by Michael Würfel

FUN WITH STATISTICS

The main section of this book consists of addresses and descriptions of 429 communities in Europe. How many communities actually exist in Europe is unknown. For one thing, we don't know them all, and therefore cannot contact them all. Secondly, not all of those that we wrote to, responded to us. At the end of 2013, our database contained a proud 2,187 addresses of supposed communities – during the course of 2013 we wrote to about 550 of them by post, and to another 1,500 by email. Our research didn't come up with meaningful addresses for the remainder. In total, we received about 600 answers, containing 116 reports of communities no longer in existence. 34 communities answered that, for a variety of reasons, they did not wish to be listed in the current directory, 15 did not wish for us to contact them again. A frequent reason for the former was that the communities were currently in an orientation phase. Sometimes there just wasn't anyone prepared to fill in the questionnaire for the eurotopia publication. The reasoning behind not wanting to be contacted at all any more was interesting: We were told several times that the onslaught of interested parties was already sufficiently large. It's completely understandable and natural for those communities to not to want eurotopia readers to join the stampede. There are probably other groups who didn't bother to answer us for that precise reason. These communities are unfortunately missing in our overview of existing communities, which is a shame, particularly given that it's often very agile, hard-working communes that drop out of the statistics in this way. In any case, an estimate of the number of communities in Europe is a vague affair.

We contacted:	2050
Answers received:	600
Confirmed existence:	484
Confirmed existence and want to be published:	450

Of the roughly 450 groups who were prepared to be published, around 20 are not listed in the book, because in our opinion they are not communities, or we simply did not want to publish them (see the chapter "Who is Community?").

The number of communities in this book might have been augmented further if we had emailed not just an average of three reminders, but got in touch say five times, or if we'd sent postcards or letters, or announced that your reply might win you a prize! But at some point the work had to begin on the layout, and nagging people more than necessary is not good for our reputation with the communities. Our ability to collect so much data is certainly linked to us actively approaching communities, answering their questions, resending forgotten log-in details for our database, etc. If we had simply sent out an announcement and waited for people to present themselves on an internet platform,

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we surely wouldn't have collected even 200 addresses. Most likely we would have heard from communities in the establishment phase, since we get lots of responses from those, almost like advertisements à la "I want to establish a community that… etc. Who's up for joining?" We don't publish those kinds of announcements, as it's not suitable for the book format; the eurotopia directory is meant to be a valid resource, and should be just that for about 3 years. Of the 432 published projects 48 are "planned" i.e. "in the establishment phase" (that's 11%), but these seem sufficiently realistic. With this selection process we have probably repelled a few community founders – but we have to make a book for readers who are interested in communities and not just in ideas dreamed up by individuals (see also the preceding article).

42 of the published communities classified themselves (or were classified by us) as settlements (nearly 10%) and 19 are in the co-housing category (4%) (two of them classified themselves as both). Their communal living is structured somewhat less bindingly than in explicitly intentional communities (see "Community Definitions") – but of course each individual case is rather different.

In addition, 77 communities describe themselves as ecovillages – that's about 18% of the communities in the book. This term is statistically not very meaningful – the communities evaluate themselves as "ecovillages" or not, and 13 of the listed eco"villages" have less than 10 residents – but this term seems to resonate differently with the public, politics and sciences than the term "community", which we at eurotopia use to describe intentional communities. The classification as an ecovillage is independent of whether the group lives on the land or in the city. And by the way, 326 of the published communities, so about three quarters, are land-based and not city dwellers.
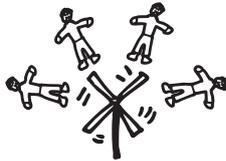
With the data about the published communities, we can now find out all sorts of interesting and fun facts. Of the 414 communities that gave us information about their size, 330 consist of a least 7 people. The average would consist of 66 residents, if you count the two most inhabited settlements GWL-terrein (The Netherlands, 1,400 inhabitants) and Ökopolis Tiberkul (Russia, 6,000 inhabitants). Without these two, the average number of people is only 38. Within the 382 communities with up to 100 inhabitants, the average number of people is 23. So calculating these kinds of values seems useless given such distant outliers.

