

HERIWELL

Cultural Heritage as a Source
of Societal Well-being in European Regions



In collaboration with



WGA



ESPOON HERIWELL FINAL CONFERENCE

15 December 2022



Cultural Heritage as a source of well-being.

Part I: Individual perceptions

**Findings of the HERIWELL population survey
(8 ESPON countries later involved in case studies)**

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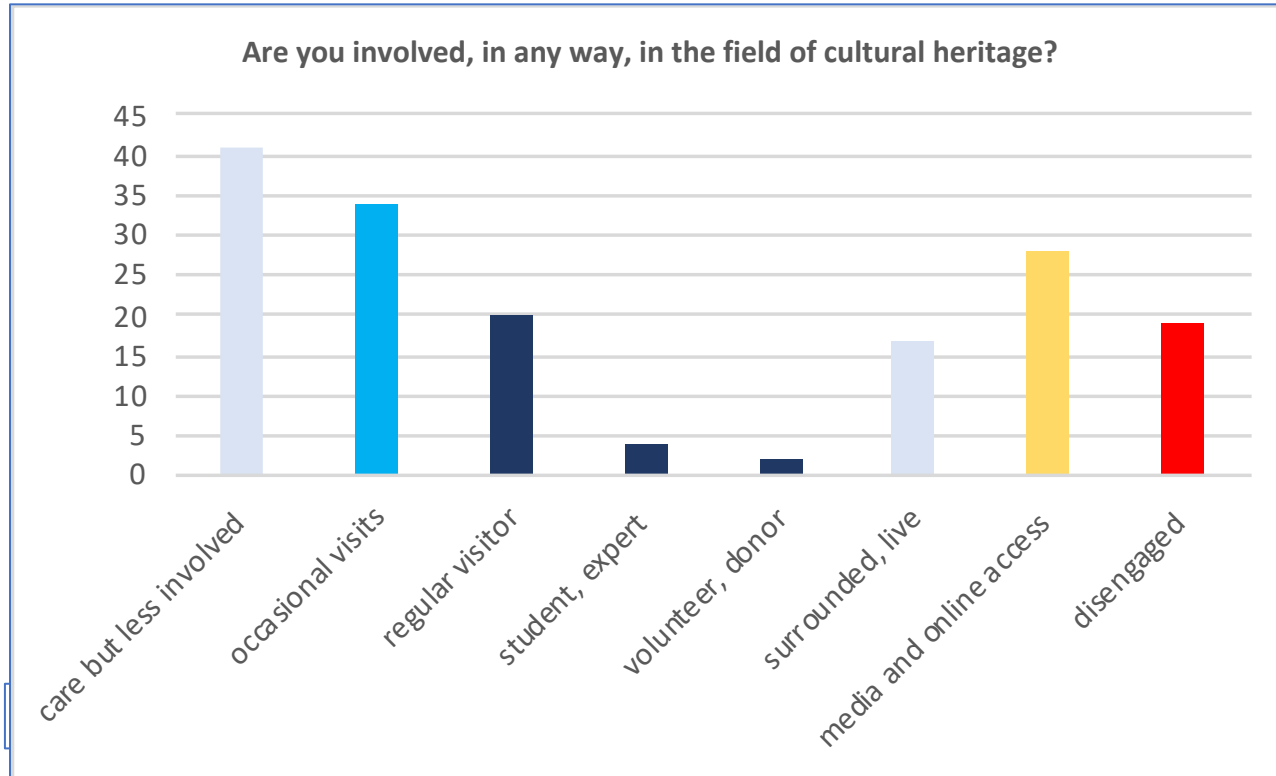
Population survey: Aim and scope

Investigate people's perceptions on the impact of all forms of CH on SWB, both in general and in the context of COVID-19, and their attitudes on, and access to, heritage. Focal issues:

- the **intensity of engagement** with CH;
- **barriers** for not engaging with CH;
- perceptions of positive or negative **impacts of COVID-19** on the view and use of CH;
- opinions about the impact of CH on different **dimensions of well-being**.

