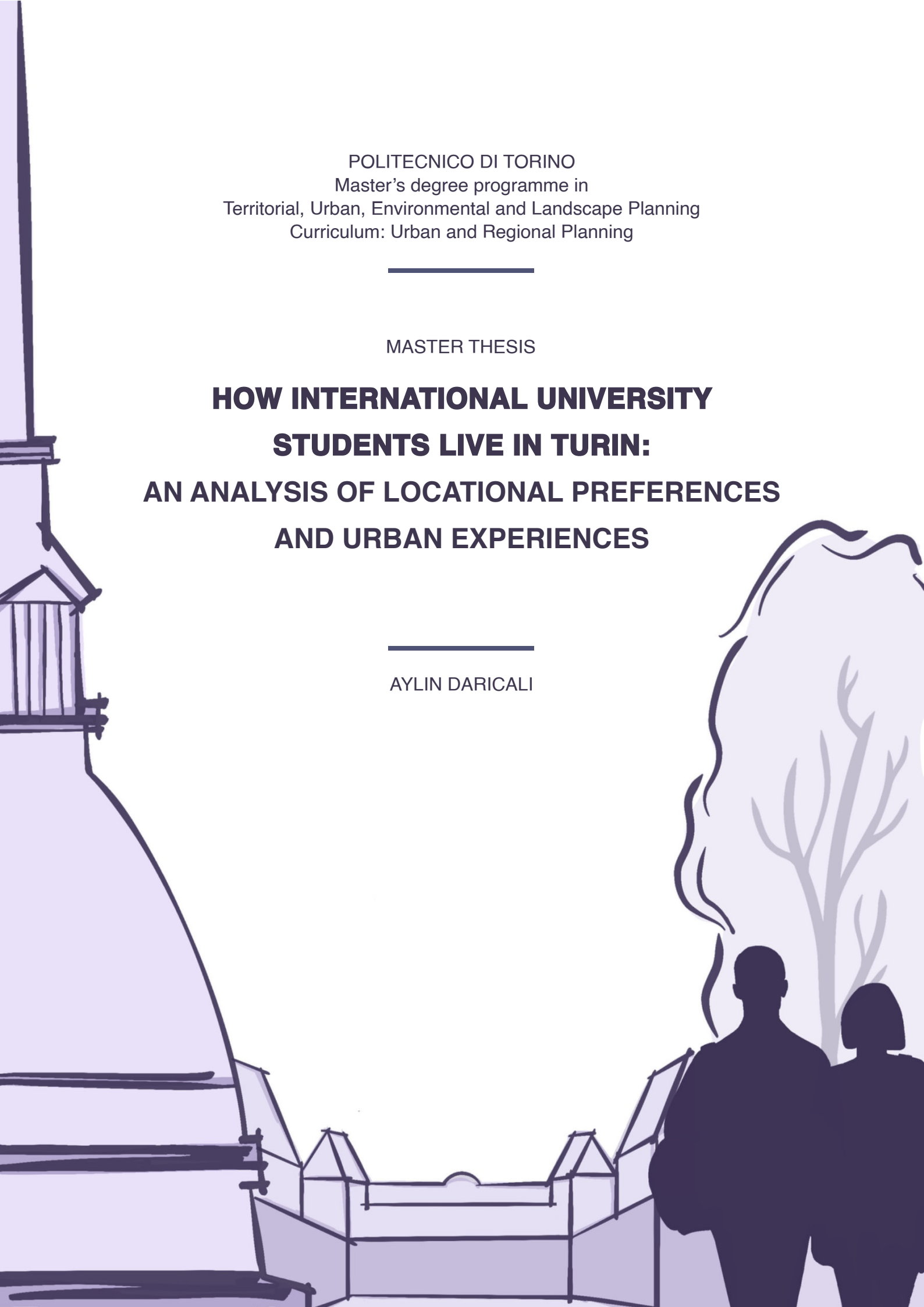


POLITECNICO DI TORINO
Master's degree programme in
Territorial, Urban, Environmental and Landscape Planning
Curriculum: Urban and Regional Planning

MASTER THESIS

**HOW INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS LIVE IN TURIN:
AN ANALYSIS OF LOCATIONAL PREFERENCES
AND URBAN EXPERIENCES**

AYLIN DARICALI





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How International University Students Live in Turin: An Analysis of Locational Preferences
and Urban Experiences

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I am grateful.
Teşekkür ederim.

Figure 1: Collage of the pictures provided by the interviewees. Authors' elaboration.

ABSTRACT

Universities are globally playing an increasingly important role for today's societies. This phenomenon underscores the significance of understanding the relationship between cities and higher education institutions (HEIs). Such an understanding also highlights the connection between students and the urban environment. Notably, international university students have been found to have a distinctive role in the city. This master's thesis investigates the relationship between international university students and urban environments, particularly their locational preferences and movements within the city. The approaches found in the existing literature often omit international student's perspectives in terms of how they perceive and interact with the urban environment. This raises questions such as, how do international university students navigate, perceive and interact with the urban environment? Which elements of the city are the most significant in shaping their locational preferences in their daily lives? What currently non-existing urban features this user group would look for? In what ways and with which roles do international university students contribute to the urban environments they use on a daily basis? The thesis focuses on the perspective of international university students in Turin, Italy - home to two major international universities: University of Turin and Polytechnic University of Turin. This thesis employs a qualitative methodology using two primary tools: an online survey and semi-structured interviews. The data collected reveal areas of the city that students find easier to navigate and interact with more frequently. Furthermore, the results provide insights into students' perceptions of the city and the factors influencing their preferences for certain locations. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how international university students experience, perceive, and influence urban environments. They offer valuable insights for future research and initiatives aimed at fostering more inclusive and engaging cities.

INDEX

INTRODUCTION	10		
01. THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	14		
1.1. Importance of Higher Education Institutions for the City	16		
1.2. University Students and the City	18		
1.2.1. Mutual Impacts of University Students and the City	18		
1.2.2. University Students' Life in the City	21		
1.3. International University Students and the City	25		
1.3.1. The Increasing Importance of International University Students in the Urban Development	25		
1.3.2. International University Students' Life in the City	27		
02. METHODOLOGY AND INVESTIGATION	30		
2.1. Case Study: Turin	32		
2.2. Methodology	38		
2.2.1. Survey	38		
2.2.2. Interviews	45		
03. RESULTS	48		
3.1. Results from the Survey	50		
3.1.1. User Demography	50		
3.1.2. Recreational and Leisure Preferences	60		
3.1.3. Frequency of the Visits	66		
3.1.4. Possible Specific Activities	79		
3.1.5. Composition of Social Circles	81		
3.2. Results from the Interviews	84		
3.2.1. User Demography	84		
3.2.2. Recreational and Leisure Preferences	89		
3.2.3. Possible Specific Activities and Composition of Social Circles	91		
3.2.4. Valentino Park	92		
3.2.5. Mental Maps and Pictures	96		
3.3. Key Findings of the Results	100		
04. DISCUSSION	102		
4.1. Discussion of the Results	104		
4.2. Discussion of the Results with Literature Review	122		
05. CONCLUSION	126		
5.1. Conclusion of the thesis	128		
5.2. Future Works	132		
REFERENCES	136		
APPENDIX	142		

INTRODUCTION

This master's thesis is dedicated to an in-dept examination of the growing number of international university students in the dynamics of urban transformation related to their interactions and locational preferences in the city. Over the years, the role of universities has grown in various countries and cities, in different magnitudes, according to the attention given by some authors such as Smith (2005) and Cortex (2004). This evolution has made the city and the university relationship crucial to examine and consequently, the role students play in cities. From this perspective, international university students, in specific, seem to possess a distinctive role, not only as financial contributors to stakeholders such as landlords, considering housing demands, but also due to the diverse cultural backgrounds of these students, transcending conventional idea on the preferences of student in terms of how to navigate and interact in the cities. Given that these students may be accustomed to specific activities that they are more familiar with in their home countries, they may seek analogous experiences in their new urban environment. These activities, not necessarily prevalent in the host city, create a demand for, and introduce new, daily patterns within the urban landscape. The thesis aims to explore the potential of diverse activity typologies, seeking a comprehensive understanding of how international university students allocate their time, select locations and therefore interact with the city.

The research questions that aim to develop a clear path in this exploration are:

1. How do international university students navigate, perceive and interact with the urban environments in Turin?
2. Which elements of the city are the most significant in shaping their locational preferences in their daily lives? What currently non-existing urban features this user group would look for?
3. In what ways and with which roles do international university students contribute to the urban environments they use on a daily basis?

These research questions aim to identify the key factors influencing the locational preferences and perceptions of international university students during their daily life in Turin, providing a deeper understanding of their interactions with the city. Although, every aspect of their daily life is not feasible to analyze, the thesis has been interested in their daily patterns, any potentially unique locational preferences based on their lifestyle in the city. The objective is to ascertain the preferences of international university students concerning how they spend their time, discerned through engagement in various activities.

Furthermore, the thesis aims to cultivate an understanding of whether the places frequently visited by international university students coincide with those chosen by university students in general and the rest of the city inhabitants. This research also analyzes the ethnicity of the friend group the students have, to develop a better understanding of their interaction in social settings in the city. By doing so, the study aims to provide insight into the broader dynamics of urban integration and the diverse contributions of international university students to the urban landscape.

All the aspects mentioned above is analyzed through an in-depth study in Turin, Italy, a post-industrial city with important academic institutions. Turin has two major universities in the city, The University of Turin (henceforth UniTo) and Polytechnic University of Turin (henceforth PoliTo) with 132.000 students in the city in 2023, alongside other university level institutions. As of the academic year 2022/2023, PoliTo had 38.700 students, 20% of which were international students while in UniTo, percentage of the international students was 6.2%. (OSSREG, <http://www.ossreg.pie.monte.it>). This background of Turin in terms of universities, number and variety of university students makes the city an ideal case study for the topic of this thesis. Therefore, it intends to put international university students of Turin as the main characters and examine their daily life preferences in the city, what type of activities they engage in and where. Only then it can be discussed how students navigate in the city, what role they have in the dynamics of the city and what can be done to improve their relationship, if needed.

Given the broad scope of this topic, the case of Turin can be considered in a broader global framework where the increasing presence of higher education institutions (henceforth HEIs) seen with their contribution to the logic of global competition between cities as knowledge nodes (Olds 2007). According to previous research, it is proven that HEIs are impacting the city in terms of the economic, social, and cultural aspects (Goddard et al. 2014). The relationship between cities and universities forms the foundation of the thesis since the increase in the importance of HEIs, and the related competition among cities to attract larger number of mobile students. This makes the role of students in cities crucial topic to be investigated.

To this extent the thesis considers the concept of studentification as a highly related yet very wide topic. Studentification reflects changes in the urban environment created by higher education students. Previous literature shows dynamic nature of studentification (Smith, 2005). Although the focus of this thesis partially differs from it, studentification focuses on how the city is impacted by the students and, as such the topic has been taken into consideration as a starting point, since it refers to "the distinct social, cultural, economic and physical transformations within university towns, which are associated with the seasonal, in-migration of higher education students" (Smith, 2005: 74). Therefore, it can be said that the impact of the students on the city is not only within university areas or neighboring ones, but it can be seen also in different

dynamics of the city which makes it crucial to understand the behaviors of the students within the city.

Overall, after the recognition of a set of issues regarding the relationship between university students and the city in the academic debate, the structure of the thesis has been focused on international university students. While much of the literature on the relationship between students and cities concerns studentification, this research will examine how this relationship plays out in terms of navigation and interaction, particularly for international university students. Consequently, the thesis will draw on various global examples while highlighting potential differences specific to the Italian context. One of its aims is to test new perspectives and generate new insights that can open doors to new possibilities.

Following an analysis on the case study and a review of the previous research done in Turin, the thesis wants to see the locational preferences of the international university students in Turin and tries to establish a relation between the reasons behind the selection by conducting a survey and an interview among them. According to the results of the survey, it is possible to see the places they prefer to go to the most in the city and why, which than explored with an in-depth investigation through interviews. Therefore, after the outcomes, the thesis will discuss them and analyze the result.

All this considered, the thesis aims at developing a nuanced understanding on the complex interplay between the international university students and their urban environment, coming from the existing literature and the specific context of Turin as the case study. By examining the interaction between international university students and urban environments, the thesis aims for a broader understanding of how cities can better adapt and integrate with these dynamic populations and ultimately improve their academic and social experiences.

*This thesis was done within the framework of an internship, conducted at the Future Urban Legacy Lab, a research center of Politecnico di Torino, under the supervision of Lucio Beltrami and Erica Mangione. Participating in two different projects named, "Mover la Movida" and "Osservatorio Student e Abitare" where the first one aimed to rebuild the cultural programming, entertainment, and highlight nighttime mobility of Turin and the second one aimed to make an observation on the characteristics of the university student population and its relationship with the city of Turin. Both of the projects, due to their related topics, have provided an important perspective for the conclusion of this thesis.

01.

THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This part of the thesis aims to provide a general overview of the topic, after understanding the dynamics of citizens perception of the city, by giving a background on universities and their relationship with the cities. It looks at the logic and dynamics leading to the growth of the university student population, its impacts on universities and cities to create the basis of the research. First, it is crucial to stress how the number of higher education institutions (HEIs) increases, as the importance of their role as global players increases. The research also looks at the reasons why attracting university students became a trend and how it impacts the relationship between the students and the city as well as considering the role students play in the knowledge economy. Then, in part 1.3. of the thesis aims at understanding the relationship between the city and the university students according to the existing literature. Furthermore, it will give a more general view by considering all types of university students and as a relative topic how it shapes within studentification. In the part 1.4., the thesis will focus more on the international university students by looking at the reasons why cities are highly interested in bringing them and how the elements mentioned before can impact international university students differently. It is important for the research to develop a better understanding of the ways in which international university students live in the city and the reasons behind their behaviors. It is important for the thesis to understand how much of their behavior is impacted by the city and how much they contribute to the urban process by looking at their locational preferences and daily activities. At the end, the theoretical background part of the thesis tackles this complex relationship between behaviors of the university students and the urban dynamics by focusing on how the recent literature refers to the relationship between the university students and the city.

1.1. Importance of Higher Education Institutions to The City

The dynamic interplay between university students and the city is a broad and vibrant subject, that is emerging from the variety of connections between higher education institutions and urban environments. Therefore, before discussing the role of university students in the cities, it is important to mention the role of higher education institutions. Considering that, for the most of the time, HEIs are the reason why the student chooses to move to that city specifically, one should first understand how they impact the city. Although HEIs are known for their basic aims as education and research, they are also a dynamic element of the city contributing to the process and improvement of the urban environment. Instead of being the centers of academic pursuits, in some literature, they are being referred to as anchor institutions, according to the economic, social, and cultural impacts they have on the city (Goddard et al., 2014).

As HEIs first impact, this work takes in consideration their economic contribution. Felsenstein states that most of universities are considered to be major employers and significant purchasers of local goods and services which, magnified by multiplier effects, have direct and indirect impacts on the wider local economy (1996). He also mentions the similarities of a higher education institution to a business complex due to the variety of activities that can change from hospitals to catering, in the large area they are occupying (Felsenstein, 1996). Since one of the basic aims of a business complex is to benefit the economy of its city, this resembling highlights the important role of HEIs as one of the resources of the city. Of course, when considered as resources, the positive impacts of the universities on the city can be seen more clearly. One of these positive impacts is benefiting the knowledge economy, another term discussed considering the relationship between the university students and the city.

The existence of the university in the city can be considered crucial for the knowledge economy (Lazzeroni, 2013). Powell and Snellman define knowledge economy as "production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technological and scientific advance as well as equally rapid obsolescence" (2004: 199). Hence making it very crucial for the city in order to keep up with global competition. Although the topic "knowledge economy" covers a wider range of terms, the definition suggests contribution of the higher education institution as a place where the main knowledge-intensive activities are located. With the support and encouragement of the government, higher education institutions are fostering global economic competitiveness and innovation via knowledge-based economies and societies (Cooke, 2004). Due to their contribution to the knowledge-based economy, HEIs are both attracting talent and industries to its city, seeking to have an important position in terms of their graduates and research.

Another clear contribution of HEIs to the city is the fact that it creates job opportunities for its citizens. Besides the academic positions, it creates job options in different fields from the maintenance of the campus to administrative positions. In addition to the mentioned employment aspects, with the innovation related to academic research HEIs can lead to the creation of start-ups and companies participating in the city economy.

In addition to all, the fact that university as an establishment comes with its demands like housing, transportation, and improvement of the general landscape of the city, it can be said that they also contribute to making the city more attractive and livable. Therefore, the contribution of HEIs to the positive development cycle of cities cannot be ignored. With the important role universities play for their city, they participate in the economic growth, employment, and infrastructural development. Hence, the reason behind the growing number of universities becomes clearer as they play a pivotal role in cities. This role has been important for the thesis to make better relations between the cities and its university students by highlighting the motivations behind establishment and maintenance of higher education institutions in the cities.

1.2. University Students and The City

In order to keep and increase the number of HEIs and benefit more from their presence in the city, cities are highly motivated to attract more domestic and international university students. These motivations can range from economic reasons to cultural aspects. The first part of this chapter will look through these motivations to develop a better understanding of what drives cities to attract more students. After that, the second part, aims at considering the student's perspective in terms of their daily life, locational preferences, type of amenities they expect the city to have and how the city can impact them during this process.

1.2.1. Mutual Impacts of University Students and the City

As cities keep on evolving with the aim on economic growth, they become more interested in increasing the importance of higher education institutions, due to the benefits mentioned in the first chapter, hence increasing the number of the higher education students as its' users. This attraction is crucial because cities can only sustain the benefits from having higher education institutions if there are enough students actively participating in the educational process.

Relatively, the number of higher education students enrolling to the higher education institutions has increased over the years. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2000 there were 100 million students enrolled in higher education institutions compared to 235 million in 2020 which is more than double of the students enrolled in 2000. In these two decades, the number of students in Europe and Northern America increased by 24% (2022). Furthermore, it is only expected for the numbers to increase in the future, with the estimation of by 2030 there would be 377.4 million, 471.4 million by 2035 and 594.1 million students by 2040 (Calderon, 2018). The increase in the numbers is highlighting the remarkable shift that has happened over the years, and sheds light for the future increase there for the importance that should be given.

Some research provided evidence of the positive impacts on the higher education institutions to attract and keep students and scholars from around the world (Gertler, Vinodrai, 2005). In this manner, the city's participation in efforts to retain and accommodate college students will be increased, thereby facilitating the continued growth and expansion of such initiatives. Thus, it is relevant to look through the motivations behind what drives cities to attract more higher education students.

First of all, with the existence of academic institutions and their students, the city aims to have a good position on the global competitiveness related to the academic research being conducted and the possible technological

improvements. They are aiming to create intellectual capital by attracting young and bright minds to shape more innovative and creative living spaces (Addie et al., 2015). In another way these students are considered as young talents that can benefit urban development. Therefore, the effort to attract and retain young talent and promote their academic and professional development in the city requires strategic alignment of urban amenities with aspirations and requirements of students. By increasing livability and attractiveness, the city strives to encourage students to extend their stay within its borders beyond their academic pursuits (Wesselmann, 2019). If the city manages to keep university students after their graduation, it will be strengthening its workforce and bring young professionals to its dynamic urban environment (Addie et al., 2015). Motivations like strengthening the workforce and aiming professional growth are highly related to the economic growth of the city.

A further aspect to be considered in relation to HEIs presence in the city is, participation of university students to urban economic growth. They are engaging with the economic system not only by making educational expenses, but also in terms of accommodation, transportation, leisure, and entertainment. However, it would be wrong to consider it as just another purchase since university students are also using, shaping and being shaped by this environment they are participating in according to their purchase. Therefore, it makes this motivation more interesting among others considering the social aspects of the matter, making it a topic discussed in the literature under different terms. As one of these terms, to highlight how the city is impacted by the students, in the next part of the thesis will mention studentification to give necessary references.

The concept of "studentification" refers to the unique socio-cultural, economic, and physical changes occurring within university towns due to the periodic influx of higher education students (Smith, 2005). In the 1990s, the topic started to come into discussion in the UK related to the expansive higher education policies of the time (Armstrong, Darrall, & Grove-White, 1997). Main argument while discussing studentification is if the growing number of students in some neighborhoods triggers urban renewal or drives processes of housing devaluation and blight (Cortes, 2004). This highlights the issue of off campus student accommodation, therefore impacting city life. There are several key factors while considering this process. Firstly, economic perspective shows that studentification participates in reshaping the housing stock in the area due to the new development of student accommodation and the change in private rented housing with demand coming from newly moved students, consequently leading to a decrease in homeownership levels in the area (Smith, 2005). Socially, the influx of students as newcomers to neighborhoods can disrupt established patterns of social concentration among existing residents (Watt, 2009). Moreover, the replacement of previous residents often corresponds with the emergence of a predominantly young and single social demographic, thereby introducing new trends, needs, and preferences that cater more to the student population, consequently influencing the existing culture (Roberts &

Sykes, 2000). Considering the diverse lifestyles of this new social class, changes in patterns of production and consumption related to services and retail can be observed (Grogger & Eide, 1995). Finally, concerning all economic, social, and cultural dimensions, the physical environment may undergo both positive and negative impacts as a result of these changes (Watt, 2009). From the perspective of scholars with a more critical approach, students are considered to be marginal gentrifiers claiming the neighborhoods near the university while reshaping the subcultural spaces (Hubbard, 2009; Ley, 2003; Rose, 2004). In addition, Smith also reflects that growing number of students in a neighborhood creates a positive impact, in terms of the value of the neighborhood, resulting in the uplift in the housing prices (2005). On the other hand, after a couple years with the change in lifestyles of students, new demands focusing on shared living spaces were created, ending up changing the private rental market (Smith and Holt, 2007). While a crucial portion of scholarly literature on this subject originates from British cases, upon comprehensive examination of the essential factors, it becomes evident that the presence of students within a city profoundly influences urban life across various dimensions. Although the perspectives considered within the term studentification are mainly focusing on the impacts on the city, it's crucial to highlight the importance of the relationship between the city and the students, in order to move forward in the research.

Another research perspective focuses on the leisure activities of the students, as one of the many ways they contribute to the urban economy (Chatterton, 1999; Chatterton and Hollands, 2005; Hollands, 1995; Russo and Arias Sans, 2009). It is important to highlight that university students are also a consumer group in the urban population, due to their contribution to the leisure sector as young people wanting to socialize. The leisure sector comprises businesses that center around products and services related to recreation, entertainment, sports, and tourism, collectively known as REST related products and services (Chon, 2012). Therefore, the significance of the leisure industry for cities can be seen not only because thriving leisure sector can enhance the overall quality of life for residents, making cities more attractive places to live and work, but also to attract more visitors by fostering recreational, entertainment activities. In order to be attractive and compete with each other, contemporary cities seek to develop leisure activities and the infrastructure associated with them (Evans & Ilbery, 1993; Hall & Page, 2014). When it comes to higher education students, cities can derive economic benefits even after the completion of their education by regarding them as a "profitable, substantial, and reliable consumer demographic with purchasing power and consumption patterns that have the potential to bolster urban economies" (Chatterton, 2010: 511). Drawing on Chatterton's (2010) discourse concerning the expansion of 'consumption-oriented student cities', Zasina (2021) proposes the conceptualization of the integration of pubs, bars, nightclubs, and fast food and retail establishments primarily catering to university students as the 'student urban service sector.' Within this framework, these venues are

regarded as facilitators for students to shape their identity, providing platforms for social interactions and entertainment, as presented by Chatterton (1999). Locations for the 'student leisure' can be situated in many different locations in the city and can only be seen more clearly by developing an understanding on the movements of the university students within the city, in order to understand where they prefer to go to the most for it. According to this, the thesis aims to focus on these preferences by investigating the movements of the university students.

In consideration of all these factors, it is conceivable to assert that the presence of students extends beyond the university limits. They are playing a bigger role impacting the urban landscape both materially and symbolically (Collins, 2010). The relationship between students and the city, as exemplified by studentification, is a dynamic interaction with a wide range of consequences for the urban environment. Ensuring a balance that enhances students' positive impacts on the city while also tackling potential challenges is crucial for emphasizing the mutual benefits that the city and the university students offer each other.

1.2.2. University Students' Life in the City

After providing a comprehensive understanding of the mutual influence between the city and university students, as well as explaining the motivations underlying the city's desire for a growing student population as the main basis of this research, the next paragraphs focus primarily on the perspective of university students. This strategic shift aligns with the core inquiry of the research question, directing the analytical focus to the experiences, challenges, and contributions of university students in the city.

First of all, one should remember that education is a fundamental human right and therefore fair accessibility should be guaranteed under appropriate conditions. Despite the right to education, the quality of this experience depends on environmental variables, impacting the student's life negatively or positively (Sen, 1999). Depending on the problems like affordability, housing or any unequal distribution of resources and opportunities in the urban environment may pose some challenges for the students resulting in an adverse effect on their experience (Marcuse, 1997). However, it is essential to ensure that these difficulties do not hinder students from meeting their basic needs. Once the fundamental needs of students are fulfilled, it is expected that the challenges they face will primarily shape their behavioral tendencies (Adey, 2006). This can include their preferences for certain spaces within the city and how they choose to allocate their time accordingly.

Furthermore, there exist positive outcomes. The city often acts like an extension of the academic world that is beyond the university limits. Not only by being home to variety of the educational institutions like libraires and cultural institutions, but it is also a space where students engage with real-

world challenges, and experience learning opportunities and a broad body of knowledge beyond formal courses (Florida, 2002). It also includes social interaction, creating a space for students to develop their social skills, where they can navigate through the social networks, attending cultural and recreational events and entering a new independence phase. The inherent diversity in urban environments exposes university students to multifaceted perspectives and experiences, thus facilitating a nuanced expansion of their global understanding (Sassen, 2001). Furthermore, the challenges and opportunities inherent in the urban environment help students mature, providing greater adaptability, problem-solving competence, and an increased sense of responsibility. In the light of this, it can be said that the city plays an important role in shaping the social identity of university students and developing their interpersonal skills. Moreover, cities can impact the students economically too with the possible opportunities for part-time employment, internships, and interaction with the professional world (Harvey, 1989). This engagement can provide them with financial independence and give them space to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings. Considering the above-mentioned examples, the visible impact of urban environments on the comprehensive development of university students becomes evident.

Students' understandings range from academic resources and employment pathways to cultural opportunities and a conducive environment, underlining the search for cities that align with their aspirations and facilitate inclusive development (Brown & Kim, 2016). Moreover, it is also imperative to consider the additional expectations which students might have that extend beyond the basic requirements and need a detailed consideration of their interaction with the urban environment. For instance, a dynamic cultural environment and recreational opportunities are natural components of students' expectations in an urban environment (Chiu et al., 2017). The presence of theatres, museums, galleries, and leisure venues offer students opportunities for both recreation and cultural enrichment (Zukin, 1995). Offering a variety of entertainment options, festivals, and cultural events in accessible locations, cities play an important role in shaping a comprehensive student experience (Ley, 1996). This rich environment could foster a greater sense of connection and interaction with the urban landscape.

Coming from diverse backgrounds and interests, university students often seek out urban leisure sectors that can also differ according to the interests of the students and offer cultural enrichment opportunities (Richards & Wilson, 2006). Therefore, it is possible to assert that students exhibit a preference for the city in which they pursue their education to provide a spectrum of diverse activities that can answer their different expectations (Gonzalez & Vianna, 2020). For instance, sports facilities, parks, and green spaces play a crucial role in promoting physical well-being and providing avenues for relaxation (Smith & Rasambainarivo, 2018).

The existence of parks in the urban environment is especially crucial

for not only the university students but all its users. Chiesura confirms with her research that experiencing a natural environment in the city acts as a source of positive feelings and other beneficial services that are crucial for immaterial and non-consumptive human needs (2004). Furthermore, the fundamental rule of the neighborhood sidewalks, also goes hand in hand with the neighborhood park, where liveliness and variety seen within them, attract more liveliness (Jacobs, 1961). Making urban parks good locations to socialize and interact with other people. Moreover, the accessibility of the park also influences the experience. For example, on the study done by Kim and Jin (2018), illustrated that more accessible the public park is, happier the people living around. As users of the park, it can be said that having an urban park near them can improve the experience of the students.

Cities that prioritize a spectrum of recreational options, catering to various interests and preferences, align with the expectations of university students seeking a well-rounded and balanced lifestyle (Kim & Kwon, 2019). This is important to mention because once the options are provided by the city and where there are variety of activities for university students to join, the location of these activities can impact the city according to how many students are joining and how busy it gets around the area. In relation to this where university students prefer to go can be depicted.

Undoubtedly, a comprehensive examination of a university student's typical daily routine is imperative to develop a better understanding of his or her behavior and preferences. A significant portion of a university student's daily schedule is devoted to academic pursuits, which include attendance to lectures, active participation in discussions, participation in laboratory sessions (especially related to science-related disciplines), and eager participation in assignments or projects (Martinez-Alier et al., 2020). Structuring daily routes depends heavily on class schedules and concerted efforts towards independent study and preparation. As a result, their movements revolve predominantly around the boundaries of university campuses (Hall et al., 2018). In addition, the geographical location of their residence also assumes significant importance, as the immediate environment significantly affects the places frequented (Barton & Pretty, 2010). The comfort and accessibility of the neighborhood contribute greatly to daily activities, especially in routine activities such as grocery shopping (Hensher et al., 2019). Apart from these key locations, the course of students' daily activities can depend on the location of their preferred leisure venues, a factor inherently linked to the urban context. The cityscape plays an important role in determining the spatial distribution of these leisure activities, thus creating a noticeable impact on the daily lives and movement patterns of university students (Carruthers et al., 2017). The impacts of the city on a university student's daily life are multifaceted, ranging from academic resources and extracurricular opportunities to social interactions, employment prospects, and overall well-being (Kuh et al., 2008). The city's functionality in terms of roads and buildings, culture activities that are provided, and its

accessibility plays a pivotal role in shaping the university experience and influencing the choices and satisfaction levels of the student population.

Furthermore, understanding these expectations is of great importance for urban centers aiming to attract and sustain a dynamic and heterogeneous student demographic. This participation not only bodes well for students' individual development, but also makes a significant contribution to the vitality and dynamism of urban communities (Barton & Pretty, 2010).

Overall, it is clear that the urban environment has a profound and complex impact on university students in many dimensions. From shaping academic pursuits to influencing social interactions and contributing to personal development, the urban environment is emerging as a transformative factor in the student experience (Kuh et al., 2008). Recognizing the symbiotic relationship between university students and the city highlights the imperative to create urban environments that enable the comprehensive development of students by fostering a dynamic intersection that enhances both individual lives and the vitality of urban communities. Effectively navigating academic commitments and the demand of urban life requires some considerations and encourages cities to address these challenges to ensure universal access and equal benefit for all students in urban environments.

1.3. International University Students and the City

In today's world, international university students play an important role in contributing to the vitality and diversity of a city. Their presence brings a unique cultural richness and global perspective to the local community. Different than the domestic students, international students bring an additional layer of diversity and global connectedness that can enhance the city's cosmopolitan character and global standing. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how international students are influenced by and their impacts on the city. While the first sub-topic undertakes a thorough examination of the nuanced dynamics inherent in this relationship, elucidating the manifold ways in which the presence of international students shapes cultural dynamics, economic landscapes, and the overall vibrancy of the city, the second sub-topic will focus on how international university students are influenced by the city, according to how they prefer to move around the city and what they do in daily basis.

1.3.1. The Increasing Importance of International University Students in the Urban Development

The dynamic and multifaceted interaction between international university students and the urban environment creates a relationship of crucial consequence, resulting a significant influence on both the experiences of the students and the natural character of the city. As international students, they are not only experiencing what it is to be a university student but also being a foreigner at the same time. This situation can result in different outcomes both for the student and the city. In the light of this, the next paragraph aims at explaining the impact of students on the urban environment, focusing specifically on understanding the force driving the influx of international university students into the city, thus serving as a foundational topic for the research.

The presence of international university students has a variety of impacts to the city. Firstly, drawn from various geographic locations and cultural backgrounds, it is possible to question if students contribute to a rich tapestry of perspectives, arts, and traditions in terms of cultural diversity and if so how and what are the impacts of it to the city. International students are seen as individuals enriching these cities with their diverse heritage and perspectives, therefore, participate in increasing cultural awareness and appreciation (Bevis, 2002; Harrison, 2002). For example, possible cultural events that can be created with their participation or simple due to their existence. The resulting cross-cultural interactions not only enhance the academic environment but also permeate the broader social fabric, resulting in a cosmopolitan ethos that

allows for global understanding and appreciation. For a city aiming not to fall behind in the contemporary world, these impacts should be considered crucial (Smith, Khawaja, 2011).

Moreover, international students often contribute significantly to the local economy through tuition fees, accommodation, and spending on goods and services, just like it was mentioned for the students coming from different cities above. However, the economic contribution of international students can have positive ripple effects by encouraging various industries and businesses in the city (Townsend, Lee, 2004). This financial contribution creates tangible impacts by stimulating local economic growth and supporting a wide range of businesses. Moreover, the demand for services tailored to the unique needs of international students, like a variety of leisure activities and more entertainment activities, can change the economic landscape, creating a more resilient and adaptable urban economy.

International students can also act as cultural ambassadors, building bridges between the city and their home country, potentially encouraging international collaborations and partnerships. The relationships developed during their tenure contribute to positioning the city as a nexus for global educational and cultural engagement, elevating its international standing. Thus, the coexistence of both international and domestic students can create a synergistic environment that strengthens the city's educational, economic and cultural landscape (Cortes, 2015). This integration of diverse perspectives among students fosters an intellectually stimulating academic environment, encourages creative thinking, and advances the frontiers of knowledge. The mutual influence enables the city to benefit from its growing reputation as an educational hub attracting academics, researchers and professionals in search of a dynamic and globally connected intellectual community, meaning that they are attracting a good percentage of society to grow.

Due to the motivation of the city mentioned above and the contemporary world being more demanding on this over the years, it can be seen that the numbers are getting higher and higher. According to UNESCO, between the years 2000 and 2019, the number of students who pursue their tertiary education

International mobile students by host region, 2000-2019 (Million)

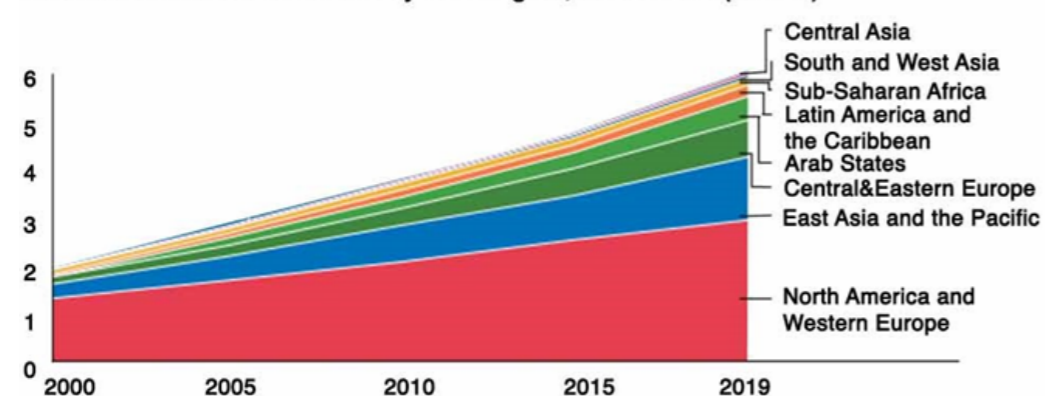


Figure 2: International mobile students host region, 2000-2019 (Million). Source: UNESCO.

outside their home country almost tripled during the last two decades by having over 6 million international mobile students in 2019. Almost 1 million of these students were hosted in countries in Central and Eastern Europe (2022). (see fig.2)

Overall, it can be said that the interdependence between international university students and the city is characterized by dynamic reciprocity and mutual enrichment. As cities continue to embrace and proactively support international student groups, this symbiotic relationship is poised to play an increasingly important role in shaping the course of both academic and urban landscapes.

1.3.2. International University Students' Life in the City

Given that international students are also users of the city, understanding the general user perceptions of the urban environment and how it can be done, provides valuable context for this study, which will be discussed further in section 3.2.5. However, due to their diverse cultural, academic, and experiential backgrounds, the presence of international university students can give rise to distinctive behavioral patterns. This chapter aimed to pay attention to these possible differences and how the city impacts them. These differences can be seen in various aspects. Due to lack of literature regarding to the unique patterns international university students might be creating in their daily lives, this part of the research will mainly focus on Understanding international students beyond studentification: A new class of transnational urban consumers. The example of Erasmus students in Lisbon by Daniel Malet Calvo.

First of all, the interest of international university students to exhibit a heightened engagement with the local culture as they navigate a new environment can be given. Their desire to be part of and understand the host city creates in them the need to explore the local customs, traditions, and cultural events. For instance, possessing a limited familiarity with the city may systematically engage in the exploration and utilization of municipal resources, such as museums, cultural events, and recreational spaces. Exposure to diverse cultural, social, and economic realities within the city cultivates a nuanced understanding of the complexities inherent in contemporary society, preparing students for active and informed citizenship. Thus, this engagement facilitates cultural exchange and a nuanced expansion of their global understanding.

Furthermore, faced with the necessity of assimilating into a new social environment, international students often display a forward trend to establish social connections. This proactive stance often results in the expansion of their social networks beyond national borders, resulting in the development of interpersonal relationships with peers from different cultural backgrounds. In the light of this their social groups can be formed with people coming from different backgrounds than them, which can lead to their participation in a variety of activities.

Having constant and different activities is crucial for international students considering they are coming to a different country with the purpose of having an international experience. Through these activities they can experience different situations and customs. Furthermore, their lifestyles are a crucial element to develop an understanding of the diverse movements they might have according to their culture. In his study at Lisbon, Calvo stated that international students are colonizing in different districts and activities with a variety of processes of belonging and distraction (2018). He argues that due to their important roles in relative urban changes like knowledge economy (as also mentioned above) and leisure economy, their distinctive lifestyles can (re)produce new urban identities. His approach suggests that once the leisure industries, HEIs and travel operators have similar marketing strategies, both the young tourist and international students might consume similar commodities like, apartments, museums, cafes, retail services and nightlife locations. Therefore, they end up having a touristic approach and socialize mainly among themselves in their daily life, especially with other students coming from their home country. Calvo also suggests that these situations could be related to their socio-economic situation that is higher than the average in their home country. Overall, all these features suggest that international students might be a part of the “transnational urban consumers” (2018). As a consequence, they often contribute to the city’s diversity by participating in or initiating cultural exchanges, international events, and community initiatives from all around the world.

Throughout this experience, various elements can exert disparate impacts on international university students related to the procedural frameworks, like governmental procedures. Notably, the regulatory frameworks governing issues such as visas and resident permits manifest as salient determinants influencing the degree of engagement with democratic processes. Procedures of the democracy progresses are highly crucial for the student. Ease of the procedures can have a positive impact on the experience of the students, however, if instead it’s difficult, it can make it hard for the student to feel part of the city. Furthermore, language barriers can happen in foreign countries. Although learning an additional language is very helpful for the student, given the important role of language in facilitating effective communication, its absence can detrimentally impact the student’s experience.

Challenges with cultural assimilation, adaptation, and social integration experienced by the international university students require careful consideration. Cities must tackle these challenges to promote the well-being and inclusion of the international student demographic, thereby creating an environment where diversity is not only accepted but actively nurtured. Recognizing these differences is integral to fostering an inclusive and enriching environment for all students. The convergence of diverse behaviors contributes to the multifaceted nature of urban university life, ultimately enhancing the social, cultural, and economic fabric of the city.

After explaining the rationale behind the establishment of this association and grasping the potential implications for international university students, it becomes evident that the connection between the city and these students is very important and has a significant impact on how they navigate, perceive and interact with the city. Solidifying its foundation in the existing literature, the thesis aims to move forward by integrating the case study approach.

02.

METHODOLOGY AND INVESTIGATION

In this part, the thesis is focused on the case study and specific procedures conducted to analyze, choose, and identify the topic. First, it will introduce the city of the case study which is Turin. Then, the “how” of the research is referred by mentioning the two important research methods: survey and the interviews. By targeting international university students of Turin, the survey gathered responses to the questions developed to understand their movement and preferences in the city. Although it includes some open-ended questions besides the closed-ended ones, the survey mainly follows a quantitative method. While the interview with a more qualitative approach, have more exploratory questions according to the results of the survey, conducted by a smaller number of volunteers who also joined the survey.

2.1. Case Study: Turin

Located in the northwestern region of Italy, next to the Po River and surrounded by the Alps, Turin is the capital of Piemonte region (4.2 millions inhabitants in 2023). In 2023, Turin had a population of 847.398 in the municipality while it has 2.204.632 people in the metropolitan area (ISTAT, <http://dati.istat.it>) as the fourth biggest one in Italy. (see fig.3)

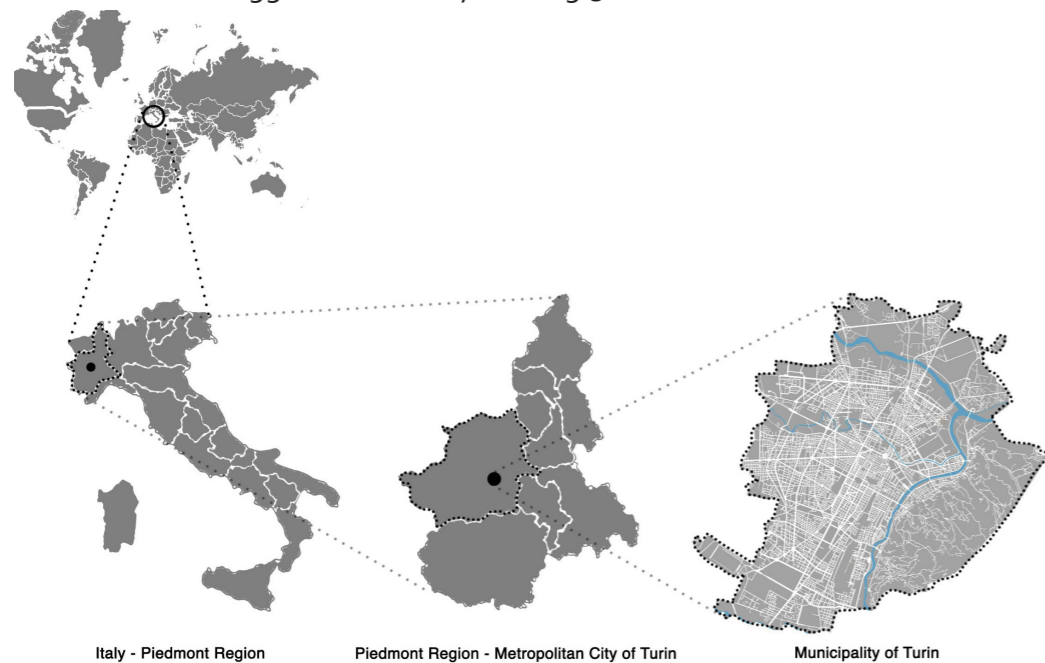


Figure 3: Location of the study area on a national and regional scale. Authors' elaboration.

Possessing historical significance of major imports with roots tracing back to ancient time, the city served as the capital of the Duchy of Savoy and subsequently assumed the status of the capital for the Kingdom of Sardinia under the dominion of the House of Savoy. In particular, it had the distinction of being the first capital of the Kingdom of Italy in the period from 1861 to 1865. Reflecting that the city holds a crucial historical value, with an important part preserved to this day, creating a lot of space for historical tourism in the city. In more recent years, as a post-industrial city, Turin has been praised for its transformation from a traditional industrial monolith centered around world-famous automotive giant FIAT to a knowledge-centered economic hub. The beginnings of this transformative trajectory date back to the 1970s, in line with the paradigm observed in some other municipalities undergoing post-industrial transition, characterized by what scholars call a 'pyrotechnic urban agenda' by Belligni and Ravazzi (2012). This strategic developmental framework prioritizes enhancing cultural, recreational, and touristic aspects in the urban landscape. For instance, after it became clear that in the mid-1990s, Turin would have to cope with a much smaller industrial sector, especially after FIAT crisis.

Therefore, it was decided to follow a strategic planning process. Turin's three strategic plans have been discussed and described in other literature. (for example, in Pinson, 2002; 2009; Pinson and Santangelo, 2007; Saccomani, 2011; Belligni and Ravazzi, 2013; Ravazzi and Belligni, 2016).

In terms of other elements, over the last two decades, Turin has implemented significant changes to develop the "Turin University City" strategy, aimed at enhancing higher education institutions (HEIs). In light of this, the two major HEIs in Turin have become increasingly vital in running urban strategic plans and urban regeneration programs (Zasina et al., 2021). In line with this initiative, the Municipality launched the Turin University City plan in 2012 (Mangione, 2019). Over all, it can be said that the city, in the last years, adopted a focus on integrate universities into Turin's urban branding strategy, thereby attracting both national and international students (Cenere & Mangione, 2021).

