoms severity and monitor symptom changes/effect of treatment over time. It	Free to use.

		has seven items that assess the severity of participants' anxiety over the past two weeks. It is often used with the PHQ-9.	
Mental Health	GHQ-12 General Health Questionnaire (**)	**GHQ-12** consists of 12 items designed to detect common mental disorders and psychological distress. The questionnaire uses a 4-point scale in which respondents indicate the extent to which they have recently experienced symptoms or behaviour. It can be used in primary care settings, occupational health, public health research, pre-intervention screening.	Free to use.
Mental Health Anxiety Depression	HADS Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (**) (Zigmond & Snaith, 1983)	**HADS** is used to assess anxiety and depression in general hospital patients with good results. It is a self-report rating scale of 14 items (7 items for depression and 7 items for anxiety) on a 4-point Likert scale (range 0–3). The total score is the sum of the 14 items, and for each subscale the score is the sum of the respective seven items (ranging from 0–21). It is available in several languages.	Free to use.
Mental Health Major Depressive Disorder	PHQ-9 Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (*) (**) (Kroenke *et al.*, 2001)	**PHQ-9** is a diagnostic tool for mental health disorders used by health care professionals. It is the major depressive disorder (MDD) module of the full PHQ. It contains nine items each are rated on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 3 (almost all), producing a severity score ranging from 0 to 27. Higher scores on the PHQ-9 are linked to lower functional status, greater symptom-related difficulties, increased sick days and increased use of healthcare. It is designed for use in primary care settings.	Free to use.
Mental Health Functional Status	WSAS Work and Social Adjustment Scale (**) (Mundt *et al.*, 2002)	**WSAS** assesses the impact of a person's problem* on their **ability to function** in terms of work, home management, social leisure, private leisure and personal or family relationships. One question is asked for each of the **5 functional areas**, answers are given on a scale of 0 to 8: 0 indicates no impairment at all and 8 very severe impairment. It has been validated for use with individuals experiencing depression, anxiety, or alcohol-related issues. *The problem might be related to mental	Free to use without charge for research and evaluation purposes. To use the WSAS free-of-charge for research purposes, please contact Dr. Isaac M. Marks at SSHC, 303 North End Road, London W14 9NS, UK.

		health.	
Mental Well-being	WEMWBS Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (*) (**) (Tennant *et al.*, 2007) SWEMWBS Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (APPGAHW, 2017)	**WEMWBS** is a brief psychometrically robust tool used to **monitor mental well-being in the general population** and evaluate projects designed to enhance mental well-being in adults. Focusing on positive aspects of mental health, it shows potential for large-scale population monitoring. It is important to note, however, that this is not a clinical tool and is not intended to diagnose mental illness. It uses 14-item, rated on a 5-points Likert scale, to capture **thoughts and feelings related to well-being**. However, while the WEMWBS is a potentially valuable tool for evaluating mental health promotion initiatives, it is essential to ascertain the scale's sensitivity to change before recommending it in this context (Tennant *et al.*, 2007). **SWEMWBS** is an abbreviated version, the, which comprises 7 items. asks users to rate their responses on a 5-point Likert scale. ranging from 'none of the time' to 'all of the time'. It is ideal when time is limited, and it still offers reliable information.	Free to use, after asking for permission, by completing a registration form on the WEMWBS website.
Quality of Life	MQOL-R McGill Quality of Life Questionnaire-Revised (Cohen *et al.*, 2017)	**MQOL-R** is use for assessing QoL in end-of-life, chronic patients. It consists of 14 items divided into four domains: The Single-Item Scale (SIS), physical symptoms (three items), feelings and thoughts (seven items), and social (three items).	Free to use, upon signing a user registration form with conditions of use.
Quality of Life	QOLS Quality of Life Scale (**) (Burckhardt & Anderson, 2003)	**QOLS** has 16 items rather than the 15 found in the original version by American psychologist John Flanagan. Items are divided in five conceptual domains of quality of life: material and physical well-being; relationships with other people; social, community and civic activities; personal development and fulfilment; and recreation. An additional item, "independence, doing for yourself" was added after a study with chronic illness groups (Burckhardt & Anderson, 2003).	Free to use.
Quality of Life	SF-36 Short Form Health Survey	**SF-36** represents a set of generic, coherent, and readily administered	Free to use. Accessible on RAND

Health	SF-12	quality of life measures. These measures are based on patient self-reporting, tapping eight health concepts. It also includes a single item that provides an indication of perceived change in health. The survey can be used in accordance with specified conditions, which, together with the scoring instructions, are available online with the survey itself. **SF-12** is a 12-item version of the SF 36 and has been validated for people aged 14 and over.	website
Quality of Life	WHOQOL-BREF (WHO, 1996)	**WHOQOL-BREF** is a shorter version of the WHOQOL-100. Both were developed by the World Health Organization Quality of Life group with fifteen international field centres, simultaneously, to develop a QoL assessment that would be applicable cross-culturally. WHOQOL-BREF is a 26-item questionnaire to measure quality of life. It is a self-administered questionnaire comprising 26 questions on the individual's perceptions of their health and well-being, over the previous two weeks on a 5-point scale, across four domains: physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment. It can be used with specific populations or groups with a particular disease, or general populations.	Free to use.
Resilience	RS-14 Resilience Scale (Callegari *et al.*, 2016)	**RS-14** is the short version of the Resilience Scale. It consists of 14 of the original Resilience Scale items: 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 17, 21, & 23. It adopts a 7-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) for each item. Higher scores indicate a greater tendency towards resilience. The total score for each participant is calculated by summing the response values for each item, with a potential range of 14 to 98. The scale is written at a level commensurate with that of a sixth-grade education (equivalent to 12-13 years of age) and can be completed by all age groups above this, in about 3-4 minutes by most individuals.	There is a licence fee.
Well-being	CWS Canterbury Well-being Scale	**CWS** uses an easy-to-use visual analogue scale to assess well-being "in the moment". It is usually administered	Free to use.

	(Camic, 2020).	before and after an activity and can be used once or over time. Activities include music, singing, viewing visual artwork, museum (and non-museum) object handling, golf, using an application on a tablet computer and social breaks without intervention.	
Well-being	CIT Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving (Su *et al.*, 2014) BIT Brief Inventory of Thriving (**) (Su *et al.*, 2014)	**CIT** comprises 54 items pertaining to well-being, organised into domains (relationship, engagement, mastery, autonomy, meaning, optimism, subjective well-being). **BIT** is a condensed version of the CIT, consisting of 10 items. Both inventories employ a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).	Free to use, for non-commercial purposes, for all professionals (researchers and practitioners). Appropriate credit should be given to the authors of the scale: Su *et al.*, 2014.
Well-being Functional Status	CORE-OM Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation – Outcome Measure (*) (**) CORE-10 YP-CORE CORE-LD	**CORE-OM** is a 34-item tool used in psychological therapies to assess change across four main domains: well-being, problems, functioning, and risk. Each item uses a five-level response scale, with a focus on the past seven days. **CORE-10** is a shorter version, which has no wellbeing items, six problem domain items, three functioning domain items and one risk item. **YP-CORE** is a 10-item measure version of the CORE-OM for young people aged 11 to 16. Items have been rephrased for the target audience. **CORE-LD** is a modified version of the CORE-OM for people with learning disabilities.	Free to use.
Well-being Emotional Well-being Social Well-being Psychological Well-being	MHC-SF Mental Health Continuum Short Form (Lamers *et al.*, 2011)	**MHC-SF** is derived from the long form MHC-LF and consists of 14 items that were selected to represent each fact of well-being. The short form consists of 3 emotional well-being items (reflects hedonic well-being), 6 psychological well-being items, and 5 social well-being items (when combined, reflects eudaimonic well-being). These response options assess the frequency with which respondents experience each symptom of positive mental health. Responses are	Free to use.