What about world views? It's obvious that many communities have shared religious beliefs (even though the directory is compiled in a very worldly community of mostly non-religious people). 64 communities ticked "Christian" amongst the keywords, 36 of those "Christian and ecumenical". 160 communities chose "spiritual" as a keyword, 25 chose "esoteric" (these statements are not mutually exclusive).
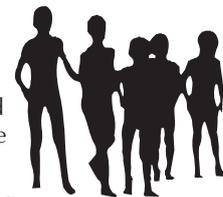
Incidentally, 96 communities identified themselves as having a left-wing political understanding – 30 of them simultaneously described themselves as spiritual, and 6 simultaneously as politically left-wing, spiritual and esoteric. That these kinds of combinations are no longer mutually exclusive, that the old gulf between the "spiritual"

and "political" communities has been somewhat filled in, can now be substantiated with statistics, too.

293 ticked "consensus" with regards to "how we make decisions" – however, there are also statements such as "preferably consensus, otherwise majority". Consensus-purists will not have any patience for this, and indeed a real consensus decision-making process seems particularly necessary when unity is not easily achieved. But then we only ask about it and print the answers.
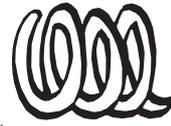
Of the 432 published communities, the following number also categorised themselves as (first the keyword, followed by the number of communities who ticked it):

Ecological: 332, organic diet: 201, organic gardening: 258 (a spoilsport, because it doesn't go with the previous value – or do 51 communities spurn their own organic veg?), vegetarian: 134, vegan: 42.
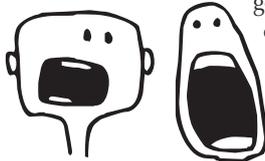
69 communities engage in ("animal friendly") husbandry, 156 in permaculture.

Inner growth is an important issue for 176 of the communities, 78 concern themselves with education, 42 work with mentally/psychologically handicapped persons. 45 are at least partly accessible to the disabled, 22 dared to tick "free love" (yes, they dared: for the entry about my own community I didn't tick it, although it does apply to some residents, because it's simply too easily misinterpreted by the public) and 75 ticked the newly introduced keyword "non smoking". 14 communities want/use "no cell phones/wireless".

With all its inaccuracies, the list nonetheless demonstrates impressively how enormously community culture deviates from mainstream culture – I find that soothing. And you can, by the way, study all this yourself using our online community search tool (www.eurotopia.de/booksearch).

The newly introduced indication regarding the degree of self-sufficiency in terms of food was intended to provide an interesting figure for those readers interested in a material independence from the conventional economic system. Was this successful? The pie chart shows that half of the communities provide up to 20% of their own food. A further quarter of the communities manages to provide up to 50% of their nourishment.

The entry about "how many of you work in community-owned businesses" is also meant to contribute to estimations of the independence of the community. Therefore the symbol with the recycled Euro: The more that people work inside the community, the less money flows out of the community, that's our line of thinking. Whatever the communal business produces or
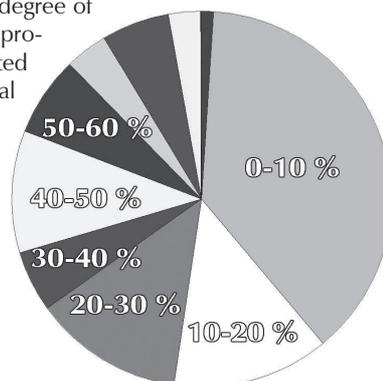
how many communities (slices) made what kind of statements regarding self-sufficiency with food (%)

provides, part of it will go to the community and therefore money (or another exchange medium such as time) will remain in circulation within the community. In our overview we found that about half (52%) of community residents (of the communities who responded to this question!) work in community-based businesses.

The symbol with the hammer between the houses describes how many people are working in the community – so on-site, as whatever, self-employed or employed or within the communal economy or otherwise - meaning at least, not driving to work somewhere on a daily basis, but working where they live. More than 60% of the community residents work on site (10,066 members of communities with a total population of 16,110 – counting only the 287 communities that supplied valid data for this field). 25% of the published communities say that "everyone" works on-site.