From the administrative point of view, municipality of Turin is organized through 8 different zones called Circoscrizioni. Each of the zones includes several districts inside them. The 34 districts in total can be seen in the following list and the map according to the Circoscrizioni they belong to. (see fig.4)

- Circoscrizione 1: Centro, Crocetta
- Circoscrizione 2: Santa Rita, Mirafiori Nord, Mirafiori Sud
- Circoscrizione 3: San Paolo, Cenisia, Pozzo Strada, Cit Turin, Borgata Lesna
- Circoscrizione 4: San Donato, Campidoglio, Parella
- Circoscrizione 5: Borgo Vittoria, Madonna di Campagna, Lucento, Vallette
- Circoscrizione 6: Barriera di Milano, Regio Parco, Barca, Bertolla, Falchera, Rebaudengo, Villaretto

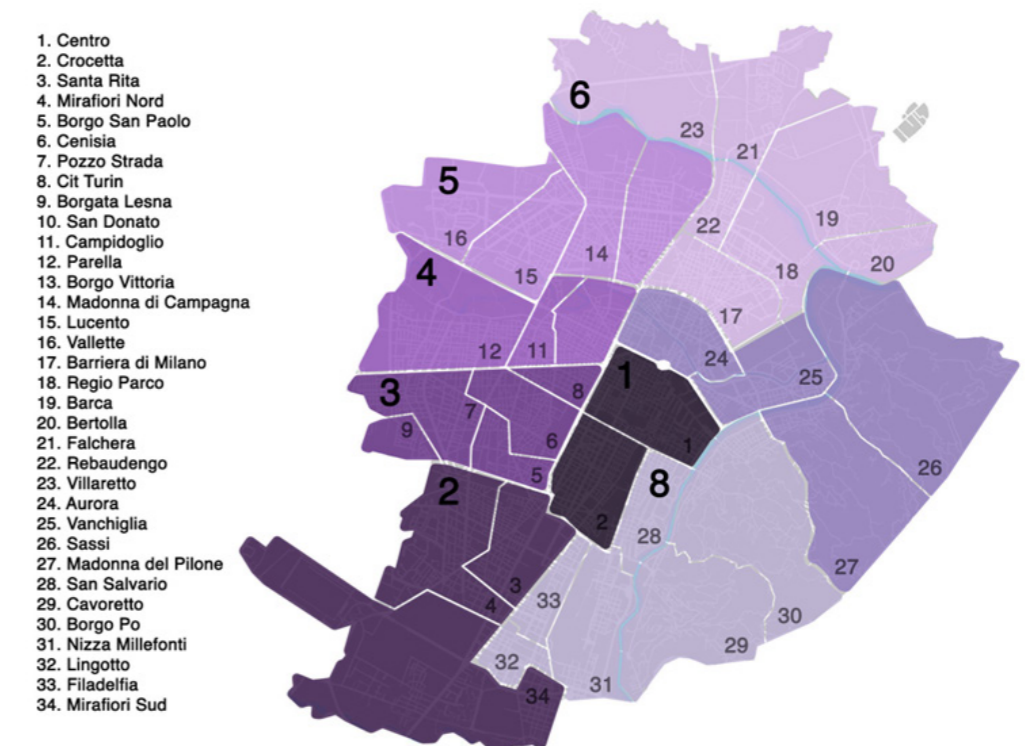


Figure 4: Administrative map of Turin. Authors' elaboration.

- Circoscrizione 7: Aurora, Vanchiglia, Sassi, Madonna del Pilone
- Circoscrizione 8: San Salvario, Cavoretto, Borgo Po, Nizza, Millefonti, Lingotto, Filadelfia

It can be said that each district holds a different character, according to the leisure and administrative activities the district holds, making some of them preferable to live or spend free time. According to their characteristics, the type of activities they hold and the citizens profile who lives there, some of these neighborhoods are considered to be richer and more touristic districts in the city. For example, while Centro and San Salvario, known with touristic and leisure activities, are considered to be richer neighborhoods even though there are many different options serving for different groups in city. While Crocetta and Cenisia are known as richer ones due to housing prices and resident profiles.

Moreover, it is imperative to identify important locations, landmarks and streets as an integral element for a comprehensive understanding of the urban fabric and spatial arrangement within the city. Overall, the city has a grid layout that makes it easier to connect different parts of the city. The urban framework of Turin is distinguished by expansive avenues adorned with wide tree-lined borders, comprising a central thoroughfare, commonly referred to as 'viale', and one or two parallel smaller roads known as 'controviali'. This shape of the city also makes it very walkable, due to the easy connections. Furthermore, considering the size of the city center that is relatively small compared to other busy cities of Italy, makes it possible to reach one location to the other by walking. One of the most important examples of Turin's urban landscape can be epitomized by Piazza Castello, a central square that houses seminal landmarks such as the Royal Palace of Turin and Palazzo Madama. The city's spatial organization is particularly evident in the radial arrangement of major avenues leading from Piazza Castello, resulting in a good connected urban environment. Linked to this central hub is Via Po, a historic street connecting Piazza Castello to the Po River and the Gran Madre di Dio as another important monument and popular location in Turin. Shaped with cloisters and historic cafes, Via Po has gained popularity among locals and visiting enthusiasts alike. Creating an additional critical zone, Quadrilatero Romano, popularly known as the Roman Quadrangle, represents a historical residential area located between Piazza Castello and Porta Palatina. This district is characterized by a labyrinth-like network of narrow streets and charming squares, where medieval and Renaissance architectural motifs merge seamlessly with contemporary boutiques and avant-garde art spaces. With more eclectic and bohemian ambiance, San Salvario appears as a dynamic neighborhood south of the city center. Boasting a diverse demographic, vibrant murals, and a coexistence of traditional and alternative establishments, San Salvario serves as a poignant testament to Turin's cultural diversity. This district is mainly known for its leisure activities and its popularity among the young population of Turin, as a district

Figure 5: Map of Turin City Center with important street names and avenues. Authors' elaboration.



full of young adults, specially at nighttime due to the variety of bars. In San Salvario, Parco del Valentino, a large park on the banks of the Po River, is an integral part of the city's urban charm. This green space not only provides a sense of natural tranquility and spaces for multifunctional activities, but also houses Valentino Castle, an architectural marvel that serves as a university structure, further enhancing the cultural and educational dimensions of this vibrant neighborhood. Furthermore, the central location of the park and the nearby bus stops make it very accessible. The increase in the number of people once the weather is more preferable shows that the park is a very popular location for its citizens to enjoy the day. Moreover, Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, a lively street that runs through the city center, stands as another important element in Turin's urban topography. Filled with an array of shops, cafés and historic buildings, Corso Vittorio Emanuele II serves as a lively hub that caters to the needs of its residents (Bergeron, 1973). (see fig.5)

Overall, it can be said that Turin is a relatively small city , specially compared to other European cities, that is well-connected with its grid layout and main streets connecting the important squares, makes it easier to access

and walkable to different activities starting from big parks located in the city center to different museums and leisure activities.

The city's evolution into a university city is not solely an economic and academic phenomenon; it is deeply intertwined with cultural and social dynamics. The influx of students and scholars from diverse backgrounds infused the city with a dynamic energy, fostering a rich cultural tapestry. Collaborations between academia and industry flourished, giving rise to research centers, incubators, and innovation hubs (Zasina, Mangione, Santangelo, 2021). This synergy between the academic and industrial sectors not only propelled Turin onto the global stage as a knowledge-driven city but also stimulated economic growth through the development and commercialization of cutting-edge technologies. Turin's journey into a university city epitomizes the transformative power of strategic planning and foresight (Vanolo, 2015). The city's ability to adapt to changing economic landscapes, coupled with a commitment to education and research, has positioned it as a beacon of academic excellence, resulting in a growing university student population. The expanding demographics of university students fosters the academic excellence and innovation, especially characterized by a diverse group of international scholars. Moreover, the presence of international university students often translates into additional revenue for the local economy. The growing international student population in Turin establishes an invaluable network of potential global leaders, professionals, and influencers. Making the city evolve into a bond for international networking and diplomatic relations as students develop connections throughout their academic stay. Turin finds itself on the threshold of a transformative era where the student body is rapidly increasing, especially from diverse international backgrounds. The city's ability to capitalize on the cultural, economic, academic, and diplomatic advantages resulting from this demographic shift is crucial to its enduring expansion and global importance, therefore the city can only aim to attract more international university students.

In total, in 2023, the city had around 132.000 students (OSSREG, <http://www.ossreg.piemonte.it>). Although this system is according to the data relating to students enrolled in the four universities in Piedmont, the main number of students are from University of Turin and Polytechnic University of Turin with almost 120.000 students. The information is categorized according to upper secondary schools in Turin where two of the others included are The University of Gastronomic Sciences in Pollenzo and The University of Eastern Piedmont located in three different locations, Alessandria, Novara and Vercelli. Therefore, the research will focus more on University of Turin and Politecnico di Torino.

Firstly, University of Turin (henceforth UniTo) is one of the oldest universities in Italy founded in 1404, it has been a cornerstone in the city's intellectual history. The university offers courses in a variety of disciplines except for Engineering and Architecture. UniTo had about 80.000 students in the academic year of 2022/2023. 62.2% of these students are females while 23.9%

are from outside of Piemonte region. Furthermore, 6.2% of the students with a foreign nationality from 131 foreign countries which is about 3.000 students (University of Turin, 2023) For the year 2021/22, among the international students enrolled, there were 1163 Romanian, 441 Iranian, 408 Albanian, 343 Moroccan, 276 Chinese, 234 Peruvian, 148 Moldavian, 124 Russian, 135 Turkish, 105 French, and 101 Pakistani, with few others coming from different nationalities (OSSREG, <http://www.ossreg.piemonte.it>).

However, the expansion and diversification of academic offerings gained momentum with the establishment of new institutions, including the Polytechnic University of Turin and other specialized colleges. As the second major university, Polytechnic University of Turin (henceforth PoliTo) is a relatively young university compared to University of Turin, founded in 1859. As the oldest public technical university in Italy, PoliTo offers courses in Engineering, Architecture, Urban Planning and Industrial Design. As of the academic year 2022/2023, PoliTo shared having 38.700 students. 61% of them are from outside of Piemonte region, in which 41% of them are Italians coming from outside Piemonte, and 20% of them are international students from 117 countries. Among 6.861 international students who enrolled in 2022/2023, 71% of them are from Asia while, 14% are European, 7% are South American, 1% is North American and 7% are from Africa and other countries. To be more specific, 21% of the international students are from Iran while 17% are from Türkiye, 10% are from China, 5% are from Lebanon, 4% are from India, 4% are from Romania, 4% are from Pakistan, 4% are from Uzbekistan, 3% are from Colombia, and 3% are from Albania (Polytechnic University of Turin, 2023).

As a result, the increasing influx of university students with an emphasis on a diverse and international nature has crucial potential to catalyze Turin's all-round advantages. The city seems to gain significant benefits in cultural, economic, academic and diplomatic dimensions. Integrating diverse perspectives and academic backgrounds within the student population serves as a catalyst for increasing academic excellence and innovation. Moreover, the participation of international students not only contributes to the cultural richness of the local environment, but also provides additional income to the regional economy. From now on, it is also important to see how students cope with the city and how is their experience during their participation in the overall growing of the city.

2.2. Methodology

Firstly, in terms of the research design which outlines the overall structure and plan of the study where it involves decisions regarding the type of research, for the case of this thesis, it followed both qualitative and quantitative research. Methodology guides the selection of appropriate data collection methods. In the case of the thesis, the methods that are included in are surveys, and interviews. The choice of methods is influenced by the research question and the type of data needed, related to the international university students of Turin. Afterwards it comes to the selection of participants, and the arrangement of variables. To define the process of selecting a representative sample from the population under study, which in this case international university students of Turin, it can be said that between various sampling techniques, the research used snowball sampling and is benefited from the social media channels for the survey, to enhance the generalizability of the findings. The interviewees are selected from among people who participated in the survey and were willing to conduct an interview. Specified techniques used to analyze the collected data are statistical analyses, content analysis, and qualitative coding, as the chosen procedures should align with the research objectives and the type of data gathered.

Overall, the methodology and its methods are the backbone of research, providing a structured and systematic approach to the pursuit of knowledge. As research continues to evolve, methodology remains an indispensable tool, guiding through methodology is the quest for a deeper understanding of the research.

2.2.1. Survey

Surveys, as a fundamental and versatile method of data collection, in its most used way, refers to a method of gathering information from a sample of individuals (Scheuren, 2004). As the main characters of the thesis question, the right answers and data can only be gained through the students themselves. Therefore, the thesis aims to have a systematic method of collecting data from international university students of Turin to gain a comprehensive understanding of their locational preferences, behaviors, and movements in the city by using a questionnaire. To optimize the facilitation of survey design and broad participation, the research endeavor is implemented through an online survey platform, specifically utilizing Google Forms. This method not only enhances accessibility but also facilitates efficient data analysis, as the questionnaire encompasses a well-balanced mix of both qualitative and quantitative questions. Additionally, the online format offers the advantage of

reaching a wider audience, ensuring inclusivity among the diverse international university student population in Turin. Furthermore, the use of digital platforms enables real-time monitoring of survey progress, providing valuable insights into response rates and potential areas for targeted outreach efforts. Moreover, it is important to mention that the intention of the research is to capture a comprehensive snapshot of information at a specific point in time related to the timing of the thesis, therefore possible changes through time are not included.

Of course, attaining comprehensive participation and reliance upon every international university student in Turin for survey completion is improbable. Therefore, as with any other surveys relying on a representative sample from the larger population under investigation, this survey aims to have a number of international university students to relatively represent the international university student population in Turin. To ensure that the findings can be generalized to the broader population, selection of the participants must be done correctly by using the right sampling method. Due to that, in the process of selecting participants, a strategic approach employing snowball sampling is adopted. This methodology aims to diversify the sample by systematically reaching out to initial participants who, in turn, refer additional individuals. This snowballing technique is instrumental in achieving a variety of nationalities among respondents, fostering a richer and more representative dataset for the research. Simultaneously, efforts are aimed to be made to select students by taking into account the countries they come from, reflecting the current distribution of international students within the city. It was aimed for nations with greater numbers in Turin to participate in the survey at higher rates. Furthermore, the utilization of snowball sampling aligns with the research objective of obtaining a nuanced understanding of the perspectives and experiences of the international student community in Turin.

The implementation of snowball sampling extends beyond interpersonal communication; it leverages social media platforms for participant recruitment. The survey link is actively shared on various social media channels, notably Instagram and WhatsApp, thereby tapping into the extensive networks of the international student community, considering they are using these platforms often and effectively. This dual strategy, combining personal referrals and social media outreach, enhances the reach and diversity of participants, contributing to a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the perspectives and experiences of international university students in Turin.

The questionnaire is the primary instrument in a survey. Both closed-ended and open-ended questions aim to extract relevant and meaningful responses from participants. The design of the questionnaire is crucial in ensuring clarity, and the ability to capture the intended data. In total, the questionnaire consists of 38 questions with some sub-questions involved. It is required less than 10 minutes to complete and there is no compensation for responding and all information will remain confidential. In order to enhance clarity regarding the inclusion of specific questions and the rationale behind

their selection, a detailed explication is provided in the subsequent sections. First part is consisting of 9 questions with 2 sub-questions and can be seen in the following,

1. Please select your gender:
2. How old are you?
3. Which country are you originally from?
4. Which university are you enrolled in?
5. What is your current level of study?
 - 5.1. Which program you are in?
6. How long have you been living in Turin?
7. Which neighborhood do you live in?
8. Please also provide the closest street intersection to the place you live in but not your address.
9. What is your accommodation?
 - 9.1. If you are living in a dorm, please write the name of the dorm and/or company that manages the dorm.

These questions were strategically designed to reveal the different profiles of the participants. Questions that fall into both academic and personal domains aim to obtain comprehensive information about individuals. Academic questions provide information about educational backgrounds, experiences, and institutional affiliations, while personal questions provide a detailed understanding of the respondent's unique characteristics, like gender, age, country of origin and area that they are living in. By crafting questions covering these areas, the aim is to create a holistic profile that goes beyond mere statistical data and captures the essence of each participant's academic journey and personal identity. Furthermore, the location of the house they live in is crucial so once the data is mapped, it can be overlapped with the other answers of their locational preferences to understand if they prefer to spend their time near their house, as it is analyzed in the discussion part of the thesis. This approach provides a detailed and understandable analysis of the surveyed population.

Second part is consisting of 20 questions and 9 sub-questions, which can be seen in the following,

10. Which neighborhood would you say that was easier for you to learn and navigate through in the city?
11. Why do you think this neighborhood was easier to navigate for you?

These questions are included to have insights into the respondent's familiarity and comfort level with various neighborhoods, shedding light on their spatial awareness and adaptability within the urban landscape. Understanding which specific areas are perceived as more navigable offers nuanced information

about the student's behavior and preferences, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of their engagement with the city. Similarly next ones are,

12. Which is the neighborhood you usually spend your time in when you go out or to meet with your friends?
13. Why do you prefer this neighborhood to go out among others?

These questions are crucial to capture the respondent's social and recreational preferences within the city. By eliciting information about the preferred neighborhood for social engagements, the question provides valuable insights into the international student's lifestyle, social circles, and the areas they find most appealing or conducive for leisure activities. This information can contribute to a deeper understanding of the cultural and social dynamics within the city, helping to identify popular gathering spots and social hubs especially for university students. The following questions are,

14. Where do you prefer to study?
15. Please specify the name of the place you prefer to study?

These ones are instrumental in measuring the respondent's learning environment preferences and habits. By reflecting about their preferred study locations, this question provides insights into the conditions and surroundings that individuals find conducive to effective learning and concentration. The responses can show whether respondents favor quiet libraries, collaborative study spaces, the comfort of their homes, study rooms within the university campuses or other specific environments. Understanding these preferences is valuable to see if the study spaces provided by the city are enough and welcoming for international university students. Moreover,

16. Which place(s) do you go to the most in your spare time in Turin during the week?
17. According to this, what is the type of place you usually go during the weekend?

Similar to the ones above, these questions are included to understand the student's recreational and leisure preferences within the city. By probing into the places frequented during both weekdays and weekends, these questions provide valuable insights into the individual's lifestyle, social activities, and the venues that hold significance in their free time. At the end, its aimed to see if there are any densities in specific locations. For the following questions, provided answers to questions 16 and 17 are important to mention. The options were, Museums, Squares, Parks and gardens, Restaurants and cafes, Shopping districts/malls, Theaters and cinemas, Bars and nightlife spots, Sports facilities, Libraries, Friend's house, and I do not go out. As well as where they prefer to go

how often they go there was crucial because it serves as an additional layer of insight into their habits, preferences, and the level of engagement with different aspects of Turin's offerings. The frequency of visits can indicate the significance of these places in the international university student's movements and the extent to which they contribute to their overall quality of life. therefore, the next questions are,

18. How often do you go to museums?
 - 18.1 If you do go to museums, please provide the name of the one you go to most.
19. How often do you go to squares?
 - 19.1. If you do go to squares, please provide the name of the one you go to most.
20. How often do you go to parks and gardens?
 - 20.1. If you do go to parks and gardens, please provide the name of the one you go to most.
21. How often do you go to restaurants and cafes?
 - 21.1. If you do go to restaurants and cafes, please provide the name of the one you go to most.
22. How often do you go to shopping districts/malls?
 - 22.1. If you do go to shopping districts/malls, please provide the name of the one you go to most.
23. How often do you go to theaters and cinemas?
 - 23.1. If you do go to theaters and cinemas, please provide the name of the one you go to most.
24. How often do you go to bars and nightlife spots?
 - 24.1. If you do go to bars and nightlife spots, please provide the name of the one you go to most.
25. How often do you go to sports facilities?
 - 25.1. If you do go to sports facilities, please provide the name of the one you go to most.
26. How often do you go to libraries?
 - 26.1. If you do go to libraries, please provide the name of the one you go to most.
27. How often you go to a friend's house?
28. How often you go to the place you specified as other?
29. What makes these places better for you to visit?
30. Is there a specific place you like to go to most in Turin apart from the ones you mentioned before?

Question 30 is crucial to see if any other possibilities was not mentioned in the questions above. Moreover, to understand if there are any other places that are so important for the student to mention additionally.

Third part contains 4 questions,

31. Do you do any activities that are specific to the country you are from?

32. If you do join any activities specific to your country, can you please specify the activity and location?
33. And if you never do any activities specific to your country, why do you think it is?
34. Do you have additional comments or suggestions for the type of places that can be missing for international university students to spend time in Turin?

The set of questions is important to understand the engagement in activities specific to the respondent's country and their feedback on it to see if there are any. Firstly, questions 31 and 32 aim to explore the extent to which individuals participate in activities that are culturally specific to their home country. This inquiry is crucial for understanding the degree of cultural integration and preservation within the international student community in Turin. Responses can illuminate the diversity of cultural practices, events, or gatherings that students may be involved in, contributing to a richer understanding of the city's cultural landscape. Question 33, which delves into the reasons for not participating in country-specific activities, seeks to uncover potential barriers or factors influencing cultural engagement or is it just simply not needed. This information is valuable for both university administrators and city planners, as it can shed light on areas where additional support or cultural initiatives may be needed to enhance the overall student experience. Lastly, question 34, inviting comments and suggestions about places lacking for international university students, serves as a valuable avenue for students to express their needs, to see if there is something missing and their desires. Their insights can be instrumental in identifying gaps in the city's amenities or cultural offerings, guiding the development of tailored solutions to foster a more inclusive and enriching environment for the international student population. In sum, these questions collectively aim to foster cultural understanding, address potential challenges, and to see if the overall experience for international students in Turin should be improved or if they are not seeking for any activities from their country.

The last part of the survey includes 4 questions which can be seen in the following,

35. Would you say that in the places you go to the most, people there are mainly from the same country as yours?
36. Would you say that your circle of friends is mainly from the same country as yours?
37. Can you please tell me how did you hear about this survey?
38. Would you like to join a short interview to help me more on the research? If yes please write your email, so that I can give you more information and set a good time for you.

The first two questions are to understand the composition of social circles and the predominant nationality of individuals frequenting certain places to see the nature and extent of international student integration within the community. These inquiries give valuable insights into the level of interaction among the international student population in Turin. Question 35, asking whether the people in the respondent's frequented places are mainly from the same country, offers a glimpse into the dynamics of social spaces. This information is crucial for measuring the degree of integration and interaction among individuals from various national backgrounds within specific locations in the city. Question 36 further delves into the depth of cross-cultural relationships. Understanding whether friendships are primarily formed with individuals from the same country or if there is a diverse mix contributes to insights into the social integration and inclusivity experienced by international students in Turin. These insights are crucial for creating an environment where students from diverse backgrounds can form meaningful connections and enrich their overall university experience. Question 37 is to see whether the sampling methods of the survey worked and how efficient it will be. The final question is to have further assistance in the research, and it serves several important purposes. Firstly, it allows for a potential deepening of the insights gained through surveying, as interviews often provide a more detailed and nuanced understanding of an individual's experiences, views, and perspectives. Secondly, providing an interview invitation demonstrates a commitment to engaging with participants on a more personal level, fostering a sense of collaboration and shared interest in the research goals. This can contribute to higher participant engagement and greater willingness to share valuable information. This can also provide the opportunity to explore topics not covered in the survey or to clarify certain answers. This flexibility is particularly valuable in research aimed at a comprehensive understanding of the research question. In general, asking whether the participant would be willing to participate in a brief interview is a strategic approach to increase the depth and quality of research findings, encourage participant engagement, and potentially uncover additional insights that can add to the richness of the study.

The entire study started with an attempt to cover a representative sample size approaching approximately 100 students for the survey. This quantitative goal is considered crucial for the robustness and statistical significance of the survey results. In addition, the study places great emphasis on ensuring balance in the formulation of personalized questions. This reasonable balance is considered essential to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data collected, since the tailored inquiries aim to provide detailed information about participants' individual experiences, perceptions, and preferences. Additionally, the research methodology is underpinned by a thoughtful effort to reflect the inherent diversity of university demographics. Similar to the compositional differences that exist within the student body of the respective academic institutions, a concerted effort is made to cover a comparable range

of nationalities. This alignment aims not only to increase the generalizability of the findings, but also to facilitate a more accurate reflection of the subtle intercultural dynamics that exist in the context of international students in Turin.

2.2.2. Interviews

Complementing the targeted survey data, the qualitative arm of this study is focused on in-depth interviews with a selected group of individuals who have unique insights and experiences relevant to the research focus. Schostak states that an interview is an extendable conversation between the interviewers and interviewees, that aims at having an 'in-depth information' about a certain topic or subject, and through which a phenomenon could be interpreted in terms of the meaning's interviewees bring to it. (2006: 54) Once explained this way an interview can be conducted in such different ways. For example, as in focus groups or one-on-one interviews (Marshall, Rossman, 2006). In the research one-on-one interviews will be conducted. Furthermore, the research opted a semi-structured interview, which is a more flexible interview compared to the structured ones as it gives possibility for more depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to investigate and expand the interviewee's responses (Rubin, Rubin, 2011). In this regard, the research aimed to develop some topics, a checklist of question as suggested by some authors (see Berg, 2007), according to the results of the survey to have a deeper understanding of the participants answers given in the survey and make sure to cover the related area. Therefore, after the results of the survey are conducted, common answers are examined, and related questions are decided to be asked, with the aim of discussing it further with the interviewer according to the course of the interview. This way it is aimed to have a further comprehension on the reasons behind the locational preferences of the international university students in Turin.

Apart from the questions, during the interview, two activities are included. Firstly, the participants were asked to draw a mental map in order to understand how they visualize Turin. Sarre gives the definition of a mental map as a model of the environment which is built up over time in the individual's brain (1973). Main reference for this tool is taken from Kevin Lynch's work (1960) stating that there is a profound relationship between how the person visualizes the city and their experience. He argues that people tend to create images in their mind according to their interactions and experience. According to Lynch, these images include different elements such as, Paths, Edges, Districts, Nodes and Landmarks. Paths are features that arrange the movement between space, they refer to the streets, sidewalks, and any other ways in which people travel. Edges to define borders like walls, buildings and overpasses. Districts for medium to large areas which are two dimensional. Nodes are representing the large areas like the neighborhood and the city itself. Lastly, landmarks are the

points of reference that can be thing from buildings, signs, mountains, public art to mobile points like bus stops. His approach developed an understanding of how individuals perceive and recall elements in the urban environment, therefore creates a good reference in order to understand the perception of international university students thereby contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of their experiences. To link participants' images of the environment with their expression of behavior, they were asked to conduct mental maps. This approach aims to deepen the research by understanding their individual perceptions and possible common elements.

In the second activity interviewees were asked to share a few photos they have, that is for them represents Turin. It is an important approach to understand how residents' views the cultural landscape through their experiences and memories that were captured in making (Barthes, 1987). As a good reference, Jane Jacobs gives strong statements about the city in her work *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) can be given. She criticizes the modern urban planning which, in her opinion, overlooks the complexity of people's daily life. Her natural surveillance concept -eyes on street- maintains this order where presence of passers-by who can easily observe the area so that they can help provide a safe environment for them and other users. To facilitate this, the city planning should be done in a way that is easy to observe with elements like low landscaping, streetlights, street designs that encourage pedestrian use, promote visibility and discourage hiding places. Overall, she suggests making the fabric of the streets as a continuous system as much as possible in a neighborhood as well as including parks, squares, and public buildings in this network to intensify the fabric's multiple uses rather than segregating different uses, therefore the system will have more users to accomplish 'eyes on street' concept. Considering that all these elements are suggested according to the human's daily life, it also means that they are features that users look for in a city. Due to this, it can be said that they are able to navigate and move around better in such settings. Therefore, by collecting photographs, the research aims to provide visual support to understand how international students observe Turin and identify which elements capture their attention and are easier to observe.

Since the answers of the survey hold a crucial value for the interview, the interviewees should be selected from the ones who participated in survey. Therefore, as indicated before, the students who responded to the final question where it is asked if they will be willing to participate in an interview will be contacted. The research aimed to have approximately 20 international university students to conduct the interview with. After the survey, in order to set a date that is suitable for the student, respondents are contacted through mail. The interviews aimed to be done online to have more flexible timing for the arrangement of the interview, where it will not take longer than an hour.

03.

RESULTS

This part of the thesis, after the culmination of the research efforts, delves into the outcomes derived from a comprehensive survey and in-depth interviews conducted as part of the research. These methodologies were strategically employed to gain nuanced insights into the subject matter under investigation. The combination of quantitative data that are obtained through the survey and the qualitative richness gained from interviews presents a holistic view of the phenomena examined. The statistical analyzes that follow will provide a measurable basis for subsequent discussions. Therefore, a multi-faceted exploration of the research questions is aimed to be reflected in the previous parts through discussion. Through the questions and probing discussions, a wealth of qualitative data is gained, aimed at offering a deep understanding of the intricate nuances surrounding the phenomenon. The thematic analysis will be developed in interpreting interview responses will highlight the patterns, divergences, and emergent themes that enrich the overall narrative. Convergence and divergence observed in the data is aimed to be used in a layered perspective, fostering a more nuanced comprehension of the research questions at hand. The objective of the ensuing discussions is used to unpack the significance of these results, contextualizing them within existing literature.

3.1. Results from the Survey

After the preparation of survey questions and the necessary refinement process, by using a combination of the snowball method, leveraging the interconnections inherent in the international university student community in Turin and the strategic use of social media platforms, the survey was methodically administered to and answered by 84 participants. In this chapter, answers given by the students are showed according to the related parts in the survey starting from user demography, recreational and leisure preferences, frequency of the visits, possible specific activities and composition of social circles.

3.1.1. User Demography

Within 84 participants, 35 individuals identified as male, representing the 41.7% of the respondents, while 47 participants identified as female, constituting 56% of the subgroup. Furthermore, the analysis underscores the inclusion of one respondent who identified as non-binary, while one participant chooses to withhold their gender identification (see fig.6). This detailed demographic delineation provides a granular insight into the gender distribution among participants, furnishing a comprehensive foundation for subsequent analytical considerations within the scope of this research.

Furthermore, within the cohort of 84 study participants, none fell below the age threshold of 18, indicating a cohort exclusively comprising individuals of legal adulthood. An example of the sample by age reveals a diversified distribution: 16 participants, constituting 19% of the total, fell within the age bracket of 18 to 22 years. A majority demographic emerged within the age group of 23 to 26, encompassing 41 participants or 48.8% of the cohort. Moreover, next cohort of 23 individuals, representing 27.4%, was situated within the age range of 27 to 30. Furthermore, a smaller contingent of 4 participants, constituting 4.8%, was identified within the age category of 31 to 35 (see fig.7).

Participants represent a globally diverse group coming from 26 different countries. As mentioned before, the international spectrum is integral to the research's overall goal of reflecting the demographic composition of the student population in Turin. Efforts were made to distribute participants proportionally across countries, and this goal was achieved mainly through a strategic recruitment approach. Prioritization to students from Türkiye, Iran, Colombia, China and India were made with 20 students from Türkiye, 10 from Iran, 9 from Colombia, 6 from China and 5 from India participated in the recruitment strategy, due to their higher density in the city compared to other nationalities. By mirroring the city's diversity within the study sample, the research is

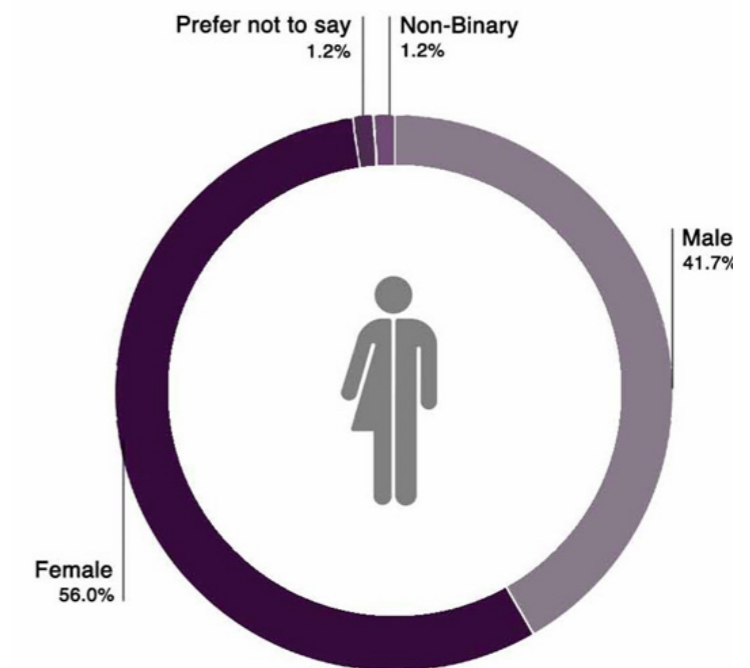


Figure 6: Gender of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

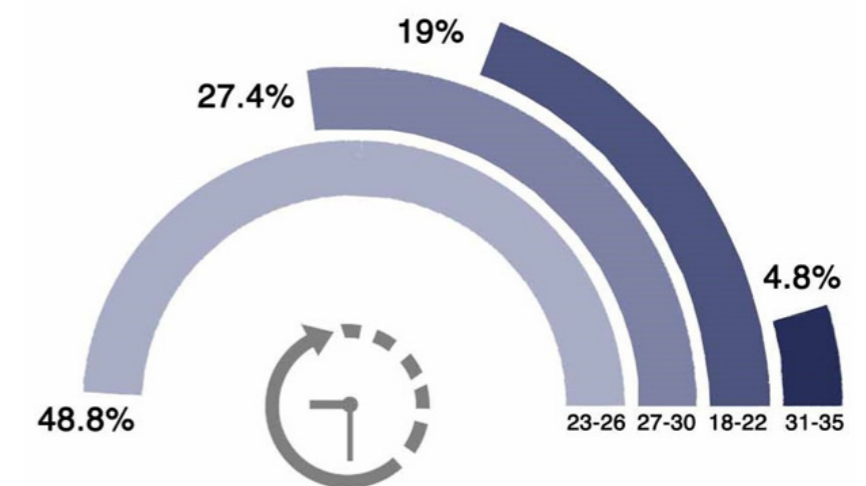


Figure 7: Age of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

equipped in a better way to offer insights that are reflective of the broader international student community in Turin. Additionally, a careful selection process that included participants from a variety of countries contributed to the overall diversity of the sample. Distribution of the participation is as follows: 3 students each from Brazil, Georgia, France, 2 students each from Egypt, Greece, Mexico, Switzerland, Romania, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan, 1 student each from Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Lebanon and Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, Syria, USA, Venezuela and Albania (see fig.8). It is worth noting that while the research effectively achieved its goal of covering people of various nationalities, representation from Pakistan and Lebanon was relatively limited, according to their more significant presence in the city. Overall, the diverse composition of study participants holds crucial significance in the broader context of the research objectives and contributing to the robustness and generalizability of the study findings, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the

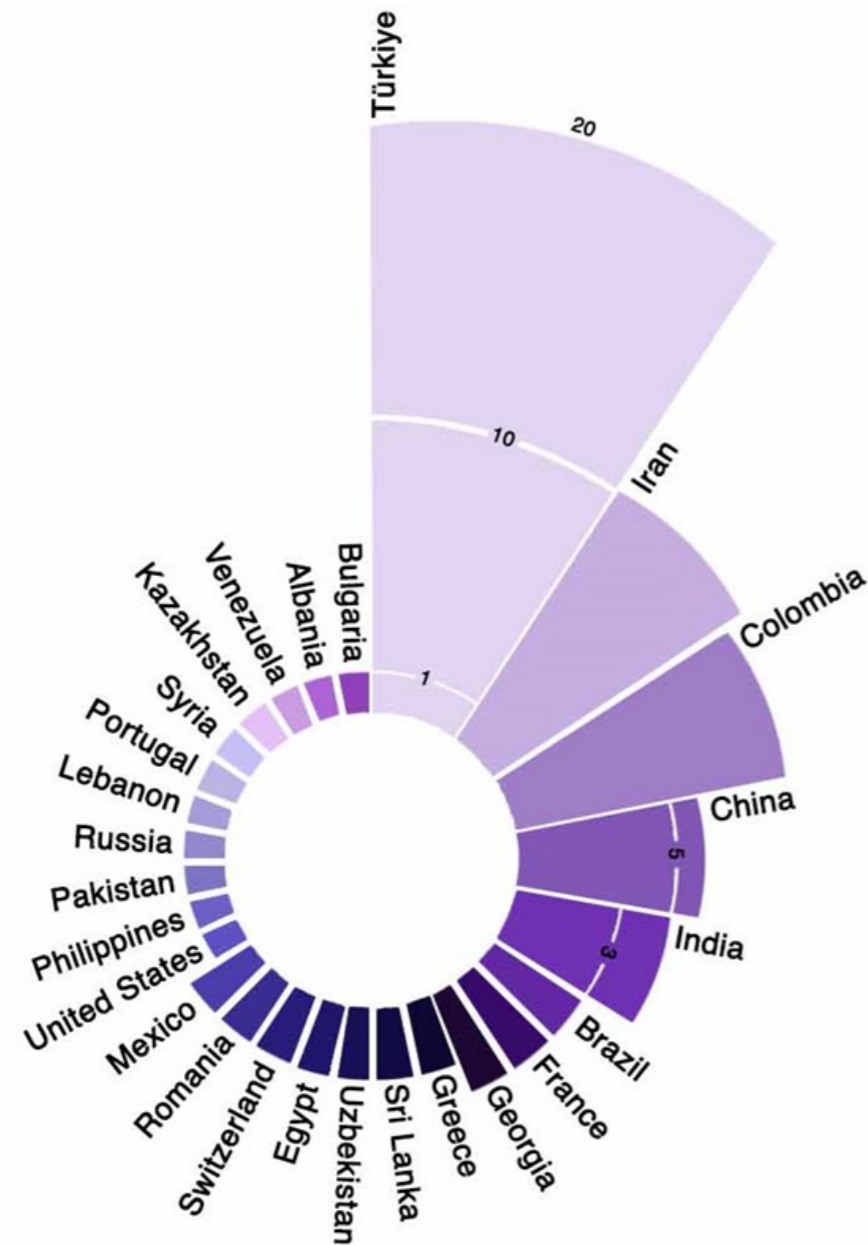


Figure 8: Nationality of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

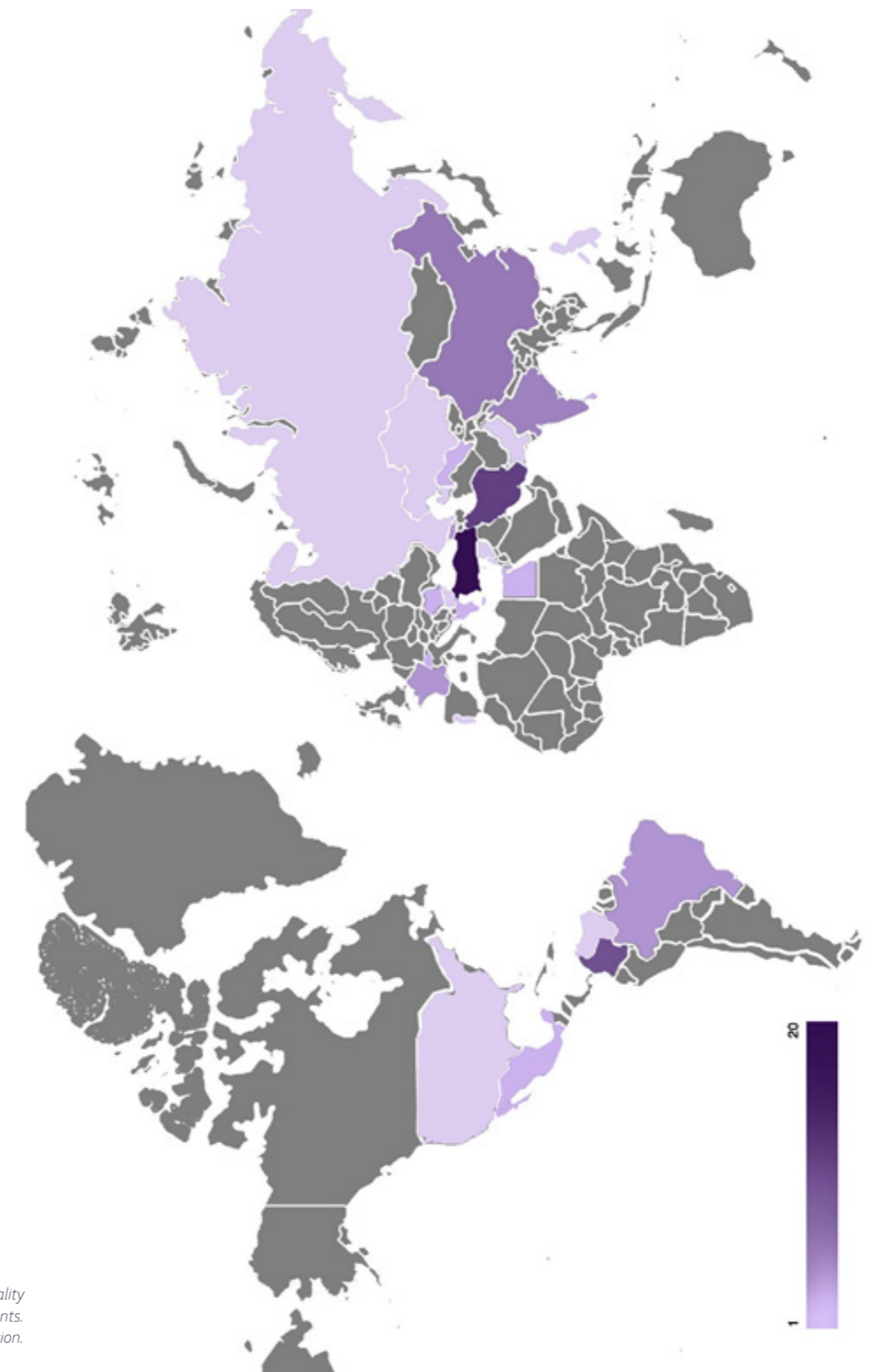


Figure 9: Nationality map of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

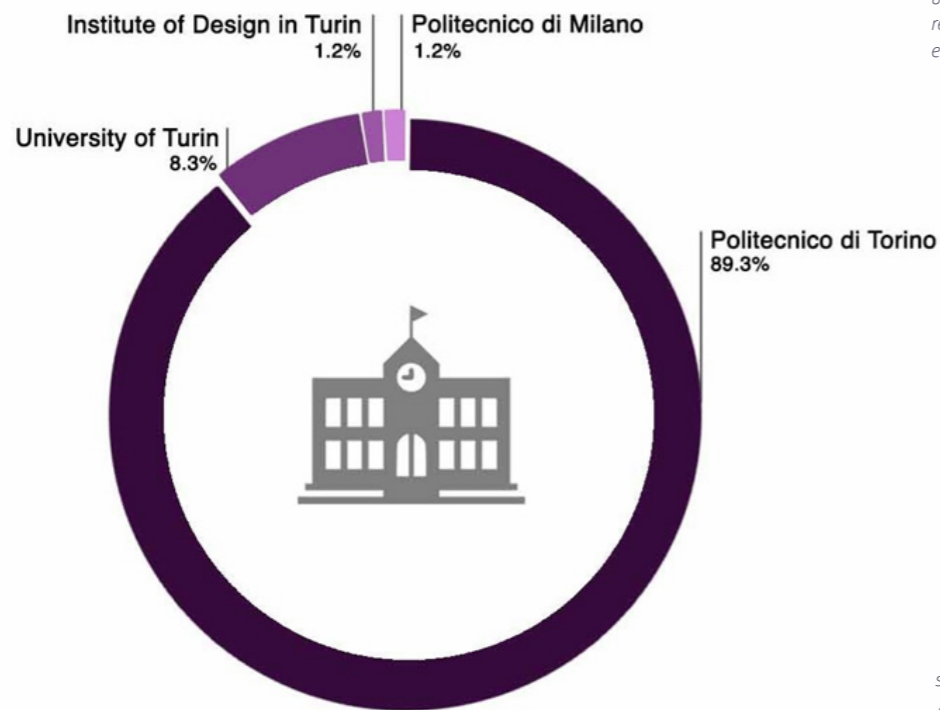


Figure 10: Enrolled universities of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

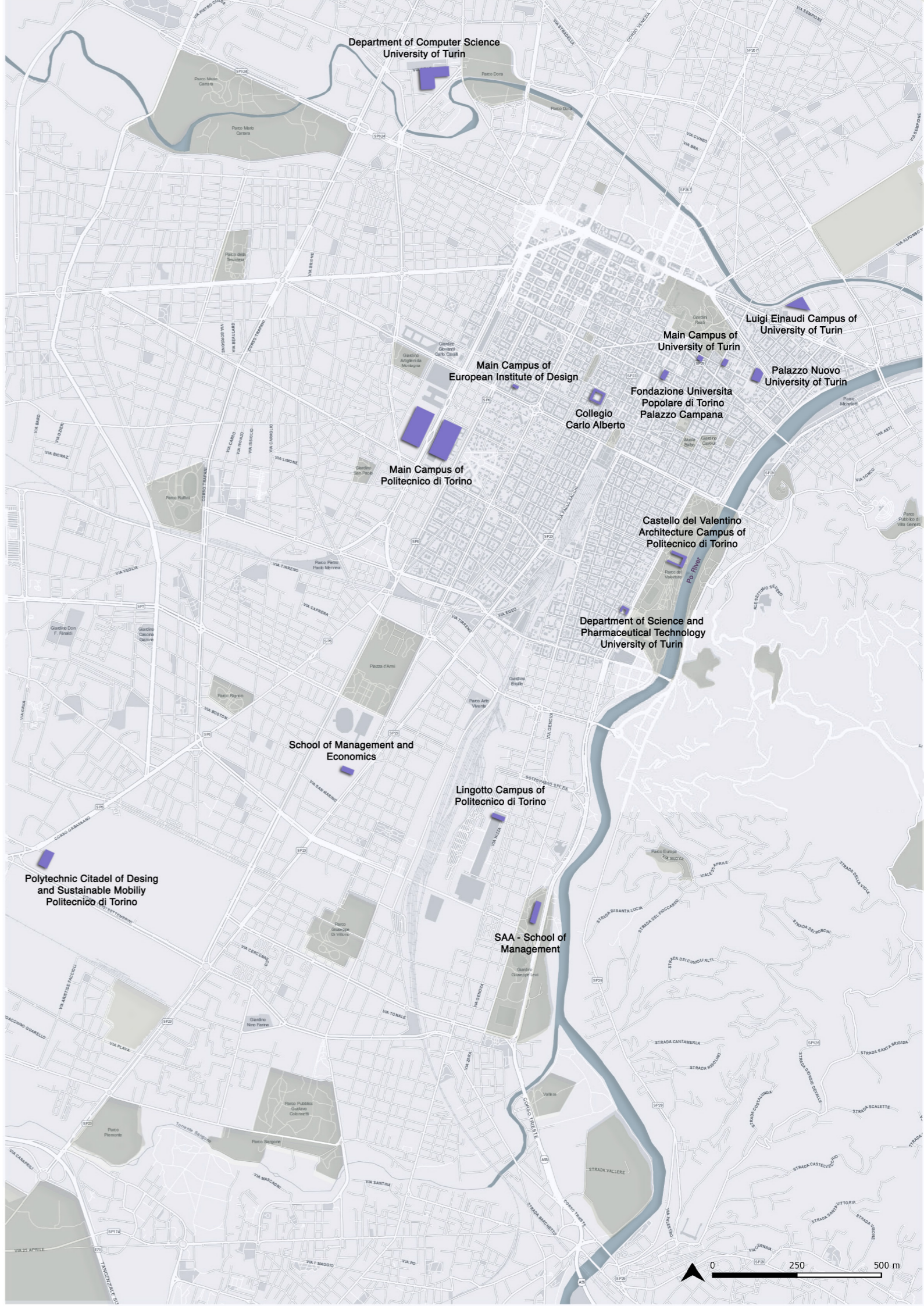


Figure 11: Map of universities of the respondents in the city. Authors' elaboration.

intricacies inherent in the lived experiences of this population. This alignment is crucial for generating findings that can inform policies, support services, and initiatives tailored to the specific needs of the diverse international university student population.