		given on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0 “never” to 5 “everyday”.	
Well-being	MYCaW Measure Yourself Concerns and Well-being (**)	**MYCaW** questionnaire is designed to assess holistic and personalised approaches to supporting people. It is designed to be quick and easy to complete, usually as part of a consultation. It helps to identify and prioritise the specific issues for which a person most wants support, offering a structured way to capture their needs beyond anecdotal feedback. In the initial form, people list their main concerns (up to two) in boxes, each ranked by severity on a simple Likert scale, along with an assessment of general well-being.	There is a free licence for non-profit-making organisations and a commercial licence for profit-making organisations.
Well-being Psychological Well-being Health-related Quality of Life	PGWBI Psychological General Well-Being Index (Dupuy, 1984; Grossi & Compare, 2014) PGWBI-S Psychological General Well-Being Index Short (Grossi *et al.*, 2006)	**PGWBI** is a 22-item Health-related Quality of Life (HR QoL) questionnaire which produces a self-perceived evaluation of psychological well-being expressed in a summary score. It assesses self-representations of intrapersonal affective or emotional states reflecting a sense of subjective well-being or distress. The 22 items explore six different dimensions: anxiety, depression, positivity and well-being, self-control, general health and vitality. (Grossi & Compare, 2014). **PGWBI-S** is the shorter version of PGWBI. It is based on only six items representing five of the six original subscales: anxiety, vitality, depressed mood, self-control, positive well-being, vitality (Grossi *et al.*, 2006).	Free to use.
Well-being	Oxford Happiness Questionnaire – Short Scale (Hills & Argyle, 2002)	**Oxford Happiness Questionnaire – Short Scale** is an 8-item questionnaire which measures current levels of happiness on a 6-point scale.	Free for non-commercial use, by including a credit line that contains the source citation (Hills & Argyle, 2002).
Well-being	WHO-5 The World Health Organization-Five Well-Being Index (WHO, 1998)	**WHO-5** is a short self-reported questionnaire of current mental wellbeing. The measure was first introduced in 1998 by the WHO Regional Office in Europe as part of the DEPCARE project on well-being measures in primary health care. It has been found to have adequate validity in screening for depression and in measuring outcomes in clinical trials. It	Free to use.

		is suitable for children aged 9 and above. It consists of five statements, which respondents rate according to a 6-point scale below (in relation to the past two weeks), with 0 meaning “at no time” and 5 meaning “all of the time”. The total raw score, ranging from 0 to 25, is multiplied by 4 to give the final score, with 0 representing the worst imaginable well-being and 100 representing the best imaginable well-being.	

Tab. 31 Off-the-shelf tools for Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life Domain (own elaboration)

Living Conditions

This subdomain is informed by the SoPHIA subdomain “Living Conditions”, which is comprised in the domain “Quality of Life”. Moreover, some of the issues highlighted in the SoPHIA subdomain “Regional and local development” are referenced, particularly those pertaining to the reduction of territorial imbalances, urban regeneration in disadvantaged areas, repopulation of abandoned territories/neighbourhoods, and the improved provision of higher-quality urban services.

This subdomain aims to assess whether the CWA contributes positively to the living conditions of individuals and groups who are either engaged in or impacted by its presence. The main features of this subdomain are derived from the analysis of the vulnerability of inner areas. This reflection generated specific lenses, calibrated to the needs of what is perhaps the most problematic context in terms of structural deficiencies for the implementation of CW actions. Through such lenses, it will be possible to observe how and to what extent CW initiatives succeed in mitigating the disparities identified in terms of living conditions. Accordingly, this subdomain will concentrate on three fundamental shortcomings of vulnerable inner territories: health, education, and mobility. In addition to these three core factors, an additional consideration is added, namely the availability and accessibility of cultural offerings. Many of these facets are also included in the self-reported quality of life assessment proposed in the WHOQOL-BREF (presented in the previous subdomain), namely: health and social care accessibility and quality; transport and mobility; access to leisure activities (WHO, 1996). With respect to the SoPHIA model, where the evaluation of these aspects had a time lag of 5, 10, 20 years, the HECWA framework also considers the immediate contribution of the CWA to the area concerned, which can then be clearly observed over longer periods of time as well.

The People’s Perspective investigates how the CWA can contribute to access and quality of education, health, social and cultural services. Finally, it assesses how it relates to the presence or absence of public transport and seeks to be as accessible and reachable as possible. In this way, it is

also possible to monitor the extent to which the CWA is being established as a proximity service. This subdomain is concerned not only with the inclusion of new proposals to implement the services and offers of the different sectors, but also about the improvement of the accessibility of the sites, in order to reduce the barriers to their use (extended opening hours, offers for different audiences, inclusion of groups previously excluded from use, etc.).

This subdomain has been incorporated into the domain of "Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life" because it is vital to consider that the absence of essential services hinders citizens' ability to exercise their equal rights. The invitation to the CW sector is to test itself in challenging contexts such as those of inner areas, to truly enter a dimension of welfare service that is structured, integrated, and democratic. An additional risk in this regard must be considered: if a CWA succeeds in improving essential services within marginal areas, it could inadvertently exacerbate inequalities and create more unjust conditions in those that remain underserve. To prevent this, a coordinated national strategy with structural support and clear guidelines for an integrated CW system is necessary, ensuring that benefits are distributed equitably across regions and territories.

As illustrated in the table below, the "People's Perspective" section presents original questions, which are grouped as follows: "Education", "Healthcare and Social Care", "Cultural Offer", and "Mobility". These questions are preceded by a general section of five questions, four of which (marked as usual with an asterisk at the end) were inspired by the two SoPHIA subdomains mentioned above (SoPHIA Project, 2021, pp. 31, 36).

Subdomain	Living Conditions
Description	The aim is to assess whether the CWA contributes positively to the living conditions of individuals and groups engaged in the activity or impacted by its presence in the area.
People's Perspective	**General**: - What are the objectives of the CWA in terms of living conditions for individuals and groups engaged in the activity or impacted by its presence in the area? * - What is the well-being strategy implemented by the CWA? * - In what ways can/does the CWA contribute to People's well-being in the long run (5, 10, 20 years)? * - How do People view the quality of services in the area? How does the CWA impact this view? * - What are the expectations different stakeholders had regarding regional and local development related to the CWA? * - Do People have a better knowledge of the educational/social/health and cultural services they can benefit from thanks to the CWA intervention? **Education**: - Does the CWA have educational value? - How does the CWA promote access to, and quality of education (formal, non-formal and informal)?