N = 8818 CAWI respondents from 8 countries: Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland and Spain. Fieldwork: YouGov 2021

Engagement



Differences in participation rates by **country**, possibly linked to the meaning and cognitive accessibility to cultural heritage

- Regular visitors: Spain (32%), Germany (14%)
- Media: Czech Rep. and Poland (35%), Belgium (23%)
- Live in area with historic or cultural value: Italy (25%), Belgium (9%)
- Non interested or involved people: Germany (31%), Spain and Italy (8%)

Different intensities and different types of contact with CH, but **education** has the highest influence.

Barriers: individual and institutional/structural

- What happens with people who are not involved?
- Why don't people engage more frequently?

Perceived **high costs** (34%), **lack of time** (24%) - especially in the youngest generation - and **not enough information** (22%) are the most frequently mentioned barriers, followed by being **deprived from social contacts** (16%).

Barriers: individual and institutional/structural

- A **lack of reception facilities** for specific groups of the population is noted mainly in Spain and Ireland (15%).
- **Lack of interest** very large variations (5% in Spain to 18% in Belgium). The education level is the key variable for this answer, as well as for having a **limited supply of CH offers**.
- **Regional variables** tend to be more relevant for barriers related to: limited supply, no information and lack of ancillary services.

COVID-19 impact on CH habits and perceptions

- The **highly educated** are more likely **aware of both positive expectations and negative impacts of COVID-19**.
- “Lockdowns” and other **restrictions** impacted 35% of all respondents.
- Concerns about **potential repercussions** for the cultural sector at large (26% of the respondents).
- Restricted possibilities for **social interaction** and human communication (16%)
- **Daily concerns** of survival in pandemic times actually lowered the interest in heritage activities.
- **Motivation to engage more** in heritage-related activities: about 20% (up to 30% in Ireland and Italy) want to see more of the national/regional cultural resources (for 13% this desire extends to heritage sites in other European countries).
- **Volunteering** and other active forms of engagement are planned by over 10% of the respondents in Ireland, Italy, Spain and Poland.

COVID-19 impact on participation and awareness

- Very different patterns according to the intensity of engagement. People with **no involvement or interest** at all in CH were the most likely **not to experience any impact or to decrease** their interest for CH.
- People living surrounded by CH but not accessing it were they **more aware of the negative effects** of the COVID-19 over the sector (no tourism), and probably over the social activity that is generated around historic spaces.

What about the digital turn?

- The **pros and cons of a “digital turn”** have been widely discussed among CH professionals and policy makers even before COVID-19 gave it more urgency.
- Around 30% of the respondents, in some countries nearly 50% (Norway, Germany), report **no relevant change** towards the use of Internet and social media during COVID times with regard to CH-related information.
- There are two perspectives of the answers that are almost at dead level: **a real alternative or inspiration** during the pandemic vs **sceptical views or preference of experiencing “real” CH** artefacts, sites or traditions.
- It seems that, for the time being, digital engagement is more of a **complement** to visits rather than a substitute.

CH and the dimensions of well-being

There are remarkable country **similarities** on the correlates of perceptions of the linkages between CH and the **individual** and **societal material dimensions of well-being**, notably the effect of education and gender effects.

The **social cohesion dimension** is the one where more **differences** between countries are found.

What is perceived to be cultural heritage and its symbolic values have **deep cultural roots** and differs in **national contexts**. This influences the perceptions of the societal benefits and negative effects for people of different countries.

Engagement, attitudes and awareness

Engagement is related to the **awareness** of the potentially positive and negative effects of CH for **individual and societal well-being**. The same with the awareness and concern about the **impact of COVID-19**.

Education is the most important personal characteristics to explain differences in engagement and the intensity of engagement, and it is also the most stable relationship across countries.

This is not the case for other potential factors such as age, sex and regional influences.

Part II: More evidence of well-being and "bad-being"

A few empirical results from three HERIWELL chapters

A.1-4: Chapter 3 - "Cultural heritage institutions as drivers of social change"

B.1-2: Chapter 4 - "Intangible cultural heritage and societal well-being"