Independent of this statistical overview, we hope that this new data is interesting for readers who are interested in the respective communities. We do reserve the right to ask different or less questions next time! When looking through self-descriptions and keywords further, important information naturally comes out – the "longest private zip line", for example, isn't to be found in a commercial theme park, but in a community.

In 2014 we will publish the first English language eurotopia directory since 2005, so the international aspect is elementary for us. We compiled a very interesting table (see next page) listing European countries with their population density (source: Wikipedia). Next to the population figure is the number of communities published in eurotopia for this country (not including communities in the planning phase). In the next column the number of existing communities (according to eurotopia) is shown in relation to the respective number of inhabitants – because such tiny percentages come out, we give the value in ppm – so it describes how many communities there are per 1 million inhabitants of the country. We think that there are clearly too few: the Europe-wide average is at 0.4 communities per 1 million Europeans.

It's fascinating to calculate how many communities should be in each country if the average was applied to the respective countries: then the Russian part of the book would be the largest, with 43 communities (in reality there are 11). We would only expect three communities in Austria (in the book: 10). In a world of averages, Denmark and the Netherlands would be represented by only 2 and 7 communities respectively; in reality these two countries are in the lead in terms of the relationship between communities and population figures: there are 17 and 19 communities respectively. Germany represents the fattest part of the book with 160 entries; judging from population size we would expect only 34. This is partly due to the fact that the last edition of the book was only available in German and that our best connections are with communities (and people wanting to establish communities) in Germany.

We hope that this table will serve as an incentive to the countries that are not yet very strongly represented – we would be happy to be able to at least present the existing initiatives in these countries. The English edition will hopefully contribute to making the eurotopia Directory more internationally known, to finding more people in many coun-

tries who would like to distribute the book, and encouraging more communities across Europe to contact us about being included in the next edition.

Country	Population (2008)	Number of existing communities (published in eurotopia)	Communities in the country in ppm (parts per million) related to the population figure (this many communities per 1 million inhabitants)	The number of communities the country would have applying the average relation
Albania	3.170.048	0	0	1
Andorra	83.888	0	0	0
Austria	8.430.558	10	1,19	3
Belarus	9.489.000	0	0	4
Belgium	10.666.860	6	0,56	4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4.552.000	0	0	2
Bulgaria	7.606.551	0	0	3
Croatia	4.489.409	1	0,22	2
Czech Rep.	10.501.197	1	0,1	4
Denmark	5.475.791	17	3,1	2
Estonia	1.342.000	2	1,49	1
Finland	5.326.314	4	0,75	2
France	62.793.432	19	0,3	26
Germany	81.882.342	160	1,95	34
Greece	11.141.740	4	0,36	5
Hungary	10.020.000	3	0,3	4
Iceland	317.593	0	0	0
Ireland	4.239.848	3	0,71	2
Italy	60.245.846	17	0,28	25
Kazakhstan	480.000	0	0	0
Kosovo	1.800.000	0	0	1
Latvia	2.261.294	1	0,44	1
Liechtenstein	35.789	0	0	0
Lithuania	3.354.700	2	0,6	1
Luxembourg	493.300	0	0	0
Macedonia	2.063.122	0	0	1
Malta	410.290	0	0	0

Moldova	3.300.000	0	0	1
Monaco	32.796	0	0	0
Montenegro	672.180	0	0	0
Netherlands	16.493.156	19	1,15	7
Norway	4.825.500	3	0,62	2
Poland	38.153.389	6	0,16	16
Portugal	10.617.575	7	0,66	4
Romania	21.498.616	2	0,09	9
Russia	104.000.000	11	0,11	43
San Marino	31.538	0	0	0
Serbia	9.298.001	0	0	4
Slovakia	5.455.407	2	0,37	2
Slovenia	2.019.614	1	0,5	1
Spain	46.661.950	14	0,3	19
Sweden	9.269.986	10	1,08	4
Switzerland	7.701.900	8	1,04	3
Turkey	9.799.745	3	0,31	4
Ukraine	45.994.247	1	0,02	19
UK	61.113.205	44	0,72	25
Vatican City	932	0	0	0