	Healthcare and Social care: - How does the CWA add value to the healthcare system? - How does the CWA promote access to, and quality of alternative form of healthcare? - How does the CWA promote access to, and quality of health services? - How does the CWA add value to the social care system? - How does the CWA promote access to and quality of social services? - To what extent does the CWA collaborate with local healthcare providers or social services to expand access? **Cultural Offer**: - How does the CWA add value to the cultural offer? - How does the CWA promote access to, and quality of cultural offer of the area? **Mobility**: - How does the CWA help mitigate mobility discomfort for participants? - Does the CWA improve transportation options or accessibility for those with limited mobility (e.g., shuttle services, community carpool initiatives)? - Is the CWA easily accessible by public transport? - Does the CWA reach places not served by public transport? - How does the CWA enhance access to cultural experiences for low-income or geographically isolated people?
Tips for Evaluation	Each domain is subject to change and integration based on the evaluation needs isolated by the CWA team. Any modification or addition of facets (housing, safety, etc.) contributing to the quality of living conditions is advocated.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: the integration of an educational component into the CWA has the potential to assist in the reduction of educational disparities in underserved regions. It can also foster the promotion of lifelong learning. **Social & Civic**: the improvement of essential services, such as those pertaining to health, education and mobility, facilitates inclusive and equitable access, generating the conditions to exercise citizens' rights and fostering participation and engagement. **Economic**: the provision of support and implementation of local cultural initiatives, involving the local cultural workforce, has the potential to enhance economic opportunities and reinforce the local economy.
Drawbacks	**Social & Civic and Governance & Delivery Process**: the contribution of CWA to these essential services may result in the emergence of even more unfair conditions and increased inequality in areas not directly affected by the CWA. To address this complex scenario, a national strategy providing structural support and guidance on the subject is a potential solution.
SDGs 2030	SDG 3 − Good Health and Well−being SDG 4 − Quality Education SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 16 − Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 32 Overview of the subdomain Living Conditions (own elaboration)

2.3.6 Governance & Delivery Process Domain

This latter domain explores the operational management needs of CWAs. It is inspired by the Impacts 08 domain "Governance and Delivery Process" and by the SoPHIA domain "Social Capital & Governance". These have served as the basis for the development of two subdomains, namely Good Governance, and Visibility and Reputation. Furthermore, an examination of the main features of CW management revealed that the methodology outlined by the NEB Compass (European Commission, 2022) would be optimal for delineating three additional subdomains. The NEB Compass guiding framework is based on a three-axis system comprising three values ("Beautiful", "Together", "Sustainable") and three working principles: "Participatory Process", "Multi-level Engagement", and "Transdisciplinary Approach". The utilisation of these principles as a foundational framework served as the basis for the formulation of three additional subdomains[99]. As delineated in Section 2.3 of this chapter, the three ambitions associated with each principle were maintained, and the related questions presented in the NEB Compass were employed as a point of departure for the formulation of those presented in the subsequent tables[100].

These principles have been selected and translated into subdomains because they encapsulate some of the necessary ambitions of a CW project. It is essential to work across disciplines, sectors and levels of governance, to involve all relevant parties in an open and fair manner, and to maintain a clear understanding of the role and contribution made at the local, regional, national and international levels.

Echoing all the aspects indicated above, the domain is articulated in five subdomains, which are described below: Good Governance; Visibility and Reputation; Participatory Processes; Multi-level Engagement; Disciplinary Convergences.

Good Governance

This subdomain is inspired by the SoPHIA subdomain "Good Governance", contained in the domain "Social Capital & Governance".

This subdomain encompasses the managerial and decision-making aspects of the CWA, with a particular focus on issues pertaining to transparency, responsiveness, accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency. Primarily, to ensure the reliability of the governance assessment, it is recommended that a fundamental preliminary step be taken. It would be prudent to establish a governance pact.

[99] Namely: Participatory Processes; Multi-level Engagement; Disciplinary Convergences.
[100] This aspect relates to tables: Tab. 35; Tab. 36; Tab. 37.

This would guarantee that all parties are aware of the scope of their input and the decision-making structure. Once this has been established, it will be possible to ascertain with greater objectivity whether an agreement has been breached, whether there has been a lack of trust or transparency in the governance of the CWA. The concept of transparency is not only limited to the publication of documents (the number of which must be monitored) but also includes ensuring that information is clear and accessible (and in this sense, any action to make materials as accessible as possible must be considered in the evaluation). Accountability is reinforced by setting clear objectives and implementing regular evaluations of outputs, outcomes, and impacts, to the greatest extent possible. This assessment must be supported by robust feedback mechanisms that enable individuals to assess and influence governance. Such an approach will also facilitate the evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of the action. The degree of involvement and collaboration will be addressed in the subdomains "Multi-level engagement" and "Participatory Process", where it will be possible to provide a more detailed exploration and to capture the nuances of these crucial facets of governance. Finally, a good governance is pivotal to ensure that CWAs are both successful and perceived positively.

The questions collated in the "People's Perspective" section are predominantly original, with five of the eleven questions drawn from the subdomain "Good Governance" and marked with an asterisk (2021, p. 23).

Subdomain	Good Governance
Description	The aim is to assess the good governance of the CWA, focusing on transparency, responsiveness, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency.
People's Perspective	- What is the governance and decision-making structure in planning, management, and evaluation of the intervention? * - Do People feel adequately represented? * - Do People feel included in decision-making processes? * - Do People consider the decision-making processes to be transparent? * - Are feedback/monitoring/evaluation processes in place for planning and management the CWA? * - How does governance respond to emerging challenges or feedback from People within the CWA? - Are the outcomes of CWA's regularly assessed against their initial objectives? How is this information shared? - How effectively does the CWA communicate its goals and progress? - Does the CWA achieve its objectives effectively? - Does the CWA make best use of resources in achieving its objectives? - How is the effectiveness and efficiency of CWA management assessed? Are these metrics clearly communicated?
Tips for Evaluation	For the CWA governance assessment to be reliable, it is recommended that a fundamental preliminary step be taken. It is advisable to establish a governance pact. This would ensure that all parties involved are aware of the scope of their contribution

	and the decision-making structure. Once this is clear, it will be easier to establish objectively whether an agreement has been breached or not, whether there has been a breach of trust or a lack of transparency in the management of the CWA.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: good participatory governance can cultivate a constructive sense of belonging, engagement, and shared responsibility among people regarding the conservation and enhancement of the heritage associated with the CWA. This condition has the potential to initiate a virtuous cycle of cultural-based regeneration. **Economic**: good governance can improve working conditions, and labour relations. There could also be impacts on social innovation and entrepreneurship through transparent processes and participation. **Ecological**: green management can be supported by responsiveness and transparency in governance. **Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life**: good governance could positively impact the quality of life, improving the services offered.
SDGs 2030	SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 16 − Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 33 Overview of the subdomain Good Governance (own elaboration)

Visibility and Reputation

This subdomain is inspired by the SoPHIA subdomain "Visibility and Reputation", contained in the domain "Identity of Place".