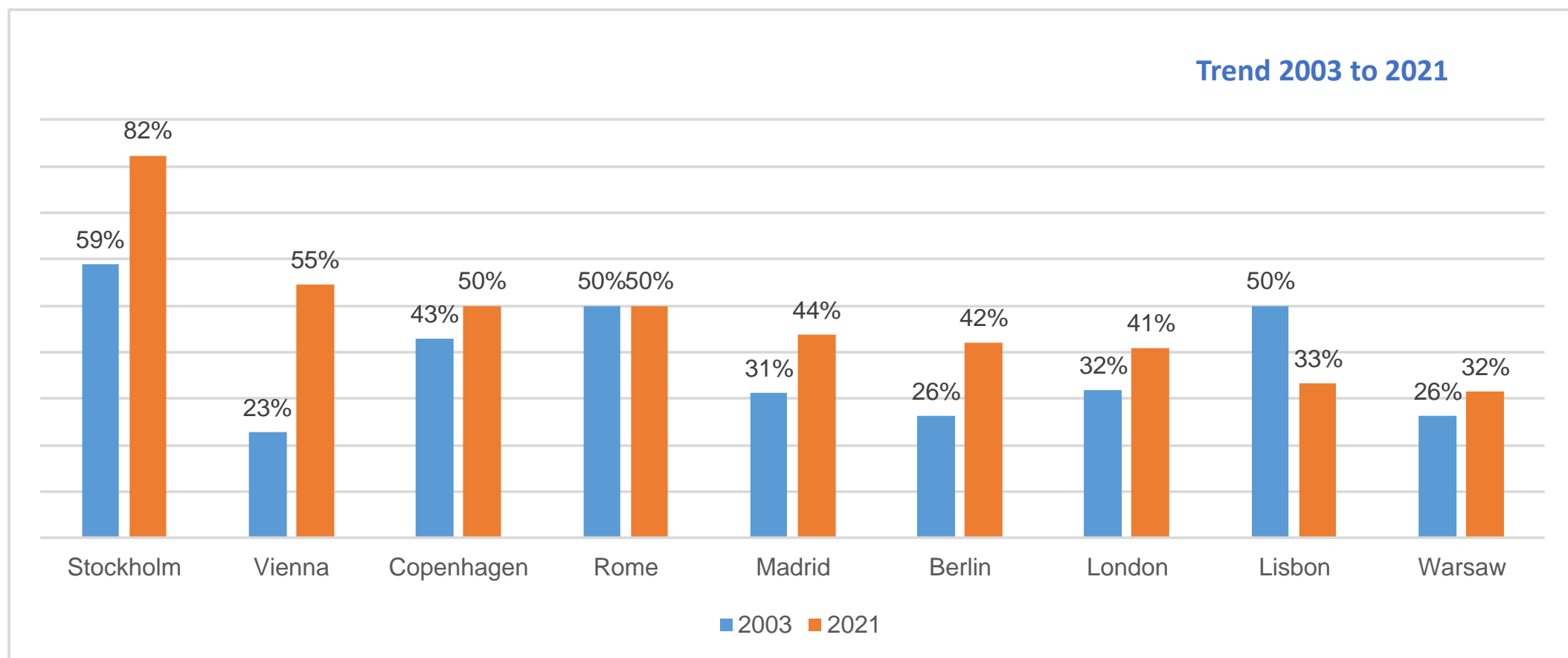
C.1-5: Chapter 6 - "Controversies: a focus on contested and neglected heritage"

A.1: Gender Equality again top on policy/legal agendas

- The European Parliament with the first plenary resolution on **gender mainstreaming** in 2003;
- March 2010: EU Commission's **Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015**, calling inter alia for equal pay for equal work and equality in decision-making;
- **UN Sustainable Development Goals**: gender equality (SDG #5);
- **National and international organisations** active in the different fields related to CH have called, since many years, for ensuring "gender balance at senior leadership levels" and particularly more equitable conditions in the leadership of museums, cf. e.g. UNESCO (2014), *Gender Equality – Heritage and Creativity*.

Can the Heritage sector provide trends and good practice experiences for gender equality and thus contribute to societal well-being?

A.2: Share of women directors of state-funded museums in nine European capitals



Source: ERICarts elaboration for HERIWELL, based on the *International Directory of Arts* 2004 (editorial deadline August 2003) and online research April to July 2021 for the same museums or collections

A.3: Parity or alternative benchmarks?

