

# WORKPACKAGE 2 – SYMBOLICAL AND FACTUAL NUISANCES

## DELIVERABLE 6 – ROADMAP FOR SURVEY

### 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 first step is, consequently, to create a survey in order to gather first-hand data about semiotical relationships between humans and liminals in Tartu, in particular about corvids, our case-study, and even more especially about the main species of this project, *Corvus cornix*.

### 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 survey able to make emerge gaps and paradox in nuisances caused by liminals to inhabitants 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 inhabitants' feelings, perceptions and experiences 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

Questions are mostly inspired by the survey created for the work with rats in Paris, as these questions were able to make emerge the “pet effect” and the “Ratatouille effect”. Modifications and innovations are directly linked to inputs of Workpackage 1, especially regarding the behavioural profiles and the relationship to city’s aesthetic. The survey clearly aims to gather data for aspects that were found fragile or incomplete after Workpackage 1.

Data for socio-demographic classification were limited to genre, age, size of city of residence, level of studies and if the person has a profession impacted by liminals or not.

The survey was created through LimeSurvey, as the tool is proposed by the university IT Departement.

### ISSUES AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Two major issues occurred: the comparative aspect of the study, and the linguistic limitation:

- **Comparative aspect:** the comparative aspect of the study makes mandatory to have a survey able to take into account different kinds of geographical profiles, and to propose different versions of the survey to these different profiles. Rather than to create multiple surveys, that can lose the general public in various links, it was decided to use the logical links of the survey in order to create different “paths” inside the same survey.
- **Linguistic limitations:** the initial survey was created in English. But as the study is mainly focused on Tartu, it seemed important to also have an Estonian version. Automatic translation enabled to propose such a version, as sentences are very short and simple. A revision and correction of this version was done by Ott Puumeister (Philosophy and Semiotics Department). Link directing to the other version of the survey will be included in every first page.

### POINTS OF VIGILANCE

To respect the Data Management plan (see Documents section), no identifying data was included in the survey.

The tool used to create the survey should ensure that no third party has access to the data and that everything is managed by the University of Tartu. Precise technical issues will be investigated with the IT Department.

## RESULTS

### RAW RESULTS

The survey is composed of 6 blocks:

- **Your current location:** The first question “You are currently living” will set participants on three different paths:
  - o Inhabitants of **Tartu**: Question will be asked about how long they have been in Tartu.
  - o Inhabitants of **other city in Estonia or Europe**: Question will be asked about the city and country of residence.
  - o Inhabitants **outside of Europe**: Survey ends here for these participants, but they can leave their contact if they are interested into participating in further project’s steps.

## DELIVERABLE 6 – ROADMAP FOR SURVEY

- **Who you are:** Classical section with gender, age, level of education, size of the city of residence. Two questions more specific will be asked about the kind of pets participants have or had, and about jobs related to the topic of the survey.
- **About liminal species:** A short group of questions about the liminal species the participants are used to see in their environment, which ones they consider as pest or not, and what kind of measures have been taken by their city government.
- **Let's talk more about corvids:** This section has four metacognitive questions in order to evaluate the potential gap between what inhabitants think they know about corvids and what they know really. It includes question about their personal feelings regarding these species and what kind of adjectives they would apply to them.
- **Corvids, city and humans:** A short section about their beliefs regarding the nuisances caused by corvids and their own personal behaviour regarding them in their day-to-day life.
- **End of the survey:** A text only section in order to give contact and link to the website for any inquiry the participants could have.

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### INTERPRETATION

The set of questions should be able to gather first-hand data on both the emotional and symbolical relationships inhabitants have with corvids.

Questions have been set in order to be able to identify a potential “pet effect” in the results, as well as more classical gender or age effects.

Metacognition questions have been implemented in order to solve the lack of data on this aspect that appears in Paris’ study results.

## MILESTONE 2 – PROGRESS REPORT

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### 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 gather relevant data in good conditions and with a solid methodology.

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### 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 interview’s preparation, see Deliverable 7 – 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.

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### NEXT STEPS

The next step is now to diffuse the survey and attract volunteers in order to gather enough material to confirm, infirm or nuance the results of Workpackage 1. This should take between four and five 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 survey 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 and adaptation in survey 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

Survey will be advertised through the website and video used for communication. It will be presented as a way to be involved, as a citizen, in science programs and to help building knowledge about day-to-day species and home city.

### 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 AND LINKS

#### REFERENCES

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

#### LINKS

English version of the survey: <https://survey.ut.ee/index.php/227672?lang=en>

Estonian version of the survey: <https://survey.ut.ee/index.php/938279?lang=et>

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ott Puumeister for review and corrections of the Estonian version of the survey.

### DOCUMENTS

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