The questions presented in the table which are based on this subdomain are marked with a single asterisk (SoPHIA project, 2021, p. 26).

Effective CWA management entails the capacity to cultivate a positive public image and enhance visibility. It would be beneficial for management to adopt a transparent communication strategy, disseminating information about their practices and outcomes in a careful and comprehensive manner. It would be desirable to investigate the perception of the CWA by the People involved, at various levels, as well as its general reputation.

Subdomain	Visibility and Reputation
Description	The aim is to assess the visibility of the CWA, according to criteria established during the programming phase, and to ascertain whether the overall reputation of the intervention is favourable.
People's Perspective	- What is the CWA's image for the various People involved and what are the main discussions about it? * - What perception/image does the CWA try to communicate externally? How? * - How is the CWA represented and discussed in the dissemination channels? * - What do main public discussions about the CWA relate to? * - Is the CWA entangled in new daily rituals? * - Is the CWA included in new activities? *

	- What actions are being taken to improve the visibility of the CWA? - What are the main public discussions about CWA?
Tips for Evaluation	If people have collectively determined the desired level of visibility for the action, try to ascertain the extent to which they derive satisfaction from the objectives achieved in this regard. Try to monitor all dissemination activities that are carried out, in all phases of the project, even the initial ones. Try to identify where the dissemination takes place: locally, across sectors, at different geographical scales (regional, national, international). This multiplier action of the dissemination activity can be evaluated by keeping track of the new collaborations born because of these dissemination actions.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: good visibility and a positive reputation can foster a stronger sense of belonging for those involved in the CWA. Moreover, it can also have an impact on the ability to share knowledge and enhance local assets. Finally, the dissemination of CWA can also be part of the list of activities embraced by the subdomain of Research, which with academic and scientific discourses can add *gravitas* to the CWA itself and improve its reputation. **Social & Civic**: good visibility and a positive reputation can lead to new or stronger collaborations between groups. **Economic**: good visibility and a positive reputation may enhance the ability to attract economic resources and increase the tourist attractiveness of the areas covered by the CWA.
Drawbacks	**Governance & Delivery Process**: it is possible that the dissemination of information may not provide an accurate and comprehensive representation, which could potentially dissatisfy some participants. This could engender a sense of exclusion and a deterioration in trust. If negative narratives are not adequately addressed, they may lead to a cessation of activity.
SDGs 2030	SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 16 − Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 34 Overview of the subdomain Visibility and Reputation (own elaboration)

Participatory Processes

This subdomain is founded upon the NEB compass principle, which bears the same name.

The subdomain aims to evaluate the degree of participation in the decision-making process of the CWA, not only in the planning and management phases, as proposed by the subdomain "Good Governance" of SoPHIA, but also in its evaluation. By encouraging the active involvement of individuals and groups in the governance process, from the initial planning stages to the final evaluation, the CWA includes a diverse range of voices in its development. Successful participatory approaches are dynamic processes that truly reflect and respect the values and expressions of the people involved. These practices enhance democratic and civic participation, and contribute to a

more vibrant, resilient and inclusive cultural sector, shaped after the principles of the Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2005). It would be erroneous to assume that participation is a one-dimensional concept; rather, it encompasses a range of nuances (as presented in Chapter II). Indeed, Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation illustrates that the higher one is on the scale, the greater the level of power and decision-making authority granted to citizens (Arnstein, 1969). This ranges from simple manipulation, which is typical of non-participation, to information, which is representative of tokenism, to partnership, in involvement, up until citizens' control at the highest levels. To summarise, the spectrum of participation ranges from simple manipulation (non-participation) to information (tokenism), up until citizens' self-governance (citizen power) at the highest levels (Arnstein, 1969, p. 217).

Some of the questions presented in the Table have been inspired by the guiding questions from the NEW Compass (European Commission, 2022, p. 16). To easily navigate the People's Perspective section, the degree of participation investigated, which overlaps with the three ambitions presented in this working principle: 1) to consult; 2) to co-develop; 3) to self-govern, is provided in bold before the set of related question. The questions marked with two asterisks (**) are an adapted CW version of the questions presented in the NEB Compass (*Ibidem*). The three questions that precede the three sets aforementioned are wholly original and general in nature, applicable to all levels of participation.

Following the structure proposed by the NEB Compass principle, participatory processes are here divided into three main areas of pertinence: consultation; co-development, and self-governance (European Commission, 2022).

To consult means that the participatory CWA moves through communication channels, whether consolidated or not. At this first level of ambition, participation ranges from the sharing of information about the project to the dialogue and consultation that feeds into the decision-making process. The flow of information is static and mostly one-sided: information streams from the CWA team to the different categories of People.

To co-develop means that the participatory CWA engages stakeholders as key partners and advisers in defining and/or co-creating the rules and objectives of the project. The emerging ideas are developed collaboratively by the CWA team and the People involved. The information flow is dynamic, exchanges are on an equal foot and information becomes co-designed.

Finally, *to self-govern* means that the participatory CWA aims to enable stakeholders to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with powerholders, at all stages of the project's lifecycle (design, management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) and empowers people to make decisions and govern the project.

The implementation of participatory processes can promote the preservation and enhancement of cultural and natural heritage, fostering a stronger sense of belonging and shared responsibility. In the social and civic sphere, these processes reinforce civic and democratic engagement, thereby strengthening community ties. From an economic perspective, these processes enhance resilience by empowering local communities to engage in economic planning, facilitating sustainable development through initiatives such as local enterprises and cooperative models. Additionally, they stimulate social innovation and entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, these processes may also slow down the CWA design and delivery, due to a more time-consuming participatory approach. Indeed, such initiatives frequently necessitate a considerable investment of time, human resources and financial capital, which can result in delays and ultimately render the project economically untenable. From an ecological standpoint, participatory approaches can foster environmental stewardship, harmonising local concerns with broader sustainability initiatives. Finally, while participatory governance has the capacity to effect significant transformative and positive change in terms of health and well-being, it can also engender inequalities if dominant groups exert undue influence over other voices, resulting in an uneven distribution of benefits and marginalisation.