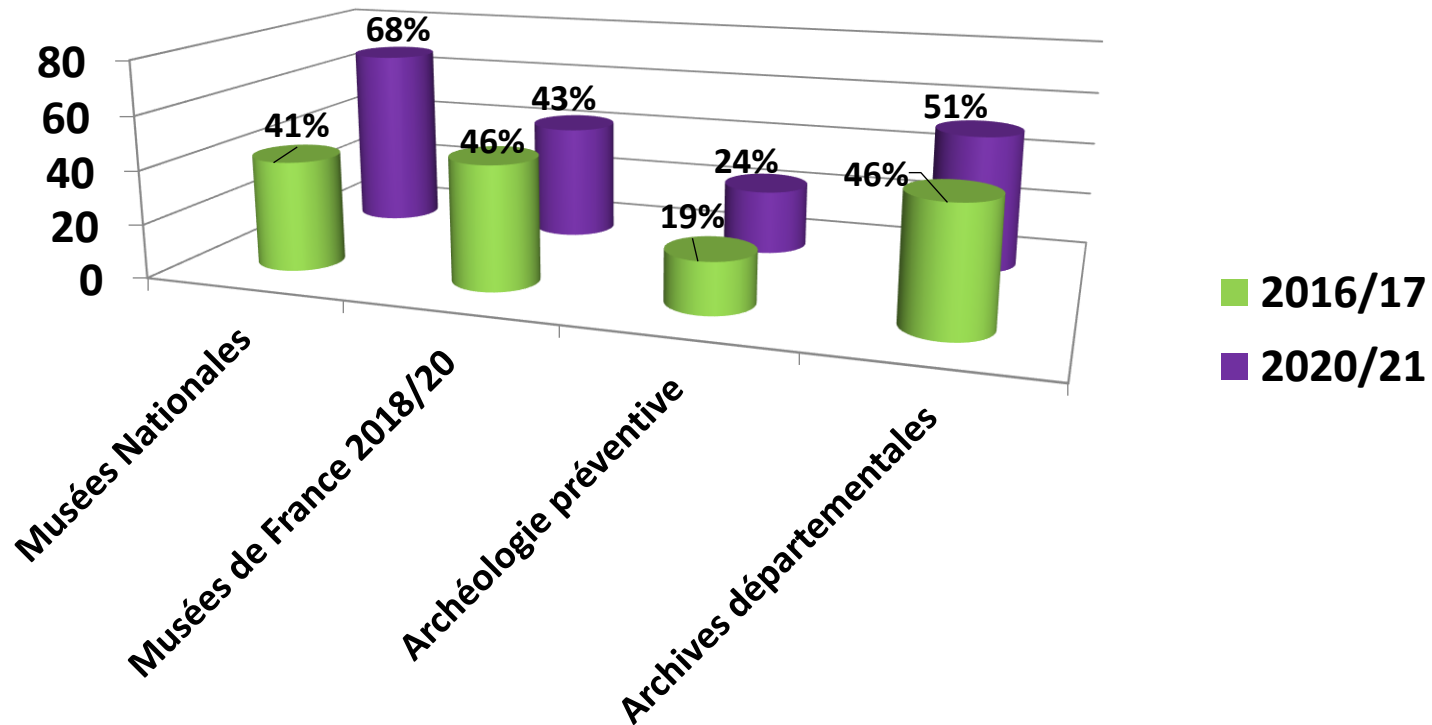
- a) Striving towards an "ideal" 50:50 parity?
- b) Or taking into account the much higher rate of female students and graduates in university subjects that qualify for lead functions in museums and other heritage institutions – on average 60-80% in the European Union?

If b) is correct, we are – despite some progress – still far away from a proper "gender balance" in European heritage decision making positions!

No time to discuss the reasons behind the slow process towards equality in this domain, but you may consider what I called the "P-Factors" of male dominance in my earlier studies, namely:

Pay – Power – Prestige – Privileges...

