

**Project Group (Number and Name): Group 38 - Villacity**

## Comment

**Authors of the Comment:** Lukas Steinmetzer, Milena Mennitti, Sophia Hintemann

### **Comment:**

Urban citizenship – How changing spaces reshape contemporary democracy  
Critical Comment on the gap between cities and villages: In which directions are the differences between big cities and small villages developing towards in the future? In this comment we take the perspective of villagers and urban citizens in order to underline the differences and try to predict the future outcomes. The contrast between these spaces is found not only in a geographical sense, but even more in political discussion and cultural discrepancies.

Nowadays the lines between what is usually considered a village or a city are blurred due to digital advancement. At the same time, they are enforced by political views and cultural differences. With our diverse group of people, we were able to discuss about the topic through various perspectives coming from different livelihoods.

Looking at the problem through a political lens we discovered that political tension is created by the variation of surrounding space. For instance, the statistic result of Brexit vote distribution pointed out that peripheries felt left out from Europe's advantages which consequently led to Brexit.

On the other hand, in our modern society people are more connected than ever. Satellite structures make it easy to gain access to information, state political opinions and bridge cultural gaps from a distance through mobile phones.

In addition to that physical distances might not be the core problem. For example, in a large city like Paris many immigrants living in a designated area with diverse cultural backgrounds feel deprived of the same (political) possibilities and chances as natives.

This artificial distance created by a mix of ideologies and prejudice which should be diminished by technological advancement might even be increasing. By critically reflecting on our conjoined personal experiences, we could somewhat grasp the conflicts between urban and rural areas.

To mitigate the differences our vision focuses on a new kind of exchange programme called "Villacity." In the modern work environment personal interconnection is often replaced by home office. Regarding that issue we propose co-working spaces connecting urban and rural citizens on Villacity accommodations.

Moreover, its portfolio incorporates a community garden with a kitchen, community rooms, tiny houses with a house exchange program. The idea of this program is to enable people from large conglomerates and small towns to establish personal relations and provide a safe space for new interaction and open-minded (political) discussion. These safe spaces would be built in both subject areas. As a result, both villagers and urban citizens are incentivised

to visit tiny houses in the countryside as well as the city.

What makes our vision difficult to accomplish are funding, organisational structure and advertisement going hand in hand with social participation.

The project might be too financially straining for full state funding thus, it might need private investors, corporate funding, NGOs or even crowdfunding to kick-off and sustain itself.

For organisational structure there is to say that it might be unpredictable to foresee the number of interested people who might want to be part of the community network.

Additionally, we should not underestimate the human nature and different world views that might deter the wished for open-minded and friendly environment.

As a conclusion our vision is one of many possible solutions to further interlink two different sides of our modern world, with the common aim to improve sincerity in our human society.

## **Video Information**

**Title of the Video:** Villacity

**Authors of the Video:** Emil Bahmann, Charlie Weißer, Angelika Benenson, Sophia Hintemann, Bennet Schulz, Lukas Steinmetzer, Mika Wettstaedt, Paulina Korff, Mia Kopetzky, Milena Mennitti, Lina Jendryschik, Helen Murphy

**Music:**

iMovie Sounds:

- "Jubelnde Kinder"
- "Cartoon (aufsteigend)"

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