Among the expected responses to the survey questions, examination of the enrolled university among participating international students revealed a marked deviation from expectations. Specifically, an overwhelming majority of respondents with 75 students in total, or 89.3% indicated that they were enrolled at the Politecnico di Torino, while a much smaller group of 7 students indicated the University of Turin as their academic institution. Interestingly, further investigation revealed that one participant, a resident of Turin, is studying at the Politecnico di Milano, while another student was enrolled at the European Institute of Design in Turin (IED) (see fig.10&fig.11). Despite the aim of the survey to provide a better distribution among various universities, the use of the snowball technique appears to have contributed to the disproportionate representation of students enrolled in Politecnico di Torino. This result suggests that although the snowball technique is effective in recruiting participants, it may affect the observed distribution by creating a clustering effect among international students studying at the same university that might need further investigation.

Another aspect of the survey concerns the different academic levels of the participating students and reveals the expected variability in their academic pursuits. Mainly, a significant proportion of 53 students or 63.1% enrolled in master's level program, proving the existence of a tendency towards further

studies in the surveyed group. In contrast, 24 students, accounting for 28.6% of the participants, were enrolled in undergraduate programs, while a nominal group of 2 students were pursuing their doctoral studies. (see fig.12) It can be said that these academic levels are crucial to capture the diverse educational preference of the survey respondents. Moreover, an interesting observation emerges considering the temporal dimension of the students' stay in Turin is taken into account. Despite the temporary nature of Erasmus students' stays compared to the other students enrolled in longer-term programs, it remains imperative that due attention be given to this subset. The reasoning behind

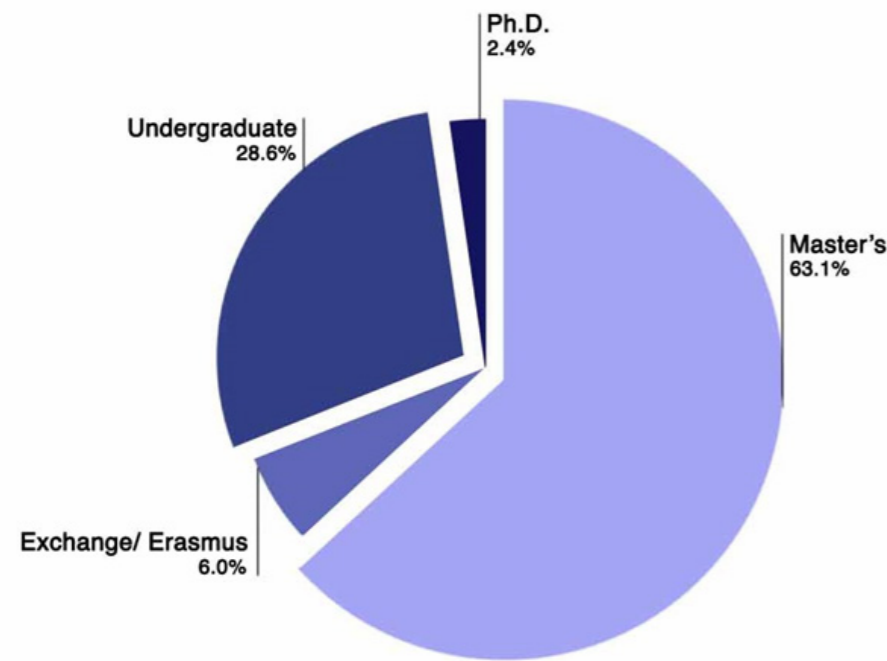


Figure 12: Current level of study of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

from those enrolled in more comprehensive programs. Therefore, investigating perspectives is effective in showing potential differences resulting from time spent in the city. Such research not only provides a more comprehensive understanding of diverse student experiences in Turin, but also serves to discern any distinguishing factors that may influence students' perceptions and engagement depending on their changing length of residence in the city.

Furthermore, having variety of the courses that participants are attending was crucial to see if it impacts their experience and to have different perspectives. This is also important considering the campuses the courses have located differently in the city. After the result it has been seen that the variety that expected was achieved. It can be seen that participants attend courses that vary from Architecture courses to Computer Engineering (see fig.13).

Another aspect is to know how long the participants are staying in the city. Depending on the timeline, how much they know the city can have an impact on their experience. Although having variety is crucial, the main participants that aimed to have been the ones who are staying in the city

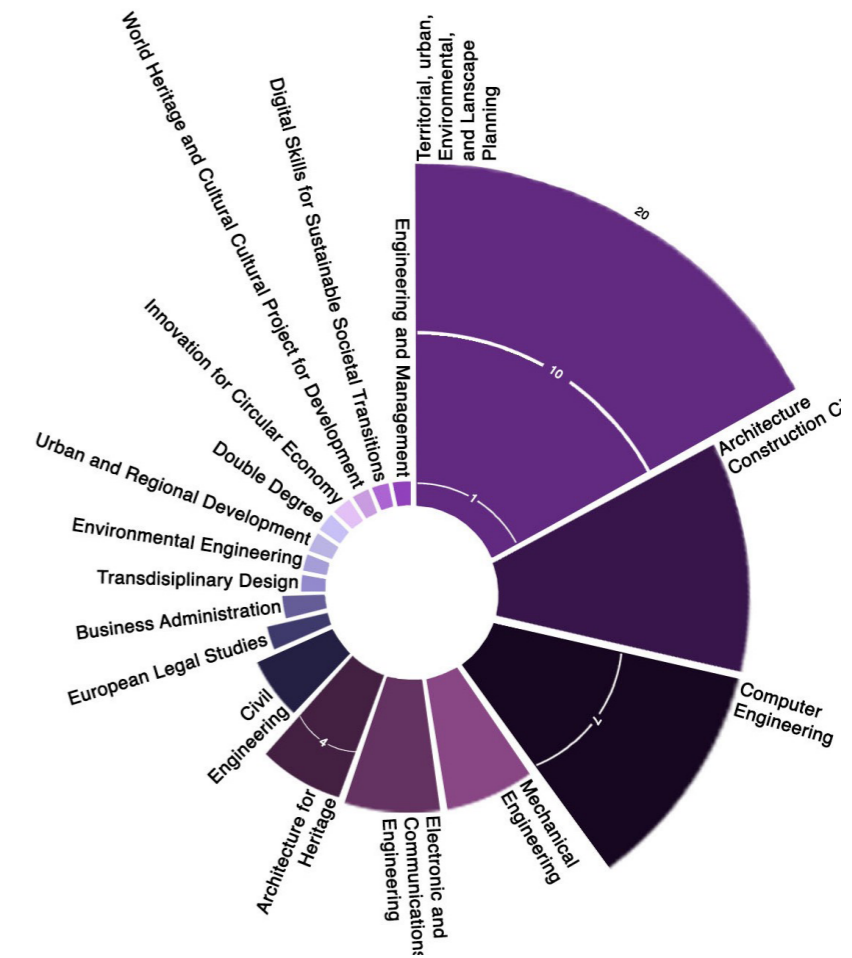
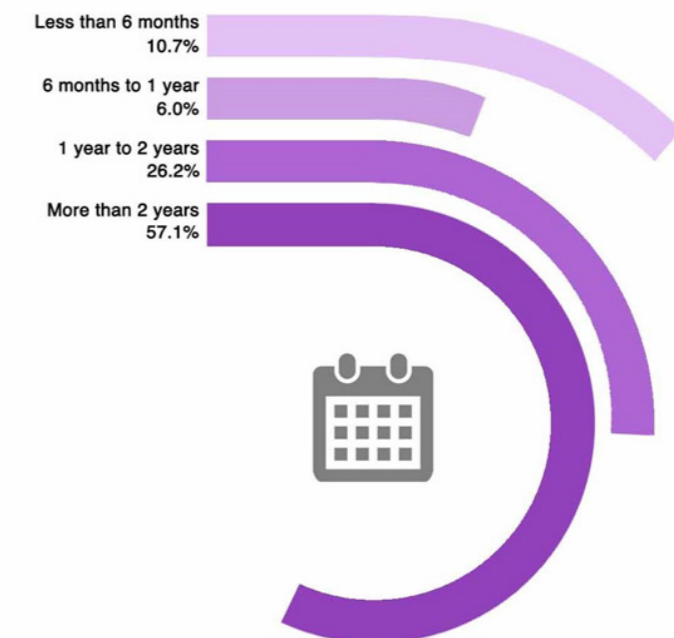


Figure 13: Programs of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

Figure 14: Spent time of respondents in the city. Authors' elaboration.



longer. According to this, out of 84 students, 48 of them with 57.1% highlighted that they are staying in the city longer than 2 years. The rest varies between 3 different answers, 22 of them with 26.2% are staying in the city from 1 to 2 years, 5 with 6% of them are staying from 6 months to 1 year and 9 with 10.7% of them are in the city less than 6 months (see fig.14). Another variety gained from the survey was regarding to the neighborhood the respondents live in and even their closest street intersection to have an idea of their address to see if it impacts their locational preferences. Although the data of the neighborhood's participants live, that can be seen in the graph, has a very good variety with 17 different districts, prominent ones are San Salvatore with 17.9%, Centro with

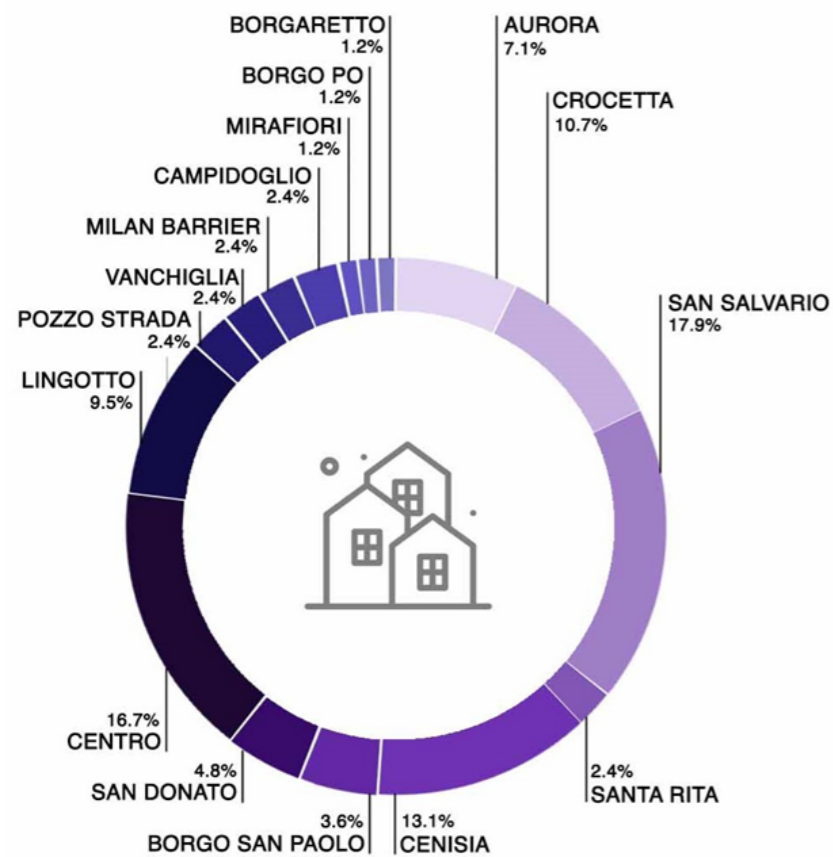


Figure 15: Neighborhoods of respondents live in. Authors' elaboration.

16.7% and Cenisia with 13.1% (see fig.15). Some other worth mentioning districts are Crocetta with 10.7% and Lingotto with 9.5%, covering important part of the city with campuses of the universities. Furthermore, according to the given intersections and streets of the respondents conducted map highlights the result of the graph more clearly (see fig.16).

Next, the type of accommodation of the students was crucial to see both the opportunities and options provided by the city and how much the participants of the city were able to reach them to understand how it impacts their experience. To start with, 31 participants, constituting 36.9% of the sample, indicated their residency in a private apartment for rent, demonstrating a predilection towards independent living arrangements. Concurrently, 29 respondents (34.5%) disclosed their occupation of a single room within a shared apartment,

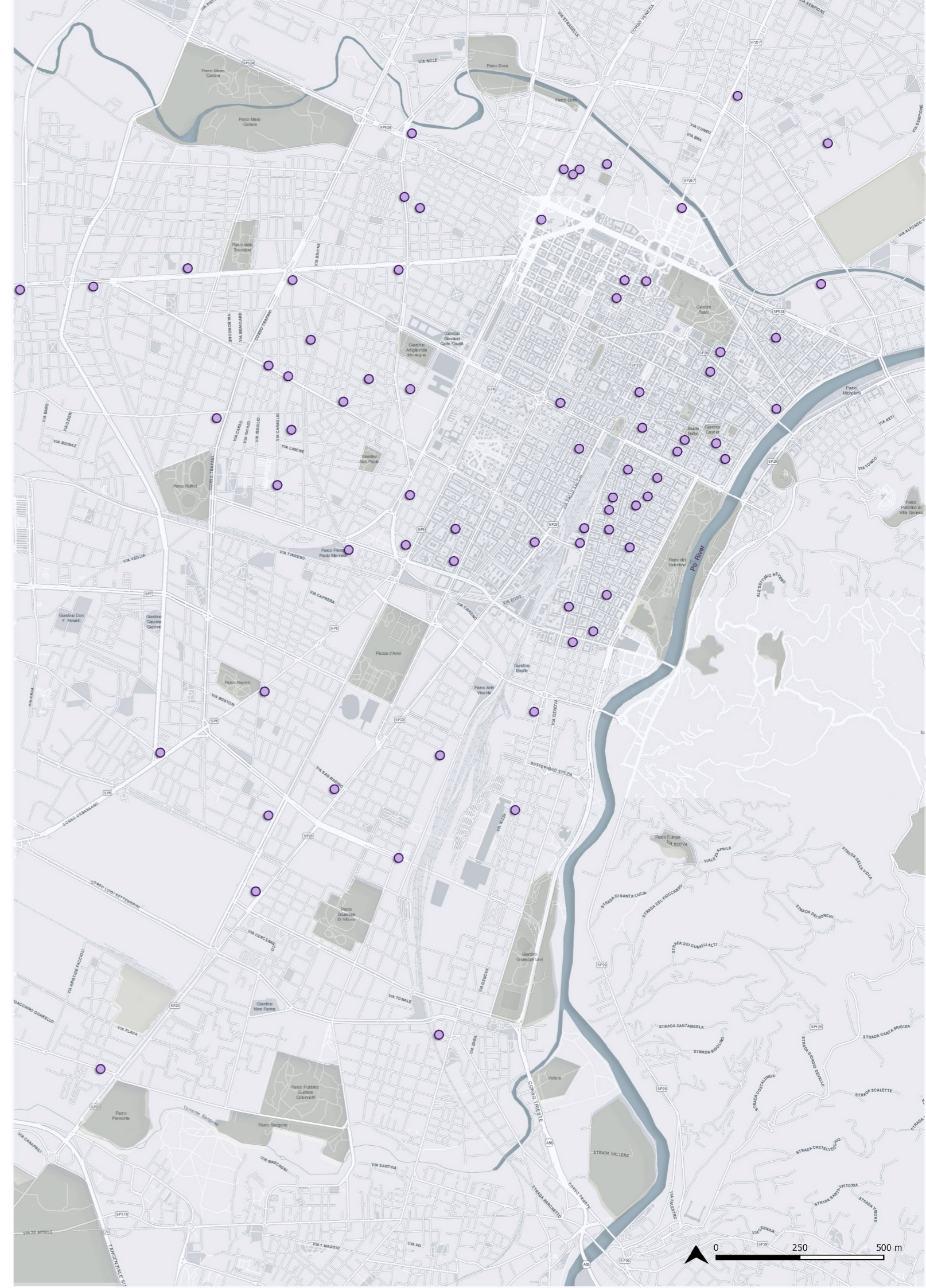


Figure 16: Map of respondents address in the city according to the closest intersection they indicated. Authors' elaboration.

reflecting a preference for a communal living environment while maintaining a degree of personal space. Moreover, 13 individuals (15.5%) reported residing in single rooms within dormitory facilities, signifying a propensity towards more structured residential settings. Notably, 7 participants (8.3%) disclosed their occupancy of shared rooms within shared apartments, indicating a collaborative living arrangement conducive to social interaction and resource-sharing. Finally, 4 respondents (4.8%) divulged their habitation of shared rooms within dormitory premises, reflecting a communal living arrangement within institutional settings. (see fig.17)

Furthermore, for those students who indicated residence in dormitories, a detailed examination was imperative to delineate the spectrum of dormitory options available within the city, albeit within the confines of the participants' scope. Despite occasional ambiguities in responses, the analysis revealed a diversity of dormitory selections. Notably, 6 participants were affiliated with Edisu dormitories, spanning the Borsellino, Verdi, Olimpia, Carvour and Turati residences, while 5 individuals resided at Campus San Paolo. Additionally, one respondent each stated their residence at D'orho Housing, DoveVivo Housing, and Camplus Moi, with their respective locations delineated on the map for reference. This comprehensive examination illuminates the nuanced landscape of student accommodations in Turin, underscoring the varied preferences and options available to participants and providing a foundation for further exploration into the potential ramifications of their residential circumstances on their broader experiences within the city (see fig.18).

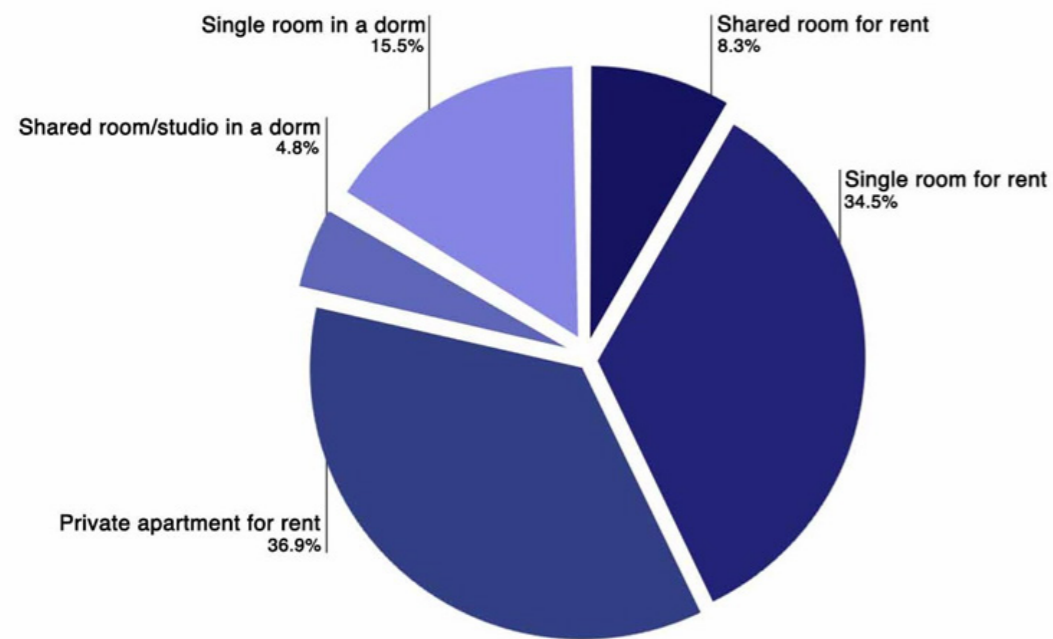


Figure 17: Type of accommodation of the respondents live in. Authors' elaboration.

3.1.2. Recreational and Leisure Preferences

In the next section of the study, which was dedicated to elucidate the locational preferences of the students, a comprehensive examination was undertaken to discern the neighborhoods perceived as the most conducive for ease of

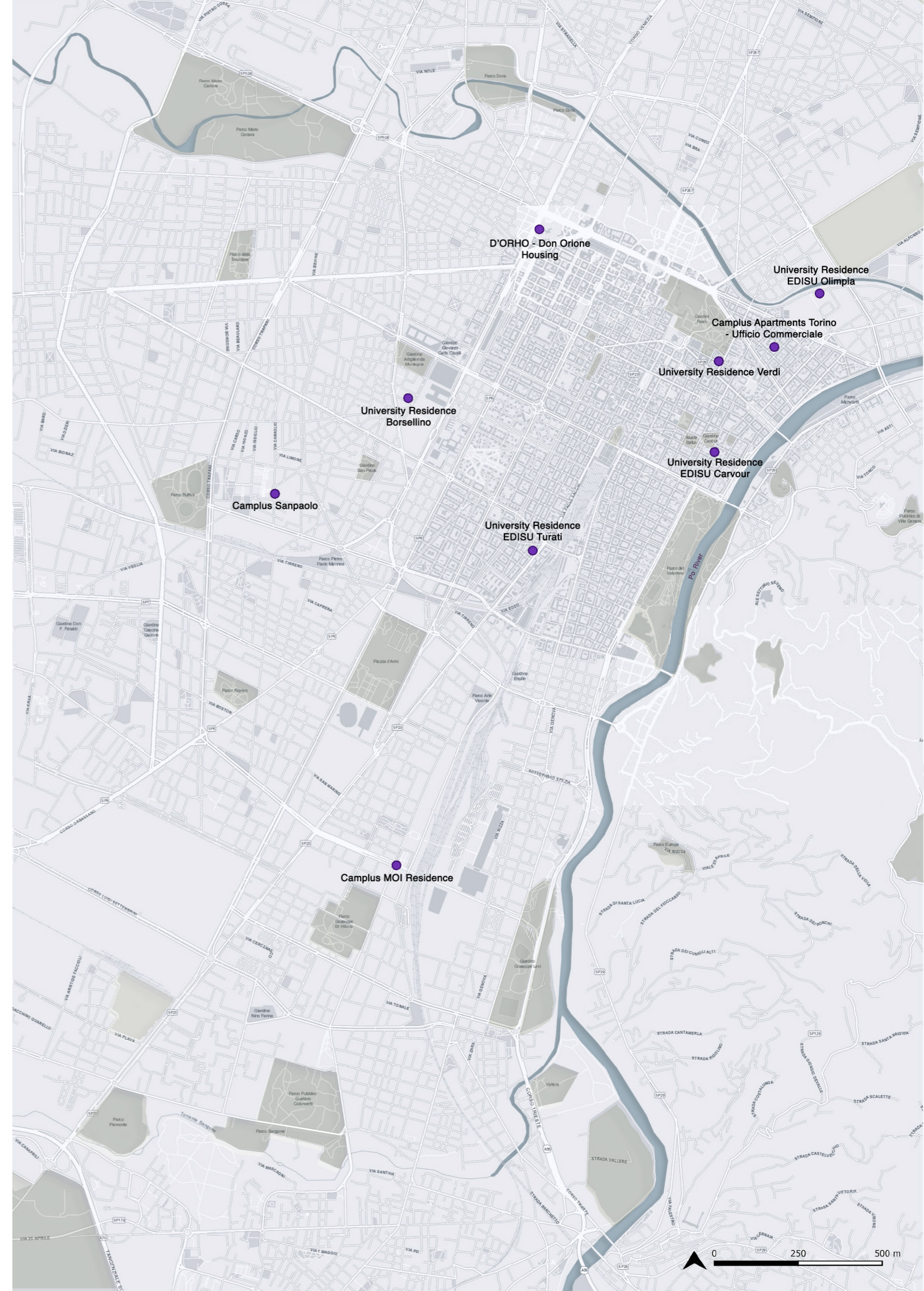


Figure 18: Map of dorms of the respondents in the city. Authors' elaboration.

mobility and comfort among the respondents. It was possible for participants to exhibit the capacity to provide multiple responses to the posed question without indicating any priority among the answers. Firstly, the analysis unveiled the primary permanent neighborhoods identified by participants, with notable emphasis placed on Centro, which garnered the highest preference rate of 80.7%. Subsequently, significant choice was attributed to San Salvario, with 57.8% of participants expressing comfort in navigating this district, followed closely by Crocetta, which secured a preference rating of 45.8%. Additionally, to these primary choices, Lingotto and Cenisia emerged as noteworthy secondary options, with respective preference rates of 19.3% and 18.1% (see fig.19). This nuanced examination provides valuable insights into the spatial preferences of the student populace, underscoring the significance of certain neighborhoods in facilitating ease of movement and fostering a sense of comfort and familiarity within the urban fabric of Turin.

The result for the reasons behind when it was asked to the students why they prefer these neighborhoods among others, has a variety. The main common answer that catches the eye is related to the transportation. Many of the students mention the transport network being efficient in that location with a couple of different transport options, nearby bus stops, and the journey takes a short amount of time. Next objective given was related to the recognizable, famous buildings in addition to the landmarks positioned in that neighborhood. Some students mentioned the proximity to the university and the leisure activities they frequently visit, therefore got used to the neighborhood faster than the other ones. Another interesting point to mention is that participants find these neighborhoods easy to walk to both due to the space given to the pedestrians and the convenient lighting of the area which relates to the feeling of the safety of the one has during the experience. Lastly, some students indicated that regular positioning of the streets and the existing orthogonal pattern makes it easier for them to learn to neighborhood better therefore, easier to navigate through. (see appendix, Q.11)

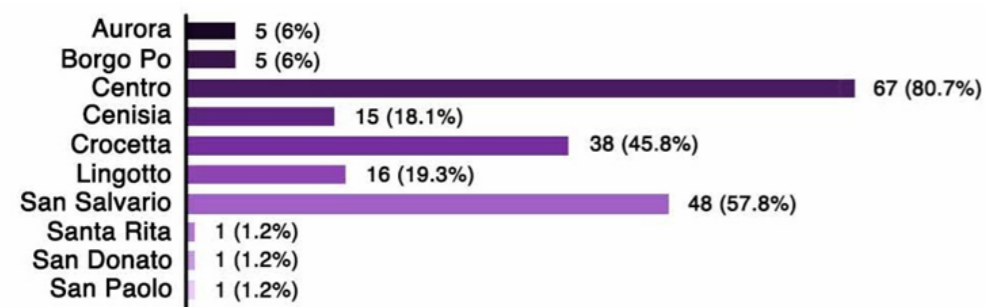


Figure 19: Neighborhoods that are easier for the respondents to navigate through. Authors' elaboration.

The subsequent inquiry sought to delve into more nuanced preferences concerning the specific neighborhoods frequently visited by participants when going out or socializing with peers. In this question, students were only able to give one answer to reach a more certain data. Similarly, to the outcomes of the preceding inquiry, the data revealed notable trends in neighborhood selection,

reflecting prominent choices among the respondents. Notably, a significant proportion of participants, comprising 54 individuals or 64.3% of the sample, indicated Centro as their primary choice for social meetings, underscoring its preeminent status as a preferred location for social engagements. Following, San Salvario emerged as a notable selection, with 21 respondents or 25% expressing a propensity for this district. Moreover, a minority of participants showed preferences for alternative neighborhoods, with 3 individuals each opting for Crocetta and Vanchiglia, while singular selections were attributed to Lingotto and Aurora (see fig.20). This exploration highlights the diversification of neighborhood preferences among participants, shedding light on the varying factors influencing their choices in selecting venues for social interactions and leisure activities within the urban landscape of Turin.

In explaining the logic underlying participants' preference for certain locations over others, several insightful perspectives emerged that shed light on the multifaceted considerations that shaped their spatial choices. The most common among these is the multitude of options and activities available in preferred neighborhoods, from lively bars to culturally rich museums. The diverse offering gives participants a rich experiences and stimuli, thereby increasing the appeal of these places as preferred destinations. Participants also noted an emphasis on affordability as a determining factor in their local choices, with many choosing businesses and venues that offer competitive prices. This is a proof to the pragmatic approach taken by participants in navigating their urban environment; here financial considerations play a crucial role in shaping consumption patterns and leisure pursuits.

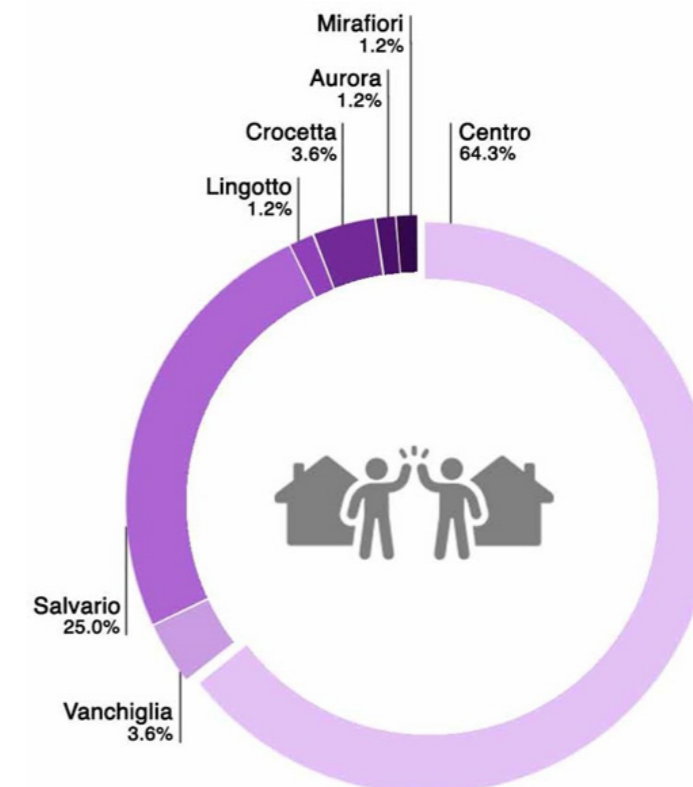


Figure 20: Neighborhoods visited by participants to socialize with peers. Authors' elaboration.

Additionally, the centrality of preferred neighborhoods and the presence of strong public transportation options and convenience for participants. Accessibility to these places, especially at late hours when public transport options are operational, makes them easily accessible to participants and their friends living in different parts of the city, thus promoting social cohesion and facilitating collective participation. An interesting dimension highlighted in the findings is the vibrancy and liveliness of preferred neighborhoods; Participants stated that they preferred lively crowds and dynamic atmospheres. This preference reflects a dual desire for both a sense of security bolstered by the presence of other residents and an immersive, culturally rich environment that stimulates their senses and encourages a sense of connection to the urban fabric. (see appendix, Q.13)

In the next question, the students indicated their favorite places to study revealing distinctive patterns in their choices and shedding light on the efficacy of existing study facilities within Turin. It is important to highlight that one participant was able to give more than one answer in this question without any limits and priority. Notably, a majority of participants, comprising 66.7% of the cohort, identified Politecnico di Torino as one of their favored study venues. This prevalence is to be expected given the predominance of students enrolled at PoliTo within the surveyed population, thereby underscoring the institution's centrality as a primary study hub. Moreover, a noteworthy proportion of respondents, totaling 29.8%, expressed a preference for studying in the comfort of their own residences. This inclination suggests a desire for a familiar and comfortable environment, and as one of the students mentioned, to potential inadequacies in the amenities or conditions of external study facilities within the city. Moreover, a considerable number of participants, constituting 26.2%, designated Aula Studio or study halls located outside university premises as their preferred study locale, either exclusively or in conjunction with other options. This preference signifies a recognition of the conducive learning environments offered by external study spaces, prompting a proportion of students to seek alternatives beyond the confines of their academic institutions. Furthermore, the results surfaced with 19% of respondents indicating a preference for studying in cafes, indicative of a burgeoning trend favoring non-traditional study venues characterized by ambient surroundings and amenities conducive to productivity. In contrast, a modest proportion of participants, comprising 8.3%, favored libraries, while 6% of the students chose parks as their preferred study settings. This interesting preference for venues outside conventional academic settings underscores a potential need for enhancements in the accessibility and quality of study facilities within Turin which is discussed during the analyses of the results.

Upon specifying their preferred study locations, Valentino Castle emerged as the most commonly mentioned, including both its library and study rooms. This preference highlights the centrality of Valentino Castle as a favored study destination among students, further emphasizing the need for

adequate resources and facilities within this iconic locale to accommodate the academic needs of the student populace while looking for the reason behind why it is this popular among international university students. In addition to that, there were several answers regarding to the Polito R rooms, located in the main campus, Unito main library and additional study room outside of the university limits. Only few of the students mentioned that they would like to study in the Starbucks and some additional cafes around the city. (see appendix)

Question 16 of the survey was designed to describe the types of places students preferred on weekdays, and participants were encouraged to provide a maximum of three answers, without any priority. An important observation from the data analysis reveals that the highest proportion of respondents, 51.2%, prefer to visit their friends' homes; this is indicating the tendency towards socializing in the familiar and friendly environment of a private residence. Equally interesting is the equality in the percentages attributed to restaurants and cafes, as well as parks and gardens, with both achieving a rate of 46.4%. This indicates a balanced trend towards outdoor recreation areas and kitchen facilities for weekday leisure activities. Similarly, respondents allocated 20.2% of their preferences to squares, bars, nightlife venues and sports facilities; This refers to a variety of recreational interests that include social, cultural and physical pursuits. Additionally, the survey found that 16.7% of respondents identified libraries as a preferred destination, underlining a commitment to academic pursuits even in their spare time. Similarly, 14.3% expressed a preference for shopping malls; this reflects its proximity to retail and entertainment facilities. 13.1% of survey respondents said they preferred to avoid outdoor activities by choosing I do not go out option; this is likely a reflection of a desire for solitude or the demands of weekday academic commitments (see fig.21). Also, due to the same reason, is expected that preferences for indoor venues and activities will emerge. The findings highlight the subtle interplay between social, recreational and academic priorities among students, illuminating the multifaceted nature of weekday leisure preferences in Turin.

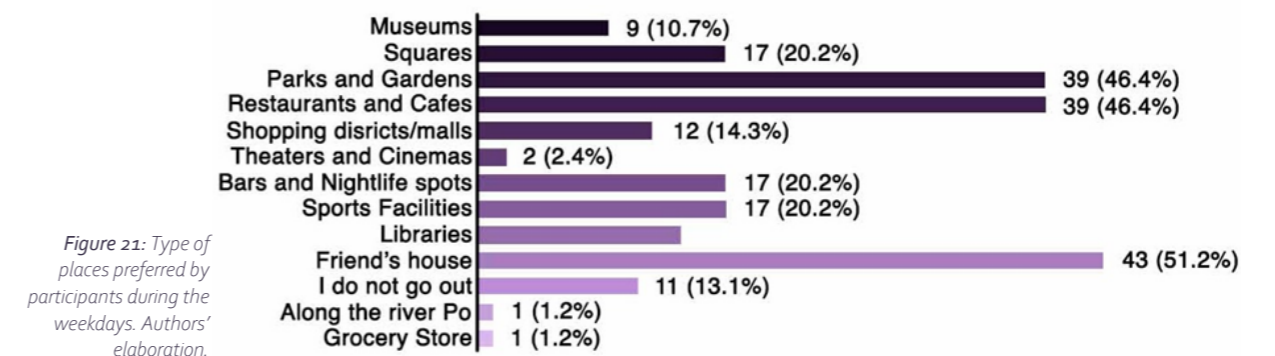


Figure 21: Type of places preferred by participants during the weekdays. Authors' elaboration.

The progression of the survey then focuses on identifying international university students' weekend preferences and aims to highlight potential disparities compared to their weekday preferences. Again, participants were asked to provide a maximum of three answers, without any priority among

the answers. The most preferred option was parks and gardens, with a remarkable response rate of 52.4%. This preference underscores the tendency for outdoor recreational activities and leisure pursuits during weekend breaks in the surveyed group. When tracked closely, and perhaps unsurprisingly given the demographic composition of young adults, bars and nightlife venues emerged as the next most preferred option; 51.2% of the participants stated that they preferred such venues. Additionally, restaurants and cafes emerged as prominent preferences among the students who participated in the survey; 47.6% stated that they preferred to eat and socialize in these institutions on weekends. Similarly, the convenience and sociability of gathering at friends' homes achieved a remarkable response rate of 44%; This highlights the importance of interpersonal connections and friendly environments within closed doors for weekend leisure activities. Squares also stood out as a preferred option among participants; 36.9% stated that they preferred to gather in these common areas. Additionally, the appeal of shopping districts and shopping malls is evidenced by the fact that 25% of survey respondents stated that they prefer these retail and entertainment centers on weekends. In the contrary, relatively less preference was attributed to theaters and cinemas, as well as sports facilities, each achieving a response rate of 8.3% (see fig.22). This study of weekend preferences among international university students sheds light on a variety of leisure activities and social engagements, providing valuable information on various leisure trends and lifestyle preferences in Turin on the weekends.

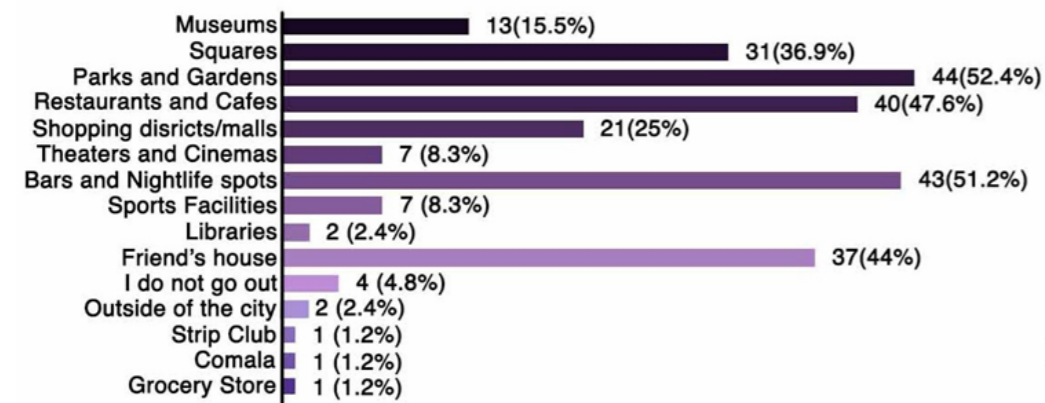


Figure 22: Type of places preferred by participants during the weekends. Authors' elaboration.