Subdomain	Participatory Processes
Description	The aim is to assess the degree (consultation; co-development; self-governance) to which People are involved in the design, implementation and evaluation phases of the CWA.
People's Perspective	- Who participates in the processes? - At what stage does participation take place: planning, management, evaluation of the CWA? - What is the experience of the People about their role and level of engagement? **Consultation**: - Does the CWA keep People informed? How? ** - Is there an awareness of who might be excluded from the CWA? If so, who? ** - To what extent will the CWA allow People to contribute? ** **Co-development**: - Will the CWA process stakeholder input? How? ** - Are people included in the decision-making? How, and by which means? ** - Does the CWA aim to collaborate with people? How? ** - Does the CWA reach out to those who are excluded from their activity? How does it plan to do so? ** - Do people feel themselves to be decision-makers? - Do people feel that their input has a significant influence on CWA decisions? **Self-governance**: - Does the CWA empower and sustain grass-roots initiatives beyond project implementation? How? ** - Does the CWA aim to allow stakeholders to take (legal) ownership? How? ** - Do the CWA team aim to make themselves redundant, enabling a community to

	take agency? In which way? ** - What measures does the CWA take to include those affected by a design and to ensure representation in decision-making? **
Tips for Evaluation	A shared agreement, among all the people involved, on which is the degree of participation implemented in the CWA is fundamental to set objectives and indicators for evaluating the results of these processes.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: participatory governance can promote safeguarding and enhancement of cultural and natural heritage, increasing sense of belonging and common responsibility. **Social &Civic**: participatory processes foster civic and democratic engagement. **Economic**: participatory processes can boost economic resilience by encouraging local communities to actively engage in economic planning and decision-making. This engagement can lead to more sustainable local economic development, as communities help to shape economic initiatives that directly benefit them (local enterprise; cooperative models) and can stimulate social innovation and entrepreneurship. **Ecological**: participatory processes can lead to greater environmental stewardship.
Drawbacks	**Economic and Governance & Delivery Process**: participatory processes can slow down decision-making and implementation. Such processes are frequently more costly in terms of financial, human and temporal resources. **Well-being, Health & Quality of Life**: participatory governance can also lead to inequalities if certain groups dominate the decision-making process, marginalising other groups and leading to inequalities.
SDGs 2030	SDG 5 − Gender Equality SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 16 − Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 35 Overview of the subdomain Participatory Processes (own elaboration)

Multi-level Engagement

The foundation of this subdomain is the NEB compass' working principle "Multi-level Engagement".

This subdomain analyses CWA's ability to nurture effective exchange both horizontally and vertically, within a given local context, across different levels, and/or globally. Indeed, the highest ambition for a multilevel CWA is to find ways to achieve transformative impact beyond its initial scale and to connect the local and global dimensions. This bridges a place-based perspective and systemic thinking, enabling the CWA to situate itself within an identified context while simultaneously extending its scope into adjacent dimensions. Effective multi-level collaboration should produce transferable and scalable solutions to spread knowledge across sectors and promote cross-border experimentation. In accordance with the structure proposed in NEB Compass principle, the multi-level engagement subdomain is articulated into three dimensions which

replicate the working principle's ambitions: to work locally, to work across levels, and to work globally (European Commission, 2022). These are not mutually exclusive; rather, they can and should be combined and evaluated simultaneously within a single CWA. As in the previous subdomain, to easily navigate the People's Perspective section, these dimensions are provided in bold before the set of related questions. These questions are an adapted CW version of the questions presented in the NEB Compass (marked with a double asterisk), with original questions at the conclusion of each subsection in "People's Perspective" section of the table (European Commission, 2022, p. 18).

To work locally means developing forms of inter-municipal cooperation. Such coalitions can link informal networks (e.g., individuals, groups, neighbourhoods, and civil society organisations) with formal institutions (local entities, administration, and services). Overall, the result is a joint effort to influence the local living environment with a place-based approach.

To work across levels implies vertically connecting informal networks (e.g., individuals, groups, neighbourhoods, and civil society organisations) and/or formal institutions (e.g., municipalities, provinces, regions, governments, administrations, countries, and supranational institutions). This can take place on various scales (e.g., individual municipalities with regional authorities, local studies with international research programmes). The broad aim is to push single-scale initiatives beyond their own scale (e.g., local, regional, national).

To work globally indicates seeking a wider and more transformative impact, going beyond an initial, local scale of application. The CWA aims to link (inter)governmental networks and/or institutions which, at various levels, share similar objectives. Overall, the aim is to generate transformative impact on multiple scales, especially global, by promoting cross-sectoral cooperation. This also applies to actions with a Global North-Global-South scope.

Multi-level engagement, particularly at local level, can help to promote the exploitation of cultural and natural resources and local cultural production. It can also facilitate knowledge sharing at multiple levels, generating a positive impact on education, training and research. Especially at the local level, it promotes social cohesion by building cooperative relationships between different groups, both institutional and non-institutional. Economically, it increases the ability to attract diverse sources of finance, increases economic attractiveness through social innovation, supports local cultural activities, creates jobs and has the potential to stimulate tourism. However, it is important to consider that as the scope and impact of CWAs expands, multi-level engagement may also increase the ecological footprint due to increased demand for travel and transport in extended territories.

Subdomain	Multilevel Engagement
Description	The aim is to assess the CWA's ability to nurture effective exchange both horizontally and vertically, within a given local context, across different levels, and/or globally.
People's Perspective	**To work locally**: - Does the CWA interact with local networks and collectives? Which activities does it put in place to do it? ** - Does the CWA aim at influencing the local living environment? How? ** - Does the CWA cultivate a place-based approach? How does it do that? ** - Does the CWA facilitate collaboration between local institutions and community organisations? How? **To work across levels**: - Does the CWA interact with networks and/or institutions that are active beyond the scale of the CWA itself (e.g., from local to regional, from national to international…)? Which activities does it put in place to do so? ** - Does the CWA work at different scales (e.g., neighbourhood and the city, one single school with a network of national schools…)? How does it make it possible? ** - Does the CWA aim at having an influence across different scales? How does it plan to do so? ** **To work globally**: - Does the CWA aim to reach a global, transformational impact? How? ** - Does the CWA consider the local impact putting it in perspective with the future of the entire ecosystem? Which actions does it plan to put in place to do so? ** - Are policies considered in decision-making (local, national, international)?
Tips for Evaluation	To capture this dimension, it is advisable to keep track of the number of meetings, exchanges, events, publications, conferences and any form of interaction representative of the emergence of established networks, whatever their scope.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: multi-level engagement, especially at the local level, can enhance local cultural and natural resources. It can also increase knowledge sharing and positively influence education, training and research. **Social & Civic**: multi-level engagement can promote social cohesion by facilitating cooperative relationships between different groups, institutional and non-institutional. **Economic**: multi-level engagement increases the ability to capture diverse funding opportunities and economic attractiveness by stimulating social innovation, supporting local cultural production, and generating job opportunities. Finally, it can be a stimulus to the tourist economy.
Drawbacks	**Ecological**: while multi-level engagement expands the reach and impact of the CWA, it can also increase the ecological footprint due to the increased need for travel and transport resources over larger territories.
SDGs 2030	SDG 5 − Gender Equality SDG 9 − Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 12 − Responsible Consumption and Production SDG 16 − Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 36 Overview of the subdomain Multi-level Engagement (own elaboration)

Disciplinary Convergences

This subdomain is inspired by the working principle "Transdisciplinary Approach" of NEB Compass.