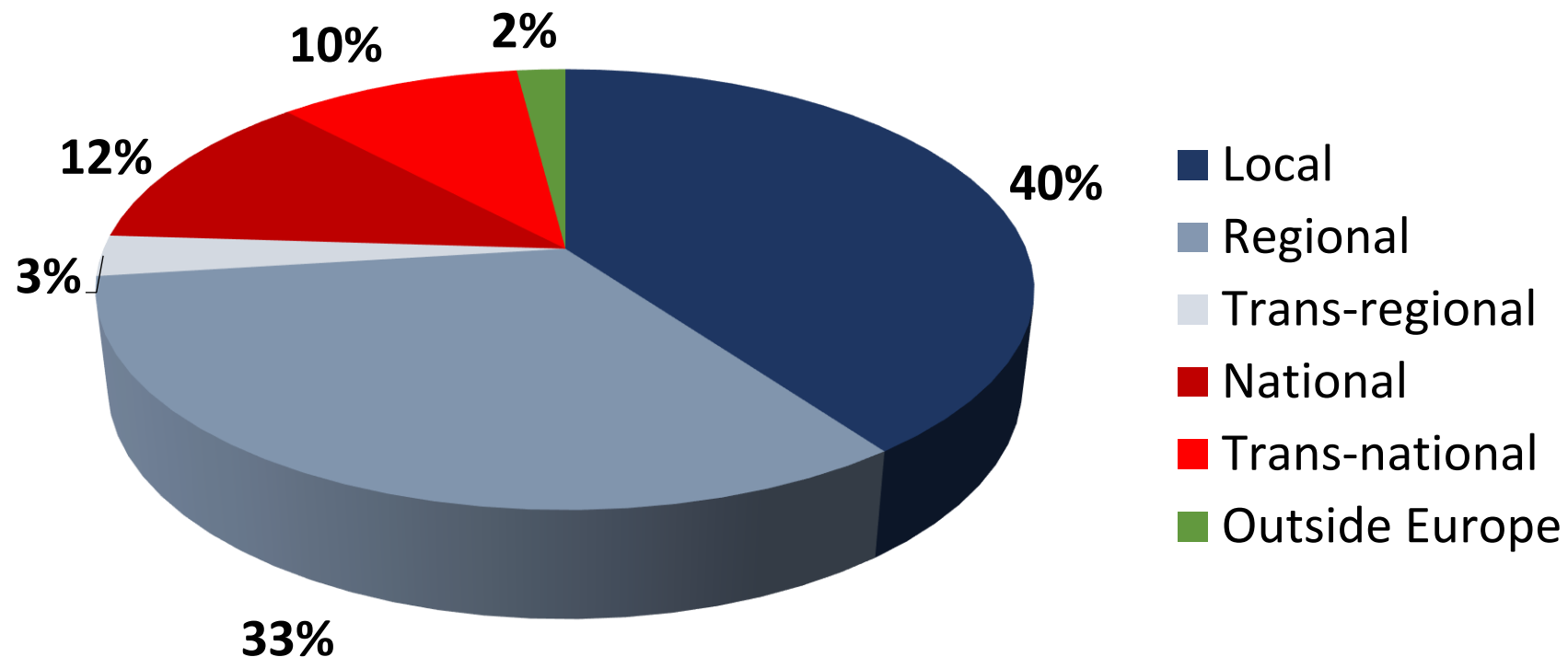
A.4: Female Directors of French Heritage Institutions



Source: [Ministère de la culture, Observatoire de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans la culture et la communication](#), Paris 2021. NOTE: The figures for senior positions in archaeology seem to contradict a bit the optimism of the study by Lazar, I. et.al.: "The Archaeologist of the Future is Likely to be a Woman", in: *Archaeologies* 2014