3.1.3. Frequency of the Visits

In the next part of the survey, participants were prompted to indicate the frequency of their visits to the places mentioned above, with the option to specify their most preferred destination within each category. Regarding museums, a significant proportion of students, comprising 62.7% of respondents, indicated that they sometimes visit the museums scattered across the city of Turin. (see fig.23) This finding underscores a moderate level of engagement with the cultural offerings available within the urban landscape. Notably, among those who specified their preferences, the Egyptian Museum and Cinema Museum

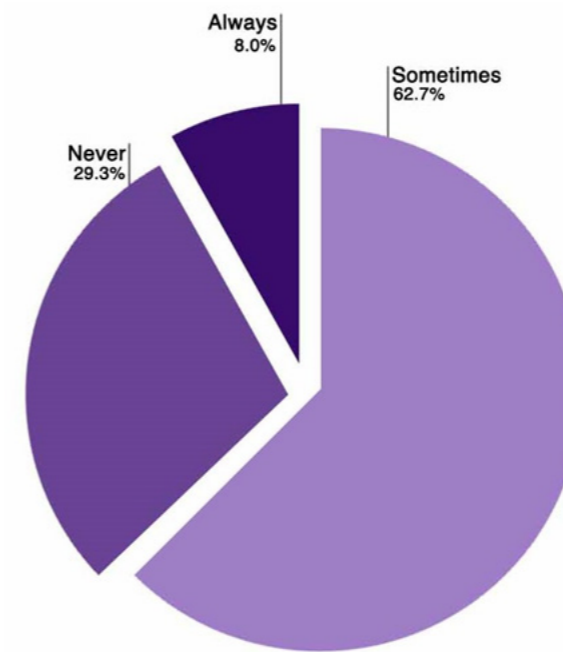


Figure 23: Frequency of visiting museums of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

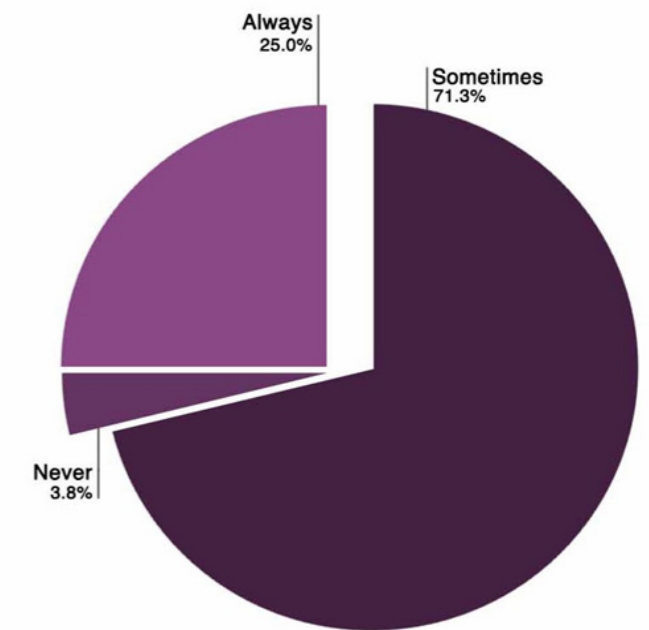


Figure 24: Frequency of visiting squares of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

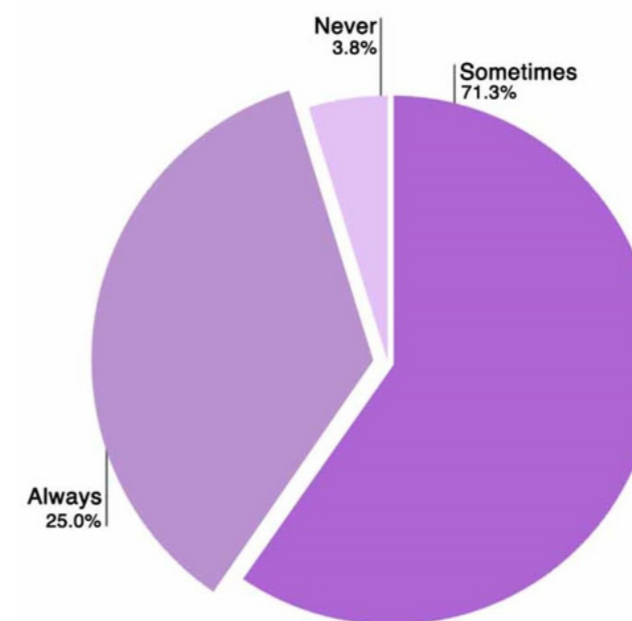


Figure 25: Frequency of visiting parks and gardens of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

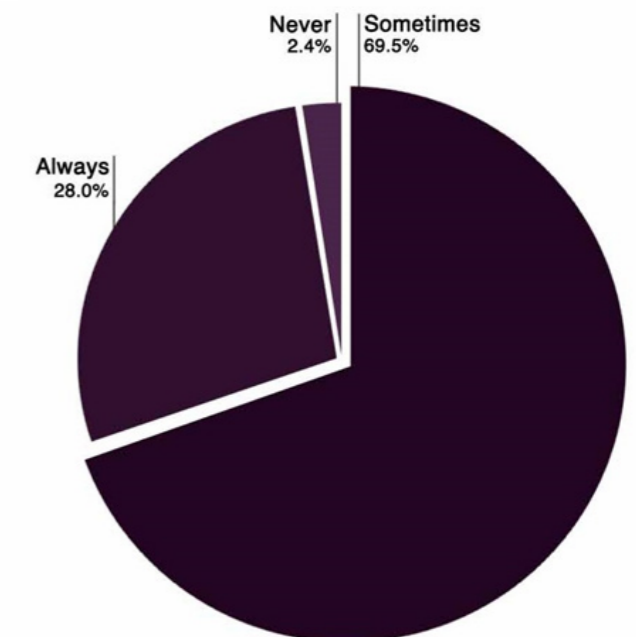


Figure 26: Frequency of visiting restaurants and cafes of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

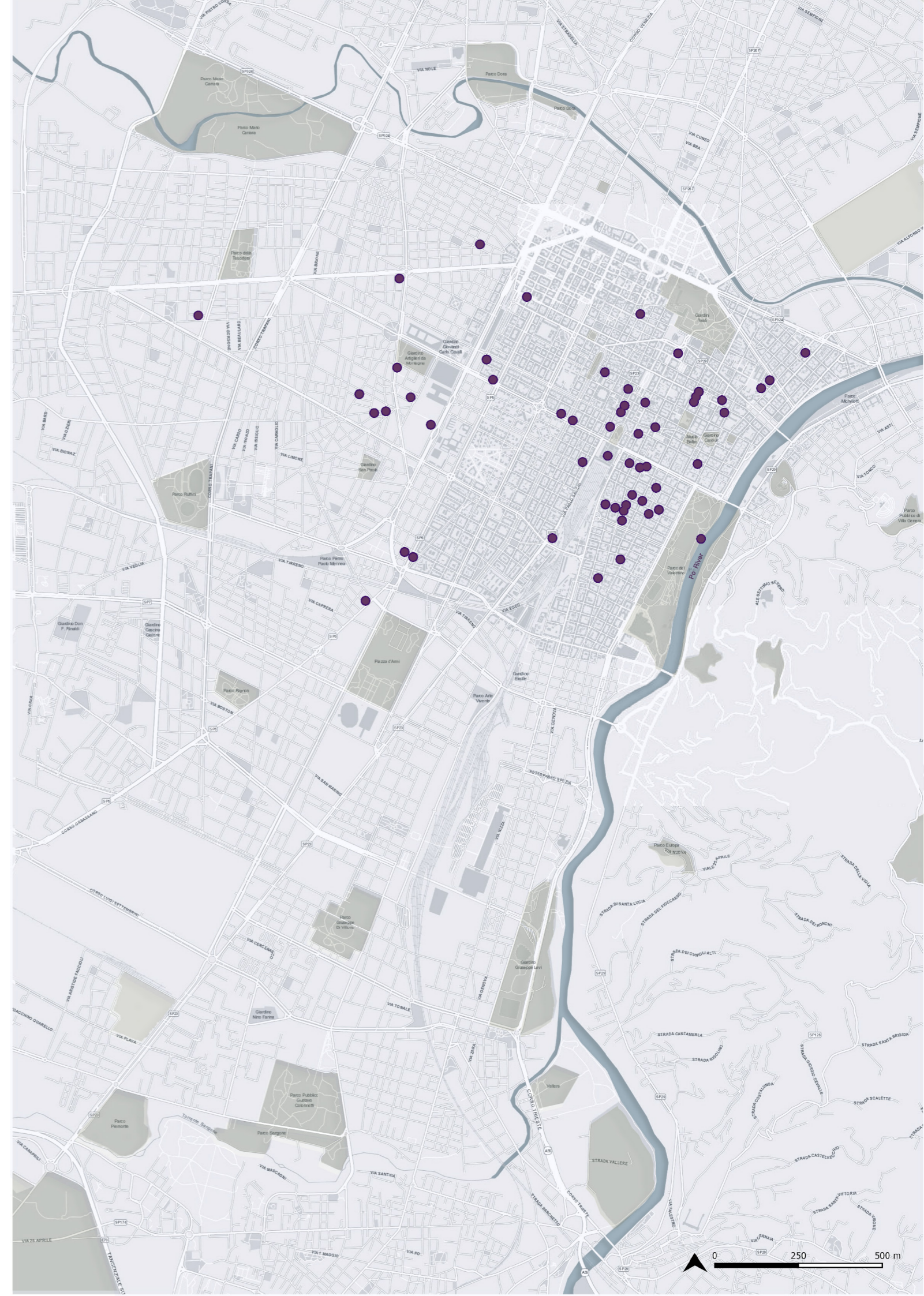
emerged as the primary destinations frequented with greater frequency (see appendix, Q.18.1). Moreover, when considering public squares, most respondents, totaling 71.3%, reported occasional visits, while a noteworthy 25% expressed a propensity for frequent attendance. (see fig.24) This observed trend can be attributed to the central location of many squares within Turin, coupled with the diverse array of activities and amenities available nearby, rendering them highly accessible and appealing to international university students. Among the specified responses, San Carlo Square and Castello Square emerged as the most frequently cited destinations, both situated in the heart of the city and surrounded by significant landmarks, amenities, and recreational facilities (see appendix, Q.19.1).

Within this segment of the survey, an interesting pattern emerges regarding the frequency of visits to parks and gardens, distinguishing it from other questions in the same part. Notably, this question, as one that is not required, achieved a response from each participant, rendering it the only inquiry to achieve full participation across the other questions in the same part. Of the 84 participants, a notable proportion, constituting 35.7% of the sample, expressed a consistent proclivity for visiting parks and gardens in the city, as evidenced by their selection of the “always” option. This result is also the highest “always” selection among all questions about the frequency. Conversely, a majority of respondents, comprising 59.5% of the cohort, indicated a less frequent usage of these natural spaces, opted for the “sometimes” category. This distribution underscores a diversity of engagement levels with parks and gardens among international university students in Turin. On the contrary, a minority subset of the cohort, consisting of merely 4 students, disclosed a complete absence of visits to parks and gardens, indicating a negligible proportion of 4.8% who never engage in this leisure activity. (see fig.25) Out of 72 respondents who choose to indicate more specific locations for parks and gardens, interestingly, with a very high percent, 62 of them mentioned Valentino Park. (see appendix, Q.20.1)

The prominence of this park among the respondents warrants a comprehensive investigation into the underlying factors driving its popularity. Thus, a deeper exploration into the subjective motivations and experiences underlying their choice becomes imperative to unravel the reasons of their recreational preferences and the allure of this urban green space. These reasons behind are both investigated during the interviews and is further analyzed in the discussion part.

For restaurants and cafes, 57 of the students with 69.5%, indicated the “sometimes” option for the frequency of their visits. 23 of them with 28%, selected the “always” category while only 2 students said they never go to restaurants and café. (see fig.26) Understandably, once the options are provided by the city these types of leisure activities very common among young population like university students. Therefore, it’s more important to decide which specific places international university students prefer in Turin. Out of the 66 responses for specific restaurant and café names no particular preference

Figure 27: Frequently visited restaurants and cafes by the respondents. Authors' elaboration.



comes to surface (see appendix, Q.21.1). In order to see any possible densities in the city, the locations that are indicated are mapped (see fig.27). However from the map, it can be seen that students are mainly prefer to go to the places located in Centro and San Salvario neighborhoods.

In the field of shopping malls, survey findings reveal a nuanced pattern of interaction among international university students in Turin. Remarkably, a significant portion of the respondents, constituting 59.5% of the surveyed group, indicated that they occasionally go to shopping areas or malls by selecting the “sometimes” option. In contrast, a subset of respondents, 32.9%, described avoiding visiting shopping malls altogether, thus exhibiting the highest incidence of the “never” response category among similar questions. This difference highlights a noticeable minority of the surveyed population who avoid such commercial venues altogether. In contrast, a smaller but notable portion of the group, accounting for 7.1% of survey respondents, expressed a tendency to frequent shopping areas or malls, choosing “always.” (see fig.28)

Participants also provided information on specific shopping spots frequently visited in Turin, adding a valuable level of detail to the analysis. Remarkably, a significant number of respondents identified Le Gru shopping center around the city as their preferred destination; 11 participants specifically mentioned this place. Similarly, Lingotto shopping center received recognition from 13 respondents, reflecting its appeal as a preferred shopping destination among the surveyed group. Remarkably, a significant group of 19 respondents identified Via Roma in the city center as their primary shopping destination. This heavy concentration emphasizes the centrality and vitality of Via Roma as a leading retail district in Turin and attracts a significant proportion of international university students.

For theaters and cinemas, 39 with 50% of the students mentioned that they “sometimes” go to them while, 36 said they never been with 3 of them choosing “always” option (see fig.29). Among the more specified answers, the most common answer given was Ideal Cinema Cityplex in the city center (see fig.32) (see appendix, Q.23.1). Can be seen that the answers are more focused on cinema activity while the students don’t visit theaters quite often. Although this can be related to the language and budget barriers and activity available for international students can be missing, the possible reasons behind and the frequency is discussed further in the discussion of the thesis.

After, the research moves to the frequency of visits to the bars and nightlife spots. 48 of the students with 60.8% opted “sometimes” as their selection, while 12 of them stated that they always go to them and 19 of them 24.1% selected the “never” category (see fig.30). In terms of specific locations, there is variety of names while some students indicated that they prefer to try new places even it comes to that matter, therefore there is no clear common answers. However, Imbarchino and Camping Bar, both located in San Salvario, are mentioned few more times compared to the other examples given (see fig.33) (see appendix, Q.24.1).

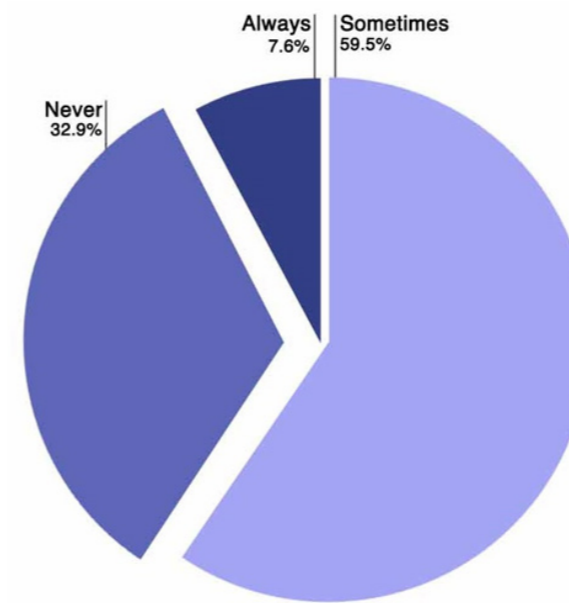


Figure 28: Frequency of visiting shopping malls/districts of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

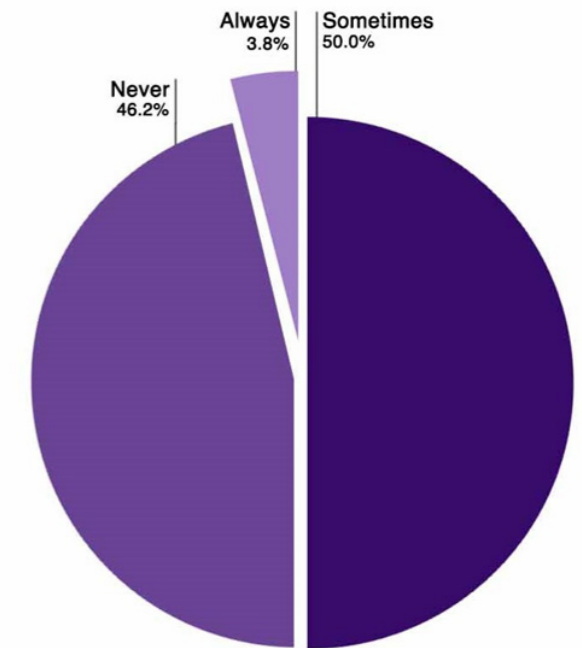


Figure 29: Frequency of visiting theaters and cinemas of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

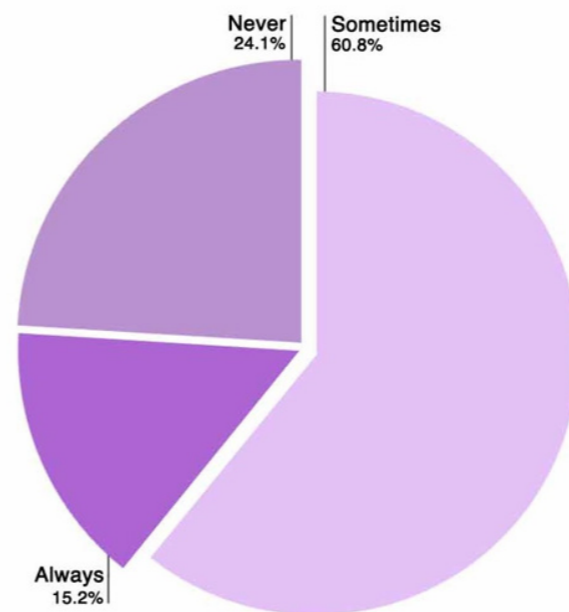


Figure 30: Frequency of visiting bars and nightlife spots of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

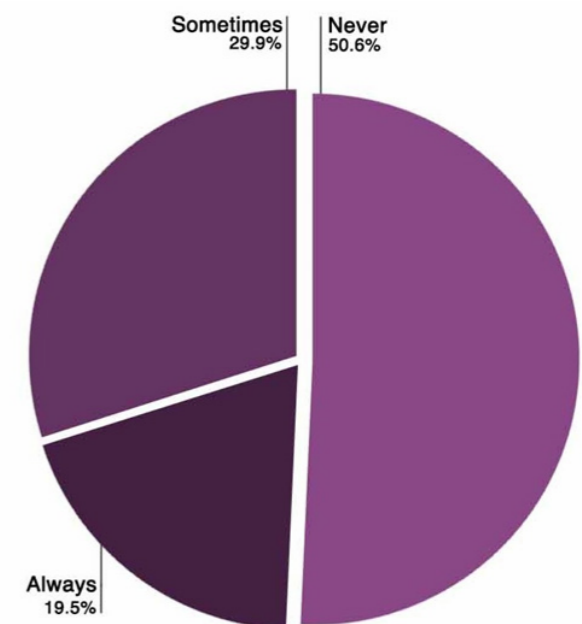


Figure 31: Frequency of visiting sport facilities of respondents. Authors' elaboration.



Figure 32: Locations of frequently visited theaters and cinemas of respondents. Authors' elaboration.



Figure 33: Locations of frequently visited bars and nightlife spots of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

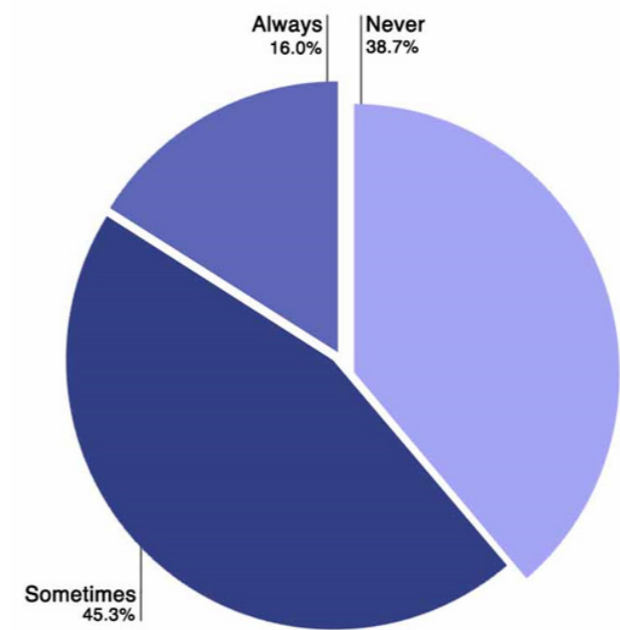
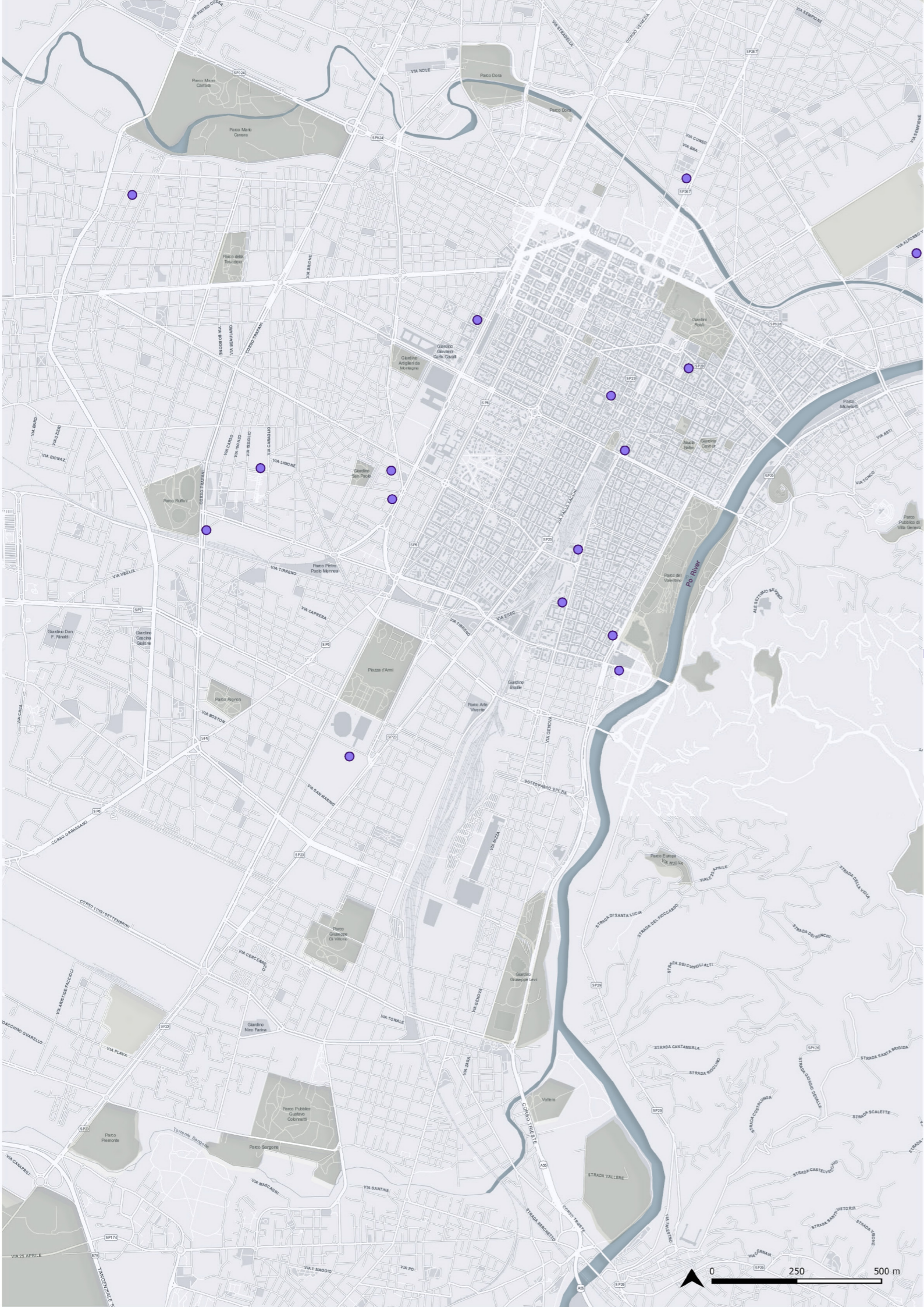


Figure 34: Frequency of visiting libraries of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

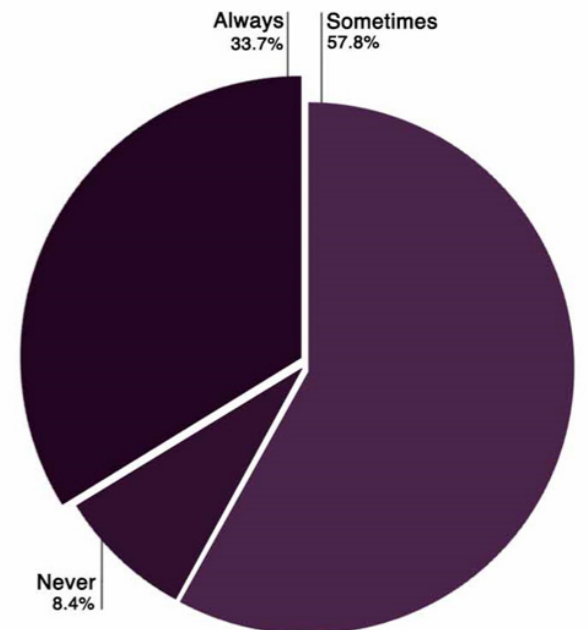


Figure 35: Frequency of visiting friend's house of respondents. Authors' elaboration.

When it comes to the sport facilities, the majority of the students, with 50.6% (39 students) stated that they never got to any sport facility. However, 23 of them with 29.9% mentioned that they sometimes use these facilities and 15 of the students with 19.5% use them very frequently since they selected the "always" option. (see fig.31) The most common answer among the specific ones is Mcfit gym. The reason behind this selection can be highly related to the options provided by the company (see fig.36) (see apendix, Q.25.1).

Examining the frequency of visits to libraries among international university students reveals various interaction patterns. In particular, a noticeable minority of 16% of the surveyed group consistently prefer library visits, as evidenced by their preference for the "always" option. In contrast, a significant majority, totaling 45.3% of respondents, goes to the libraries from time to time, indicating a moderate level of engagement with these academic resources. Conversely, a significant proportion of respondents, 38.7% of the surveyed group, declared that they avoided library visits altogether, thus constituting the highest proportion of the "never" response category among similar questions. This marked difference highlights a notable subgroup within the surveyed population that avoids library use altogether, perhaps indicative of alternative study preferences or accessibility restrictions (see fig.34). Notably,

Figure 36: Locations of frequently visited sport facilities of respondents. Authors' elaboration.



in parallel with the overall preference for study spaces, the library housed within Valentino Castle emerges as the foremost choice among respondents. This observation underscores the prominence of Valentino Castle’s library as a favored academic venue, indicative of its significance within the educational landscape of Turin (see fig.37) (see appendix, Q.26.1).

Lastly for this part, the survey asks about the frequency of the visits made to a friend’s house by the students. 48 of the students, with 57.8% indicated that they do these visits sometimes as the majority while 28 of the students mentioned that they are frequently visiting their friend at their house by selecting “always” option. The rest, 7 students with 8.4 percent mentioned they never visit their friend’s house (see fig.35). The significant prevalence of the “always” option among respondents indicates a marked tendency to seek comfort and solace within the residence, thus revealing a tendency among students to escape urban environments of Turin. The reasons behind this preference believed to be given further importance by mentioned in the discussion part.

Furthermore, participants were asked to describe the reasons behind these places they mentioned above are better for them compared to the others with a chance to give example upon a specific location. One thing that stood out among the participants was the great importance given to accessibility in their local elections. Considering their international student status, participants prioritize venues that are easily accessible, preferably within walking distance of their place of residence. This preference is rooted in practical constraints related to limited access to private transportation and the lack of familial or social networks that help secure travel in privately owned vehicles. Another important factor influencing participants’ choices is the number of amenities available in or near the chosen locations. Participants express that they prefer places that offer a variety of activities and facilities and allow them flexibility in their leisure activities and social participation. Additionally, participants underline the importance of space, flexibility, and accessibility in adapting to their large social networks, which may include individuals from different countries. The ability to find common ground and accommodate diverse preferences in social circles increases the appeal of these venues as preferred meeting points. Additionally, affordability emerges as an important determinant of participants’ venue selection; many express a tendency to gravitate towards frequented locations with competitive pricing and value for money. This pragmatic thinking highlights the financial constraints faced by international students and the importance of cost-effectiveness in shaping their consumption patterns and leisure choices. Furthermore, Valentino Park emerges as a recurring focal point in participant discourse due to its multifunctional features and accessibility. Participants praise the park’s wide variety of amenities and activities that appeal to a wide range of interests and preferences. Moreover, the large green spaces provided by Valentino Park offer participants the opportunity to integrate with nature, enjoy the sunshine and enjoy the fresh air amidst the cityscape. The park’s

Figure 37: Locations of frequently visited libraries of respondents. Authors’ elaboration.

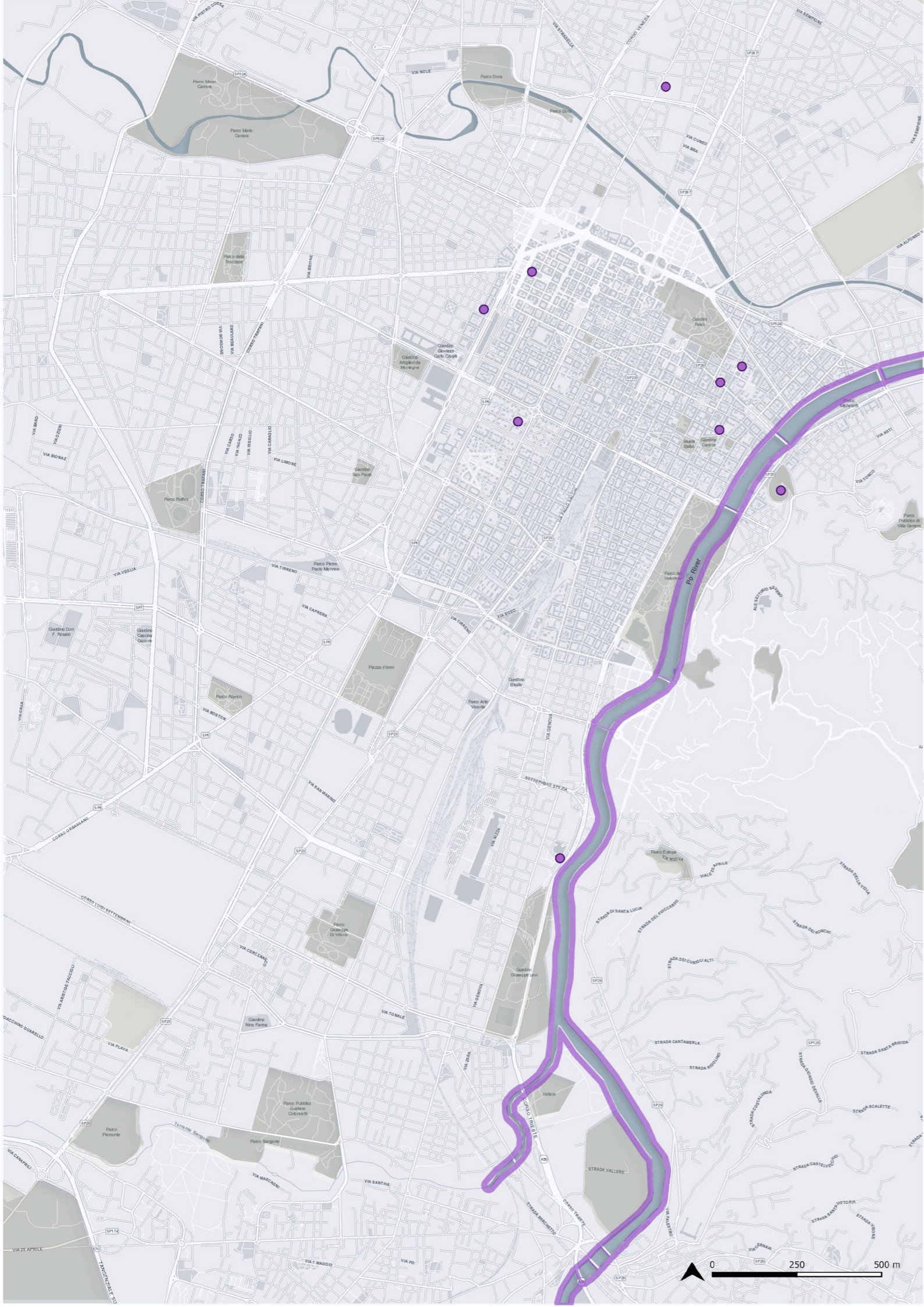
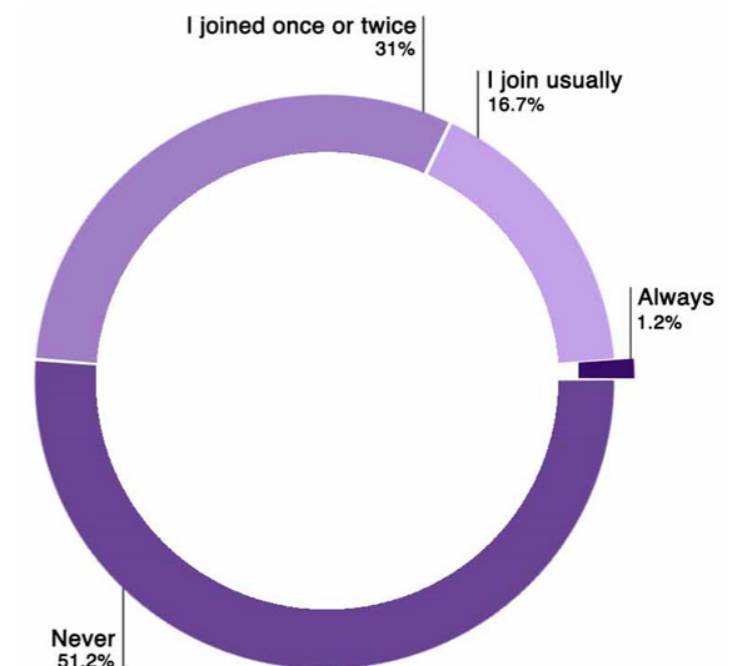


Figure 38: Locations mentioned extra by the respondents. Authors' elaboration

capacity to host large gatherings without disturbing nearby residents further enhances its appeal as a preferred destination for socializing and recreational activities, mentioned highly in the results (see appendix, Q.29).

Additionally, the research seeks to determine whether international university students can identify any additional locales beyond those previously discussed. The fact that a significant majority of the students, 71.4% of the 77 answers received, responded negatively to this question shows that they cannot think of any additional answers other than those mentioned above. However, among the remaining participants, a notable subgroup of 22 students chose to provide additional places, thereby contributing to a variety of local environments not previously mentioned (see fig.38). Notable among these responses are references to places such as "along the river Po" and "Cappuccini", which require special attention due to their characteristics and potential importance within the urban fabric of Turin. Moreover, its connections with other much-cited locations such as Valentino Park underscore the interconnectedness of urban spaces and the multifaceted nature of student participation within the city.

Figure 39: Possible activities done by the respondents specific to their country. Authors' elaboration.



3.1.4. Possible Specific Activities

The next section of the survey attempts to describe potential activities undertaken by international university students, focusing particularly on those specific to their country of origin. Within the scope of this research, a large number of participants, constituting 51.2% of the surveyed group, stated that they were completely absent from participation in activities specific to their country. In contrast, a notable subset of students, accounting for 31% of participants, described participating in such activities occasionally, indicating that they had participated once or twice. A smaller proportion, totaling 15.5% of respondents, indicated more

consistent participation in country-specific activities, only one student reported that they always participated in such activities. (see fig.39) Participants were then asked to indicate specific events in which they participated; this elicited a variety of responses that put a remarkable emphasis on cooking activities. (see appendix, Q.32) Cooking and eating emerged as recurring themes in the responses; many students specifically highlighted the practice of cooking at friends' homes to provide more detail. This observation underscores the social dimension inherent in culinary events, with cooking sessions serving as a means of promoting interpersonal connections and cultural exchange among international students. Additionally, the identification of cooking-related activities as a prominent pursuit among international students provides the opportunity to take advantage of the city's diverse culinary offerings as a means of better integrating this demographic into the urban fabric. Initiatives that aim to facilitate cultural exchange through shared cooking experiences or culinary events showcasing cuisines from different cultures can serve as effective mechanisms for promoting social cohesion and intercultural understanding within the city.

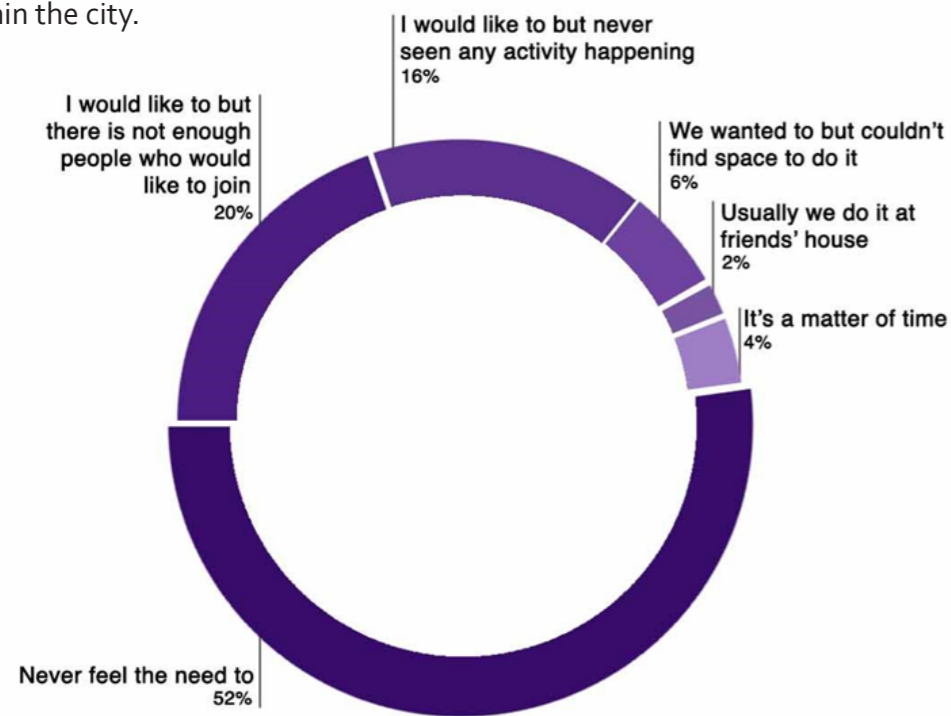


Figure 40: Reasons behind the lack of cultural activities according to the respondents. Authors' elaboration.

Anticipating that most of the respondents might answer no to the previous question, the next question aims to understand the reason behind the lack of activities provided. 52% out of the 51 responses to this question indicated that they never feel the need to join such activities as the majority. 10 of them, with 20% said that they would like to do some activities, but no one is joining while another 8 indicated that they would like to join but don't see any activity happening and 3 of them said that they would like to do but couldn't find the space to it. Two of the students indicated that the main reason for them to not to participate is that they don't have enough time for it (see fig.40) Although they are not the majority, it can be seen that a portion of the international

students would like to have or be included in more cultural activities.

At the end of this part of the survey, participants are asked to add any additional comments and/or suggestions they might have. Out of the 23 responses given, the most common answer was a suggestion to have more international activities within the city. Students have indicated that they would enjoy if there were more international activities from cooking traditional foods to markets including cultural elements, where they can learn more about other cultures and experience a sense of familiarity when participating activities from their cultures. Some commented on a possible international university hub where a variety of activities and events can be planned. Furthermore, a participant indicated that to have events which can work like introduction to Italian culture and language can be planned to make the experience of an international university student who just arrived in Turin. Moreover, a student mentioned some activities developed between the universities in Turin can be beneficial to have team building among students. All of which are important to develop an understanding of what might be missing in the city for the international students of Turin. (see appendix, Q.34)

3.1.5. Composition of Social Circles

It is also imperative that the survey captures the demographic composition of the places frequented by participants and the companies they usually accompany to these destinations. In this context, a significant majority of participants, comprising 63.1% of the surveyed group, reported that they encountered a diverse community of individuals from different cultural backgrounds in the places they frequented. In contrast, a significant subset of respondents, accounting for 27.4% of the cohort, indicated that the dominant demographic group in these regions consisted primarily of Italians. A smaller but noticeable proportion of respondents, a total of 9.5% of respondents, reported frequenting places predominantly populated by people from their country of origin (see fig.41). This distribution of responses sheds light on the social dynamics and intercultural interactions that characterize the locales patronized by international university students in Turin. The prevalence of mixed-cultural environments fosters opportunities for intercultural exchange and social integration, suggesting a rich texture of diversity and intercultural interaction in these spaces.

It is also important that the survey examines in depth the composition of the social networks provided by the participants, especially in terms of the diversity of friendship circles and the nationalities represented therein. In this context, a significant majority of respondents, accounting for 66.7% of the surveyed group, confirmed the presence of a heterogeneous mix of friends from various countries in their social circle. In contrast, a significant group of participants, accounting for 27.4% of the cohort, described their friendship group as consisting primarily of individuals from their country of origin. A

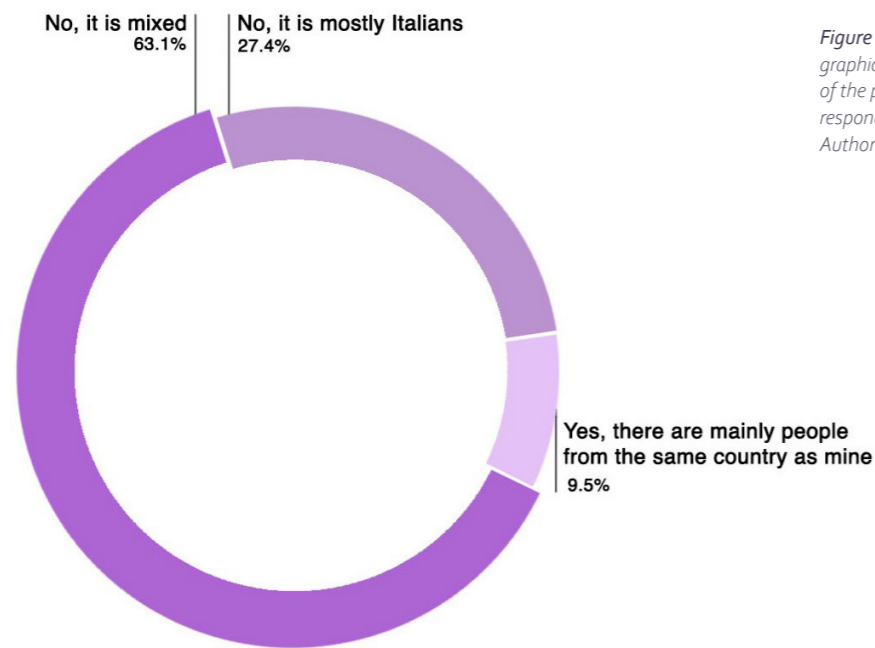


Figure 41: Demographic composition of the places the respondents' visits. Authors' elaboration.

smaller but noticeable proportion of respondents, representing only 4 people, indicated that their social circle consisted mainly of Italian citizens. (see fig.42) By exploring the composition of friendship circles among international students and the intercultural dynamics therein, the survey obtains valuable insights into the processes of social integration, identity negotiation, and community formation in an urban context. Such insights can inform efforts to foster inclusive, intercultural environments that promote social harmony and mutual understanding among diverse populations in the city.

When examining the channels through which participants were notified of the survey, discernible patterns emerge that offer insights into the effectiveness of different dissemination strategies. In particular, the use of Instagram and social media platforms as a means of accessing the survey yielded a relatively modest response; Only 7 participants reported becoming aware of the survey through this channel. This finding indicates that although social media platforms have the potential to reach large audiences, their effectiveness in attracting survey participation in the target demographic may be limited. In contrast, the use of WhatsApp groups emerged as a more prominent and effective channel for survey dissemination; 35 participants attributed their awareness of the survey to communication in these digital forums. This prevalence highlights the importance of leveraging existing networks and communication channels within the target population to effectively strengthen survey outreach efforts. Additionally, the majority of the participants, a total of 36 participants, stated that they became aware of the survey through word-of-mouth referrals from their friends. This finding underscores the importance of interpersonal communication and peer recommendations in facilitating survey participation in the target demographic. The observed distribution of responses highlights the importance of using a multifaceted approach to survey dissemination, encompassing both digital and interpersonal channels to maximize outreach and engagement.

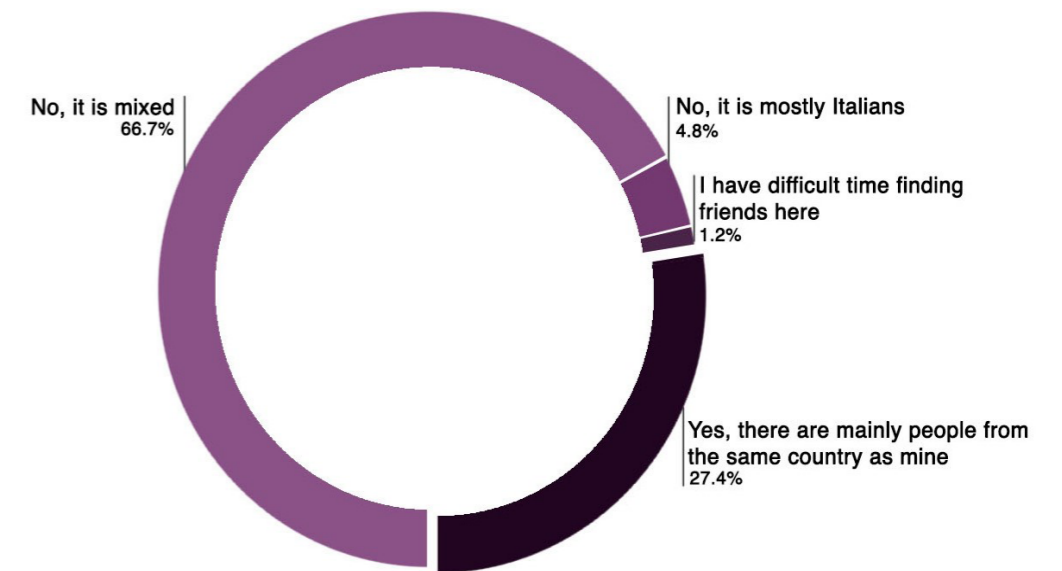


Figure 42: Demographic composition of the friendship circles of the respondents. Authors' elaboration.

When examining the channel through which participants were notified of the survey, discernible patterns emerge that offer insights into the effectiveness of different dissemination strategies. In particular, the use of Instagram and social media platforms as a means of accessing the survey yielded a relatively modest response; Only 7 participants reported becoming aware of the survey through this channel. This finding indicates that although social media platforms have the potential to reach large audiences, their effectiveness in attracting survey participation in the target demographic may be limited. In contrast, the use of WhatsApp groups emerged as a more prominent and effective channel for survey dissemination; 35 participants attributed their awareness of the survey to communication in these digital forums. This prevalence highlights the importance of leveraging existing networks and communication channels within the target population to effectively strengthen survey outreach efforts. Additionally, the majority of the participants, a total of 36 participants, stated that they became aware of the survey through word-of-mouth referrals from their friends. This finding underscores the importance of interpersonal communication and peer recommendations in facilitating survey participation in the target demographic. The observed distribution of responses highlights the importance of using a multifaceted approach to survey dissemination, encompassing both digital and interpersonal channels to maximize outreach and engagement.

At the end, since further research aimed to be done with the some of the participants, students were asked if they would be interested in conducting a survey. Out of 84 respondents, 38 responses were given. Although some students just responded as "no", 27 of them provided their mail for a further meeting. By accounting for these multifaceted motivations, the survey provides valuable insight into the complex dynamics that shape urban behavior and the lived experiences of international university students within the urban fabric. Such insights can inform urban planning initiatives and policy interventions aimed at improving quality of life and promoting inclusive, vibrant communities within cities.

3.2. Results from the Interview

Out of the 27 students who provided their mail address, which means that they approved to conduct a further interview, they were contacted via their mail address. Later, 20 of them responded positively and participated in the interview. With 12 of the students, the interview was conducted online while with the rest the possibility to an in-person interview existed, so they were conducted in a location convenient to both parts. In the next chapters, answers given by the interviewees were explained according to user demography, recreational and leisure preferences, possible specific activities and composition of social circles, Valentino Park and interview activities.

