

# WORKPACKAGE 2 – SYMBOLICAL AND FACTUAL NUISANCES

## DELIVERABLE 7 – ROADMAP FOR INTERVIEWS

### CONTEXT

#### GENERAL CONTEXT

Nuisances are a main aspect of the human-animal interactions, especially in cities, seen as the human habitat by default, where animal presence are less tolerated. During our recent research on rats in Paris (Delahaye 2021), we realised that some of the nuisances were completely overestimated and were in fact more psychological than factual (like in catering), while others were completely unknown of the wide public but really expensive to manage for professionals (automotive mostly). However, nuisances do exist, and must be addressed.

#### INSIDE THE PROJECT

This project will partially follow the methodology set for a previous study (Delahaye 2021) of another urban species (*Rattus norvegicus*) in another urban environment (Paris, France). This study showed that relationship between humans and liminals can be complex, that several layers of semiotic links can coexist, sometimes even being contradictory. A second (but parallel with D6) step is, consequently, to interview professionals working with the studied species or in a field that can potentially be affected by them, in order to have a comparison point between factual nuisances and the one expected or believed by the general public.

### RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS

#### QUESTION AND SUBQUESTION

This deliverable is part of the Case study 2, aiming to study the gaps and paradox between factual nuisances and perception of such nuisances, probably symbolical nuisances. The main question of this Case study is: How can we address the nuisances some liminal species are causing to humans?

The preparation of the survey aims more specifically to answer to the question: With inputs of Workpackage 1, how to conceive a set of interviews able to make emerge gaps and paradox in nuisances caused by liminals to inhabitants and professionals of Tartu?

#### HYPOTHESIS OF THIS STEP

The general hypothesis of this step is that most of the perceived nuisances are in fact symbolic nuisances. Factual nuisances do exist but they are not where we think they are. To improve human/animal cohabitation, a meticulous analysis of both factual and symbolic interactions is needed.

The hypothesis of this precise step is that, based on the previous results of Workpackage 1 (see document M1), there is probably a gap between the perceived nuisances and the factual ones. Gathering more data about issues faced by professionals, field knowledge and factual costs of the nuisances is consequently an important part to understand how big this gap can be, and, further, how humans are creating representations about liminals that are more or less close to the factual reality of these species.

## METHODOLOGY

### METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES

The recruitment of participants follows the methodology used for the work with rats in Paris, as these interviews were able to make emerge the gap between believed nuances and factual nuisances. Modifications and innovations are both linked to the inputs of Workpackage 1 – especially regarding the behavioural profiles and the relationship to city's aesthetic – and to the lacks of the previous work – especially about metacognition data.

### ISSUES AND PROBLEM SOLVING

The main issue is here the linguistic limitations. Most of the interviews will be conducted in English, but that reduces necessarily the variety – and potentially the representativity – of the sample. Current discussions are running in order to receive the assistance of a colleague able to conduct the interview in Estonian and/or in Russian.

### POINTS OF VIGILANCE

To respect the Data Management plan (see Documents section), consent of the participant will be clearly gathered (see also Documents section), and any identifying data will be stored on external hard drive, with no online connection. Any publication of the interviews will be done only after anonymisation, except if the participant has explicitly consent to be identified, and if this identification serves a useful purpose – like in the situation where the profession or the position of the person is interesting to understand his or her answer.

## RESULTS

### RAW RESULTS

Interview will used semi-guided methodology, in order to avoid influence on answers of the participants, but also encourage those who might not be familiar with interviews to talk more and develop their thoughts and opinions.

Mandatory questions are:

- Could you explain what your job is and how corvids can have an impact on it?
- Could you tell me more about the impact of corvids in your work, and give me few examples?
- How do you, yourself, feel about these species, both from a personal and a more personal point of view?
- Some people think they are pest, what do you think of this first opinion?
- Some other people think they participate to the ambiance and aesthetic of the city, what do you think of this second opinion?
- How would you like to see the current situation evolving in few years and why?
- Is there any other aspect not covered by this interview you would like to talk about?

### INTERPRETATION

The semi-guided structure of the interviews should prevent the important size variation between interviews that occurred in the Paris study.

## DELIVERABLE 7 – ROADMAP FOR INTERVIEWS

It should allow the gathering of both emotional, factual, negative and positive opinion without influencing the participants. In order to ensure the fair treatment of both negative and positive aspects, questions 4 and 5 could be swiped from one participant to another.

## MILESTONE 2 – PROGRESS REPORT

### IMPACT OF RESULTS

The results have no real impact on the final results of the Workpackage 2, but they are important in order to be able to conduct interviews in good conditions and with a solid methodology.

### ISSUES, PROBLEMS OR LACKING

As explained in the Issues and problem solving section, the main issue at this step – that is also present in the survey's preparation, see Deliverable 6 – is a linguistic issue. This aspect must be solved as Workpackage 2 is ongoing, in order to have a real representative sample and not create an artificial exclusion of the non-English speakers.

### NEXT STEPS

The next step is now to conduct the interviews with volunteers in order to gather enough material to confirm, infirm or nuance the results of Workpackage 1. This should take between five and six months.

## GENERAL PROJECT – CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

### IMPACT OF RESULTS

It is too early for these results to have an impact on the general project, but the methodology of interview used for the conception should lead to relevant information, able to confirm or nuance well the results obtained in Workpackage 1, especially regarding the emotional and symbolical aspects.

### PROPOSITIONS FOR OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT

#### ACADEMIC ASPECTS

Improvement in interview methodology can lead to academic productions completing the lacks observed in previous study (Delahaye 2021), especially regarding the fragility of results on the metacognition aspect.

#### POPULARIZATION ASPECTS

Interview's methodology is set up so any relevant member of the general public can take part to the project in they are interested in or think they have something to say.

### NEXT STEPS

Additions to methodology will be discussed by the potential International partners (see document I1), who took part in the diffusion of the previous study in Paris, and will be interested in knowing how the methodology has improved and how they can help again with this new project.

## ANNEXES

### REFERENCES

Delahaye, Pauline. 2021. 'Rats, Mice and Humans'. *Linguistic Frontiers* 4 (1): 44–52. <https://doi.org/10.2478/lf-2021-0004>.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Estel-la Oncins, of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, for creating the model of Consent form from which the one used in this step was created.

### DOCUMENTS

Consent form (PDF version – 20/05/2022)

Data Management Plan (PDF version – 18/01/2021)