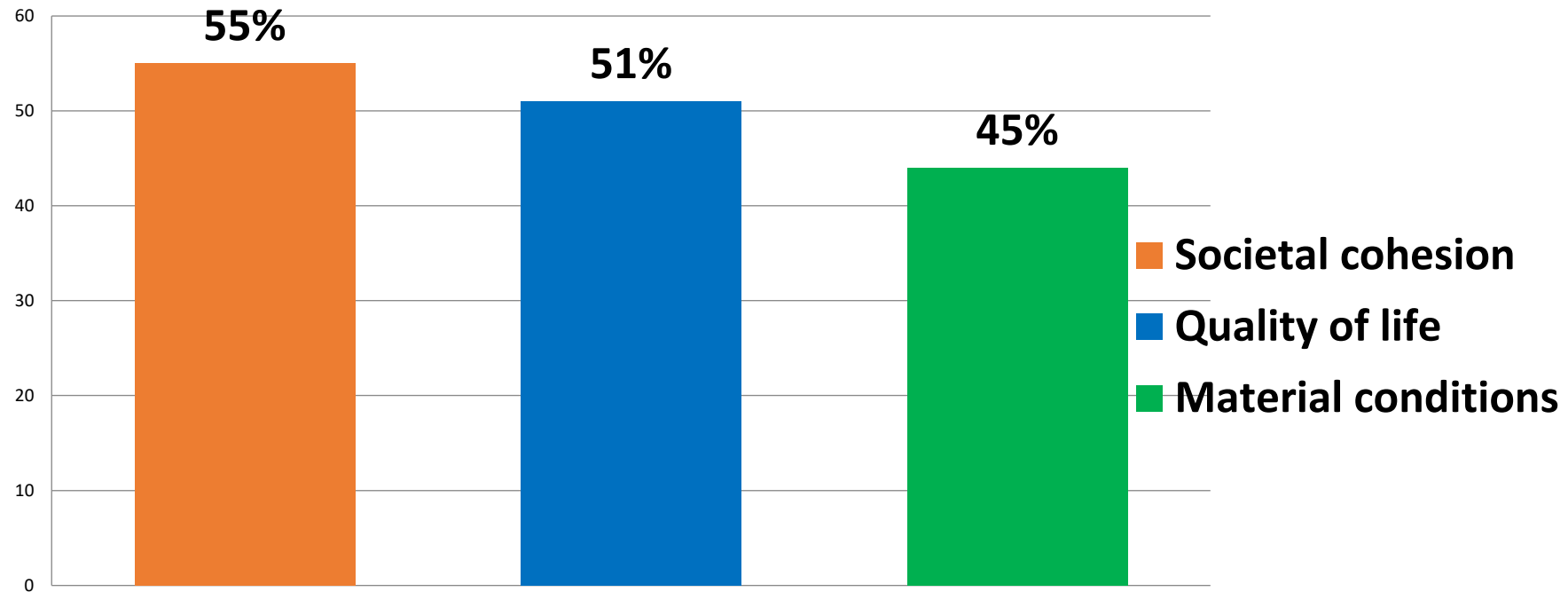
B.1: Territorial distribution of Intangible Heritage (ICH)

European Inscriptions in UNESCO lists (ESPON countries only)



Source: ERICarts evaluation for HERIWELL, based on the 2021 UNESCO ICH lists (146 ICH manifestations)