3.2.1. User Demography

Out of the 20 participants, 10 were females and 10 were males where the majority is in between the age range from 23 to 30 years old (see fig.43) and fig.44). Students participated from 14 different countries, 3 of the participants were Turkish, while 2 of each were Colombian, Iranian, Indian, and Greek. Rest of the students who join the interview were originated from Brazil, Egypt, Uzbekistan, China, Georgia, Mexico, Russia, Sri Lanka and United States. (see fig.45) Although the number of students conducted the interview with, are way less compared to the number of students participated in the survey, this variety of the nationalities creates a good representation of the survey within the interviews.

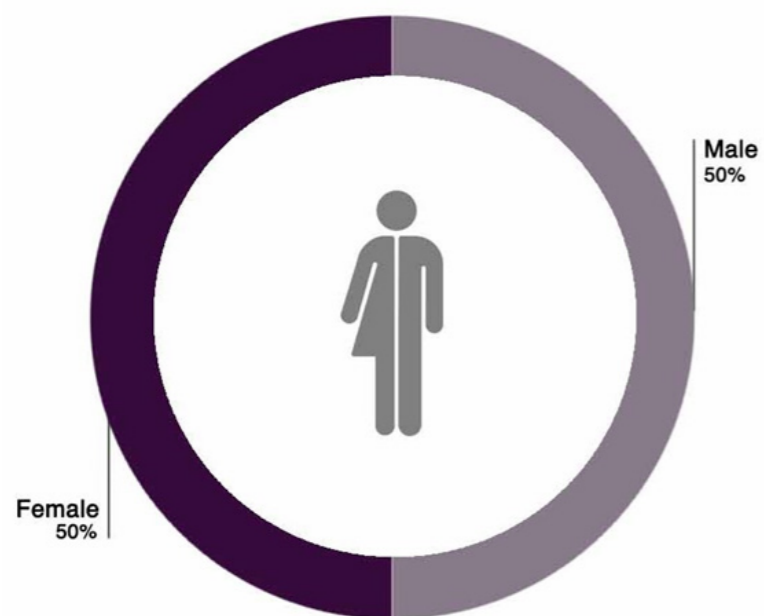


Figure 43: Gender of interviewees. Authors' elaboration.

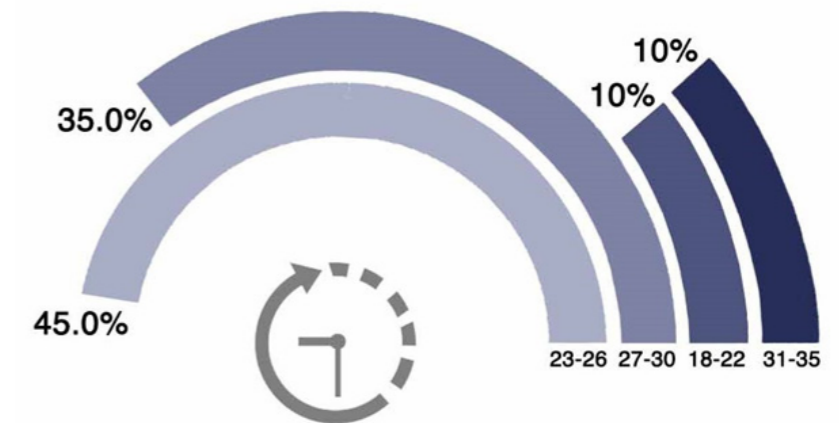
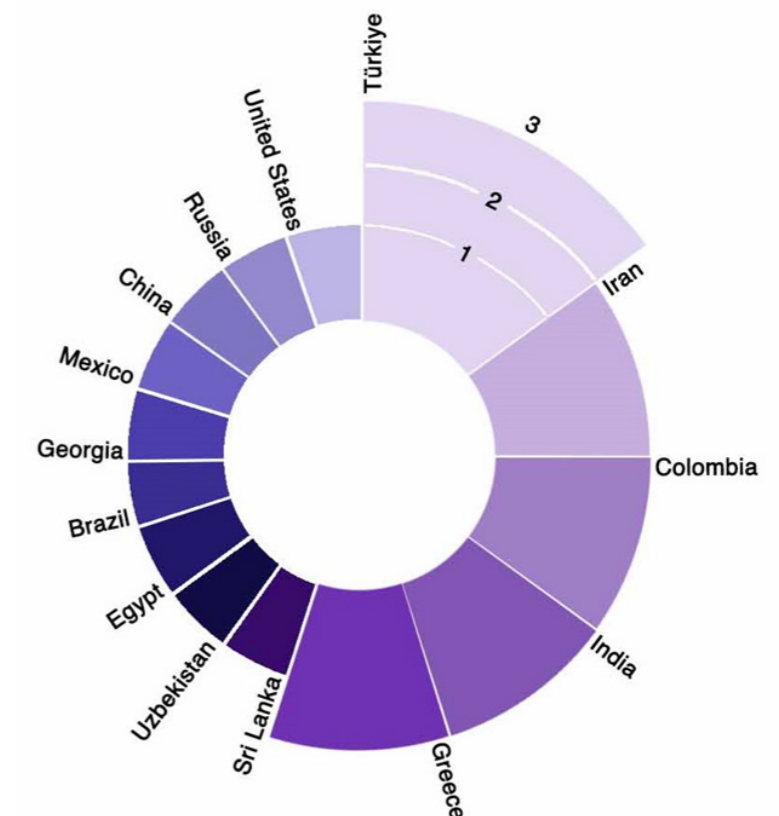


Figure 44: Age of interviewees. Authors' elaboration.

Figure 45: Nationality of interviewees. Authors' elaboration.



Furthermore, 14 of the students were doing their master's degree while 5 of them were doing their bachelor's degree and 1 was Erasmus/Exchange student (see fig.46). Except the Erasmus student who has been staying in Turin less than 6 months and other three students who are staying longer than 1 year but less than 2 years, all of the other international students participated in the interview were staying in Turin more than 2 years (see fig.47). This longer stay of the students gives space in the interview to discuss the city in a better way since they know the city much better compared to a students moved in more recently.

Although the majority of the students were living in Centro neighborhood, once their locations considered, it can be said that students live in various parts of the city. (see fig.48 and fig.49) In which, 7 of them prefers to live in a private apartment for rent, 5 students live in a single room for rent, 3 of them are in a shared room for rent while 4 of them are in a single room in a dorm and one shares a room/studio in a dorm. (see fig.50) This preference of the interviewees gives a great representation of the result of the survey.

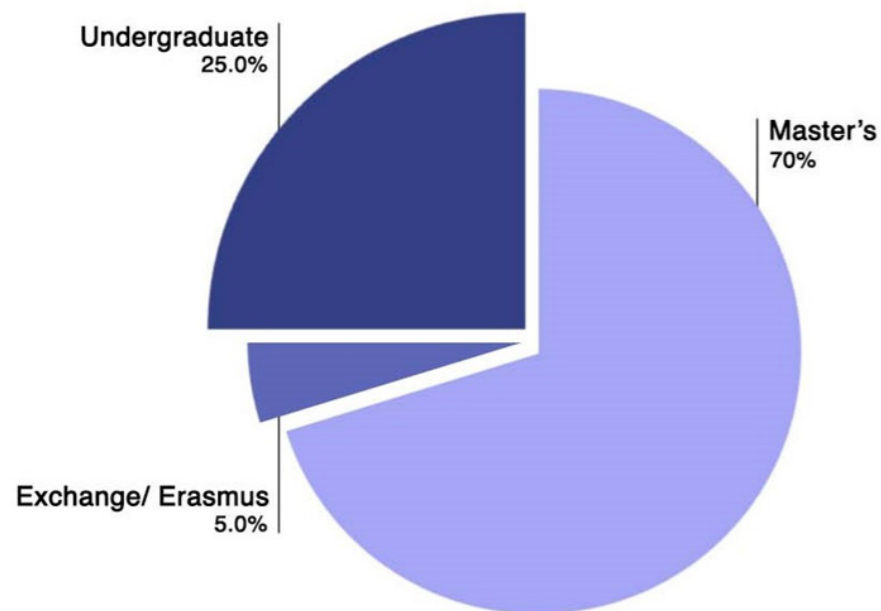


Figure 46: Current level of study of interviewees. Authors' elaboration.

After the result of the survey analyzed, in addition to the personalized questions created specific to the interviewee, according to the answers stick out in terms of student's locational preferences, the topics to be covered during the interview were selected. Firstly, their location and the neighborhoods that are easier for them to navigate through was discussed with the students. Similar to the survey results, also for the participants of the interview, the neighborhoods they feel more comfortable to move in are Centro, San Salvario, and Crocetta. As the students indicated the main reasons behind them feeling more comfortable in these neighborhoods is mainly because the amount of time they

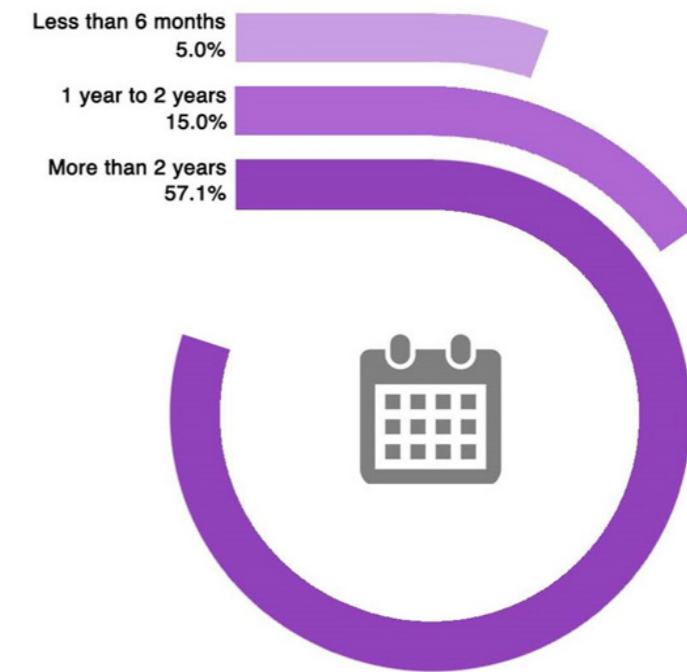
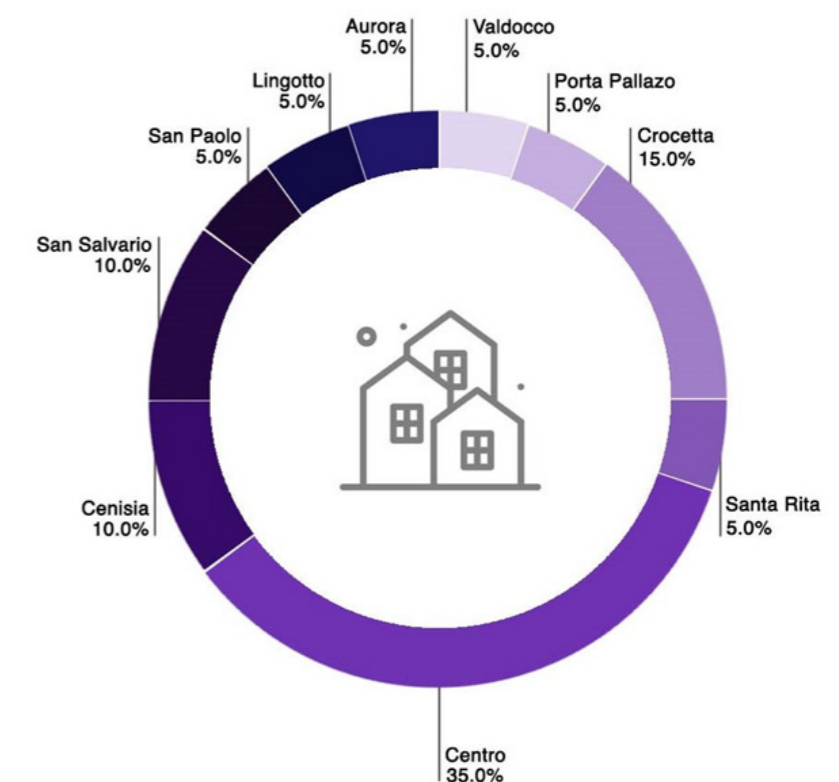


Figure 47: Spent time of interviewees in the city. Authors' elaboration.

Figure 48: Neighborhoods of respondents live in. Authors' elaboration.



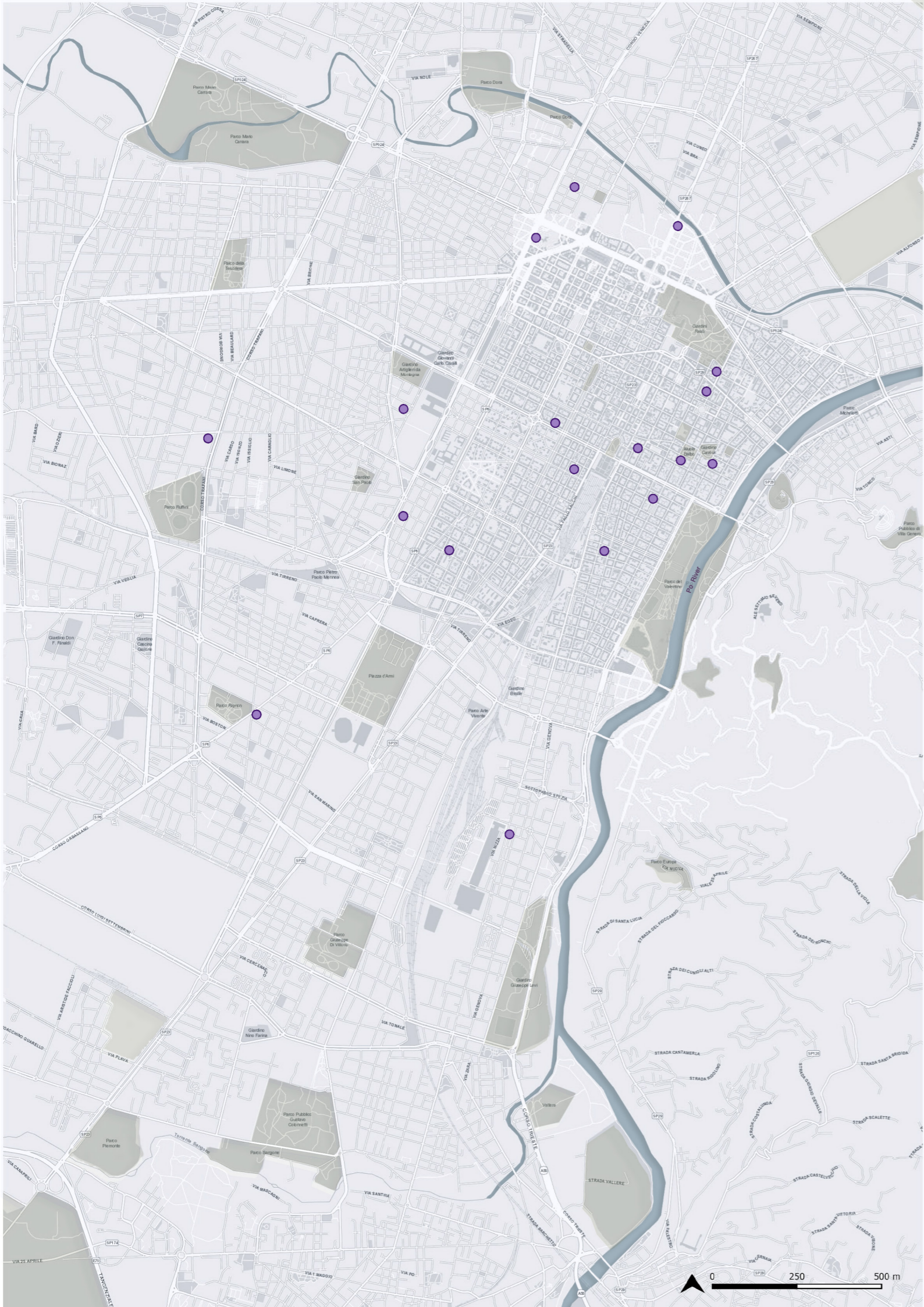


Figure 49: Map of respondents address in the city according to the closest intersection they indicated with the dorms some of the students live in. Authors' elaboration.

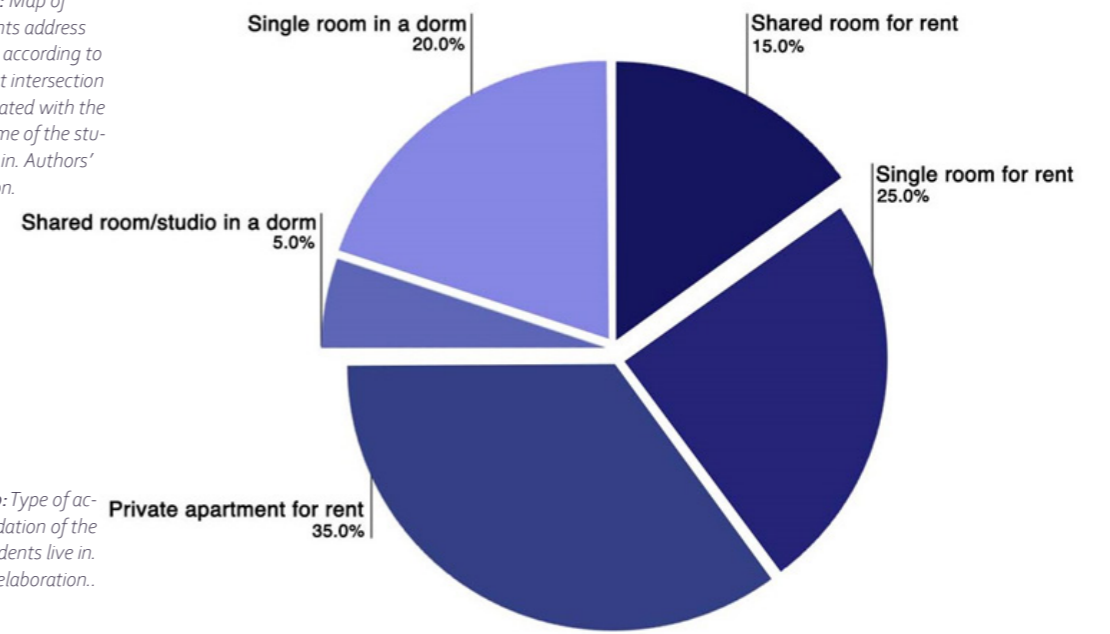


Figure 50: Type of accommodation of the respondents live in. Authors' elaboration..

spent there and how easy to reach they are with transportation. Furthermore, due to the walkable streets and memorable landmarks, students mentioned that they prefer to go to these neighborhoods a lot and find the locations easier to navigate through. Also considering most of the interviewees lives in these locations, it can be said that it's understandable for them to be happy with their house location, as they indicated to be so. Only a few thinks their address is far from the city center with not the most convenient transportation and stated that they would prefer to live one of the neighborhoods mentioned above.

3.2.2. Recreational and Leisure Preferences

As the second topic, their preferred study location was discussed. Since in the survey, the most common answer given by the students is Valentino Castle where it was mentioned to be discussed further in the interviews. Furthermore, 10 of the interviewees prefers the same location, therefore, to those 10 students were asked why they prefer Valentino Castle to study, instead of other places and why in their opinion it's a popular location. For the reasons behind, there were two answers that almost all interviewees mentioned. Firstly, all indicated the benefits of the location that the castle is easy to reach by metro, bus and tram with the tram stops right in front of the castle which makes it convenient for travel time from most of the part of the city and creates a good meeting point with other people living different parts of the city. Furthermore, the fact that location of the Valentino Castle is near by the Valentino Park, Po River, city center and San Salvario district is mentioned by the students highlighting how easy it is to make plans after their study session or if they need something it would be easy to reach. Secondly, most of the students mentioned that they like to be in a historical environment with good scenery and architecture.

Other element indicated by some of the students were how well the library functioning in terms of satisfying their demands like comfortable seating and enough plugs however most of them thinks that there should be more places available. Also, some mentioned that they like the cafeteria and quality of food there, so it influences their decision. As an interesting comment, one student mentioned that small playing areas within the open spaces of the castle like chess area, tennis table and foosball table are interesting to have and influences her decision to go since she enjoys playing with them in her study breaks. Overall, in addition to these reasons most of the students think there are less people in Valentino Castle compared to the main campus of PoliTo, therefore it is easier to find space to study.

Furthermore, students were asked what they choose to go once university is closed, in order to understand the second preferred location, if there is one. Here, students didn't only mention about the weekends but also how early the school is closed since some of them are working during the day and when they want to stay longer after 7pm there are not many options. Although Valentino castle is open on Saturday for half of the day, students stated that they don't prefer to go only for few hours on Saturdays, so they added that they mainly stay at their home to study in the weekends. Another topic that came up was how inefficient the cafes in Turin to study since not all the places allows them to stay longer and it's not easy to find a comfortable place to sit with plugs. The only two places that few of the students mentioned they got to when they don't want to stay at the house are, Luna's Torta and Starbucks. However, in general students said they would like to stay at home and not consider options when Valentino Castle is closed.

For the rest of the participants who didn't specify, were asked about the place they prefer. The answers that came out were, Edisu R building, Aula Studio Opera, Aula Studio 2 and 4, UniTo study room, campus Einaudi main library, cafés nearby their house and their home. Unlike the students who selected Valentino castle as their study location, the other 10 interviewees gave a variety of examples, mentioning that they like to change their study environment regularly. Although most of them just preferred to study at home due to personal reasons some just prefer places nearby their house, and some students who study in the main campus prefers to use different study rooms in the buildings there, to not waste time with transportation. After, the same 10 students were asked if they ever visited Valentino Castle, if not why and why do they think it's a common answer among the international students. Out of the 10 students, only 2 of them said that they had never been to the castle to study, just because they didn't consider the option. However, the rest said they have been but due to either personal reasons and/or that the location is far for them, they don't visit very often.

Next topic was related to the cafés, restaurants and nightlife locations since in this question there was no specific answers that cuts the eye. Interviewees were asked what the things are they look for while choosing cafés,

restaurants and nightlife locations as well as what makes them choose the locations they indicated. In general, students said that they prefer chill places that they can hangout longer and study during the day and thinks that's what missing in Turin. In terms of restaurant locations students indicated that they enjoy trying new foods and cuisines in which they are satisfied by the options in Turin. However, for nightlife locations it can be said that not many of the interviewees are satisfied with the options, since they mentioned they would prefer to have other types of activities than what is offered in Turin. According to the students existing nightlife locations are only consist of bars with almost no music which closes early or discos with generally expensive entrance that opens late, therefore they reflect their interest on having a place that offers more options, in terms of music and opening hours. Overall, interviewees mentioned they prefer to try out new places to have different experiences, especially if you have any recommendations received from others, while only two of the students mentioned that they like the familiarity of the place they choose and don't like to have many and new options. Furthermore, some students mentioned that they usually try out new places with other people, when they are alone, they go to the same ones. In general, they mentioned that although they don't have a favorite place to go during the day, they are satisfied about the quality of places Turin offers, except the variety of options provided by the nightlife locations, which explains the reason behind the number of different answers in this section.

Although less than half of the students indicated the sport facility they go to the most, with 33 students, 17 of them had answered Mcfit in which 5 of them had participated in the interview. Therefore, they were asked what makes Mcfit different than the other options. It appears to be the main reason students select Mcfit because of the prices since they have one of the cheapest offers. The other reasons given were the enough amount of amenities that are in good condition and the number facilities all around the city where each can be used once the membership is established.

3.2.3. Possible Specific Activities and Composition of Social Circles

Next part of discussion was related to possible activities they join specific to their country. Since 8 of the students indicated that they never feel the need to participate in such activities, 2 of them said there is not enough people to do it and 2 of them mentioned they would like to but not enough space while the rest was mentioning activities with more private settings and/or having picnics with close friend groups. Therefore, the questions shaped according to their answers. Firstly, the students, who said they never feel the need to, were asked why they don't prefer and what type of activities they would enjoy doing. Students indicated that when it comes to cultural activities of their country,

they enjoy doing small gatherings and cooking in private settings since it's easier to plan, good way to connect with people and cheaper than being outside therefore they are not interested to participate into planning something bigger and public. However, the main comment given was if there was an international event already planned, they would like join both to experience different cultures and to show their friends about their culture, since almost all students are more interested in gaining more international experience during their study abroad. Although the type of activities they would like to see and mentioned mainly by the students were food related events, other events like, special holidays like Chinese New Year celebration, art and sculpture making courses were also mentioned. Furthermore, some students reflected their interest on participating into events and tours related to the city, adding mostly it would be nice when they first came to the city to learn more about it and get used to the city faster. As an interesting comment, a Chinese student mentioned that the cultural activities he prefers to do are culturally way too different, like public baths and showers happening in the cities of China, which makes it hard to manage in Turin. Then, for those who mentioned that there are not enough people or space, it is asked what type of activities they like to do, how many people they need and what type of space it requires. One of the students mentioned that they need more space for sport activities, especially for paintball since he couldn't find a place to play it. Next, an Indian student mentioned that his friend who studies in London, participates into a lot of cultural activities mainly because of how big the Indian community is there. Although the number of Indian students is very high in Turin, he mentioned they are mainly from South India and they act as a group without involving others to in much, therefore he was mentioning that he believes if there were bigger groups of people from the same city as him there would be more chance to plan cultural activities. This preference of the students ended up being an interesting topic to be considered further in the discussion part of the thesis.

3.2.4. Valentino Park

Moreover, since the most common location received from the survey was Valentino Park, and as it has been said during the survey results that it will be further analyzed, the next part of the interview focused on asking questions related to the area. In the group of students who the survey is conducted with, only one didn't indicated that they prefer to go to Valentino, therefore, besides some extra questions asked to that student a set of questions related to Valentino Park were asked to all of the interviewees.

Extra questions asked to the one student who indicated they prefer to go Cavalieri di Vittorio Veneto Park are,

1. Why do you prefer Cavalieri di Vittorio Veneto Park?
2. Have you ever visited Valentino Park? If so, how often?

Here, the student said that she only prefers Cavalieri di Vittorio Veneto Park, only because it's in a walking distance to her house. Although she doesn't think it's the most beautiful park in Turin, she likes to go as a nearby option when she wants to enjoy nature. Moreover, she added also that her favorite one is Valentino Park, and she is visiting more or less, once a month, however, due to the distance from her house and the main campus of Politecnico di Torino where she visits often, she doesn't go there frequently. Highlighting the fact that her selection is based on the closeness of the park to her, rather than the park itself.

Rest of the questions related to Valentino Park that was ask to everyone are,

1. Why do you prefer to go to Valentino Park instead of the other options? What makes it better than the other options for you?
2. It is also the most common answer that was given, why do you think that this park is so popular?
3. What time of the day do you usually prefer to go there? Do you think it's safe during the night?
4. Which season do you visit the park more frequently?
5. Do you think there is something missing in the park? If you were to add something, what would you add to it? What type of activities you would like to see in the park?

According to the interviewees, the main reason they prefer to go to Valentino Park are the location and the size of the park. All of them mentioned that the location is very convenient to go since it's easy to access through couple different transportation options like by walking, by bus, by tram and by metro, due to the nearby stations and variety of entrance points all around the park. Furthermore, the closeness of the location to the Center and San Salvario neighborhood holding variety of activities, restaurants and cafes, gives chance to have flexibility to their daily plan. As the benefits of the size of the park, students mentioned that it gives possibility to have many different activities, from having coffee, drinks and picnics to having a walk, and doing different type of sports. Students mentioned that due to the size, and how accessible all parts of the park are, it is easy to find a space for themselves according to what they want to do, even if its just sit on a bench or sit on grass with bigger groups of people. It is important to remember that, as also the students mentioned, this multifunctionality of the park gives students to have cheaper options according to their budget. Furthermore, most of the students mentioned the Imbarchino bar as a good option in the park, next to river that they can enjoy both during the day and night or stop by when they need something, like using the bathroom. In addition to that, students added that they like Imbarchino, also because of the different activities it offers free like small concerts, some art workshops

and open-air cinemas. Although the park has a large space, according to the students landmarks within the park both makes it easier to find themselves in it and creates good scenery and viewpoints in addition to the ones created with the different slopes and hills within the park. The locations mentioned during the interviews are, Valentino Castle, Medieval Village, Fountain of the 12 Months, and the Monumental Arch to the Artillery Force. In addition to them, for many of the interviewees mentioned the Po River and the view and walking points near it, found to be rememberable. Of course, students added the importance of being in nature. Most of them find the park as a good way to escape from the city to have fresh air, be in touch with the nature and engage with some animals since the park is housing various type of animals with in it. One student specifically mentioned that the park makes him feel like he is away from the city since he does not see many buildings once, he is inside the park, and he never was able to find a similar feeling anywhere else in world he visited. Furthermore, some students said that they like how the park hosts many people during the day, doing different activities and playing music in different parts of the park, which gives them energy and feel more included in the city. Due to all these reasons, and thanks to the familiarity that comes with the frequent visits to the park, many students find the park as a meeting point that is accessible for everyone. As happened in some interviews, when the students compared Valentino Park with other options in the city, like Dora Park, Europa Park and Pellerina Park, they mainly complained about how far and hard to reach they are so if they want to visit, they need to plan ahead.

In terms of the season many of the students indicated that they mostly go during the spring and fall. Although some students mentioned that they visit Valentino Park during summer too, most of them said that they don't enjoy the extreme hot weather, and due to the number of mosquitoes appearing in the summer times therefore their visits become less frequent in the summer. When it comes to winter, although many mentioned that they don't go as often, they try to go to the park when the weather is nicer. However, when the weather is not best in their opinion, they indicated that they mainly stay at home, and sometimes go to their friend's home or go to closed cozy places to spend time. Some mentioned that if it's raining but they want to go for a walk, they prefer the city center due to the possibility to walk under the archways (portico). Furthermore, almost all of the students indicated that they go to the park in the afternoon hours while a few prefer to go in the morning to enjoy the sun and/or catch the sunset. However, the reason to not to visit the park varies, some students mentioned that its simply because they prefer bars during nighttime and think there is not much to do in the park anymore and some said that they don't enjoy when it gets colder during the night while for the rest it is mainly a safety issue. Half of the interviewees stated that they either don't feel safe because of different reasons like getting rubbed themselves, hearing people getting rubbed or being verbally harassed, decreasing number of people in the park and how dark the park gets. Out of these 10 students 6 mentioned the

darkness problem and the existence of the high number of blind spots in the park during the night which reminds them of feeling of unsafety.

When students were asked, if there was something they would like to add to the park only three of them didn't make any suggestions, adding that is there would be any extra additions and specific places for specific activities, it might feel too artificial and restrict people's movement in the park. However, the rest of the students come up with different suggestions that are mainly related to benefiting from the multifunctionality of the park without disturbing the existing structure of the park. From most common to least common suggestions given by the international university students that were interviewed are,

1. Better lighting design.
2. More café points, as an alternative for Imbarchino, to spread the density from there, and to have more activities for different age groups.
3. More public bathrooms.
4. Places to play sports, elements like volleyball nets.
5. Drawings for running tracks, to keep track of the distance.
6. Playing and gym equipment for light exercise.
7. More picnic benches.
8. Some skating structures.
9. A nearby minimarket that is open also at night.
10. Place to rent sport equipment or games.
11. More study places.
12. A roofed area.
13. An amphitheater place to have more events and shows.

Before moving to the next part of the interview, students were asked if they have any additional comments regarding their experience or/and something missed in the survey or the interview. Although 9 of the students said no, others had important comments. Main comment given by few students was the housing problem for students where it's hard to find a place to live. Second common comment was related to transportation, students were complaining about the delays the system has and the fact that transportation stops at night so when they are out after midnight, they either had to walk or have private vehicles which is a problem for them. Another one was related to lack of variety in the nightlife location, she indicated the need for a bar with music, alive before 2 am and focused on young adults in the city. Furthermore, a student mentioned the lack of common areas and green spaces in Lingotto since she lives there and knows that also the students studying in Lingotto campus of PoliTo prefer to come to Valentino campus and Valentino Park often to spend time. In terms of the international experience, one of the students was complaining about how it is very hard to find a place to get guidance as an international student while another one indicated that there is a need for an international hub, to integrate people more including the Italians.

3.2.5. Mental Maps and Pictures

Next part of the interview was consisting of two activities. One of which was for them to draw a mental map, as an important tool to read the perception of urban environment one has, of Turin without looking at any sources according to the places they remember and are important for them. This map could consist of some drawings of their preference or simply just with some shapes and words. This was an important step for the research to understand and organize the hierarchy in international university student's minds regarding the locations and the relation between them in Turin. According to the drawings, although each student had a different way of expressing their ideas on paper, it can be said that there are many common elements that can be identified easily. Firstly, it should be added that 10 of the students included their house location. Secondly, it can be seen that many of the students have drawn the River Po and River Dora where only just 2 of them didn't add the rivers. Another part of the city that only two of the students didn't include on their map is Valentino Park. Out of the 18 students who illustrated the park, 14 of them also added Valentino Castle within the park. Although the importance given to the park on the map, considering the scale and details drawn, varies from student to student, it can be said that 10 of them spend more time including the park on their map. Those 10 maps generally include the details and shape of the castle, trees and green spaces in the park, and the walkway near the river. It is possible to see in some examples (see fig.51). Many of them included a road next to Po River, with some also drawing walking people and bicycles, highlighting the fact that the road is easy to reach and can be used in many ways. Furthermore, 4 of these maps were also including Imbarchino bar and in 2 of them, the Monumental Arch to the Artillery Force was also demonstrated. Other important elements observed around the park area that students included on their map were tram stops and metro stations. Next elements that were commonly observed at least in 10 out of all the maps are, Piazza Vittorio, via Po, Grand Madre di Dio, Mole Antonelliana, Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, Basilica of Superga, Porta Nouva, Porta Susa, via Roma, Piazza Castello, Cappuccini Mountain and PoliTo main campus. Although not as common, there were other elements seen in at least 5 maps like, the building consisting of the Lingotto Commercial Center and PoliTo Lingotto campus, Piazza San Carlo, and Porta Pallazo in relation to the market happening nearby. Another interesting element seen in 5 of the maps was, how students included drink and food illustrations when they included San Salvario neighborhood in their maps. Overall, it can be said that many of the students reflected on the grid system that the city has created a better connection between the streets and squares that follow each other, in addition the places they visit frequently. As an example, strong reference to the grid system can be seen in the mental map of interviewee 1 (see fig.52).

The second activity for the students was to select a few photos that

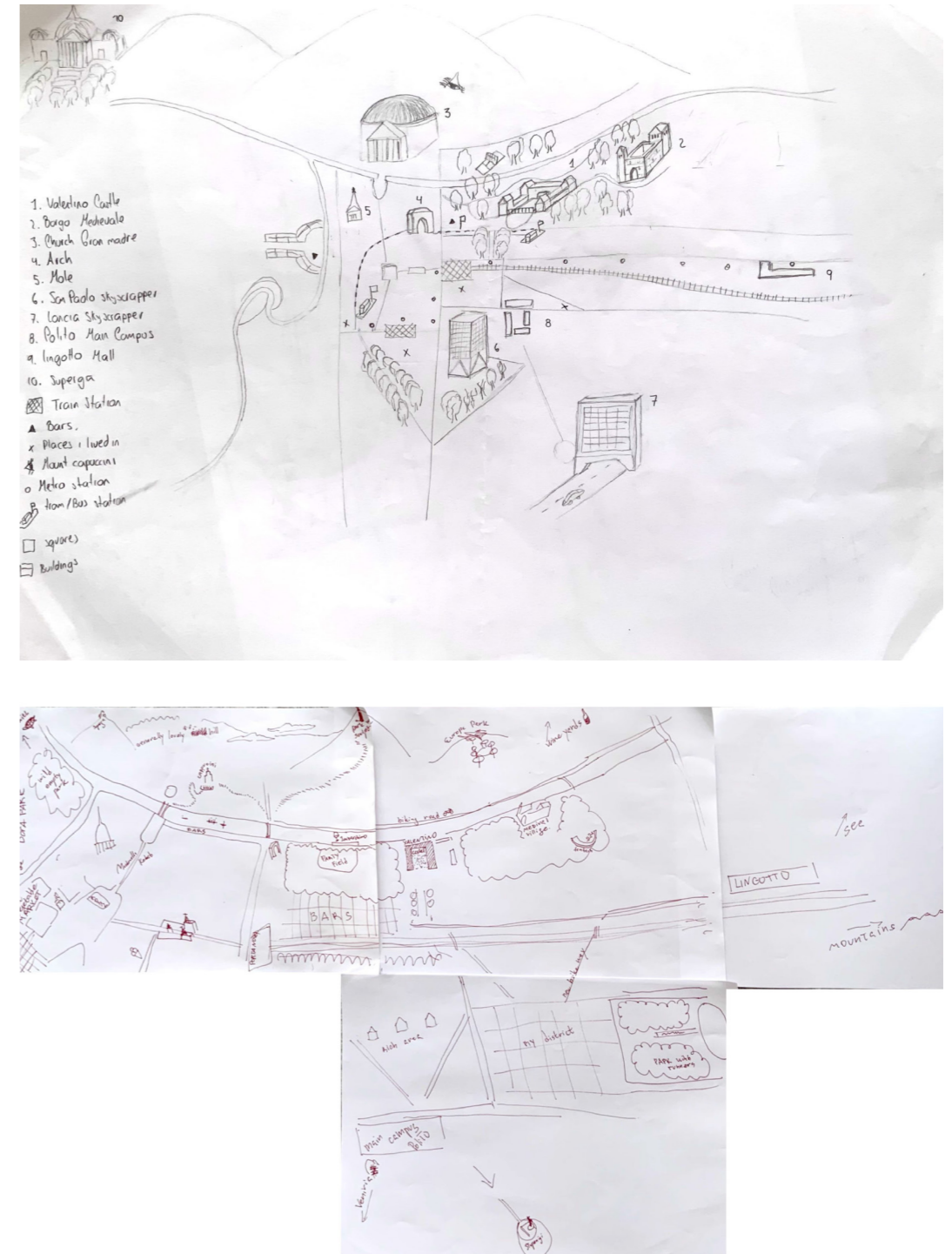


Figure 51: Mental map done by interviewee number 5 and 13.



Figure 52: Mental map done by interviewee number 1.

for them represent the city of Turin and the experience they are having in the city. This is crucial for the thesis to foster an understanding of their individual perspective and how they perceive the city, therefore, to depict the common elements and characteristics they have in the pictures of the city that is valuable for the international university students. Once the pictures are examined, it can be said that there are a variety of elements, starting from the streets and landmarks that are usually within the city center or/and near the student's house. Some pictures show how busy squares in the city center can get when there is an event happening. Although the majority of photographs come from various parts of the inner city, it can be said that there are not many common points in the photographs. However, there are many photographs taken within Valentino Park, highlighting common characteristics of the park. Students shared different perspectives of the Po River seen from Valentino Park. There are pictures also showing the strong greenery the park has in relation to the river. Furthermore, students have shared pictures showing the strong possibility of having picnics in the green areas of the park. Although most of the pictures shared in Valentino Park are taken during daytime, few of them were taken at nighttime, showing that students do go to the park during the night, even in way to think of as a representation of the city for them. A few of the photographs taken from the vista points of the city gave a panoramic view, were also shared by some of the students. In terms of landmark and specific structures, common ones shared by students were Valentino Castle, Mole Antonelliana, and Basilica of Superga. Although Mole Antonelliana is known to be the symbol of the city, there were only 4 photographs of it shared as well as the Basilica of Superga while 10 different photographs of Valentino Castle (see fig.53) was shared,

emphasizing the importance of the castle for the international students. In addition, students collectively contributed 13 photographs depicting culinary delights (see fig.54), highlighting their strong relation with cultural cuisine of Turin, as well as 17 photographs featuring their friends. A subset of these images, captured in both private and public spaces, combination of shared food and time with friends, thus illuminating passions for culinary collaboration and entertainment within social circles.

Overall, the interviews conducted with 20 international university students of Turin, who are good representative groups of the survey done before, were crucial to receive details and insights about the research. Students have given their perspective regarding the city and shared details in terms of their daily life movements and locational preferences. The research gathered important data to be discussed and compared at the end of the thesis to develop a better understanding of what are the locational preferences of international university students of Turin and what are the reasons behind that.

Figure 53: Photo of Valentino Castle, given by interviewee number 10.



Figure 54: Photo of traditional foods, given by interviewee number 1.

3.3. Key Findings of the Results

Following the receiving and investigating a variety of findings, to summarize, the most crucial elements must be sorted. These components are also further tackled and discussed in the next parts of the thesis. Derived from a synthesis both the results of the survey and interview, important points can be sorted as,

1. Diverse Respondent Demographics : The beneficial variety of the respondent in terms of nationality is noteworthy.

2. Efficacy of Snowball Technique : The effectiveness of snowball technique in gathering data needs acknowledgment.

3. Urban Environment Factors : Importance of transport, landmarks, accessibility, walkability, flexibility and affordability in the urban environments emerging as a crucial factor shaping perceptions of the city and its navigability.

4. Proximity to University and Leisure Activities : The proximity to the educational institutions and leisure activities holds a significant value over the preferences of university students.

5. Emphasis on Main Streets : The importance given to the main streets like Via Roma is considerable.

6. District Preferences : Centro and San Salvario emerge as the most preferred districts.

7. Valentino Castle : Preference related to Valentino Castle for study purposes, is a crucial observation to investigate further.

8. Non-conventional Venue Preferences : Preference for venues outside conventional academic settings.

9. Preference for Private Settings : Tendency of the university students to spend more time in private settings like their home or a friend's house.

10. Valentino Park : Value given to Valentino Park, especially considering its multifunctionality and location.

11. Absence of Specific Venue Mentions : The fact that no particular café, restaurant and bar/nightlife locations name came up worths observing further along.

12. Interest in Other International Cultures : The fact that students are not interested in any culture activity of their own countries but interested in learning about other cultures through international activities.

13. Diverse Friend Groups : International students have mixed cultured friend groups.

14. Common Interview Findings : Common points identified across interview activities serve as pivotal points for further analysis.

Given the importance of these identified components, they deserve comprehensive exploration and discussion. For this reason, it has been integrated into the fourth part of the thesis to be examined in depth.

04.

After conducting the survey and interviews, and their results were analyzed and sorted, this part of the thesis delves into the discussion where the implications and interpretations of the results are taken into consideration. In order to address any inconsistencies and offer perspectives on the broader significance of the research outcomes, a critical examination of the data presented in the previous chapters had been done. Furthermore, the second part of this chapter delves into relationship between the findings and literature mentioned before in order to see how related the outcomes are with the existing

DISCUSSION

4.1. Discussion of the Result

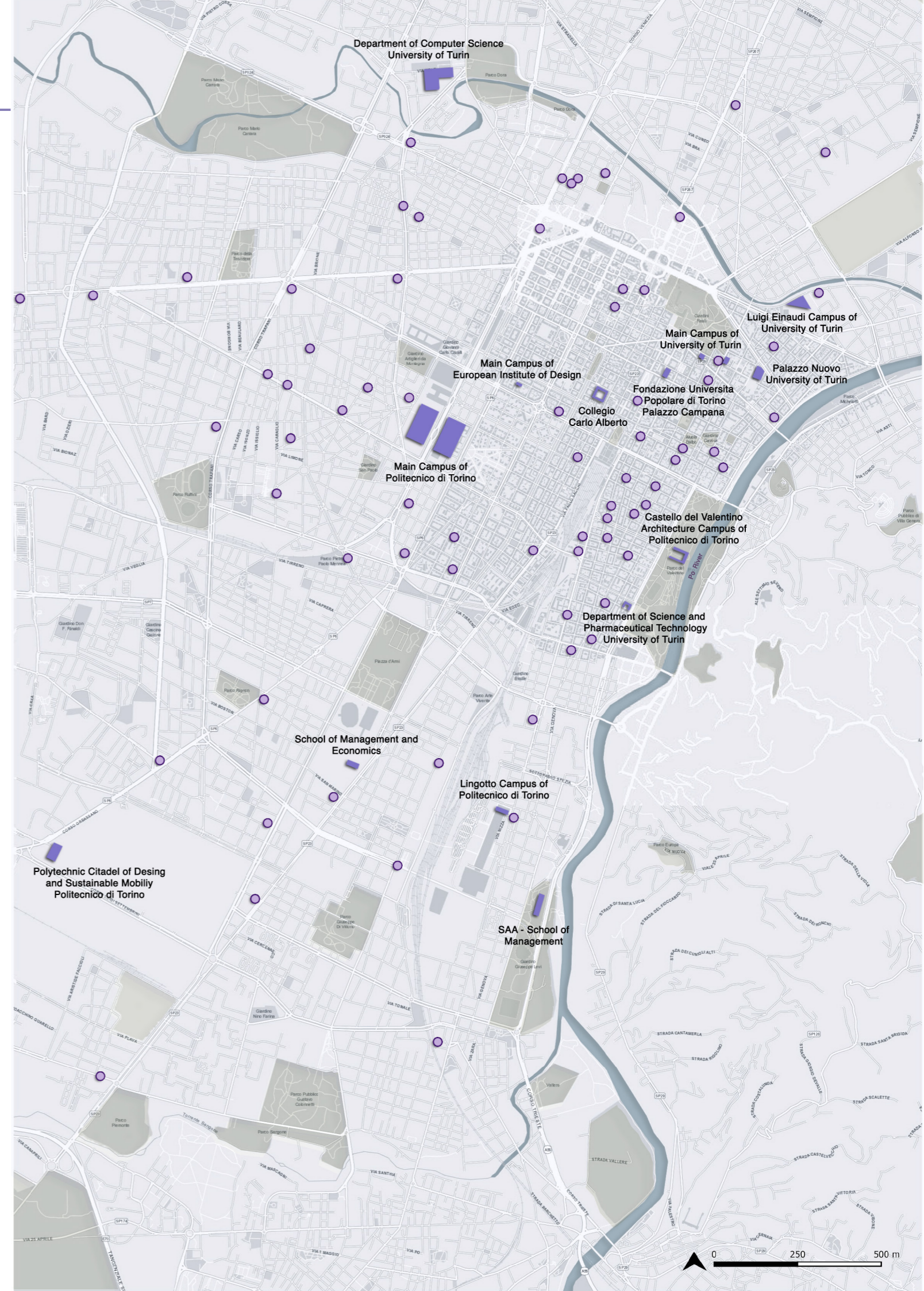
Upon thorough examination of the results, it can be said that both the survey and interviews successfully engaged a good number and demographically balanced group of participants. Participants were well distributed in terms of age, gender and length of residence in Turin. Furthermore, the fact that the addresses of the participants are well spread throughout the province increases the comprehensiveness of the research. This distribution, together with the diversity of nationalities of the participants, provides a diverse data set that is highly useful for the study and created a good, started point for the discussion of the results.