For a CWA to function effectively, it is essential that knowledge from different sectors and practitioners from various fields be brought together. The CWAs address particular sectors, which are typically cultural and creative, social, and health-related. Typically, the privileged sectors engaged in dialogue are those related to culture, creativity and the social sphere, as well as healthcare. Working across disciplines allows for the formulation of CWAs capable of generating a multi-dimensional impact, encompassing cultural, artistic, social, civic, economic, ecological, welfare and health dimensions. In addition, it stimulates the development of solutions that transcend the limits of a single sector and are applied across disciplines and fields. Finally, the ultimate ambition should be to incorporate insights from non-academics and the public into scientific expertise.

The original ambitions proposed in the NEB compass − articulated in 1) to be multidisciplinary; 2) to be interdisciplinary; 3) to be beyond-disciplinary − have been adapted to the field of CW in three possible variants, drawing on the definitions provided by Choi & Pak: be multidisciplinary (additive), be interdisciplinary (integrative), be transdisciplinary (holistic) (2006). The questions presented in this subdomain are predominantly an adapted CW version of those presented in the NEB Compass, marked with two asterisks (European Commission, 2022, p.20). A limited number of original questions is offered at the conclusion of each subsection in the table.

Being *multidisciplinary* means drawing on the knowledge of different disciplines, while remaining within their boundaries (Choi & Pak, 2006, p. 351). In doing so, the different perspectives create a wider additive understanding of a subject, that is not integrative. The boundaries of disciplines are crossed, but the disciplines retain their voices. The aim is not to achieve an integration of insights, indeed multidisciplinary teams work in parallel to address the same issue (Choi & Pak, 2006, p. 355).

On the other hand, an *interdisciplinary* approach entails the analysis, synthesis and harmonisation of the links between disciplines, with the objective of creating a coordinated and coherent whole (Choi & Pak, 2006, p.351). In a CWA where the aim is to address a common problem or issue, working interdisciplinary means collaborating with other disciplines to achieve a common goal with an internal coherence (Choi & Pak, 2006, p.356).

Finally, the adoption of a *transdisciplinary* vision implies a holistic integration "of natural, social and health sciences in a humanities context, and in doing so transcends their traditional boundaries" (Soskolne, 2000, in Choi & Pak, 2006, p.359). Moreover, this approach can entail engagement of non-academic and other stakeholders, bridging together both formal and non-formal knowledge to achieve a common goal. Drawing on both local and traditional knowledge, as well as cultural norms and values, the CWA aims to transpose scientific insights for the benefit of society, and "to transcends the disciplinary boundaries to look at the dynamics of whole systems in a holistic way" (Choi & Pak, 2006, p. 359).

The possible convergence of various disciplines in CWA can produce significant benefits in many areas. First, it promotes the innovation of cultural and creative productions by bringing together different fields of knowledge, improving resonance with a more diverse audience. Additionally, it enriches the research, training and education scenario. Socially and civilly, the integration of different fields has the potential to strengthen social cohesion. From an economic point of view, disciplinary converges can attract a variety of funding sources, extending financial support. The inclusion of an ecological perspective can trigger more sustainable practices and promote synergies between green and social prescriptions. However, in governance and delivery processes, the involvement of multiple disciplines can slow decision-making and introduce complexity due to different methodologies and objectives across fields, which can complicate governance and reduce effectiveness.

Subdomain	Disciplinary Convergences
Description	The aim is to assess the chosen approach (multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, or transdisciplinary) used by the CWA team to integrate diverse disciplines effectively.
People's Perspective	**To be multidisciplinary**: - Does the CWA work with different disciplines/fields? How does it facilitate connection between them? ** - Is there a common problem definition shared between two or more of the different disciplines/fields involved in the CWA? ** - How many different educational backgrounds are involved in the CWA team? Could there be more involved? ** - What is the distance between disciplines, e.g., urban planners working with architects (small distance) or psychologists working with artists (large distance)? Which system does the CWA put in place to bridge it? ** - Does the evaluation team include members from different disciplines/fields? **To be interdisciplinary**: - How intensive is the communication between those from different disciplines/fields in the CWA? How is it managed? ** - Is there new knowledge creation? ** - Are results integrated with each other? How? ** - Does the evaluation team define objectives in consultation between members of

	different disciplines/areas? **To be transdisciplinary**: - Are non-formal/non-academic knowledge partners/stakeholders involved in the knowledge creation? How? ** - Is equal value given to formal and informal knowledge? How? ** - Is there a common goal? What is the plan to reach it collectively? ** - Is there a collaborative process put in place that facilitates the merging of different knowledge fields? How does it work? ** - Are other categories, apart from enablers, contributing to the knowledge creation (e.g., final and intermediate beneficiaries)?
Tips for Evaluation	The specificity of this subdomain can be reflected in the evaluation process itself. Indeed, to ensure a comprehensive assessment, it is essential to include members from different disciplines on the evaluation team, as this allows for a variety of perspectives on project effectiveness.
Cross-cutting Issues	**Cultural**: the convergences of disciplines can foster innovative cultural and artistic expressions by combining knowledge from different fields. This can lead to new forms of cultural production that resonate more deeply with different audiences. It enriches the research, training, and education scenario fostering deep-rooted collaborations. **Social & Civic**: the convergence of disciplines can help build stronger and cohesive societies. **Economic**: a convergence of different disciplines could have a positive effect on attracting different funds. **Ecological**: a disciplinary convergence allows for incorporating ecological and environmental sciences in the planning and implementation of CWAs, leading to more sustainable practices. Moreover, such dialogue could facilitate the integration of green prescriptions with social prescriptions, triggering a virtuous mechanism.
Drawbacks	**Governance & Delivery Process**: involving multiple disciplines could lead to slower and more complex decision-making processes. Different disciplines may have conflicting methodologies or objectives, which can complicate the CWA's governance structures and outcomes, potentially reducing the overall effectiveness.
SDGs 2030	SDG 3 − Good Health and Well−being SDG 4 − Quality Education SDG 5 − Gender Equality SDG 9 − Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure SDG 10 − Reduced Inequalities SDG 11 − Sustainable Cities and Communities SDG 12 − Responsible Consumption and Production SDG 16 − Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions SDG 17 − Partnerships for the Goals

Tab. 37 Overview of the subdomain Disciplinary Convergences (own elaboration)

3. Conclusions, Limitations, and Future Research

As demonstrated in the preceding chapter, the analyses revealed an absence of a holistic tool that had been specifically designed for the evaluation of CW, nor one which fully meets the requirements for evaluation in this field.

Addressing this gap, the present chapter has introduced a comprehensive and multi-stakeholder framework tailored to CW, the Holistic Evaluation for Cultural Welfare Actions (HECWA) framework. This evaluation framework has systematically integrated key features emerged through the previous analysis of existing holistic models − such as Impacts 08, the SoPHIA Model, and Dunphy's Holistic Framework for Arts Engagement Evaluation − assembling the essential components to form a robust foundation for a holistic evaluation model.

Moreover, HECWA has been developed to be applicable in assessing the impacts of Cultural Welfare Activities (CWAs) in disadvantaged regions such as inner areas. This approach encourages reflection on the contribution of CWA to living conditions in terms of health, education, mobility and cultural offer.