B.2: ICH manifestations relevant for key HERIWELL categories

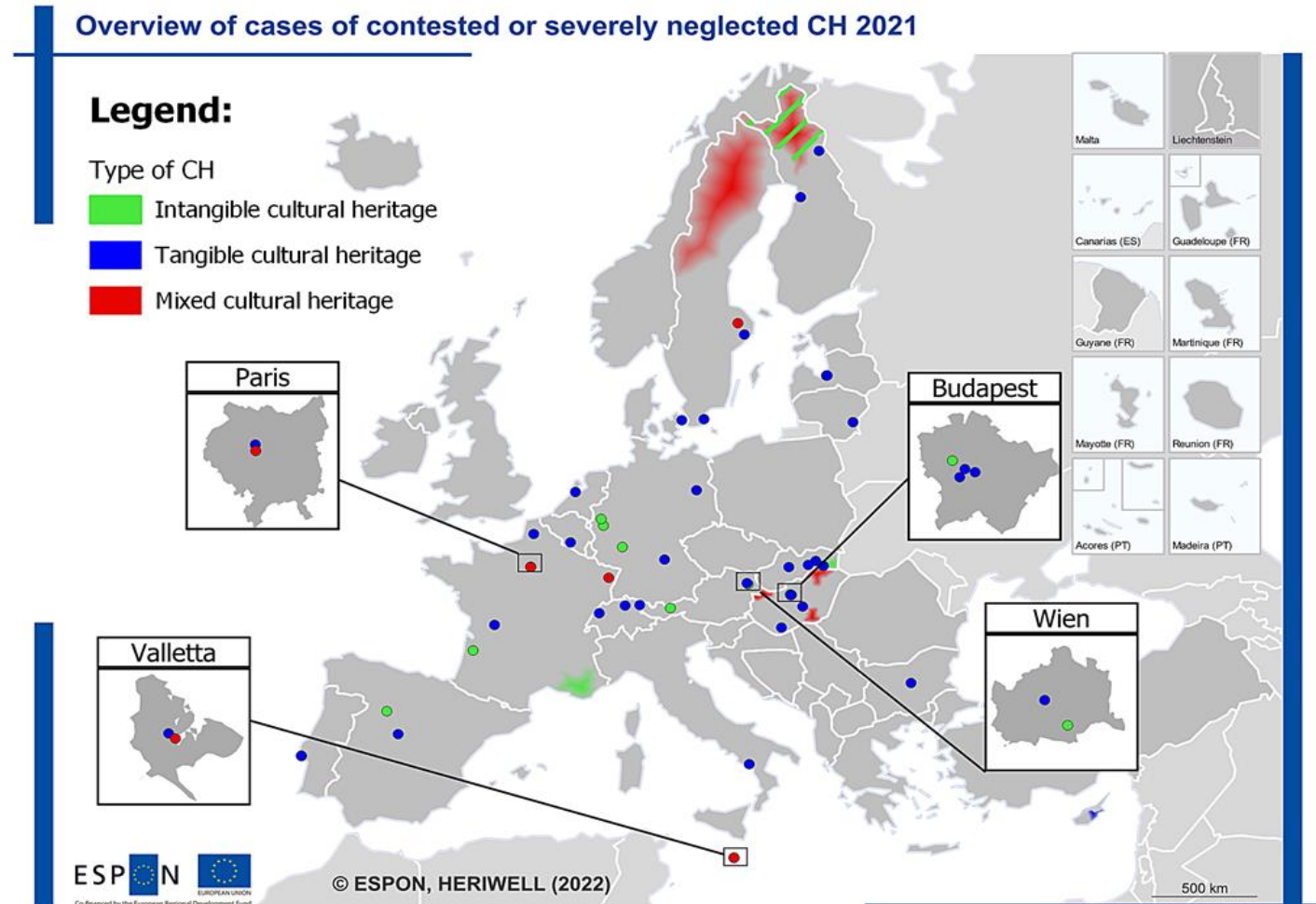


NOTE: On average, each of the 146 inscription in the UNESCO ICH-Lists is relevant in 1.5 of the HERIWELL societal well-being domains - **Societal Cohesion** (e.g. for equality, community participation, integration); **quality of life** (e.g. for sense of place, aesthetic satisfaction; educational benefits); **material conditions** (e.g. for professional opportunities, housing, tourism)