To make a critic to the gathering of the participants, although it did not create any problems considering the variety of results in many aspects, in terms of reaching students from different universities snowball sampling was not beneficial, resulting to most of the students participating in the research attending to Polytechnic University of Turin.

The spatial distribution of international students in Turin shows a remarkable distribution pattern across the city. Although there is a noticeable concentration of students near Polytechnic University of Turin's Architecture campus, a significant portion of international students reside in various neighborhoods in Turin (see fig.55). This widespread distribution emphasizes the integration of international university students into various urban areas, contributing to the cultural and social diversity of the city beyond the proximity of university campuses. Such a residence pattern suggests that international students interact more broadly with the city, encouraging interaction between multiple areas. This distribution enhances the daily experiences and social dynamics of the participants, creating a richer and more diverse contribution to the urban fabric of Turin. The integration of these students into different neighborhoods underscores their role in the broader urban context and improves the cultural exchange and diversity throughout the city. This expansion not only benefits international students by providing a variety of urban experiences, but also enriches local communities by offering a variety of cultural perspectives and interactions.

Data gathered on the navigability of various neighborhoods for international students in Turin reveals several key aspects that affect their ease of movement. In this case, Centro, San Salvario and Crocetta neighborhoods are especially favored by these students. First of all, accessibility to these areas by public transportation, strategically located bus stops and central location make these neighborhoods more attractive by significantly reducing travel time. Moreover, architectural landmarks in these neighborhoods serve as important navigation aids that help students remember places and navigate safely. The

Figure 55: Map of universities and addresses of the respondents in the city. Authors' elaboration.



orthogonal street layout combined with well-connected routes and convenient walkways further facilitates ease of movement. Furthermore, participants showed that they pay more attention to the main streets with main commercial elements like via Roma and transportation spots like Corso Vittorio Emanuele II. The fact that these streets connected to each other, in a direct way, thanks to the grid system and their high usage and preference, illustrates how this system improves the connectivity and accessibility of these streets thereby making it easier to navigate. The frequency of visits also plays a critical role; Students often find it easier to navigate these neighborhoods as they become more familiar with them through regular travel, either because they reside there or because of the proximity of the university. These findings illustrate how international students perceive and interact with the urban environment, highlighting the importance of certain urban elements in enhancing navigability. These elements include transportation infrastructure, architectural landmarks, street connectivity, walkability, and overall accessibility. The increased familiarity with these elements through repeated exposure also contributes to better navigation. Students' perspectives align with broader principles of urban accessibility, emphasizing the removal of barriers to make seamless participation possible in daily activities. This understanding underscores that for international university students, as for any city dweller, factors such as transportation efficiency, recognizable landmarks, street design, walkability, and overall accessibility are crucial in shaping their perceptions and experiences of the city. Ultimately, it can be said that these factors collectively contribute to an urban environment that supports ease of navigation, thereby increasing the city's overall livability and inclusiveness for international university students. The data shows that attention to these urban design elements can significantly improve the integration and daily experiences of the students, reflecting universal urban planning principles that benefit all city residents.

Another crucial topic to discuss is the possible reasons behind why the international students prefer Centro and San Salvario to socialize with peers. As it was mentioned before, the main reasons behind these preferences are the accessibility of these neighborhoods and the variety of options. Compared to other neighborhoods, Centro and San Salvario boast a higher concentration of restaurants, cafes, bars, and nightlife venues, making them more vibrant and attractive for social activities hence more crowded. The abundance of social spaces is due not only to the number of venues, but also to their proximity to each other, providing students with the flexibility to move as they wish. This adaptability is consistent with the social behavior of many young people who seek dynamic and active environments. Although this aspect does not distinguish international university students from their local peers, it is noteworthy that these neighborhoods are also known for being more expensive and touristy. This raises questions about the socio-economic background of international students and suggests that they may belong to transnationally mobile elites. However, as can be seen from the data, affordability plays an important

role in location preferences. Many participants stated that they preferred affordable venues and events. This duality in preferences (choosing both more expensive, touristy areas and affordable options) underlines the complex economic situation of international students. This shows that while they enjoy the diversity and vibrancy of Centro and San Salvario, they are also conscious of budget constraints, looking for social options that are both luxurious and affordable. This preference pattern highlights the importance of diverse urban amenities that appeal to different economic capacities, increasing the overall attractiveness and inclusiveness of these neighborhoods. The choice of such neighborhoods reflects a broader trend among international university students to seek environments that offer both social vitality and economic flexibility, thereby enriching their urban experience. This dual approach not only reflects their socio-economic diversity but also their ability to integrate and contribute to the urban social fabric of Turin.

Moreover, the tendency of students to spend time indoors, whether in their own house or that of a friend, is worth a discussion. Several factors contribute to this preference, with affordability being one of the first. For international students, socializing at home rather than in restaurants or bars offers a cost-effective alternative, allowing them to avoid the higher expenses that come with dining out. In addition to financial considerations, the environment of a house provides an opportunity for students to engage in cultural activities, such as cooking traditional foods from their home countries. This not only serves as a means of cost savings but also fosters a sense of cultural continuity and communal bonding among peers rather if they share similar backgrounds or not. Furthermore, the private setting of a home provides a more relaxed and comfortable atmosphere. Students may feel a greater sense of freedom to express themselves and engage in activities without the social constraints possible to see in public venues. This environment can enhance their overall social experience, causing deeper connections and a sense of belonging. The preference for home-based socializing also reflects broader trends in urban living, where the house becomes a central space for social interaction and cultural expression. This shift underscores the importance of domestic spaces in the urban experience of international students, highlighting the role of the home as both a sanctuary and a social hub. The tendency of students to spend time in domestic settings can be attributed to a combination of affordability, cultural practices, and the desire for a comfortable, private environment. It highlights the significance of the house in the urban fabric, where homes serve as vital sites for social interaction and cultural continuity. This perspective adds depth to the understanding of how international university students navigate and interact with their urban surroundings, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of the experience.

However, the preference to remain at home extends beyond socializing to include academic activities as well. The students' inclination to use their houses as study spaces points to deficiencies in the public and institutional

study environments available to them. Here, in fact, international university students have highlighted a unique pattern in their study habits, expressing a need to utilize non-conventional venues for academic work. This need comes from the observation that the culture in Turin's cafes and restaurants generally does not support the practice of studying. Unlike in some other cities where cafes serve as informal study spaces, the social norms and operational practices of Turin's cafes and restaurants, generally, do not accommodate this activity, thus making students seek alternative locations. This situation also highlights how academic activities are going beyond the limits of university campuses since they are different than times where such old universities build, and all academic pursuits shaped around it. The participants of the sample highlight this new model and reflects the change in between the university and the city in the long term. Furthermore, in the future, the preference for studying at home could potentially alter the conventional urban patterns of Turin. If students increasingly retreat to their homes for both social and academic purposes, this might reduce their engagement with public spaces which will end up impacting the vibrancy and utilization of such areas. Additionally, the lack of use of cafes and restaurants as potential study venues could prompt a reconsideration of how these spaces are utilized and perceived within the urban context.

When it comes to the study locations, Valentino castle also stands up. Although considering many of the students participated in the survey have an architectural background, it's logical to assume for them to naturally gravitate toward an architecture campus, survey results show that this preference isn't just about academic discipline. The data reveal additional factors influencing this choice, pointing to a more complex set of motivations. First of all, Valentino campus is not the only one where architecture and planning students are taking classes in, therefore their preference is not only due to their frequent visits. As the reasons behind, many mention how the location is convenient and accessible, similar to the first discussion. The strategic location of the campus, its connectivity to other parts of the city and the availability of facilities contribute to its popularity among international university students. Secondly, it has been seen that the international students also value the culture and architectural value the castle has. They are seen it as a symbol of the city, therefore would like to appreciate and be around it as much as they can. This preference reminds that these students have chosen this experience to be an international one where they can experience a different culture and the importance of designing educational spaces that meet a wide range of needs, thereby improving the overall urban educational experience abroad.

Another data that caught the eye is the fact that there is almost no common answer that comes up in terms of cafes, restaurants, and bars. This result can refer to two different outcomes. Firstly, as some students noted during interviews, their choice to visit various places reflects their desire to explore and experience different aspects of local culture as part of their international journey. This tendency towards diversity and innovation is typical

of individuals who want to maximize exposure to new cultural environments and avoid repetitive experiences. Secondly, this lack of commonality may indicate that Turin's accommodation sector does not effectively meet the expectations and needs of international students. The absence of prominent venues that consistently attract students may indicate a gap in the city's ability to provide attractive and safe social spaces suitable for this demographic. This difference in preferences underscores the dynamic nature of the international university student experience, characterized by a blend of exploration and the search for fulfilling local opportunities. The tendency for students to diversify their choices may highlight a broader desire for cultural interaction and deeper involvement in the local urban environment. Conversely, this may also indicate a disconnect between student expectations and existing services in the city and suggest potential areas for improvement in catering to an international clientele. Additionally, the lack of common favorite places among students points to the individualized nature of their social habits and preferences as international people. It reflects the diverse backgrounds and personal tastes of the international student community and emphasizes the importance of a diverse and inclusive urban environment that can appeal to a wide range of interests and cultural inclinations. In conclusion, while on the one hand, it shows their tendency to explore different cultural experiences; On the other hand, it may also indicate deficiencies in the local hospitality industry's ability to consistently meet its needs. This insight highlights the need for Turin to develop more cohesive and culturally compatible amenities to enhance the urban experience of international residents.

However, in terms of park and garden destinations international university students seem to exhibit a clear preference for Valentino Park. First of all, since the proximity of the place to their house has been found to be a crucial aspect for the participants so far, an analysis of this preference was conducted. Once the examination of the geographic distribution of respondents who identified Valentino Park as their primary destination has been made, it reveals an intriguing observation: proximity to the park does not appear to be a determining factor influencing their choice. (see fig.56) Upon juxtaposing the given addresses of respondents with the location of Valentino Park, it becomes evident that spatial proximity alone does not correlate with the selection of the park as the preferred destination. This finding suggests that factors beyond mere geographic convenience contribute to the appeal of Valentino Park among international students. The park's attractions, such as its large green spaces, recreational facilities, and cultural events, likely play an important role in the park's popularity. Valentino Park offers a unique combination of natural beauty, social opportunities and recreational activities that appeal to the diverse interests of international students. Therefore, while proximity is an important factor in the selection of many urban amenities, the preference for Valentino Park among international university students in Turin underlines the importance of qualitative characteristics. The park's multifaceted appeal, encompassing

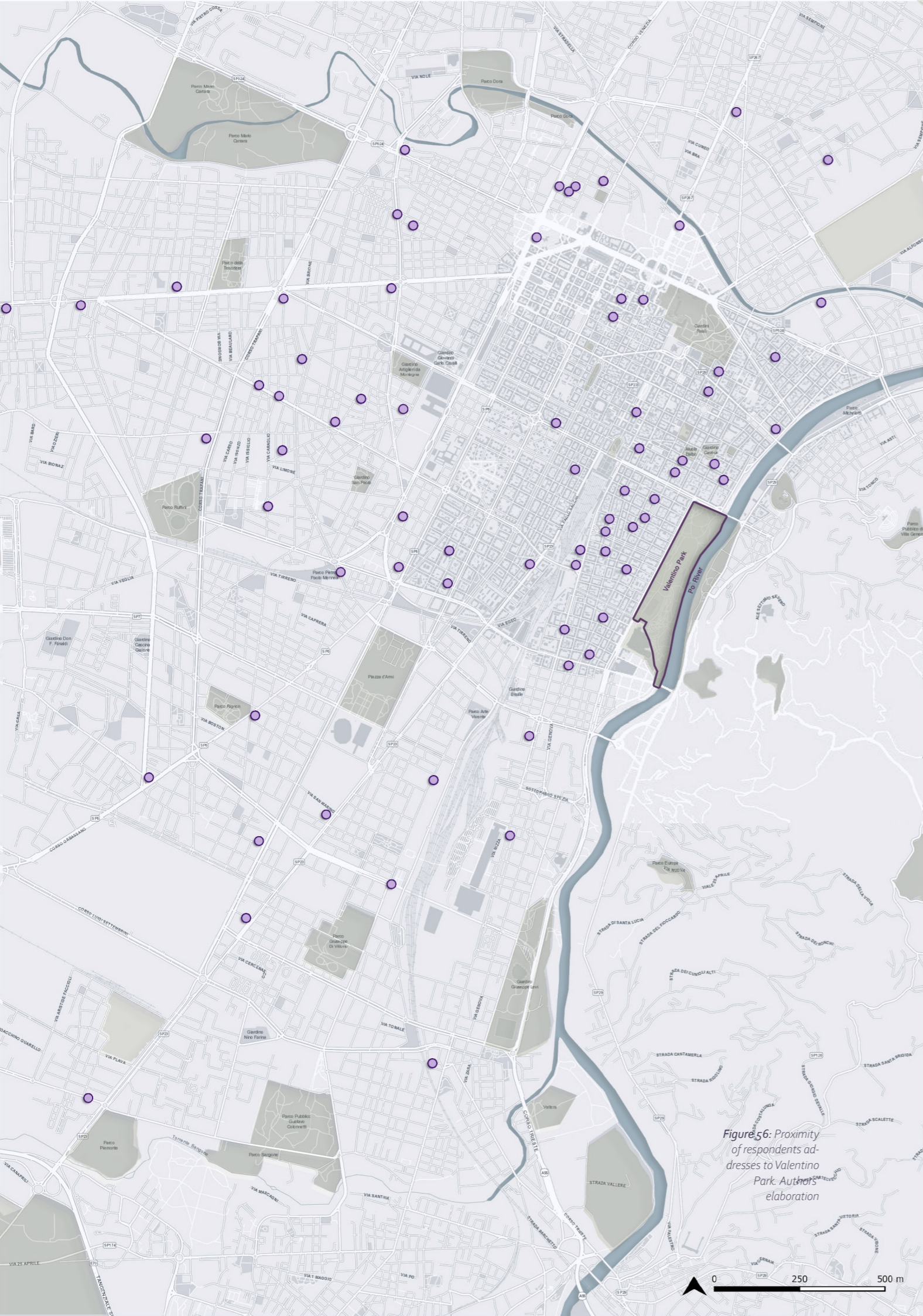


Figure 56: Proximity of respondents addresses to Valentino Park. Authors elaboration

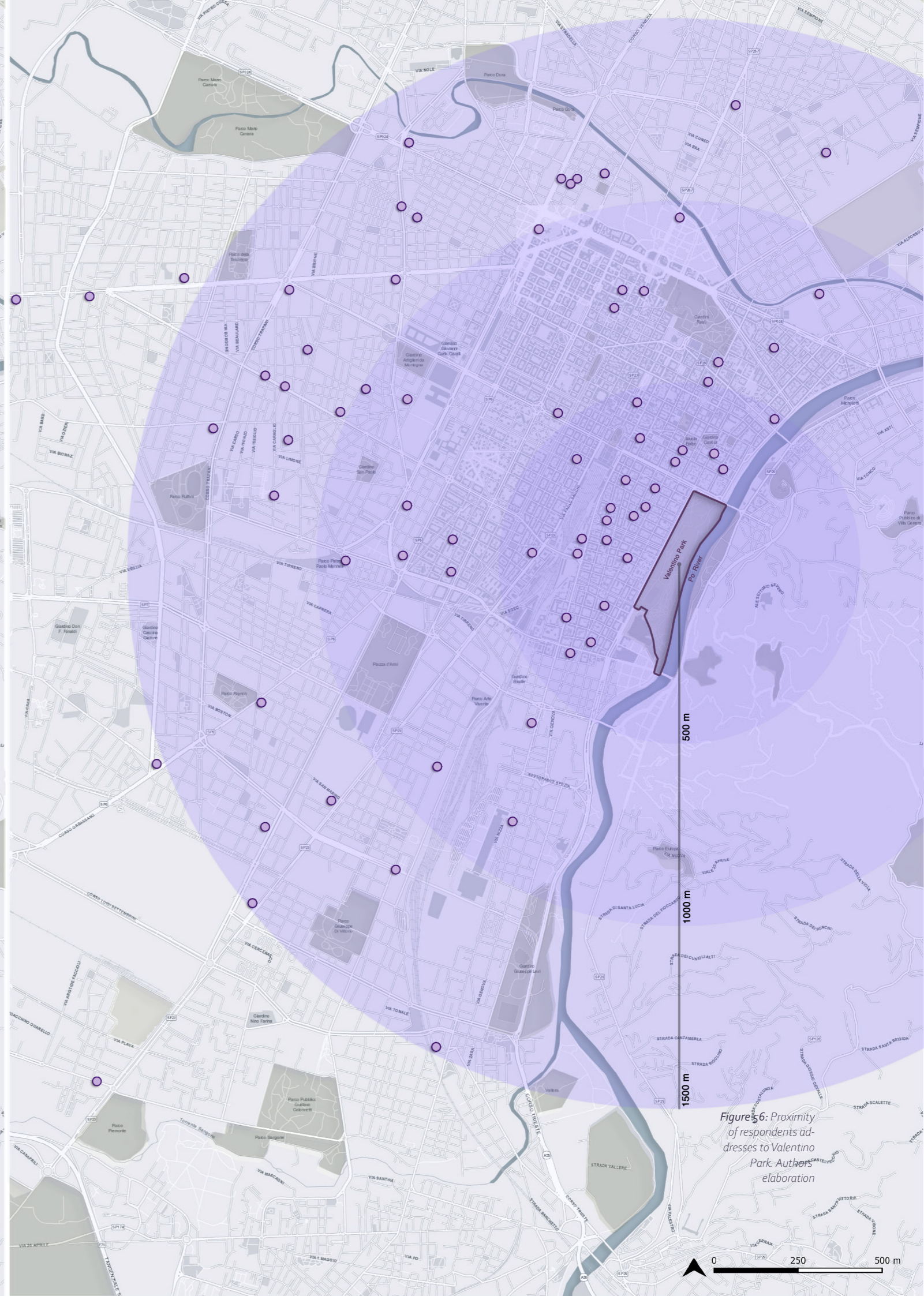


Figure 56: Proximity of respondents addresses to Valentino Park. Authors elaboration

natural, recreational and social dimensions, highlights the complex interplay of factors influencing destination choices in the urban context. This understanding suggests that urban planners and policymakers should consider a holistic approach to urban space design, taking into account the different needs and preferences of the international student population.

The frequent preference of international university students for Valentino Park can be attributed to several factors that is also improving its quality in the urban environment, both according to the results of the survey and the interviews. As seen before, as the element considered more when it comes to prefer a place over others, location of the Valentino Park plays a pivotal role for international students. Situated adjacent to the highly favored neighborhoods of San Salvario and Centro, the park provides an easy access both to them and from them. Due to its central location, the park is also very walkable from different parts of the city, thereby improving its accessibility. In addition to being easy to reach on foot, the park's proximity to multiple transportation systems, including tram, bus, and metro stations, further facilitates access from more distant areas, as also mentioned by the students both in the survey and interviews. The size of Valentino Park is another significant factor contributing to its popularity. Its extensive area not only enhances its accessibility but also provides a diverse range of spaces for different activities. Many students appreciate the presence of bars and cafes within the park, with Imbarchino, located above Valentino Castle and next to the Po River, being particularly notable. Imbarchino's multifunctionality, hosting various activities, is especially appealing to students. Many students mentioned the different activities taking place there which they enjoyed very much. However, the concentration of such activities in a single location could lead to unwanted density and overcrowding in one location. The park's expansive size also allows it to prove an open area where people can create a space for themselves according to the activity they would like to do. This element improves the functionality of the park, giving adaptability. Furthermore, since people are allowed to shape it according to their needs, it means the activity will shape within their budget, making it an affordable option for the international university students as mentioned element that they seek in the city. Another aspect of the park that is also mentioned during the interviews is the variety of landmarks it holds. Whether they are the architectural elements or leisure places in the park, it is evident that they work as a landmark, therefore making it easy for students to navigate themselves in the park. Therefore, the landmarks not only provide visual interest but also serve as reference points, making it easier for students to orient themselves within the park. Of course, the natural elements of the park offer a significant draw. As many of the participants mentioned they like to be in the nature when they went to the park, it gives proof that the Valentino Park has strong natural elements that provides an escape from the city without being too far from it. For sure saying that only international university students are enjoying this would be wrong since enjoying the nature in city is a preference of many citizens.

The popularity of Valentino Park extends beyond international students to the broader citizenry, indicating its role as a vibrant communal space and highlights the fact that the park can get very crowded. Although it sounds like a negative impact, as some students also mentioned, the existence of many people in the park creates a lively atmosphere, fostering social integration and energy. Furthermore, it is seen in the results that many of the students don't mind using the park in different seasons, except the extreme weather situations. The park's design allows for year-round use, with many students indicating their willingness to visit in different seasons, reflecting that the park makes it also possible to navigate in it during the different weather conditions. However, safety concerns present a notable drawback as the main negative outcome. Not feeling safe in the park comes from two main reasons, some students report feeling unsafe due to illegal activities occurring in dark corners of the park and the insufficient lighting during nighttime. Insufficient lighting issue create blind spots therefore shaping space for the illegal activities and make certain areas of the park less accessible and enjoyable after dark, prompting students to leave when the sun sets, even during warmer seasons. Although the main parts of the park are not considered to be very dark, there are many corners in the park, creating blind spots and making it hard to walk near or within them. As a result, while Valentino Park is highly preferred by international university students due to its accessibility, size, diverse facilities and natural beauty, it also faces challenges from security and crowding. Addressing these concerns, particularly through improved lighting and security measures, could further enhance the attractiveness and functionality of the park and make it an even more integral part of Turin's urban landscape for students and residents alike.

When considering proposed additions to Valentino Park, it is crucial to ensure that these enhancements do not disrupt the existing elements and overall character of the park. With this in mind, it is noteworthy that, aside from the construction of more café points and public restrooms, the suggestions offered by interviewees are feasible and can be implemented without significantly altering the current state of the park. One interesting observation is that some of the amenities requested by the students, such as play areas and gym equipment for light exercise, are already present within the park. This indicates two important aspects: first, the large size of Valentino Park, and second, the potential navigational challenges that might prevent users from discovering these existing facilities. This proposes that improved wayfinding and better signage could enhance user awareness and accessibility within the park. Among the suggested improvements, the enhancement of the park's lighting design stands out as an important recommendation. Improved lighting would address safety concerns by lighting up the dark corners and reducing the occurrence of blind spots, thereby making the park more inviting and secure during nighttime. This change is not just a minor improvement but a necessary intervention to ensure safety and create comfort of park visitors. In the end, these suggestions are not seen as drastic changes but rather as supplementary enhancements

that would improve the functionality and accessibility of the park, making it more enjoyable for international university students and other users. Meeting these needs could significantly elevate the park's role as a vital urban space, fostering a safer and more engaging environment for all visitors.

In analyzing the activities discussed during the interviews, it can be said that many common elements regarding to city's elements and their connections have been received. From the mental maps drawn by the students, it's evident that the main element of the city is well recognized and understood including their connections to each other. The way many of the students included these connections on their maps reflects that Turin is perceived as a well-connected urban space by the students. Furthermore, it is seen that students pay attention to the location of their residences and its connection to the various part of the city (see fig.57). Including these connections, it emphasizes the frequent use of these routes and the ease with which students navigate them, underlining the importance of connectivity in their daily lives. Moreover, it's evident that students memorized architectural and cultural elements while creating their idea of the city, indicating that these elements are significant in their conceptualization of the city (see fig.58). Another intriguing observation is how student associates' certain elements to the locations, showing how often they have done and nature of activities they engage in or witness in these areas. For example, as some students did, depicting glasses and different foods for San Salvario district, illustrating the area's vibrant social and culinary scene (see fig. 59). This association reflects the importance of social and cultural hubs in the students' urban experience. Another part seen highly in the map showing the importance for the students were the trees in the city, it seems that students pay attention to the locations where a lot of trees exist, of course for example, Valentino Park (see fig.60). These green locations provide a necessary rest from the urban landscape and are integral to the students' perception of the city. Furthermore, emotional connections to the locations were also evident, like where interviewee number 18 included the location she got married, indicating personal and sentimental value attached to certain urban spaces (see fig. 61). These emotional ties add a layer of depth to the students' interaction with the city, reflecting how personal experiences and memories are intertwined with the urban fabric. When it comes to pictures, in addition to the highly seen common elements, it's evident that shared activities and food with their peers are a huge part of the student's experience, therefore reflects the importance regarding the role of social interactions and communal experiences in shaping their urban experience (see fig.62). Common elements of both mental map and pictures suggest that the patterns of city usage created by international university students are not very unique but rather align with general urban navigational habits.

According to the data, its seen that international university students are not keen to have activities specific to their country during their experience in Turin. Although some of them mentioned having or had few activities, most

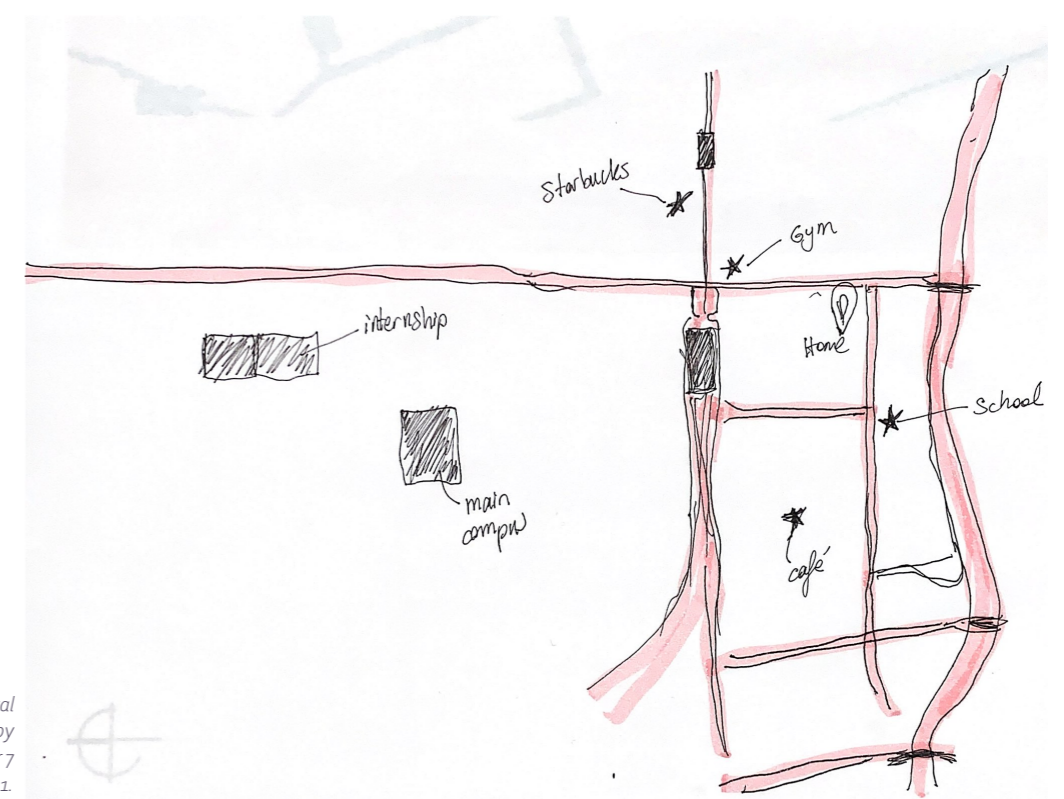
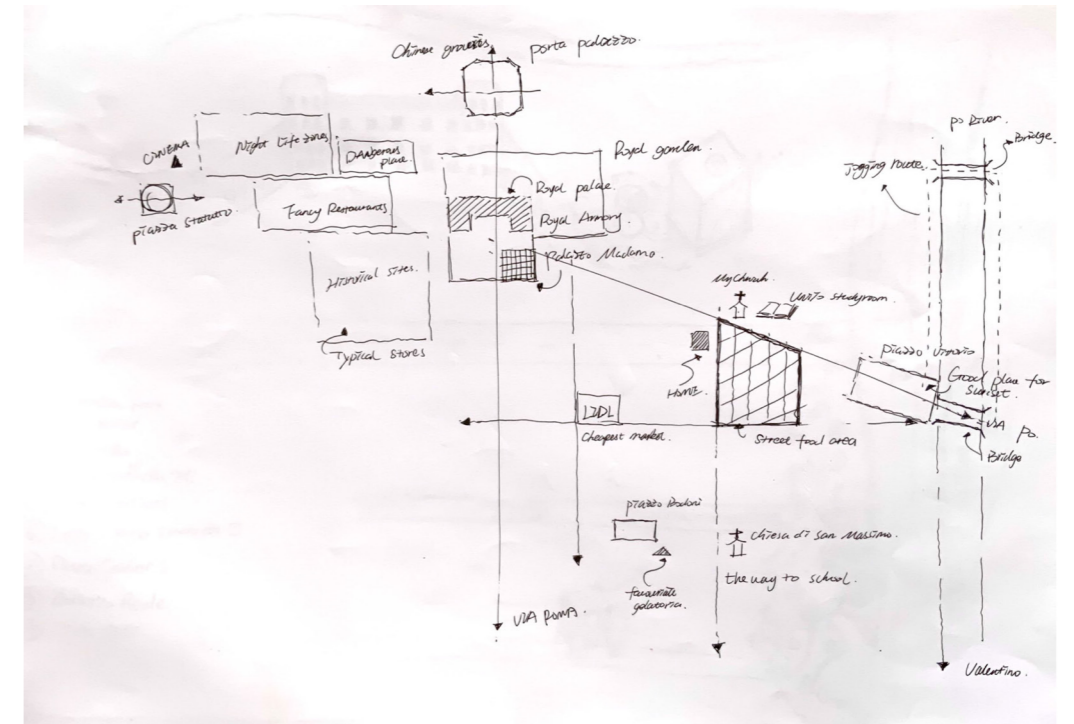


Figure 57: Mental map done by interviewee number 7 and 11.

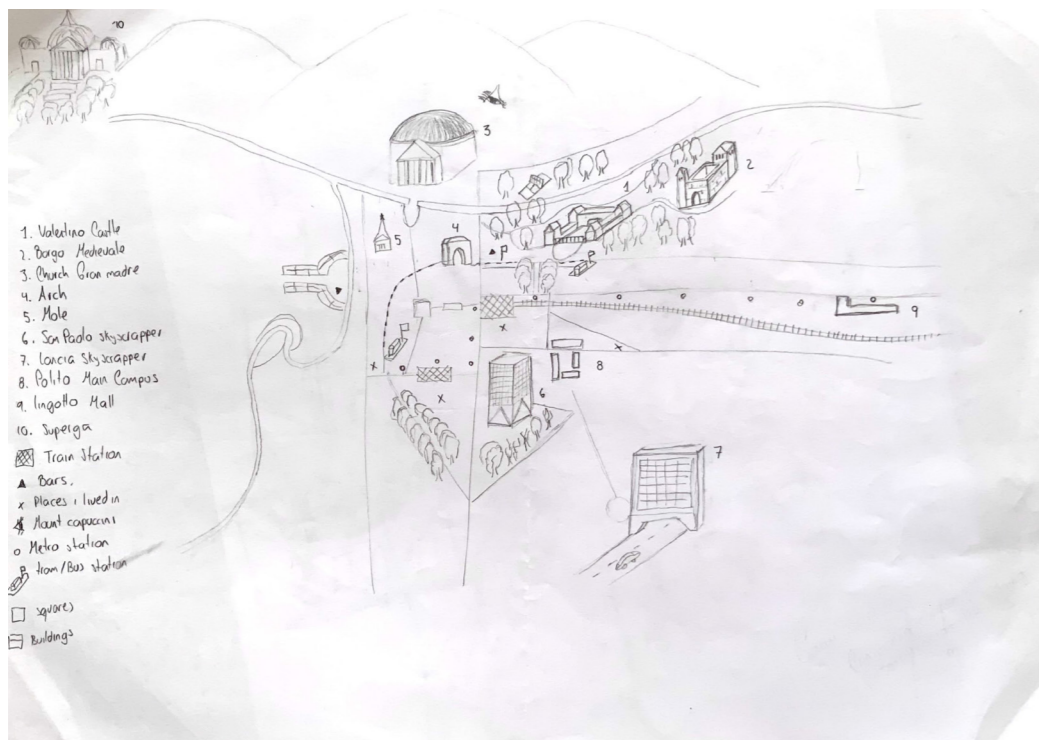
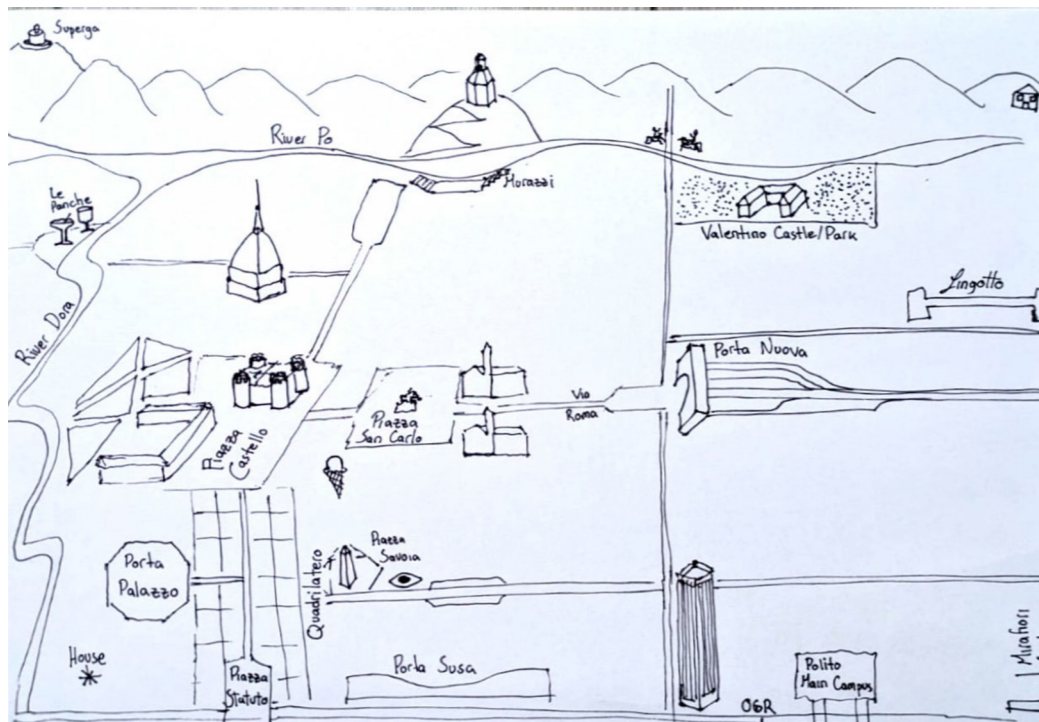


Figure 58: Mental map done by interviewee number 4 and 5.

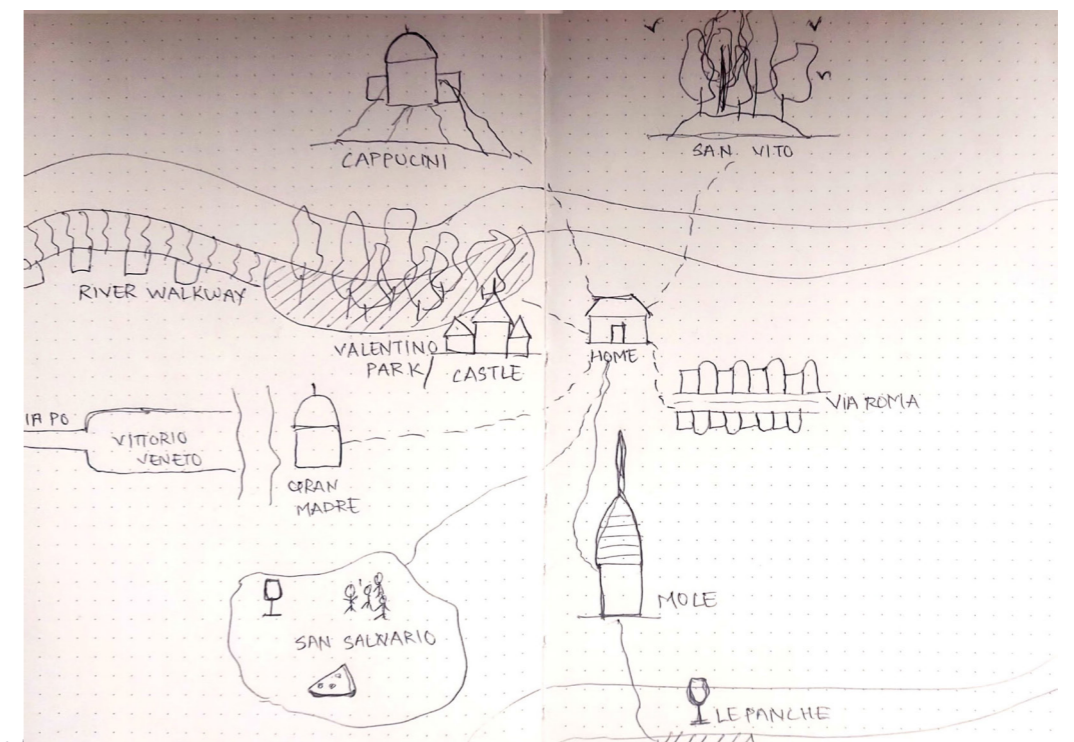
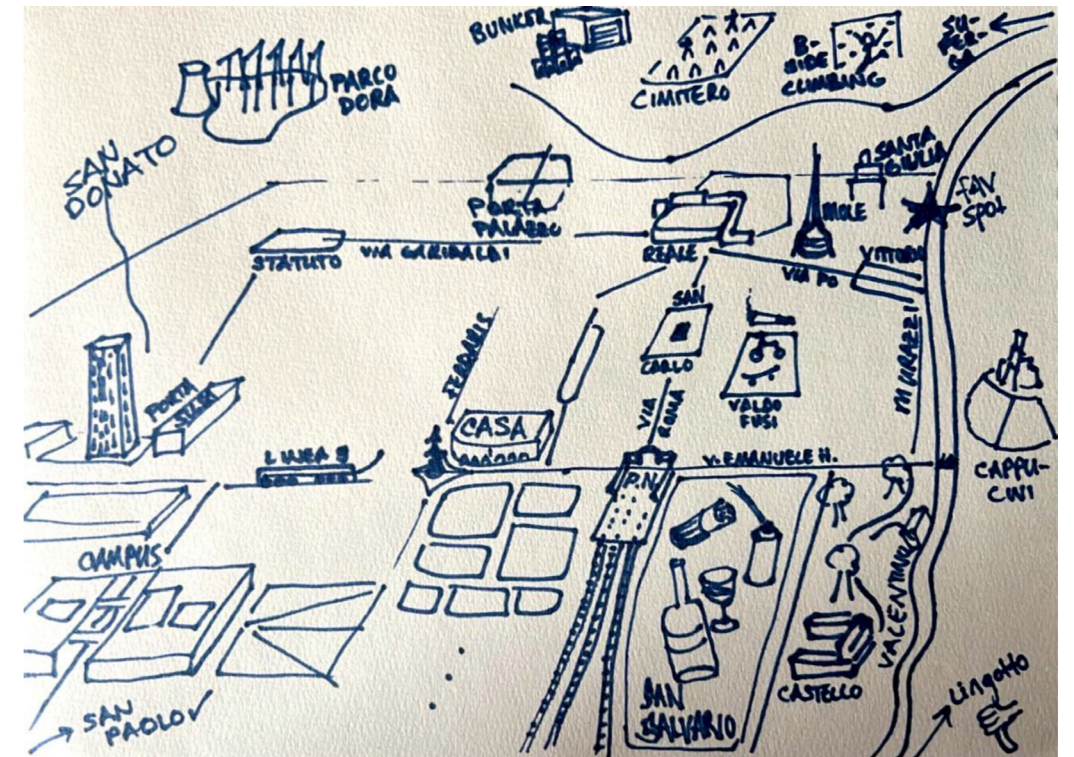


Figure 59: Mental map done by interviewee number 9 and 12.