In the chapter, the fundamental principles and aims underpinning HECWA were outlined, with specific attention to the design choices made to address the challenges identified in inner areas. The three fundamental pillars of the framework, drawing inspiration from those of SoPHIA, were then delineated: a) the Time axis, incorporating the *ex ante*, *in itinere*, and *ex post* phases aligned with the Theory of Change; b) the People axis, which employed a multi-stakeholder approach with the objective of ensuring diverse perspectives and inclusive participatory processes at the foundation of the CWA; c) and the Domains axis, which encompassed six key areas and twenty-three subdomains, providing a comprehensive evaluation structure. In the presentation of the final domain of the framework (Governance and Delivery Process), it was demonstrated how the principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) Compass guiding framework (European Commission, 2022) − namely the support of participatory processes, multi-level involvement and interdisciplinary collaboration − had been integrated into the evaluation.

The framework is designed to be flexible and responsive, aligning with the complex nature of CWAs. It aims to provide insights that could inform both policy and practical applications. The People axis identified a wide range of stakeholders, implementing the classification proposed by Dunphy (2015) and considering the design requirements of CW. These stakeholders included intermediate beneficiaries such as support networks (i.e. families, groups, delimited communities), and enablers (host organisation, educators, artistic/cultural workers, social workers, health workers, logistic partners; volunteers). These stakeholders' perspectives are one of the guidance of the

evaluation. Indeed, the People's Perspectives section presented in each subdomain gathers together existing questions from SoPHIA's Model and the NEB Compass, adapted to the CW features, and new questions designed specifically for HECWA and the CW evaluation's needs.

Despite these elements of innovation, the framework has significant limitations. HECWA has not yet been tested in a pilot project, which is crucial for verifying its effectiveness and adaptability in real-world scenarios. This aspect highlights a significant gap, pointing to the need for empirical application and subsequent refinement based on practical findings. Additionally, the comprehensive nature of the framework, while thorough and flexible, may present challenges for evaluators in navigating its complexity. This could necessitate further refinement to ensure it remains practical and accessible for those conducting evaluations.

Future advancements in this research must address these issues, potentially by simplifying the framework or developing more streamlined methods for assessment and data collection. Finally, it is recommended that professionals from the fields of culture, health and social care, in addition to academics and policymakers, be integrated into the research process. This will ensure that the framework meets real-world needs and effectively contributes to assessing and improving CWAs in various contexts.

General Conclusions

This thesis has systematically explored the multidimensional contributions of CW, focusing particularly on marginalised inner areas. CW practices are based on a cross-sectoral integration of the cultural, social and health sectors. This integration not only links the different spheres but also creates a rich reality of layers that are articulated from the initial design of the interventions to the final stage of their evaluation. Given the multicomponent nature of cultural experiences (Fancourt & Finn, 2019) and culture's ability to generate multidimensional impacts that contribute comprehensively to sustainable development (CHCfE Consortium, 2015; Hawkes, 2010; UNESCO, 2013), a holistic approach is clearly needed within the CW field. This approach is essential for assessing the impacts of CWAs, which are diverse and complex, spanning social, cultural, economic and environmental domains.

In light of the holistic, multidimensional and multi-stakeholder approach required to evaluate CW practices, the examination of participatory processes addressed in the second part of this thesis and the analysis of existing holistic models presented in the fourth chapter, this research aimed to address the following questions:

RQ1: How might the multidimensional contributions of Cultural Welfare be assessed in a holistic way, especially within marginal contexts, such as those of inner areas?

RQ2: What part do participatory processes play in the Cultural and Creative Sectors, and how might they be incorporated into Cultural Welfare practices?

In response to Research Question 1, the review (presented in Chapter IV) of existing holistic models − such as Impacts 08, the SoPHIA Model, and Dunphy's Holistic Framework for Arts Engagement Evaluation − was instrumental in isolating existing best practices and analysing them through the CW lens to identify possible positive or critical features. This analysis revealed the absence of a suitable instrument for conducting the assessment of CWA, emphasising the necessity to develop a framework that can address all the requirements of this domain. In order to address this identified gap, a robust framework for evaluating the contributions of CW initiatives was established: the Holistic Evaluation for Cultural Welfare Actions (HECWA) framework. HECWA was meticulously designed to focus on the assessment of CWAs within inner areas, where the cultural and socio-economic challenges are significant. The framework, delineated in Chapter V, adopts a managerial approach that is structured around the same three core pillars of the SoPHIA Model: Time, People, and Domains.

The Time axis, incorporating the *ex ante*, *in itinere*, and *ex post* phases, aligns with the Theory of Change, focusing on the roadmap to achieve intended changes and underscoring continuous reflection on the evaluation strategy and features, at all phases.

The People axis employed a multi-stakeholder approach to ensure diverse perspectives and inclusive participation. The stakeholder ecosystem is framed as an orchestra, in which each component contribution is pivotal, especially in the design and evaluation phases often overlooked (see Part II). HECWA provides a guide for those orchestrating these plural contributions (Biondi et al., 2020), especially those facilitating participatory processes, and offers a strategic framework for structuring the design, implementation and evaluation strategy of CWAs.

The last axis is the one presenting the multidimensional scope of CWAs' contribution. The Domains axis, which encompasses six different domains and twenty-three subdomains, provides a comprehensive approach and detailed structure inspired by the SoPHIA Model. Indeed, each subdomain is described in detail in order to effectively capture and assess the diverse impacts of CWAs in different spheres. The six domains proposed are rooted within the traditional four-pillar of sustainable development (cultural, economic, social, and environmental) and implemented thanks to the review of the existing holistic models (Chapter IV). The resulting domains identified in the HECWA framework are a) Cultural; b) Social & Civic; c) Economic; d) Ecological; e) Well-being, Health, & Quality of Life; f) Governance & Delivery Process.

The HECWA framework is a valuable point of reference due to the meticulous aggregation of information from all pertinent sectors in each domain, as well as its comprehensive and systematic integration within a broader overview. This overview methodically delineates any potential cross-cutting issues and drawbacks, across different domains. The HECWA framework has been developed to accommodate the future definition of specific indicators; these have not been delineated precisely in this instance, in order to enable their realisation in a customised manner for each CWA applying the framework. Rather, general assessment tips and a specific section on guiding questions have been provided. The so-called "People's Perspective" section is intended to facilitate a multifocal perspective within each subdomain. This section gathers existing questions from SoPHIA's Model and the NEB Compass, adapted to the HECWA purposes, and new questions designed specifically for the CW evaluation's needs. These questions constitute an element of innovation, which is considered fundamental for the managerial purpose of the framework. They represent the initial inquiries that can subsequently guide the creation of appropriate indicators.