C.1: Currently debated cases of contested/neglected CH

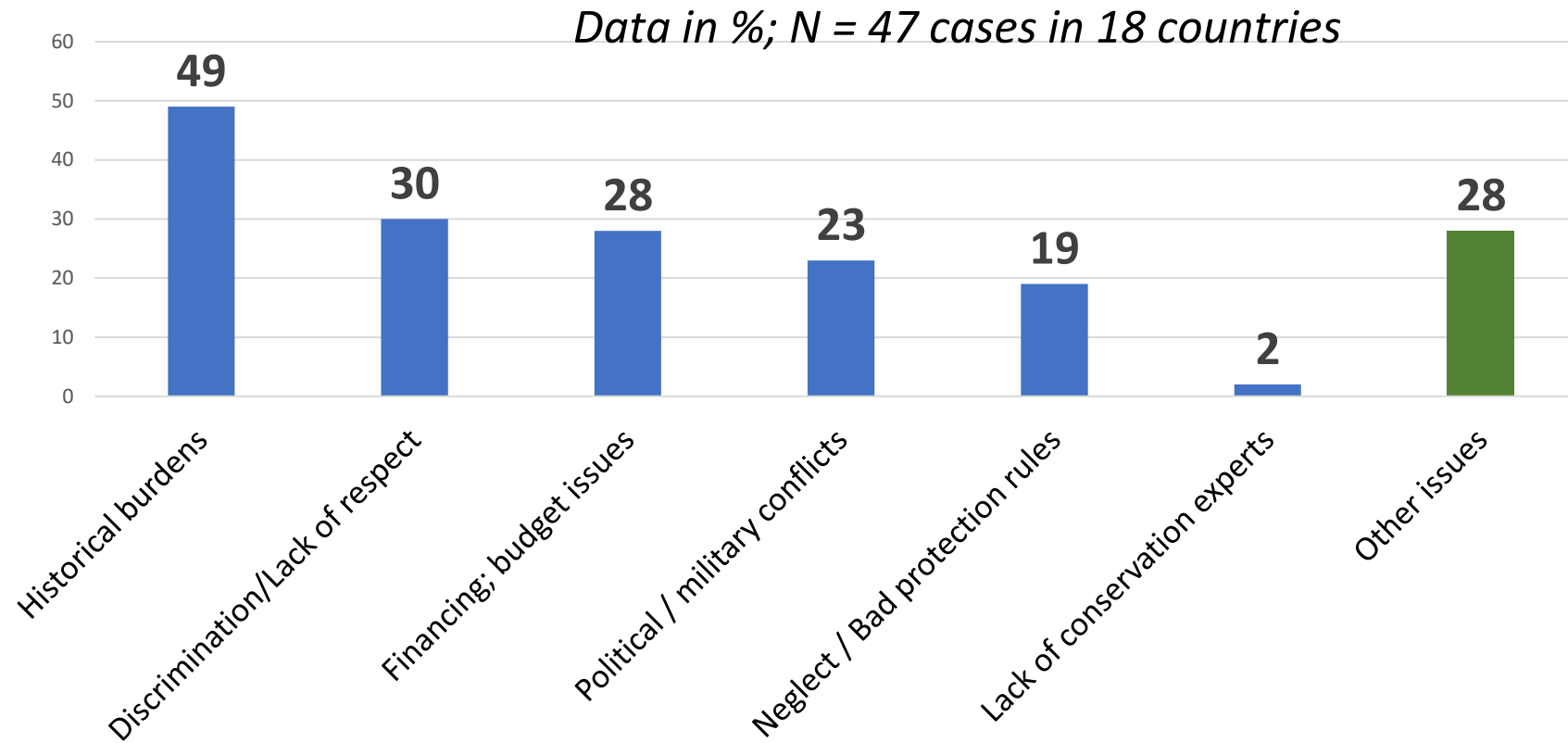
In a survey, **47 cases** were submitted by HERIWELL national experts. Many of them are considered to **stand for similar conflicts in the region or country**.

Colours in the North of Sweden and Finland mark the settlement area of the **Sámi minority** – which has long rights disputes concerning e.g. crafts or the use of land.



Regional level: Authors' elaboration
Source: Author's elaboration, 2022
Origin of data: HERIWELL Experts 2021
UMS RIATE for administrative boundaries

C.2: Main issues or conflicts



Source: HERIWELL case collection 2021

C.3: Negative impacts on societal well-being

Based on 18 indicators of the survey questionnaire we can see the following impacts:

- **Social cohesion** is negatively affected in 45 of 47 cases (96%);
- **Quality of life** of stakeholders is impaired in 72% of the cases;
- **Aggravated material conditions** play a role in 2/5 of the cases.

Source: HERIWELL case collection 2021

C.4: Reactions or remedies to address conflicts

(in place or planned in the 47 surveyed cases)

No official reactions/remedies	13%
Media echo / Internet campaigns	60%
Parliamentary debates (national/regional/local)	57%
Protests / Citizens initiatives / Sponsoring	55%
Expert investigations, documentations	49%
Judicial decisions or mediation	26%
Restoration efforts	23%
Legal remedies / New protection rules	17%
Involvement of international bodies (e.g. UNESCO)	15%
Increased public financing	13%
Restitution or compensation of CH	11%
Other remedies (e.g. artistic interventions)	15%

Source: HERIWELL case collection 2021 (multiple choice)

C.5: Volatile meanings: Heritage education is key

Question (agree or disagree): "The meaning of cultural heritage can change over time. For example, a monument that used to be cherished can later be contested or may have to be reconsidered or even removed"

Affirmative responses only!

(tend to agree or totally agree)

The missing values to 100% disagree with the statement

TOTAL	61%
Belgium	59%
Czech Rep.	49%
Germany	65%
Ireland	73%
Italy	51%
Norway	72%
Poland	61%
Spain	61%

Source: HERIWELL population survey 2021 (N = 8818 respondents; excluding 13% "don't know" answers)