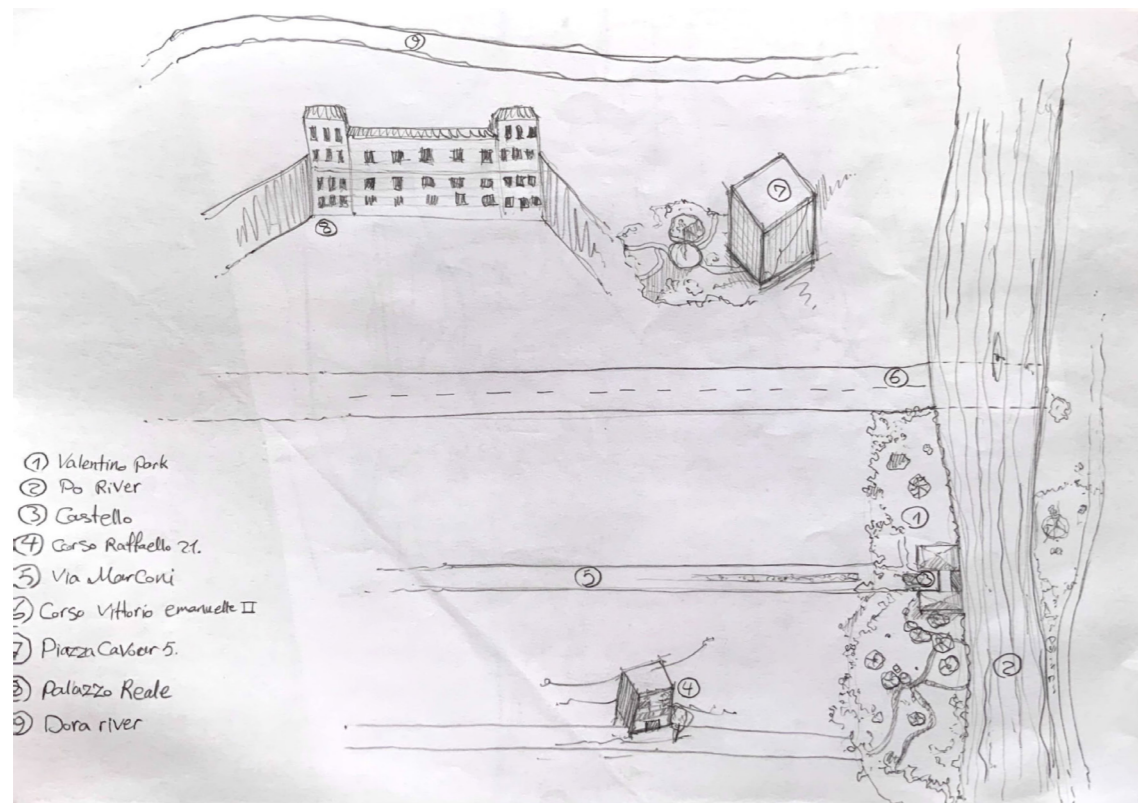
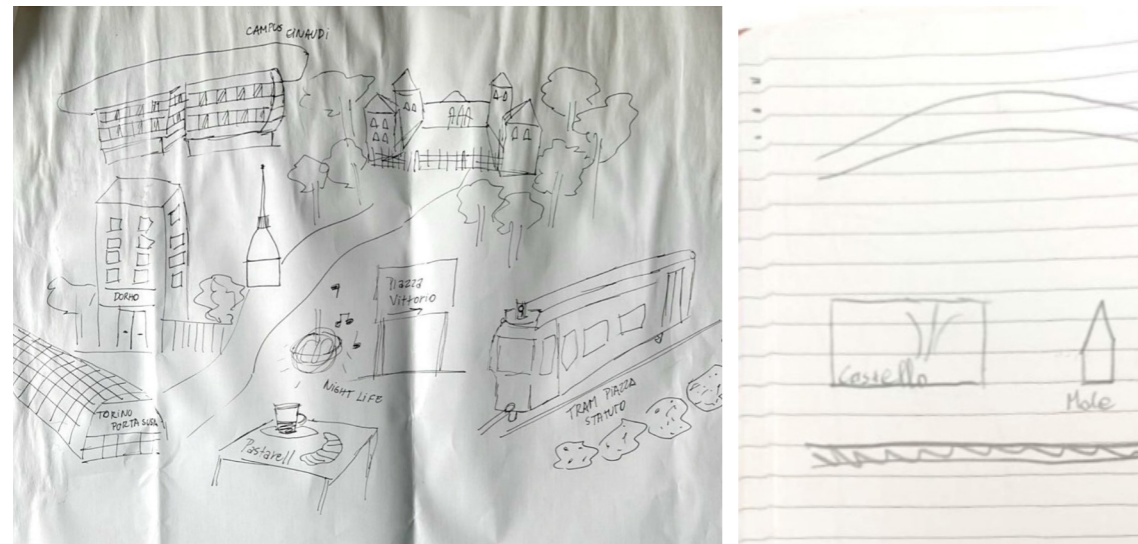
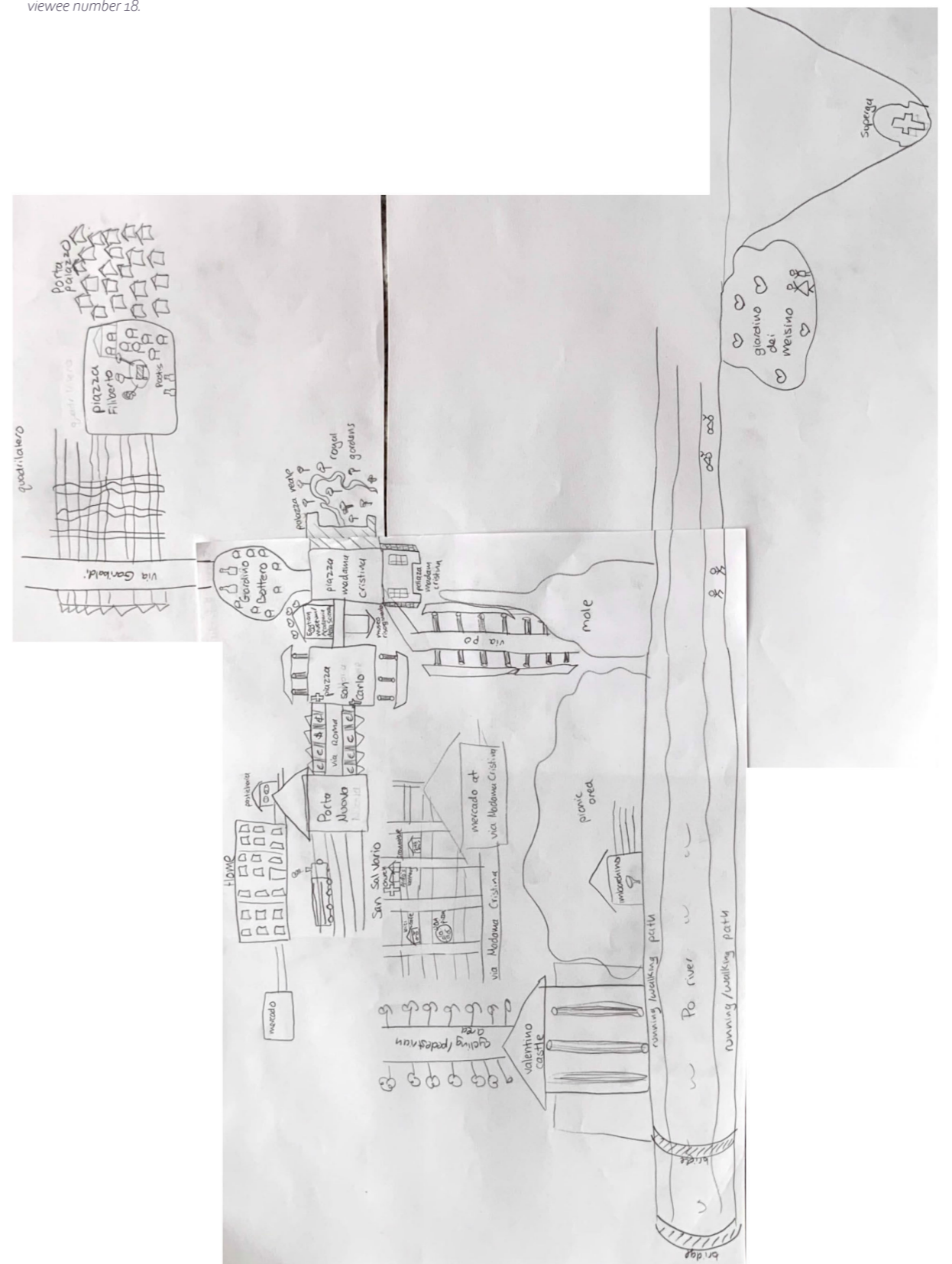


Figure 60: Mental map done by interviewee number 2, 16 and 19.

Figure 61: Mental map done by interviewee number 18.





of them are not happening in an urban environment and not shaped by an organization or the city. The main international activities they mentioned that they like to participate in are, regarding to cooking, celebrating national holidays and playing games where all of which takes place in private settings with small group of friends. Once it was further investigated in the interviews, it became clear that considering the students have come here to have an international experience, they are mostly interested in having international activities and learn more about the Italian culture. Furthermore, it's observed that they are also interested in learning about other cultures that their peers are coming from. Many of the students highlighted their interest on participating activities where they can experience other cultures and benefit more from living in an environment including people from a variety of cultures. In addition to this, the fact of them having a diverse friend group illustrates how keen they are to interact with different cultures.

Overall, the data reveals that international university students in Turin show limited interest in participating in activities specific to their home country during their stay. Students expressed a strong desire to participate in activities that would expose them to different cultural practices and enrich their understanding of the diverse global community of which they are a part. However, the current urban environment and current activity models in Turin do not adequately meet the needs of these international students for intercultural interaction and international engagement.

To conclude, it can be said that the results gathered offer a multifaced perspective on the experiences of international university students in Turin, revealing several key topics to be discussed about. Although Turin has few gaps in the city's infrastructure and services in terms of providing for the needs and demands of the international students, it can be said that arguments show students are able to find a space for themselves to cater their needs and navigate through the city effectively. The discussion of these gatherings provided the research with valuable depth, developing a better understanding of how students navigate and interact with their urban surroundings and how their preferences shift towards. This insight into students' preferences and behaviors offers a detailed view of their urban experience, which is critical for developing strategies to improve their integration and satisfaction. Students' ability to engage with and adapt to the urban landscape reflects positively on Turin's capacity to support a diverse and international student population, indicating a generally successful integration into the city's social and spatial urban fabric.

Figure 62: Collage of the pictures provided by the interviewees. Authors' elaboration.

4.2. Discussion of the Results With Literature Review

The objective has been enhancing the understanding of the subject matter by contextualizing the results in relation to the relative literature and theoretical frameworks mentioned before. There are several aspects of the results that are resonate strongly with the existing literature.

Firstly, the results indicate that students are not located near the university campuses but all over the city. This observation aligns with the theories suggested by Cortes who says that how increasing number of students triggers the urban renewal, this positioning of the students across Turin shows the potential of urban renewal overall in the city. Furthermore, considering over a quarter of the student population are living either in Centro or San Salvario which are neighborhoods also known with their vibrant leisure activities, highlights the statements of how new, young and social class can create new patterns, changing the trends in production and consumption in these areas (Roberts & Sykes, 2000, Grogger & Eide, 1995). This way it can be considered that the influx of students in these areas likely contributes to increase the commercial activities in time. On the other hand, this preference can be simple regarding the existing leisure sector in the area, improving the appeal and quality of the area and making it more attractive to live and study (Evans & Ilbery, 1993; Hall & Page, 2014). This situation demonstrates how the presence of a significant student population can both influence and be influenced by the city. Integrating these findings with Lynch and Jacobs' theoretical perspectives, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of how international college students interact with and influence the urban landscape.

Furthermore, the results illustrated that there are few key elements that students care for when it come to understand the area more clearly and have an easier navigation, which are transportation, landmarks, grid pattern of the streets, accessibility, walkability and leisure activities. Moreover, the literature regarding the urban reading of a citizen reflects similar elements. In his work, Lynch, (1960) also provides five main elements (paths, edges, nodes, landmarks, and districts) to structure the visual perceptions of the citizens when they imagine the city. These features in the city improve how they recall and navigate their environments thereby improving their experiences. Students' emphasis on landmarks and grid patterns reflects Lynch's framework because these features facilitate easier orientation and movement within the urban environment.

Regarding accessibility, students' high interest on easy and short travel time within the city, reminds the concepts suggested by Jane Jacobs, (1961) proving that international university students also develop a strong relationship between walkability and the neighborhood. As Jacob suggested, the continuous street

network of Turin enables students to navigate easily in the city. Considering that international university students are a part of the users of the city, it's inevitable for them to have such similar way of reading of the city as existing studies shows for all citizens.

Within the context of Lynch and Jacobs' theories, the research highlights how international college students, as active urban users, develop similar spatial and wayfinding understandings as other city dwellers. This alignment with existing studies strengthens the validity of the observed patterns and provides a comprehensive perspective on international students' urban experiences. Although students did not provide a specific location for their recreational activities, their interest in trying new places proofs their existence as a consumer group in the urban population (Chatterton, 2010). International university students stated how keen on they are the concept of pubs, bars, nightclubs and fast-food establishments, mirroring the leisure activities typical of a youthful demographic, throughout their responses, highlighting the importance that should be given to the student urban services sector as Zasina (2010) mentioned. This direction can take Turin to be one of the 'consumption-oriented student cities' (Chatterton, 2010). This concept includes cities that meet the consumption needs of a vibrant student population and thus integrate students more deeply into the urban fabric. The existence of this consumer group can increase the demand for various urban services and thus impact the economic and social dynamics of the city.

Another element of interest is where students prefer to do these activities. The results indicate that they choose mainly the neighborhoods that are considered to be richer parts of the city, as mentioned before. This situation suggests the potential classification of these students to be included in the 'transnational urban consumers', as described by Calvo (2018). Although in his work Calvo proves that this class does exist, in the case of Turin presents features that warrant further examination, considering that students also mentioned affordability. Although as in his example in Lisbon, international students of Turin also prefer more touristic locations and activities, they are driven by the desire for varied experience within a budget. Their strong reference on affordability does not goes hand in hand with the concept of 'transnational urban consumers' since it does not refer to a strong economic background. These findings align with Marcuse's (1997) findings on the importance of affordability during the stay of the students. Coming strong from two different points of view, this topic might need further research.

Additionally, another element that does not correspond well with Calvo's work (2018) arises in the social interactions of the international university students. He suggests that due to the touristic activities international students engage highly with, they tend spend those times with their peers from their home country. However, the finding of this research reflected that they more prefer to have more mixed group of friends including Italians. Highlighting the potential for more integrated and diverse environments in Turin. The findings show that

the experiences of students in Turin are shaped by economic constraints and the desire for cultural integration as they engage in richer neighborhoods and tourist activities.

Furthermore, although the results have indicated that the preference of Valentino Park is highly related to itself as a park with its unique qualities, this preference aligns with existing literature providing confirmation on the reasons behind. Chiesura (2004) emphasizes that having an urban park nearby that is easy to reach, provides them with many opportunities to have different activities according to their needs, enhancing their attractiveness. Moreover, the presence of an urban park benefits the well-being and improves happiness (Kim&Jin, 2018) and fosters an environment to socialize (Jacobs, 1961). Therefore, the findings of this study support and extend the arguments presented in the literature. Students' preference for Valentino Park can be attributed to accessibility, variety of activities, and social features, which have been documented as important factors in enhancing the urban experience. This consistency between the outcomes of the research and existing literature not only confirms the findings but also strengthens the theoretical frameworks underlying urban studies.

Overall, it's evident that the result of the research provides strong evidence supporting existing theories and provides further argument for the existing literature. Consistency with scientific literature highlights the importance of understanding international university students' locational preferences and behaviors. This contributes to a more nuanced understanding of urban dynamics and the role of public spaces in promoting social interaction. Validating these elements strengthens the overall research and provides a solid foundation for further investigation of the interaction between higher education institutions, international university students and urban environments.

05.

Towards the end of the research, in this chapter the focus shifts toward drawing conclusions. First of part the chapter concluding the entirety of the research, highlighting whether if the expected outcomes have been achieved. Subsequently, the chapter aimed to state the possible areas for future exploration, both in order to gain more dept in the research and to improve the urban environment for the international university students.

CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Conclusion of the Research

To sum up, this thesis has undertaken a comprehensive examination of the interaction between international university students and the urban environment of Turin, Italy. Focusing on these students' location preferences, navigational behaviors, and interaction patterns, the research gives insight into the broader dynamics of higher education-driven urban transformation.

At the very beginning of the research theoretical framework has given some strong arguments. Firstly, the research went into more detail and looked into the relationship between the Higher Education Institutions and cities. It was evident from the literature that these institutions started to have an important role as participants in the economy of the cities. Many literatures written about the concept of "studentification" such as Smith (2005) highlighted the potential outcomes of the increase student population shed light for the foundation of the research and developed an understanding of how these students can impact the cities. In the light of that cities wanted to attract more students as users of the city who came for education. Among Higher Education Students, international students seem to be particularly relevant in urban change since they participate in knowledge economy, and in leisure economy (Calvo, 2018). The increasing numbers of international students all over the world (UNESCO, 2022), proves potential benefits and the fact how cities successfully attract the students. However, the navigation, locational preferences and interaction patterns of the international university students found to be less questioned. Their interest in having more activities and learning more about other cultures have been found, and due to these, their patterns were likening to young tourists which raises the question of whether if they are a part of "transnational urban consumers".

The research methodology used in the research effectively combined the methods of survey and interviews, to capture a comprehensive picture of international university students, in its case study: Turin. With its rich historical background and substantial student's population, Turin created an ideal case to study as a university city. The survey method, which was conducted online, provided a sufficient way to reach a variety of student participation while interviews gave the research an in-dept perspective.

Conducted with 84 students from 26 different countries, the results of the survey provided a broad demographic scope (except the variety for enrolled universities) and other diverse outcomes for the research. Furthermore, with 20 of the survey participants, originally from 14 different countries, semi-structured interviews were conducted.

The findings from the survey and interviews highlighted several key aspects of how international university students navigate and perceive Turin. Firstly, when it comes to students' navigation and perception of

the neighborhoods, the findings underscore the importance of landmarks, transportation networks, and walkable streets in shaping students' daily routines. They always mentioned the importance of accessibility and proximity of locations, and their residence. This outcome is also consistent with existing theories in the literature, such as Lynch's elements of city imaginability and Jacobs's principles of walkable urban environments and demonstrates their continued relevance to contemporary contexts.

Furthermore, as young people, students' strong interest for leisure activities and vibrant neighborhoods underscore their role as "transnational urban consumers" in the literature as mentioned before. However, although they exhibit similar behavior to young tourists, the emphasis on affordability and variety of activities suggests that their preferences are primarily influenced by the availability of different options in these neighborhoods they choose to go more often.

In terms of locations to study, the common answer given was Valentino Castle. In addition to being an important cultural structure providing great views, it was found that its central location in the middle of a major park, makes the library inside a convenient and attractive place to study. Rather than going to Valentino Castle, it was found that the next common answer of the students was staying at home. This situation found be related to their preference for private settings and their need for non-conventional venue preferences which found to be limited in Turin.

Furthermore, the most common answer given by the students when it comes to their locational preferences was Valentino Park. This strong preference highlighted the importance of the park for the students. Key reasons behind were the central location of the park, its accessibility via various modes of transportation, its appealing scenery that comes with well-maintained nature and the extensive size of the park facilities different leisure activities as well as space for multifunctional uses. This multifunctionality also provides students with the affordability that they look for and makes the park function as recreational and social hub. Moreover, the data indicate that, despite some deficiencies, such as limited availability of certain amenities or areas that could benefit from improved lighting thereby safety, international students demonstrate a high level of adaptability for the park.

In terms of potential cultural activities and related to their social circles, the data illustrated that students are keener to have international activities in international environments rather than having activities they have become familiar with in their home country. Considering they generally maintain a diverse group of friends originated from different nations, it is seen that they also enjoy learning and experiencing not only Italian culture but also from their other friends with different cultural backgrounds. However, the data indicated that, although they find a way to have mixed social cycles, they seek to have a place to participate in more international activities where they can interact with boarder range of peers.

Lastly, coming from the activities conducted at the end of the interviews, the students' ability to create mental maps that incorporate significant urban elements and their connections underscores Turin's navigability for the participants. Moreover, the common elements in the pictures show they have a more or less similar ways of reading and observing the city reflecting that Turin has an easy way of perception. This spatial awareness, coupled with the students' engagement with both well-known and more obscure locations, highlights their capacity to navigate and utilize the city in diverse ways according to their preference which improves their interaction.

Overall, it can be said that the research has achieved its objective of addressing its question through a set of methods and analysis. The findings reveal that students find it relatively easy to navigate around the city of Turin and maintain a clear image of the city in their minds. This also helps them improve their perception and thereby contributes to their sense of adaptability during their stay. Furthermore, although it is also found that they interact with the city through various ways, the data show that they seek further international interactions in more multifunctional settings. The research also sheds light on lots of elements when it comes to students' selection of a location related to the city like the case of Valentino Park and provided the research with elements they would like to see in the future, which are further explored in the next part of the thesis.

When it comes to the roles students have in the city, according to the analyses, one can argue that their contribution so far has been related to the commercial settings and leisure activities, however once the features international university students aspire to have in the future are considered, the influences of them on urban dynamics can be seen more clearly. All these insights contribute to a broader understanding of the relationship between higher education institutions and urban environments, proposing practical perspectives for urban planning and policy aimed at improving the international university student experience in university cities. By acknowledging and addressing the unique needs and preferences of this demographic group, cities like Turin can develop more inclusive, engaging and adaptable urban environments that benefit both students and the wider community.

5.2. Future Works

After conducting, discussing and concluding everything done in the research, several elements emerged that are not just open to diverse research methods but also elements that needs further analysis and potential future designs for an urban environment that functions better for the international university student community.

Firstly, as was mentioned before, due to the snowball sampling not enough variety of universities were achieved. Therefore, for future research, another method might be considered to reach more students from the University of Torino instead of snowball sampling or a specific analysis focusing on the international students from University of Turin can be conducted.

Secondly, considering that both the research and literature review reveals two different perspectives when it comes to socio-economic background of the international university students. There is some evidence to suggest that these students may belong to a “transnational urban consumers” who frequent more expensive and touristy areas such as Centro and San Salvario. On the contrary, other data points to a more diverse socio-economic structure among the international student population. These contrasting perspectives on the socioeconomic backgrounds of international students highlight the need for a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of this demographic. Further research should aim to delineate the socio-economic spectrum within the international student community, examining how these differences affect their urban experiences and interactions.

When it comes to possible future designs, an element that can be considered is adding more unconventional studying possibilities in the city. During the research it is seen that international university students are seeking a different environment to study which is not very common in Turin. In conclusion, the preference of international students to study at home rather than in designated public or commercial spaces reveals significant gaps in the urban infrastructure of Turin. This trend underscores a broader issue in urban planning and design, where the needs of a diverse population, including international students, must be considered in the development of multifunctional spaces. The lack of suitable study environments in public and commercial venues in Turin suggests an area for potential improvement, where the integration of study-friendly features in cafes, libraries, and other public spaces could enhance their utility and inclusiveness. Addressing these gaps by creating more flexible, accommodating study environments could lead to positive changes in the city’s spatial dynamics, fostering greater interaction and engagement among students and the broader urban community. This shift would not only cater to the academic needs of international students but also contribute to a more

vibrant and adaptable urban fabric.

Furthermore, more focus given to Valentino Park highlighted the necessity of considering the future of the park and including some design elements. By considering this strong preference before going into the possible additions that can be done to the park, it should be added that an in-depth investigation regarding to the reasons behind the elements that makes students choice over Valentino Park can be considered a crucial future work to be done in smaller scale, focused only on the park. To move on the potential additions, firstly, it was evident that among the suggested improvements, the enhancement of the park’s lighting design stands out as an important recommendation. Improved lighting would address safety concerns by lighting up the dark corners and reducing the occurrence of blind spots, thereby making the park more inviting and secure during nighttime. This change is not just a minor improvement but a necessary intervention to ensure safety and create comfort for park visitors. Of course, other elements possible to add to the park should follow a similar structure where it does not disturb the existing situation of the park. Considering this, it can be said that suggestions made by the interviewees are very implementable. Except for the construction of more café points and public bathrooms, all the other 11 suggestions can be implemented by way of multifunctional structures. Therefore, they can be added as temporary design elements that are scheduled and removed according to the needs and demands. In addition to what was suggested by the interviewees, their ideas highlighted that they haven’t been able to find their way well enough in the park. Therefore, as an additional proposal, improved wayfinding and better signage could enhance user awareness and accessibility within the park. Meeting these needs could significantly elevate the park’s role as a vital urban space, fostering a safer and more engaging environment for all visitors.

Lastly, international university students express a desire to see more international activities in the city. Organizing events, located in a multipurpose avenue, introduce and celebrate different cultures that all students are coming from, including Italy, could address the need. Although such large-scale events might present challenges, including the students taking part in creating such events could facilitate their integration and enhance their engagement. These events can be conducted around various themes such as culinary experiences, given that they mentioned their interest in such activities highly. Additionally, other cultural activities like cinema, music and other artistic performances could provide opportunities for them to gather and share. This can be considered as an opportunity for the city to enhance the student’s experience by providing more space and opportunities for cultural exchange. Facilitating platforms where students can share and celebrate their cultural heritage can greatly increase their sense of belonging and satisfaction. By fostering a more inclusive and culturally dynamic environment, Turin can increase its attractiveness to international students and potentially increase its ability to host a larger and diverse student population. This approach not only benefits students, but

also enriches the cultural fabric of the city, contributing to a more vibrant and globally connected urban community. Since this proposal is a topic on its own to be analyzed how, when and where it's crucial to consider as future work.

To sum up, although the number of potential areas for future research may be limited, the ones that are stated are crucial topics that should be researched on they own and crucial to mentioned for both the improvement of the city and improving the experience of the international university student's experiences. Addressing these issues could significantly improve the quality of life for international university students and make Turin a more attractive destination for higher education. Additionally, these efforts can benefit the entire urban community by contributing to the city's overall vitality and cultural richness.

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APPENDIX

The Questionnaire Sample

Thesis Survey Questionnaire

Dear Student,

I am doing my master degree in Territorial, Urban, Environmental and Landscape Planning at Politecnico di Torino. For my thesis, I am examining the ways in which international university students live in the city of Turin. I am inviting you to participate in this research study by completing the attached survey.

The following questionnaire will require less than **10 minutes** to complete. There is no compensation for

responding and all information will remain confidential.

Once the questionnaire is completed, your answers will be included in the graphs that will be used in thesis and

some answers can be directly and anonymously quoted in the thesis.

The questionnaire will remain accessible until **January 10th, 2024**, so I kindly ask you to complete it before the deadline.

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards,

Aylin D.

s300247@studenti.polito.it

* Indicates required question

1. 1. Please select your gender: *

Mark only one oval.

Female

Male

Non-binary

Prefer not to say

Other: _____

2. 2. How old are you? *

Mark only one oval.

- Under 18
- 18-22
- 23-26
- 27-30
- 31-35
- 36 or older

3. 3. Which country are you originally from? *

4. 4. Which university are you enrolled in? *

Mark only one oval.

- Politecnico di Torino
- University of Turin
- Other: _____

5. 5. What is your current level of study? *

Mark only one oval.

- Undergraduate
- Master's
- Ph.D.
- Exchange/Erasmus student
- Other: _____

6. 5.1. Which program you are in? *

7. 6. How long have you been living in Turin? *

Mark only one oval.

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to 1 year
- 1 year to 2 years
- More than 2 years

8. 7. Which neighborhood do you live in? *

Mark only one oval.

- Aurora
- Borgo Po
- Centro
- Cenisia
- Crocetta
- Lingotto
- San Salvario
- Vanchiglia
- Other: _____

9. 8. Please also provide the closest street intersection to the place you live in but not your address. *

10. 9. What is your accommodation? *

Mark only one oval.

- Private apartment for rent
- Single room for rent
- Shared room for rent
- Single room in a dorm (e.g. Camplus)
- Shared room/studio in a dorm (e.g. Camplus)
- Other: _____

11. 9.1. If you are living in a dorm, please write the name of the dorm and/or company that manages the dorm.

12. 10. We want to understand which areas in Turin are easier for you to move around. Therefore, which neighborhood would you say that was easier for you to learn and navigate through in the city?

Check all that apply.

- Aurora
- Borgo Po
- Centro
- Cenisia
- Crocetta
- Lingotto
- San Salvario
- Other: _____

13. 11. Why do you think this neighborhood was easier to navigate for you?

14. 12. Which is the neighborhood you usually spend your time in when you go out or to meet with your friends?

Mark only one oval.

- Aurora
- Borgo Po
- Centro
- Cenisia
- Crocetta
- Lingotto
- San Salvario
- Other: _____

15. 13. Why do you prefer this neighborhood to go out among others?

16. 14. Where do you prefer to study? *

Check all that apply.

- Politecnico di Torino
- University of Turin
- Aula Studio/Study Halls outside of the university grounds
- Libraries outside of university grounds
- Parks and gardens
- Cafes
- Other: _____

17. 15. Please specify the name of the place you prefer to study? For example if you prefer * Politecnico di Torino write which campus, study room, library (e.g. PoliTO Main Campus, Study Room Ex Edisu Corso Castelfidardo.)

18. 16. Which place(s) do you go to the most in your spare time in Turin **during the week**? * (Please provide **maximum three** answers.)

Check all that apply.

- Museums
- Squares (e.g. Piazza San Carlo)
- Parks and gardens
- Restaurants and cafes
- Shopping districts/malls
- Theaters and cinemas
- Bars and nightlife spots
- Sports facilities
- Libraries
- Friend's house
- I do not go out
- Other: _____

19. 17. According to this, what is the type of place you usually go **during the weekend**? * (Please provide **maximum three** answers.)

Check all that apply.

- Museums
- Squares (e.g. Piazza San Carlo)
- Parks and gardens
- Restaurants and cafes
- Shopping districts/malls
- Theaters and cinemas
- Bars and nightlife spots
- Sports facilities
- Libraries
- Friend's house
- I do not go out
- Other: _____

How often you go there?

To develop a better understanding of your preference, can you also include how often you go to the places you choose in the previous questions. If you did not select the place in the previous questions, you can skip them also in the how often questions.

20. 18. How often you go to museums?

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

21. 18.1. If you do go to museums, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

22. 19. How often you go to squares? (e.g. Piazza San Carlo)

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

23. 19.1. If you do go to squares, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

24. 20. How often you go to parks and gardens?

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

25. 20.1. If you do go to parks and gardens, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

26. 21. How often you go to restaurants and cafes?

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

27. 21.1. If you do go to restaurants and cafes, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

28. 22. How often you go to shopping districts/malls?

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

29. 22.1. If you do go to shopping districts/malls, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

30. 23. How often you go to theaters and cinemas?

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

31. 23.1. If you do go to theaters and cinemas, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

32. 24. How often you go to bars and nightlife spots?

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

33. 24.1. If you do go to bars and nightlife spots, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

34. 25. How often you go to sports facilities?

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

35. 25.1. If you do go to sports facilities, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

36. 26. How often you go to libraries?

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

37. 26.1. If you do go to libraries, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

38. 27. How often you go to a friend's house?

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

39. 28. How often you go to the place you spesified as other?

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

40. 29. What makes these places better for you to visit? (To give a better answer you can * select one place among all you answered before and explain a little.)

41. 30. Is there a spesific place you like to go to most in Turin apart from the ones you mentioned before? (If yes, please write the name of the place you would like to add.)

Mark only one oval.

- No
- Other: _____

Activities Specific to Your Country

Beside the places you prefer to go within Turin, research also want to know if international students wants to do activities specific to their country and if they can find space to do them. **(e.g. playing a certain sport or meeting with people to cook traditional food.)**

42. 31. Do you do any activities that are specific to the country you are from? *

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- I joined once or twice
- I join usually
- Always
- Other: _____

43. 32. If you do join any activities specific to your country, can you please specify the activity and location?

44. 33. And if you never do any activities specific to your country, why do you think it is?

Mark only one oval.

- Never feel the need to.
- I would like to but there is not enough people who would like to join.
- I would like to but never seen any activity happening.
- We wanted to do with some people but couldn't find space to do it.
- Other: _____

45. 34. Do you have additional comments or suggestions for the type of places that can be missing for international university students to spend time in Turin?

People Using the Space

For the research, it is also crucial to understand which are the people using the space that you prefer to be in the most in Turin, and who you go there with.

46. 35. Would you say that in the places you go to the most, people there are mainly from the same country as yours? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No, it is mixed.
- No, it is mostly Italians.
- Other: _____

47. 36. Would you say that your circle of friends is mainly from the same country as yours? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No, it is mixed.
- No, it is mostly italians.
- Other: _____

48. 37. Can you please tell me how did you hear about this survey? (e.g. on social media platforms, websites, whatsapp groups, and from a friend)

49. 38. Would you like join a short interview to help me more on the research? If yes please write your email, so that I can give you more information and set a good time for you.

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Answers of the Open-Ended Questions

QUESTION 11 :

Why do you think this neighborhood was easier to navigate for you?

1. Due to the amount of pedestrian streets, the commercial and cultural activities (eg. museums) as well as the landmarks (mole or river po)
2. It has more landmarks and an orthogonal pattern
3. The main streets from Porta Nuova, the piazzas where the madama Cristina palace were easy to recognize
4. Public transport availability
5. Because of my university and easier transportation to reach
6. It is closer to uni
7. It is easy and safe to walk around and also bus and tram stations are near.
8. There were more connections of public transport and top of it it's very accessible to walk around.
9. I live in Crocetta and some of my friends too, so I always go around this area, besides I don't have to go far to find grocery stores, markets and all kind of services. The center is where I usually go to do some tourism and shopping so I got used to that neighborhood too. I go with the bike everywhere and those neighborhoods are easy to reach since there's a lot of bicycle paths.
10. I spend most of my time at these places.
11. The streets are regular and are conformed in a reticular way
12. It is close to shopping malls and there is no traffic jam like other places.
13. Because it's 5 minutes away from my place by bike
14. Easier to access with public transport; shopping center to visit
15. Easy to reach by walk to every service I want
16. It is at a walking distance from where I live
17. Walkability
18. I have lived in or close to those neighborhoods
19. Because walk around these areas
20. University
21. Better street conditions, safe roaming by walk, more restaurants and monuments
22. I visit it often
23. Close to my university likewise the city center
24. Close to university and lots of hanging out areas so I was always visiting and streets are illuminated and
25. Easy to remember
26. I go those areas often so I know my way.
27. Being able to walk safely and freely
28. Accessible by lots of transportation such as metro bus and also reachable by bike or walking
29. Not too far, pedestrian roads to reach these zones
30. Significant buildings make it easier for you to pinpoint your location like monuments, school, statues,
31. Bridges.
32. Lots of recognisable monuments

33. Multiple transportation options during the day
34. Existence of tram and different buses
35. Existence of tram and different buses
36. Yes
37. They are easier to navigate for me because there's a lot of landmarks and the streets are perpendicular to each other for the most part. I also spent the most time in these areas because of Erasmus activities.
38. All my courses are in lingotto
39. Straighter roads and less labyrinthic
40. Because of metro and bus connectivity. also I was taking the parks to reach the center and the road was more pleasurable
41. I was there often
42. Got used for it, and near by everything I want
43. Everything in close proximity and active state of the neighborhood. Prevalence of all age groups.
44. Closer and/or transportation availability
45. There are a lot of recognisable places and buildings according to which to orient
46. The reason is I spend most of my time in the center because this is where the main attractions and places to visit are located.
47. The neighborhoods I chose are which I know well, and all of them are with convenient transport like
49. Bus or metro
50. I have easy access to metro station, and different bus lines to almost everywhere.
51. Because I reach it in less than 45 minutes with public transport
52. Because it's close to university, there are well known and often crowded, it's easy to find your way.
53. There are several public transport options to go there. Besides, it's not as dangerous to bike there as in
54. Other neighborhoods.
55. Well connected by Public Transport, Well-lit areas, people are always there on the streets
56. Because have more transport facilities, commerce, city events and activities
57. A lot of transportation intersections
58. Because of infrastructure
59. Because friends of me were living there so I was visiting these areas often
60. Accessibility to the city center
61. It's closer and/or where I live
62. More intuitive and welcoming
63. Metro and close to my place
64. They are the ones that I go to more than the others and they are all aligned kind of in a grid formation that makes it easier to locate yourself and find your way.
65. Frequency of visits; the planning system along with transportation lines, placement of social hotspots: hospitality places such as bars, cafes, restaurants, cinemas, etc; educational facilities; commercial hotspots; etc.
66. Grid system
67. Because of the availability of public transportation
68. Sansa, centro
69. Almost all neighbourhoods are easy to navigate in Torino. Only the ones easier to the center are even easier, since roads are less dominant and walkable spaces are larger. Most part of the city is designed to be in a grid structure and the attitude is pretty much the

same in the whole city, therefore mapping applications work much better in the city. These make it easy to navigate.

70. This place was my first location.
71. Transportation
72. Because of transportation
73. Close to my house, safer than other zones, also i can find whatever i need in these places, no need to go further
74. Proximity to where I live and leisure places
75. Many historical buildings and artifacts to use as navigation reference
76. I can travel via metro or walk
77. The transportation network and the short transportation trips

QUESTION 13 :

Why do you prefer this neighborhood to go out among others?

1. Due to its central location and the proximity to the place i am living in, and other areas as quadrilatero, san salvario or aurora making easier the mobility and connection with the diversity of activities
2. It is usually cheaper and has a variety of options throughout the day
3. It was walkable from my home and from the university, there is a large number of bars and restaurants, and a decent variety of places in terms of price and type of food.
4. Vicinity to Le Panche or Santa Giulia
5. Everything and places needed to spend time are located in center
6. Basically all the shops and these things are there
7. Close to me and uni
8. There are so many options in terms

of food and drink.

9. It is well connected with other areas and it's very lively at all time of the day with various facilities and places to go to.
10. The accessibility to restaurants, bars and the Valentino Park
11. It's closest to my place
12. Its central in the way that my friends are close
13. It is close to my friends
14. Have more public transport connections in the night
15. Many choices of bars and restaurants; close to school
16. Visiting society
17. Lots of attraction points located densely provide lots of activities to do
18. It is central regarding
19. Parco Valentino
20. There are bars and restaurants suitable for hanging out+ not far from my place
21. Easier for everyone to reach and go back home
22. Center of city
23. Live music, city noise, preferences are close to here
24. It's beautiful and has a lot of activities
25. First of all it's easy to meet there as it's connected with all different transportation means and have a variety of activities you can do " so you it's easier to meet there and decided what to do and even if we want to do another something else not in the centre you can easily go to different neighbourhoods/ areas - also the presence of a lot of pedestrian areas - beside the presence of different events held there increase my visits to it- feeling it as more lively and bright than other areas
26. More attractions

27. Lots of drinking places
28. My girlfriend's home is around there
29. Because of shops and facilities there .and it is the closest place from my home different and many options to dine and shop
30. Because is reachable by walking, since the transportation doesn't work very well during late evening/ night
31. A lot of activities (museums, events organised by the city, music players, restaurants, ice cream shops etc..)
32. They have more options and it's cheaper. Crowded spaces make you feel safer.
33. Cheap drinks
34. Its beautiful specially at night
35. Safe
36. Because it's more or less in the middle of the city so the people that live further away don't have to go to far to hang out and there's plenty of bars, cafes and restaurants.
37. Because of relatively cheap places, variety of bars and aperitivo places. and it's well connected to my place when I need to go home
38. Preferably bigger streets and shops (including coffee shops)
39. Feel more attached to it
40. It is more active and vibrant
41. Good variety of places to hang out
42. There is diversified offer of places
43. Because this is where the main attractions and places to visit are located.
44. Close to my place and most busy street with full range of commercial
45. It's where the city is alive mostly, and most events held there.
46. Is full of activities
47. Lively, beautiful, there are bars, cinemas, public spaces,

museums... ect and because of public transportation

48. Lots of meeting places, easy to walk around, a lot of things to see and happening place
49. Because the infrastructure and events
50. It has a lot of entertainment services
51. Because it has beautiful architecture, lights and activities
52. Cuz I live here
53. A lot of cheap bars
54. Shopping and bars are mostly there
55. It's closer to my house and it has a lot of great option for going out
56. It felt more inclusive and welcoming
57. Easy access and multiple things to do
58. More options
59. It has the most options of bars and restaurants, also I think it's the safest.
60. Because of accessible hospitality hotspots
61. Close to home, I can find everything
62. More options
63. It has lots of cafes, restaurants and pubs for cheap prices
64. Many bars, parks
65. More walkable spaces, historic buildings, good landscape, less roads less cars and less noise, lots of possible activities, close to the river
66. It is close to my house and my friends house
67. Cafe options
68. Because of easy transport connections
69. Because I live here and all my friend's houses are also close to here
70. For all options of leisure, culture and restaurants

71. Lots of cafes, restaurants and places to spend time
72. Many places to choose, vibrant
73. Safer and more commercialised
74. Diversity of bars, restaurants and night life activities

QUESTION 15 :

Please specify the name of the place you prefer to study?