It has been frequently observed that the measurement of well-being, despite the utilisation of validated self-reporting scales, has been deemed inadequate (All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, 2017). HECWA addresses this deficiency by providing a

comprehensive overview of the actions and their contributions, not solely relying on self-reporting. Nonetheless, the framework acknowledges the necessity to count on existing validated tools (Sacco, 2023) to consistently assess the impact in terms of health, well-being and quality of life. HECWA broader approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of well-being that encompasses the deeper, more meaningful aspects of eudaimonic well-being, enhancing the strategic nature of the evaluation of CW interventions.

Moreover, HECWA underlines the necessity to evaluate the way CWAs enhance and conserve cultural and natural heritage − also through new innovative forms of Nature Prescription, and Creative Green Prescription (Kondo *et al.*, 2020; Nguyen *et al.*, 2022; Tate *et al.*, 2024; Thomson *et al.*, 2020) − whilst concurrently advocating for an integrated ecological approach within vulnerable inner areas, susceptible to environmental hazards and depopulation. This comprehensive assessment, tailored to inner areas fragilities and opportunities, spans various cross-cutting issues and drawbacks, delving into specific subdomains such as those of the Cultural domain: "Enhancement of Local Cultural and Natural Resources", "Cultural-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-use", "Education, Training and Research", "Artistic and Creative Vibrancy". This lens is present also within all three subdomains of the "Social & Civic Domain", but also in the subdomains "Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship", "Safeguarding against Environmental Risks", "Green Management and use of resources", "Awareness Raising on Environmental Sustainability". Finally, marginal areas, defined by their significant distance from essential services such as health, education, and transport, shape the "Living Conditions" subdomain. This subdomain also incorporates the dimension of cultural offerings, emphasising how these pivotal themes collectively influence the quality of life in these territories.

The framework provides a scalable methodology for building a territorial knowledge base to support the evaluation of projects and regional initiatives. In doing so, HECWA responds to the need for a unified and comprehensive evaluation framework that has been underlined in documents and agreements of several regions in recent years, including Marche in 2021, Toscana, Emilia-Romagna and Puglia in 2024.

In response to Research Question 2, the thesis underscores the pivotal role of participatory processes in optimising the effectiveness and sustainability of CW interventions. As detailed in Chapter III, adopting participatory approaches not only deepens community engagement but also empowers local stakeholders, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment that is essential for long-term success. This engagement has been demonstrated to have two primary benefits. Firstly, it has been shown to align cultural activities more closely with the needs of the community. Secondly, it has been proved to amplify the impact of these initiatives on community well-being. This case

study and the literature review presented in Part 2 provided respectively practical insights and broader guidance into how participatory processes can be integrated into practices to maximise impact and reach. In considering the people-centred approach to CWAs, this study has deepened the theme of participatory processes within Cultural and Creative Sectors as an essential step for developing a multi-stakeholder framework, necessary to design and implement a strategic holistic evaluation. For this reason, the People domain has been constituted, presenting all the categories of stakeholders to consider when developing, delivering and evaluating a CW intervention. Furthermore, in the Time Axes, recommendations have been put forward for implementing a participatory process with these categories, incorporating, among other approaches, creative tools that may serve to enhance inclusivity within the process.

In conclusion, the presentation of the final domain of the framework (Governance and Delivery Process) showed the enhancement of the participatory nature of the CWA, facilitated by the incorporation of the working principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) Compass guiding framework (European Commission, 2022) into the evaluation. Indeed, these working principles embrace participatory processes, multi-level engagement, and transdisciplinary approaches.

In addition to providing answers to the research questions posed in the study, this thesis has made theoretical and methodological contributions to the field of cultural management. Furthermore, the text goes on to identify implications, limitations and future research.

The theoretical contribution of the thesis lies in developing a comprehensive framework for evaluating CW from a holistic, multi-stakeholder perspective. This contribution is meticulously realised, drawing on extant literature and incorporating a multidimensional and subjective vision of value, which underlies then the necessary adoption of participatory approaches capable of returning this plurality of perspectives. HECWA model synthesises these insights to facilitate a multidimensional assessment of CW initiatives, encompassing diverse domains. Moreover, the thesis contributes to the theoretical discourse surrounding CW by situating it within the broader framework of sustainable community development. The contextualisation is further entrenched by the reflection on territorial disparities, which is situated at the core of the framework's formulation. Such aspect was conspicuously absent from the national discourse on CW, which often prioritises metropolitan and highly populated areas.

The methodological contribution of this thesis is significantly enriched by the innovative combination and adaptation of already existing models and frameworks into the unique context of CW. This integration is primarily manifested through the development of the overall structure of the

framework. Secondly, through the presentation of a subdomain structure that expands on the SoPHIA model, the framework introduces guiding questions that are either original or adapted from both the SoPHIA model and the New European Bauhaus (NEB) Compass. The questions have been meticulously designed to evaluate the impact of CW, thereby offering a structured yet adaptable methodology that is attuned to the complexities inherent in CWAs. This feature not only facilitates the assessment of impacts across various domains, but also ensures that the evaluation is comprehensive and aligned with the holistic nature of CW.

The results of this thesis suggest significant implications for policy makers, practitioners and researchers involved in the CW field. For policy makers, the proposed holistic framework offers a valuable tool for designing, evaluating, and refining CW policies, including to better meet the needs of inner areas. A similar set of benefits for practitioners is also linked to the strategic vision of evaluation as a tool for continuous improvement underpinning the whole process. Furthermore, practitioners stand to benefit from the knowledge presented on participatory processes, which can be utilised to enhance the design and implementation of CW initiatives, ensuring they are more inclusive and effective.

The limitations of the research undertaken in this thesis are articulated around several key areas, reflecting both the scope of the study and methodological constraints. Firstly, the analysis of regulatory policies is conducted with a particular emphasis on the Italian context. This focus may constrain the generalisability of the findings to other cultural and regulatory environments, where different frameworks and challenges may prevail. Secondly, the existing literature on participatory processes is confined to a single database and includes only contributions published in English. It is therefore argued that this limitation may result in the exclusion of relevant studies and perspectives available in other languages, databases, or grey literature, thereby restricting the comprehensiveness of the review. Additionally, a significant limitation lies in the practical application of the HECWA framework. To date, HECWA has not been implemented in a pilot project, which is crucial for testing its effectiveness and adaptability in real-world scenarios. This highlights the need for empirical application and subsequent refinement based on practical findings. Furthermore, while the comprehensive nature of the HECWA framework is intended to provide a thorough assessment tool, its complexity could pose challenges for evaluators. Navigating its extensive and detailed structure may require further refinement to ensure that the framework remains practical and accessible for those conducting evaluations, particularly in diverse and multifaceted CW contexts. Indeed, future research should continue to refine and expand the holistic evaluation framework, exploring its applicability and effectiveness in diverse contexts. Additionally, further studies could investigate the long-term impacts of participatory processes in CW initiatives.

In conclusion, this thesis reaffirms the transformative potential of CW in addressing welfare challenges and enhancing community well-being through a holistic and participatory approach.

As societies continue to confront intricate social, cultural, economic, environmental, and welfare-related challenges, the findings of this study may serve to inform the future trajectory of initiatives that seek to cultivate Well-being Societies.

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