1. Castello del valentino
2. Nice cafes and home
3. Classrooms and study room at the Castello Valentino campus.
4. PoliTO Main Campus, Comala
5. Edisu/ R building
6. R studio , comala
7. R study rooms
8. Starbucks and 12oz(café)
9. Library at Castello del Valentino
10. Library of the Castello del Valentino
11. I like to study in the library of Politecnico Architecture
12. Home
13. Starbucks
14. Castello del Valentino
15. Home is the best
16. Lingoto
17. In my Borsellino dorm room
18. Castello del Valentino
19. Castello del Valentino
20. Aula studio Opera
21. EDISU
22. In my room
23. Polito main campus
24. Unito main library, Polito Libreray , Campus san paolo study room
25. Main campus study room (above library)
26. Study Room R and T
27. Politecnico di Torino Special Needs Study Room
28. Verdi
29. Home

30. Castel's Library, campus Einaudi main library, biblioteca civica centrale and my dorm's study room
31. Polito Main Campus, Aula R (but often there are too many people)
32. starbucks because noone asks you to get out and they have outlets for charger.
33. Any where there is room
34. Polito free rooms, comala on the weekends
35. Lingotto campus of politecnico
36. Lingotto campus of politecnico
37. mara in carlina
38. My room
39. Lingotto campus
40. Home
41. library of the Valentino Castle
42. Valentino campus, since i study there
43. At home
44. Valentino castle library or study room
45. Study room olympia
46. Architectural Library Valentino, Aula studio valentino, PhD room
47. Study room of Campus dorm
48. Study room in library of Valentino
49. Home and Politecnico study room in Aula R Building
50. Polito corso duca
51. Valentino library
52. Castello del Valentino
53. Library at Castello del Valentino
54. Study room murazzi
55. UniTo studyroom, Piazza Aldo Moro
56. Biblioteca Centrale di Architettura Roberto Gabetti
57. Main campus of Poli
58. Biblioteca Centrale di Architettura
59. Study Room Ex Edisu Corso Castelfidardo
60. Lunas torta
61. Library of literature campus
62. Exki café when it was open or

- Luna's torta
63. R study rooms, aula studio 2
64. Main campus, secondo piano Castelfidardo
65. Imbarchino
66. Castello del Valentino
67. Castello del Valentino
68. Biblioteca centrale di architettura, Lingotto study halls
69. Study room in Valentino Castle
70. Comala
71. Polito R rooms
72. Aula studio 1-2 Polito, classrooms in Polito, verdi
73. I used to prefer Sala Studio 4? The one on the second floor with big tables, that has been in renovation
74. since last summer, since it has been closed mostly above the information desk or at mixTO
75. Polito Main Campus Sala Studios
76. Edisu Opera study Room
77. edisu study room
78. Edisu Michelangelo study aula, polito valentino campus or home
79. Campus luigi einaudi
80. Castello library, ormea aula studio, comala, imbarchino
81. Campus Sanpaolo's Aula Studio
82. Castello di Valentino study room, Starbucks
83. Castello del valentino

QUESTION 18.1 :

If you do go to museums, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

1. Cinema museum
2. Egyptian museum
3. Palazzo Reale
4. Palazzo Reale
5. Egyptian museum
6. Musei Reali
7. I go once-twice to each
8. Each one at once

9. Egyptian museum / musei reali 4 times each
10. All of them once
11. Palazzo madama and Musei Reali
12. Museo del cinema
13. Mole
14. Museo Egizio
15. I have not been a museum more than ones
16. Museo egizio
17. To different types of museums
18. Museo del Cinema
19. Palazzo Reale, Venaria, Villa Regina
20. Museo Egizio
21. Film Museum
22. Palazzo Reale
23. Palazzo Reale di Torino
24. Egyptian museum
25. Museo Egizio
26. Egyptian museum (3times)
27. Egyptian, Lombroso, car Museum, fruit museum
28. Cinema museum
29. CAMERA
30. Palazzo Madama
31. Palazzo Reale
32. CAMERA (as an exhibition), cinema museum
33. Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile
34. Palazzo reale
35. Museo di arte orientale

QUESTION 19.1 :

If you do go to squares, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

1. Piazza Castello
2. Piazza Emanuele Filiberto
3. Piazza San Carlo
4. Piazza castello
5. San Carlo, castelo
6. Piazza San Carlo
7. Piazza San carlo, Piazza Castello, Piazza Carignano
8. Piazza Castello

9. Piazza castello
10. Santa Giulia
11. Piazza San carlo
12. Piazza San Carlo
13. Piazza Carlo Emanuele II
14. San Carlo
15. Piazza San Carlo
16. Santa Giulia
17. Don't remember
18. p. San Carlo, p. Vito
19. San Carlo
20. Piazza San Carlo
21. Piazza San Carlo
22. Piazza Castello
23. piazza Vittorio Veneto
24. Domori Store Torino
25. Piazza Vittorio
26. palazzo Madama
27. Piazza San Carlo, Piazza Castello, Piazza Vittorio and Piazza Statuto
28. Piazza San Carlo (the chocolate fair got me xD)
29. Piazza Castello
30. Piazza Castello
31. Piazza San Carlo
32. Pia San Carlo
33. Piazza Castello
34. Carignano
35. All near centro
36. Quadrilatero romana
37. Piazza San Carlo
38. Piazza San Carlo
39. San Carlo
40. Piazza Castello
41. Piazza Carlo Emanuele II, Piazza Vittorio
42. Piazza Castello
43. Piazza San Carlo
44. Piazza Castello
45. Piazza Castello, Piazza San Carlo
46. Piazza Vittorio Veneto
47. Piazza San Carlo
48. San Carlo
49. Piazza Castello
50. San carlo
51. Piazza Carlo Emanuele II
52. San Carlo

53. Piazza San Carlo to walk in Centro
54. Vittorio Emanuele
55. Santa Giulia
56. San Carlo
57. Piazza Carlina
58. Piazza San Carlo
59. Piazza San Carlo
60. Santa Giulia, San Carlo, Carlo Emanuele II, Vittorio Veneto
61. San Carlo
62. San Sarlo
63. Well i pass by sometimes when i'm going to a friends house so, for ex. San Sarlo
64. Piazza San Carlo
65. Piazza San Sarlo
66. Piazza San Carlo
67. San Carlo
68. Piazza Castello

QUESTION 20.1 :

If you do go to parks and gardens, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

1. Valentino park
2. Valentino
3. Parco Valentino
4. Parco del Valentino
5. Santa Rita park
6. Valentino
7. Valentino
8. Parco del Valentino, Parco san vito
9. Parco del Valentino and parco Cavalieri di Vittorio Veneto
10. Piazza d'Armi/Giardini della Clessidra
11. Parco del Valentino
12. Valentino park
13. Olampyco park
14. Parco del Valentino
15. Parco del Valentino
16. Valentino
17. Parco del Valentino
18. Valentino
19. Valentino
20. Valentino

21. Ruffini
22. Parco valentino
23. Parca del Valentino
24. Valentino
25. parco del valentino
26. Paco Dora, Giardino Nicola Grosa, Giardino Caserma Lamarmora, Parco del Valentino
27. Parco del Valentino
28. Valentino park
29. Valentino, parco dora
30. Parco del Valentino
31. Parco del Valentino
32. Parco Valentino, Giardini Reali
33. Parco dei Cavalieri
34. Valentino park
35. Mostly valentino but basically i have been most of them
36. Parco del valentino
37. Parco del valentino
38. Parco valentino
39. Valentino
40. Parco Valentino
41. Valentino
42. Valentino
43. Valentino
44. Parco del Valentino
45. Parco del Valentino
46. Parco pallerina
47. Parco del Valentino
48. La Pellerina
49. Rignon
50. Parco del Valentino
51. Valentino
52. Parco del valentino
53. Valentino
54. valentino park
55. valentino, dora, colletta
56. Il Valentino
57. Valentino
58. Valentino
59. Parco Valentino
60. Parco del valentino
61. Valentino
62. Parco del Valentino
63. Valentino
64. VALENTINOOO, sometimes parco

- dora
65. Valentino
66. Valentino
67. Dora park, valentino
68. Parco Dora
69. Valentino
70. Parco Valentino
71. Valentino
72. Parco ruffini

QUESTION 21.1 :

If you do go to restaurants and cafes, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

1. Orso
2. 2018 bar
3. Siciloso
4. There are not a specific place just to hangout somewhere affordable for university lifestyle
5. Mixto , burger king, pizza kebabs
6. Bernini Kebap, Caffè Mulafsano, Caffè Costadoro
7. I try to go to different cafes but I like going to Orzo cafe more
8. Cafe Charlien, Poormanger and McDonald's
9. Namste India
10. Luna's Torta
11. Oh crispa
12. Ramen Bar Akira
13. Orso
14. Napples Pizzeria
15. Imbarchino
16. Dubai caffee lounge bar, Jester pub, samara bar
17. Aldi
18. Costadoro
19. Starita
20. Sushi roiyaru
21. HAER
22. Corner
23. Fradiavolo
24. Caffè Oporto, La Zeppola and Pastarell
25. Assaje

26. Quinoa cafe
 27. Bere in tipographia
 28. Sweet Lab
 29. Le panche, Aldo's bakery, Camnaffa
 30. Best one near me at the time
 31. No specific placd
 32. Imbarchino
 33. Sushi/Chinese restaurant. None in particular
 34. Costa Doro Cafe (in front of Rinascente)
 35. Chinese restaurants
 36. Chinese restaurant
 37. I don't have preference
 38. Not in Torino
 39. Exco Cafe
 40. Uao, nappoli, poormager
 41. La Bomboniera (via Cibrario)
 42. Sushi rainbow
 43. Mcdonalds
 44. Lunas torta, trapizzino, Sarchiapone pizzeria Torino, Savure
 45. Manatiki
 46. It depends. I went to imbarchino a lot of the ones mentionned for study. I randomly go to cafes a lot and don't have a favourirandom ones in San salvario
 47. Imbarchino
 48. Luna's Tortas
 49. Camaffa
 50. Mago di Oz
 51. Comala
 52. Mixto
 53. Curry and co, quioa, luna's torta
 54. Cafe gaudenti and cafe platti, since they are right next to me
 55. Hollywood grill
 56. Orso, Mara dei Boschi, imbarchino, starbucks, scaiola
 57. le panche
 58. Lentini's
 59. Orso
 60. Bottega baretta, imbarchino
 61. Deniz Kebab
62. Bun burgers, starbucks
 63. Miyo
- QUESTION 22.1 :**
 If you do go to shopping districts/ malls, please provide the name of the one you go to most.
1. Via roma
 2. Via Roma
 3. Le gru
 4. Decathlon, Primark
 5. Via roma, via garibaldi, lingotto mall
 6. Via Roma and Lingotto shopping mall
 7. Lingotto Mal
 8. Lingotto
 9. Via Roma
 10. Lingotto
 11. Via Roma
 12. Via Roma
 13. Torino outlet
 14. Le gru
 15. Lingotto mall
 16. Grugliasco, Metropolitan City of Turin
 17. Let Gru
 18. Le gru shopping village/ lingotto mall
 19. Le gru shopping village/ lingotto mall
 20. Ligotto Mall
 21. Via Garibaldi
 22. Only for specific things
 23. Via Roma
 24. Via roma
 25. Le gru
 26. Via Roma
 27. Via Roma shopping district, Le Gru shopping mall
 28. Via Roma
 29. Le gru
 30. Lingotto mall
 31. Le gru
 32. Lingotto
 33. Zara, Bershka

34. Via roma shopping street. Based on my need
 35. Le Gru (because my boyfriend has a car and we can go there) I also went to lingotto but only because it was close to the university.
 36. Outlet di Torino, via Roma
 37. Via Roma
 38. Lingotto mall
 39. Le Gru
 40. Primark
 41. I don't remember the name
 42. via roma
 43. Via Roma
 44. Via roma, humana
 45. Lingotto
 46. Via garibaldi
22. UCI Cinemas Torino Lingotto
 23. Teatro Regio
 24. Gobelins
 25. Cinema Nazionale
 26. Ideal Cityplex
 27. Cinema Cityplex Piazza Statuto
 28. I went once to the Monday cinema nights organised for Erasmus people. I don't remember the name.
 29. Centrale, massimo, ambrosio, baretta
 30. Cinema Ideal Cityplex
 31. Arthouse cinema
 32. UCI Cinemas Lingotto
 33. Cinema Museum only once
 34. Ideal cityplex
 35. Lingotto uci
 36. Ambrosio
 37. Ideal cityplex

QUESTION 23.1 :
 If you do go to theatersand cinemas, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

1. Masimo
2. Ideal Cinema Cityplex
3. Cinema Nazionale
4. I went to lingotto once
5. UCI cinema
6. Cinema Ideal
7. UCI cinemas
8. UCI lingotto
9. UCI Lingotto Cinema
10. Conservatorio Euinaudi
11. Lingotto cinema
12. UCI cinema
13. Cineplex Statuto
14. Palazzo della Luce
15. lingotto uci cinema
16. UCI Lingotto
17. Lingotto
18. Mostly because there isn't always the option to have at least subtitles since italians love to watch things in italian voice over
19. Depend wheres the show
20. UCI Cinema
21. Greenwich

QUESTION 24.1 :
 If you do go to bars and nightlife spots, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

1. Le panche
2. Imbarchino
3. Le Panche
4. Friends house
5. In centro usually
6. Milk
7. Santa Giulia
8. Charlie Bird
9. Imbarchino
10. Camping Bar
11. Jumping Jester
12. Jester
13. Imbarchino
14. San salvario
15. The Isle of Skye, La Mole Pub, James Joyce Pub and Byciclette
16. Bunker, crca pergolesi
17. Frida bar
18. Camping, imbarchino
19. I like to try new places, depends on what i am looking for at the time
20. T-club

21. In the city center
22. Locanda Clandestina, La Drogheria, Mago di Oz
23. Imbarchino, New Cotton Club, Hiroshima Night Club
24. Beach
25. Azimuth
26. The Isle Of Skye (Pub)
27. Myza club
28. Alibi
29. All in san salvario, but I dont remember the names
30. Manatiki
31. I often end up in alibi with friends for a last chupito but I don't always go to the same every weekend.
32. Toccalmatto, santa Giulia, korova, murazzi
33. Jumper
34. Jumping Jester / Imbarchino
35. Camping
36. Alibi
37. Bicierin, camping bar
38. Audiodrome
39. New cotton club
40. le panche, bunker
41. Audiodrome
42. La choza
43. Il mulo
44. Imbarchino
45. Ottantaquattro

QUESTION 25.1 :

If you do go to sports facilities, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

1. Ad Personam - Dante
2. Orange
3. McFit
4. Palazzo del nuoto
5. Along po river
6. MCfit
7. McFit
8. Orange Gym
9. Thai Boxe Torino

10. At home
11. Mcfit Politecnico
12. Anytime Fitness
13. Mcfit Politecnico
14. Orange Nizza
15. McFIT port a Susa
16. Parco Dora
17. Mac fit
18. Mac fit
19. Virgin active gym
20. McFit
21. MCFit Politecnico
22. McFit
23. Mcfit
24. Mcfit
25. The swimming pool in cenisia, Vigone
26. Mcfit
27. Orange Palestra
28. Mcfit politp
29. B-side climbing village
30. Cus torino via braccini
31. Orange
32. McFit Politecnico
33. Mcfit centro

QUESTION 26.1 :

If you do go to libraries, please provide the name of the one you go to most.

1. Castello Valentino campus library
2. Politecnico di Torino - Castello Valentino
3. Edisu study room
4. Library of Castello del Valentino
5. Library of Castello del Valentino
6. Biblioteca della Fondazione Luigi Firpo
7. Lingoto
8. Castello del Valentino Library
9. Valentino Castle
10. Castello del Valentino Architecture Library
11. The one at castello Valentino
12. Unito Main library
13. Polito library

14. Biblioteca Italo Calvino, Biblioteca Civica Centrale, Castle's Library and Campus Einudi main library
15. roberto gabetti library
16. Valentino library
17. Villa Amoretti
18. Valentino castle library
19. Valentino, since mostly i need architectural support
20. Valentino library
21. Biblioteca di Architettura, Valentino
22. Valentino
23. Library of Valentino Castel
24. Library at Castello del Valentino
25. Biblioteca Civica Centrale
26. Central library of architecture in castello
27. Polito
28. Parco del valentino
29. Campus verdi aula
30. the library at castello valentino for politecnico
31. Castello del Valentino
32. Biblioteca centrale di architettura
33. Michelangelo, verdi
34. Unito library
35. Unito National Library
36. Edisu michelangelo
37. Castello library

QUESTION 29 :

What makes these places better for you to visit?

1. Piazza castello: it central location and the amenities around make easier and attractive to go there, since is connected by via garibaldi to the place i live in, facilitates the connection not just with my house but also with the other areas of activity (restaurants, museums, bars, porta nuova)
2. The music and the people make bars better for me to visit and the opportunity to have fun and socialize
3. The parks are nice for walks, the sun, nature and some relaxation
4. Cinemas are a nice change in the type of entertainment
5. At restaurants, you can taste different types of food and dive more into the culture
6. Imbarchino, great location close to school and in the park, views of the Po, and affordable prices,
7. Vicinity to PoliTO, convenience with respect to where I am in the moment
8. It gives me better feeling and aligned with my personality
9. About the restaurants, I usually have to choose a cheap option
10. The attraction, what value it has, so if I need to go I do, otherwise I prefer not to go all the way
11. Starbucks because however the coffees are bad, there is no waiter and one can sit several hours and study or chat with friends. WCs are clean also.
12. Going to the park along with friends feels very relaxing and enjoyable. Also going to parks alone feels refreshing and chance to enjoy the nature.
13. I go to places that are usually near my house such as the Palazzo del Nuoto or where I study, like the Valentino park, so accessibility is the main reason. The center is the place where I can find more cultural and entertainment offer in my opinion
14. My friends place
15. For example for the gardens I think they are good because are free and you can enjoy the sun
16. Shopping malls and starbucks makes me feel at home
17. I prefer to go to the parks and squares because you can meet

- with all your friends and it's an open space where everyone is comfortable to arrive and stay, without disturb your neighbors and without pay a lot
18. Close to home
 19. Library
 20. I like to visit Parco del Valentino because we can organize crowded group picnics and play games with my friends in the park with a beautiful viewpoint to the River Po.
 21. The three places are more economically accesible, easier to get to, and nice atmosphere.
 22. Nature, nice view
 23. If the place is easily reachable by public transport or by walk, and if it has a nice atmosphere to spend time
 24. The distance from there I live more than how well connected it with public transportation. The things that surround these places (other shops and etc) The people that frequent these places.
 25. Time waste being bore
 26. Relaxed atmosphere
 27. It will be nice have more interesting parks with different activities summer or sunny days I prefer the parks to enjoy fresh air and the sun
 28. During the winter / rainy days it depends on how is it easy to reach the place "so mainly centre "
 29. Not so crowded
 30. Sports facilities: Good equipment and classes and space! Great price
 31. They satisfy my needs.
 32. Spend time and take walk
 33. Family vibes
 34. Being able to connect with like minded people
 35. The Isle of Skye (I prefer to go there bcs it's easy to reach, I can go there walking)
 36. I don't really understand the question
 37. Vicinity of it and how is the quality compared to the money I paid matters the most.
 38. Cheapest drinks
 39. Easy transportation to and from home, good environment
 40. Le gru shopping village/ i go there often with my friends because there are good facilities and shops that are enjoyable for me and my friends so we can hang out there
 41. Le gru shopping village/ i go there often with my friends because there are good facilities and shops that are enjoyable for me and my friends so we can hang out there different things
 42. I go to Sweet Lab everytime I want to treat myself or whenever my friends and my boyfriend are visiting. The place is welcoming, the food is really good and they're open even when all the other restaurants are closed (3-7pm).
 43. Close to metro station
 44. Beauty and calm
 45. I go often in the park because of its flexibility; it's possible to gather many students and after some time move to imbarchino , play some games that's hard to play inside the cafe. interaction quality is better in the park
 46. I like torino, it is a pretty enjoyable city to even only for walking, but not very international student friendly. So either you need to learn italian pretty good to participate to some entertainment (such as movies, theatre., even some libraries since it might be difficult to find a book about the topic you are
 47. searching for in english), or you need to search pretty good and follow the events.
 48. The people who i am with , the atmosphere and the vibes of the place
 49. Liveliness of the places
 50. I like going to places to be by myself and get some fresh air or to hang out with my friends. Any place that is calming and gives a different feel from home is a good place for me.
 51. Sometimes shopping is the best way to stress bust, mostly a flea market or any place that is not too expensive and sells authentic item for a fair price.
 52. Costa doro cafe - very good position, nice environemnt, always full of people
 53. Via Roma, Piazza Castello are my most visited places because I like facilities which provided there such as good shops, good museums, places to eat and go out. Also many different interesting events are held in these places like exhibitions, fairs, parades, public events and activities (concerts, festivals, holiday celebrations e.g.). Likewise there are lot of street musicians which I like the most.
 54. Parco Valentino is my favourite park because it's big and beautiful in any season.
 55. Because they meet my preferences and fulfill my needs, for instance, Via Roma as a commercial street, It brings together all kinds of brands and different kinds of goods, realizing a one-stop service
 56. I am mostly busy with study and work, so this is just to have a decompression of workload and get refresh in a short time or to provide the needs (buy stuff).
 57. Chill and fun
 58. Parco Valentino
 59. I just live outside the city I have no choice
 60. Feeling of comfort, seeing different activities happening at Piazza Castello
 61. To share time with some friends and assist to city events
 62. Palazzo Reale: near my place and free with museum card
 63. Ilike places that are not so crowded, where I can enjoy the view or architecture of my surroundings
 64. The vibe and community
 65. Mostly these are places that are at the walkable distance to the place I live
 66. People
 67. Easy accesible, cheap, easy to meet other people, "italian lifestyle"
 68. I can chill and relax
 69. Usually the choice is a about how easily to reach by foot (i like to walk and not take public transport when it's not needed) 45min on foot it's long for me, I like to walk
 70. Welcoming, the people there are easy and pleasant to interact with. The people running the places are also very approachable
 71. Location for everyone and options to do after
 72. Valentino park is good to connect with nature and huge with different activity options
 73. Parco del Valentino. The location, its openness, you have everything you need nearby. During spring and summer I would say I go every two days. To hangout or even just to read, draw and study there on my own. During winter I almost never go.
 74. Location, proximity to my living place, affordable prices
 75. Easy to visit and find a place for myself

76. Comala because of different activities
77. My friends
78. My and friend's ability to go there easily, distance, price
79. Chill, relaxed, less chaos
80. Mensa
81. Coziness
82. Le panche- drinks are cheaper, it has easy connection to my place and the rest of the city. it's easier for everyone, living in different places, to have this point as a meeting place
83. They are close to my house, easy to reach, they provide some social activities
84. Piazza San Carlo, because it is a central space that connects with museums, bars, restaurants,
85. Shopping areas
86. Comfortable, cheap and with good view, ambient
87. I can buy food so I can eat.
88. Starbucks Open all the time, tables for studying, affordable, tables inside and outside
89. Miyo, because it gives me the possibility of trying asian food in a central location well served by the public transportation network

QUESTION 32 :

If you do join any activities specific to your country, can you please specify the activity and location?

1. Cook traditional food at friends house
2. Cooking types of food at homes
3. It's more like playing sport game and cards or picnic so usually parks or friends
4. 90s Turkish Pop Night
5. Friends houses
6. Country festivals
7. Cook traditional food in friends'

- house
8. Go to Chinese restaurants in San salvario and supermarket in porta palazzo
9. Cooking or dancing in a friend's house
10. Restaurants
11. Just some meetings with other Turkish students in a bar/ restaurant/party
12. At my house
13. I don't know specific activities) may be ice skating during the winter ... also we have more skate parks, but they are not interesting for me. Also, museums especially modern ones do interesting programs/ lessons/ workshops and i liked to visit it
14. Cook with friends traditional food at home, go to Brazilian Bars such as Saudade and Gianca as well and join Brazilian groups to dance called "Forró Di Torino"
15. National celebration meeting at via roma
16. Eating Chinese food in Chinese restaurants
17. Play games at a park, or cooking something typical at a friend's house
18. It was a protest against the current regime.
19. Javeria students organization in Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo
20. Cooking food together at friends house
21. New Year's Eve
22. University Games At Sao Paulo (normally located on big event renting places outside the city center)
23. Meeting of people from my country
24. New year celebration
25. Holiday dinners

26. Turkish night efeso
27. Raki night at Efeso
28. Cook traditional food in friend's house
29. 100th of republic celebration
30. Drinking Raki, friend's house
31. Traditional dinner at my house or friend's house

QUESTION 34 :

Do you have additional comments or suggestions for the type of places that can be missing for international university students to spend time in Turin?

1. A wider variety of places to go out like bars, restaurants and nightlife locations, with also different time schedules that other countries might be used to.
2. The study spaces at Polito are not sufficient, they need more of these.
3. There should more places where students easily go to enjoy various types of activities they enjoy and places where they can easily find the information they are looking for being an international student in an unknown city.
4. Cultural places
5. Market place maybe?
6. An introduction course to not only Italian language but also to Italian culture about Italian literature, Italian cuisine, famous Italian musicians and songs etc that will help the international students to be involved in more conversations.
7. International students Hub, a place to exchange, promote and live different cultures between each other. So preserve information and more about different countries. Something similar to a living library/expo for international

- students to keep alive.
8. Communication
9. Free zones to talk
10. More co- working place outside of university, places with lessons and activities in English
11. Maybe a place for a community for each nationality would be good idea for shy people like me.
12. Would be nice to provide more studyrooms on the main campus or in the areas around. It's impossible to find a place to study there and those who live in that area don't have many options
13. More cafes for working
14. International events, community events, sport events.
15. To be honest I think university games are interesting to increase bonding among different universities and team building
16. Maybe asking where do people meet the most. And if they let you people outside of Erasmus organized event
17. Back home we do grilling almost every week but I haven't found a place where I can do that here.
18. The guideline of the places to avoid, not only the places of visit. Open markets, waterfronts, etc
19. Flea markets are a good option, good activity plus you can find many things for cheap like clothes and accessories plus house appliances, fresh food and vegetables; good way to get to know the city and socialise.
20. Yes a lot just see top 10 Turkish universities and their campus life you will see what is missing.

Mental Maps



Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 1.

Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 2.

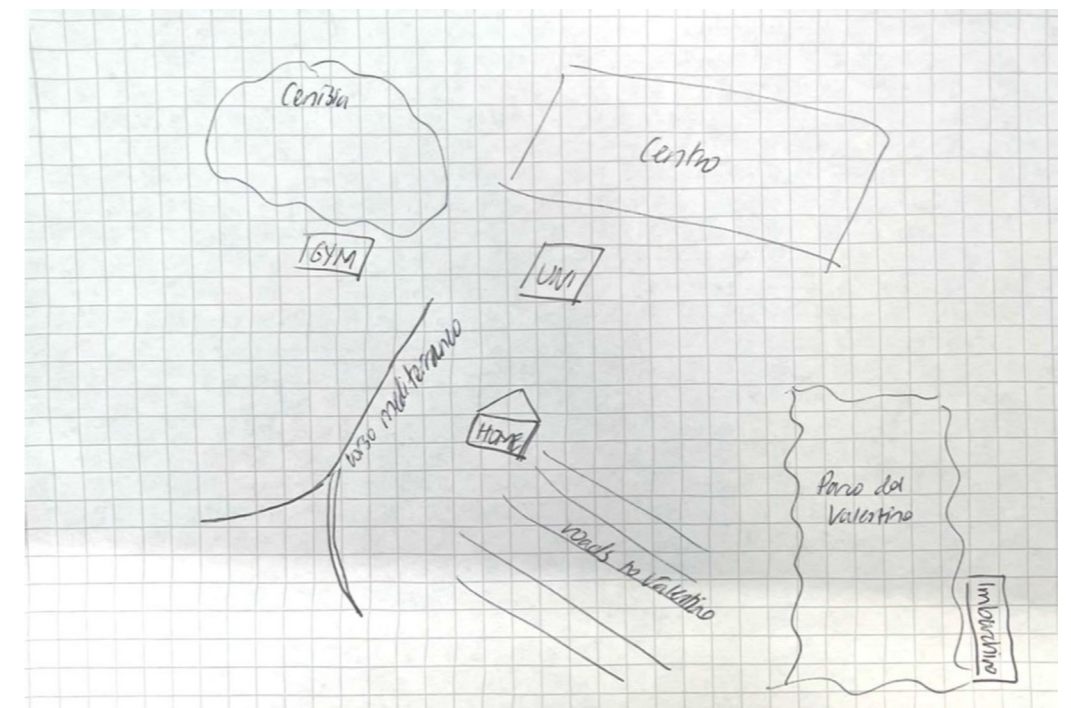


Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 3.

Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 4.

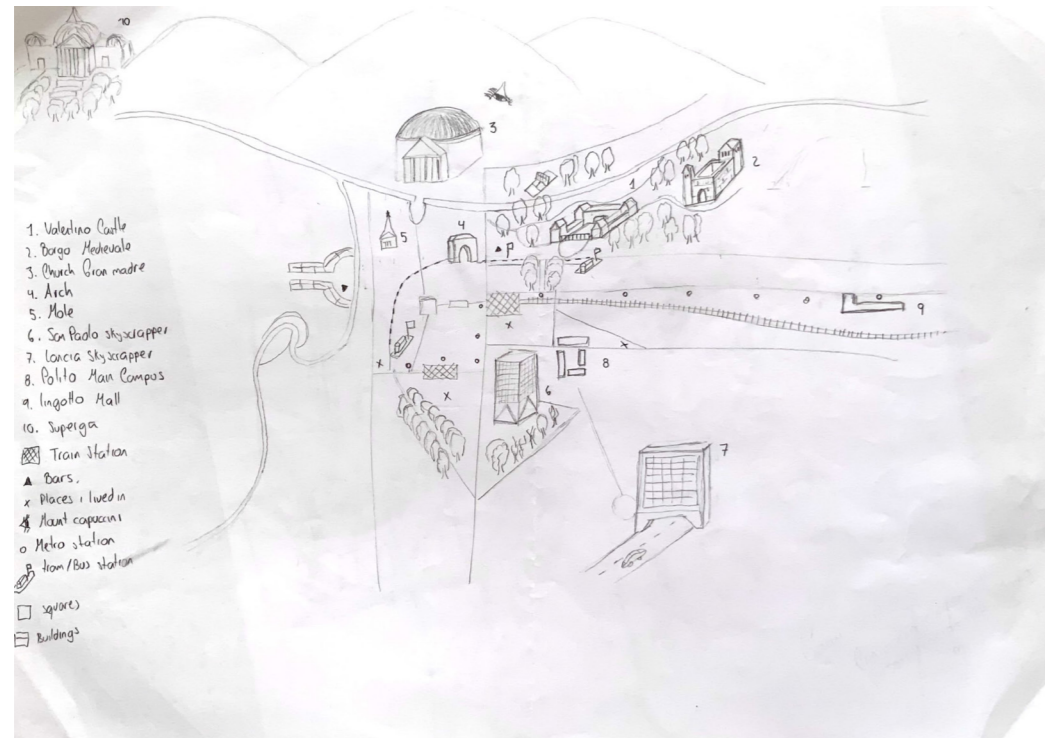
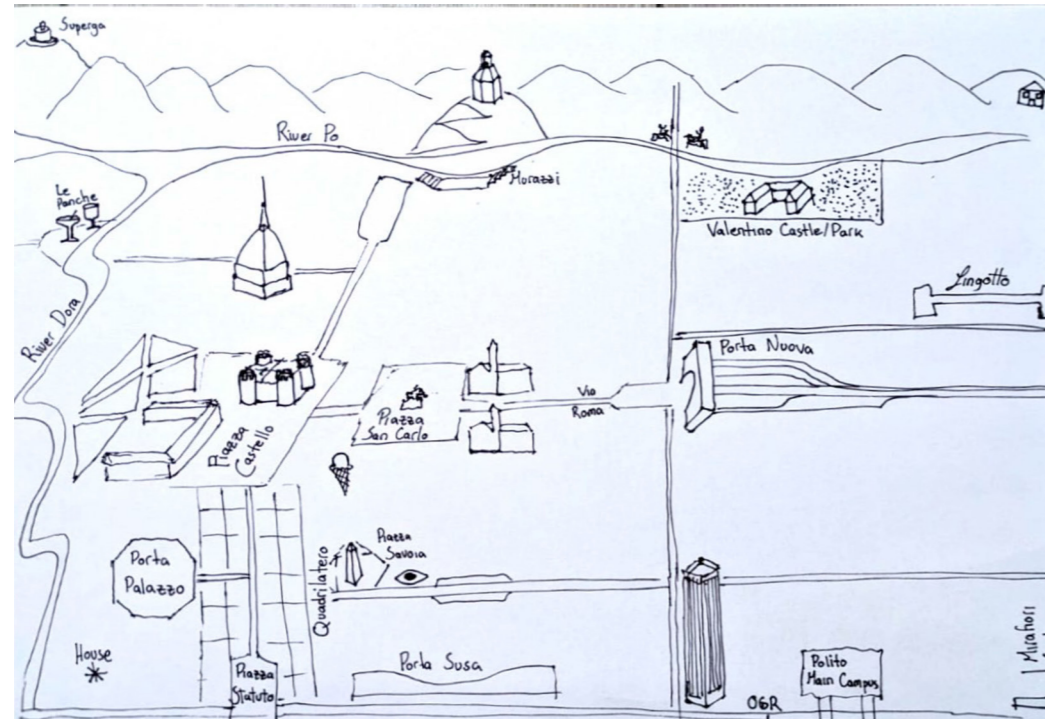
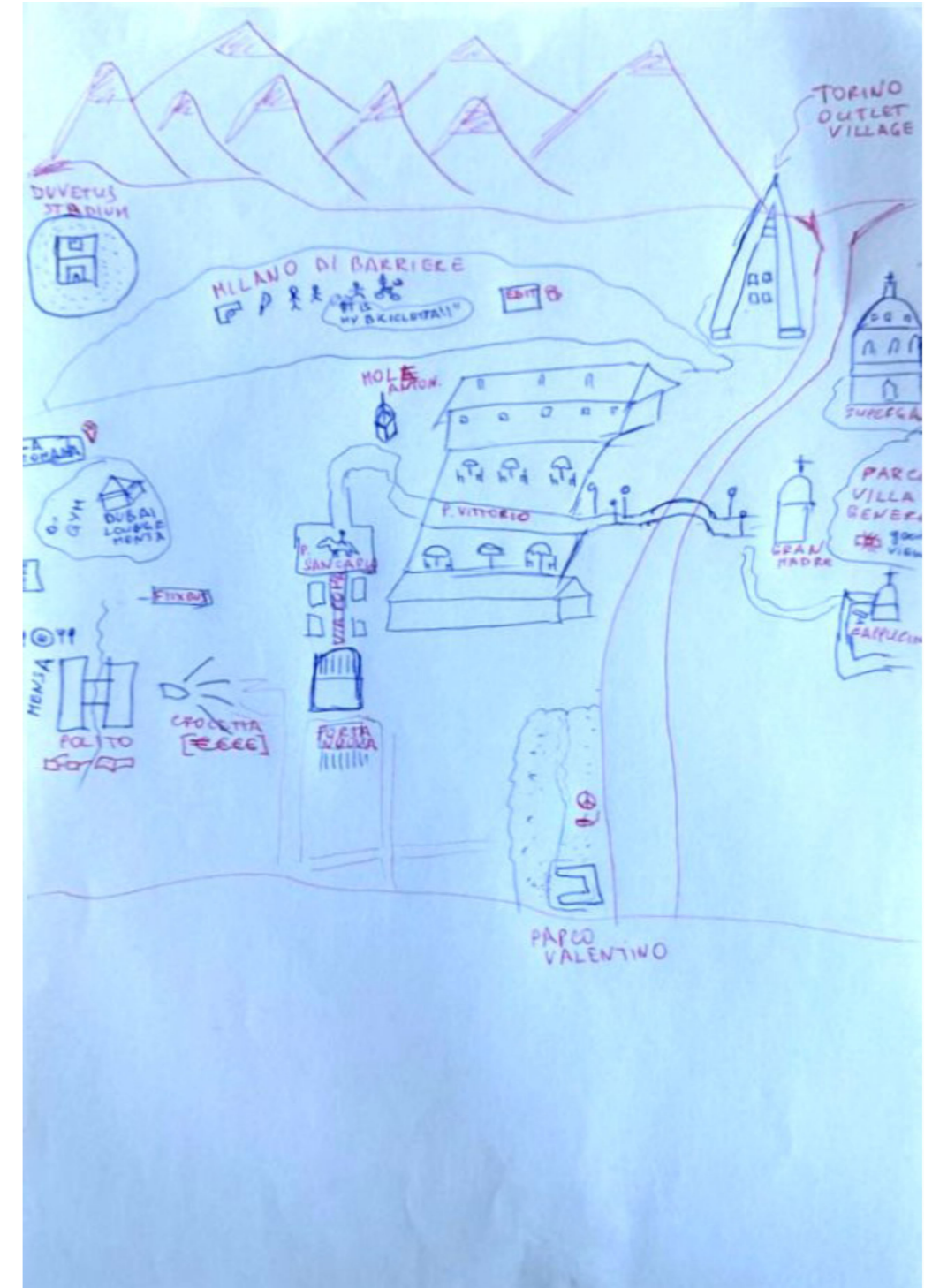


Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 5.

Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 6.



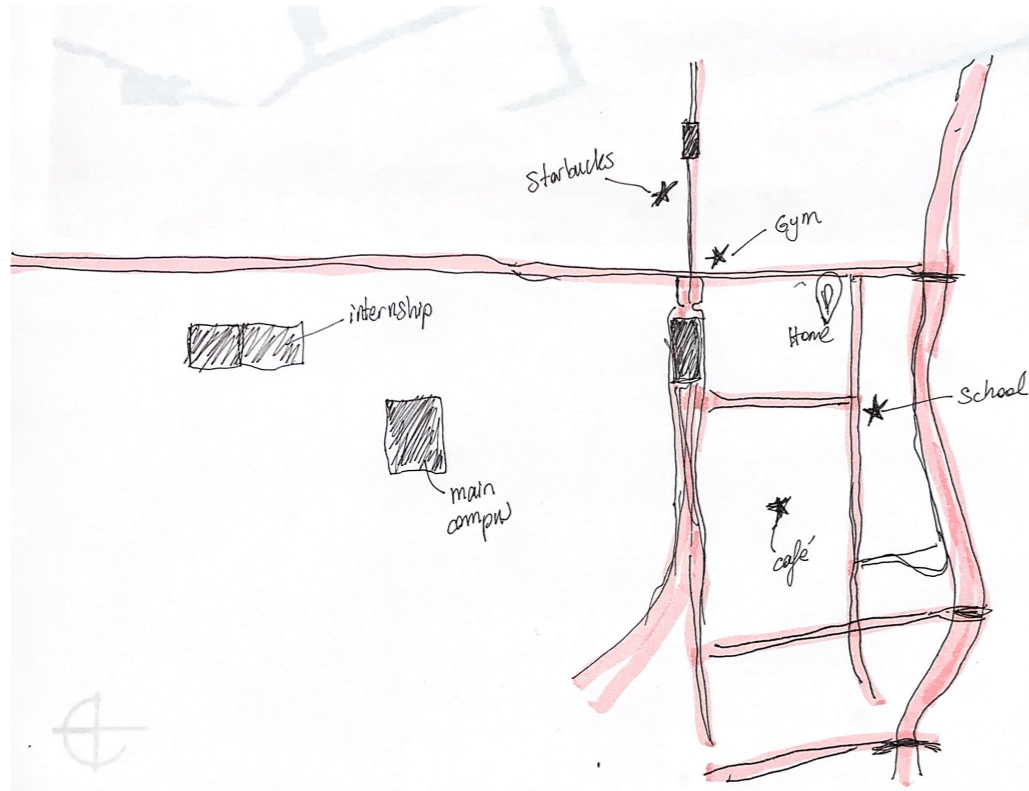


Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 11.

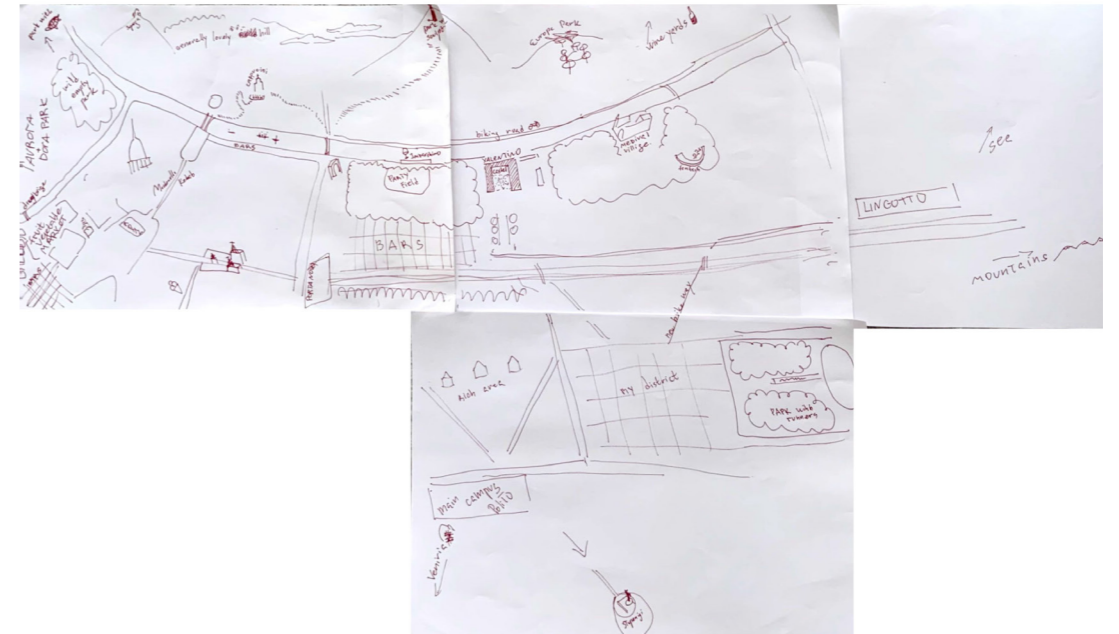


Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 13.

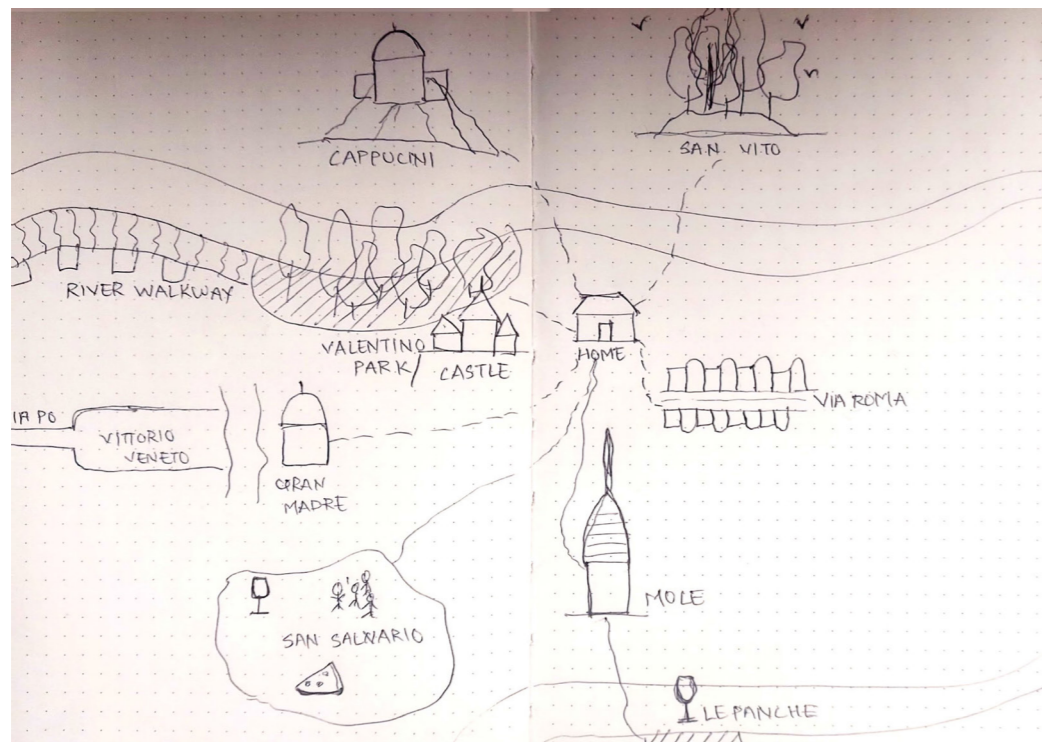


Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 12.

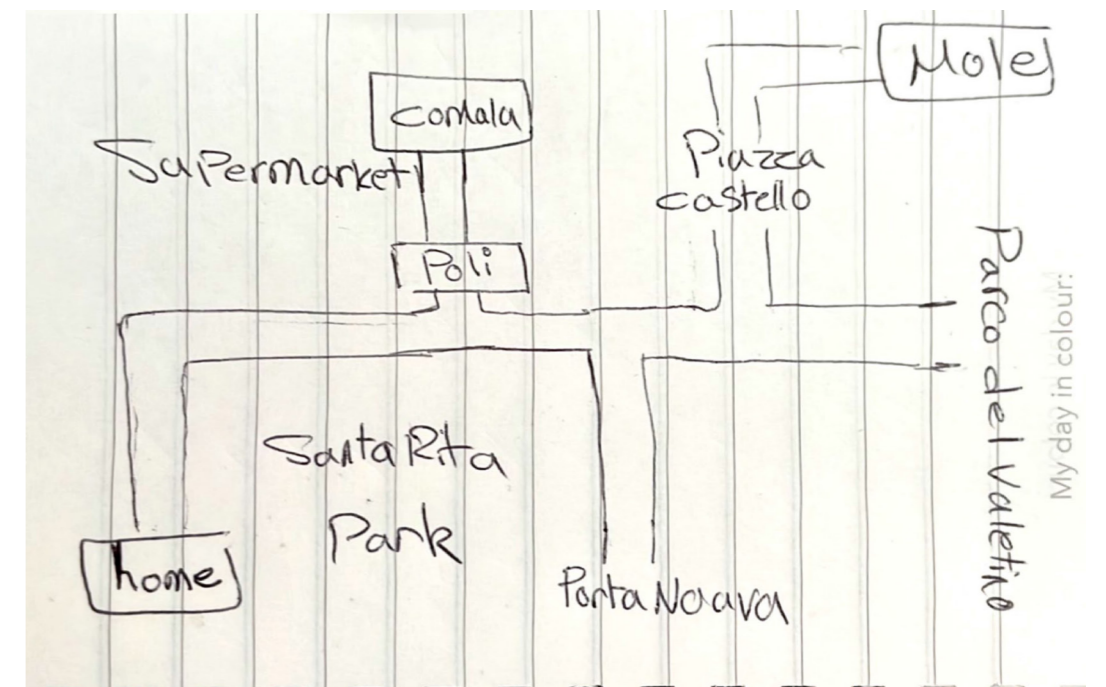


Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 14.

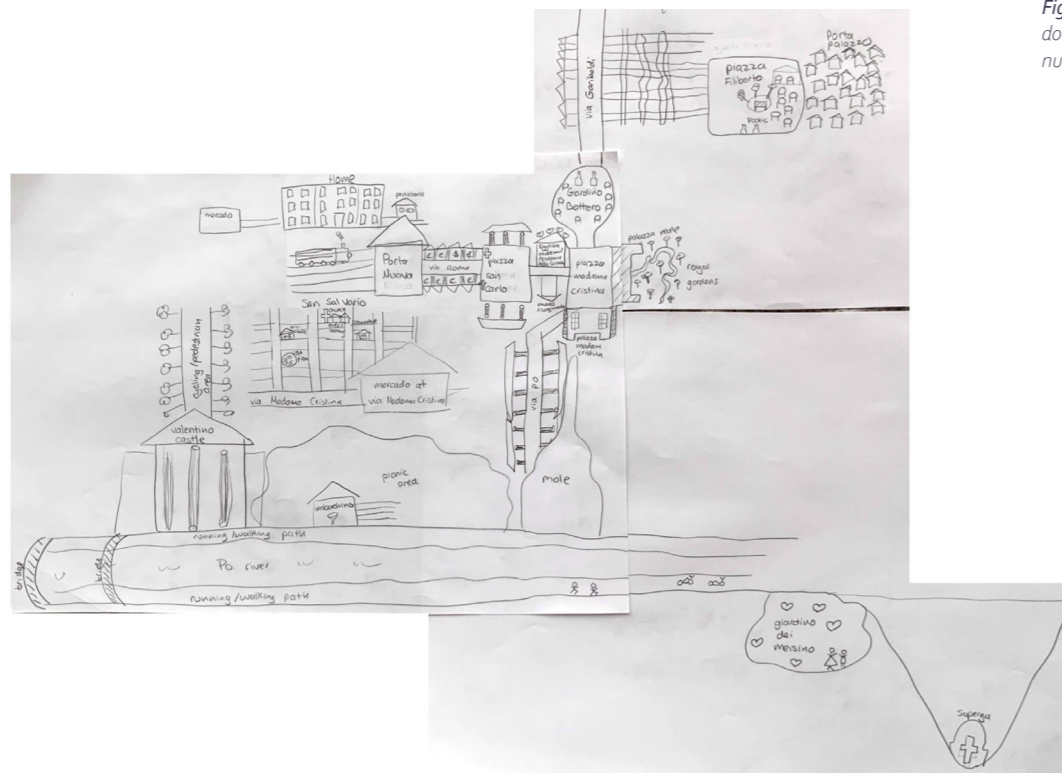


Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 18.

Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 20.

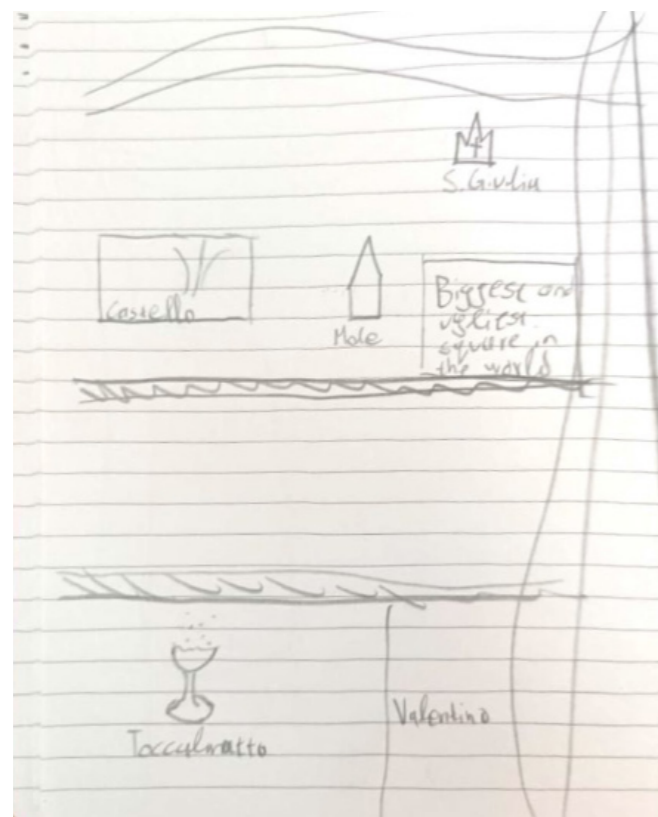
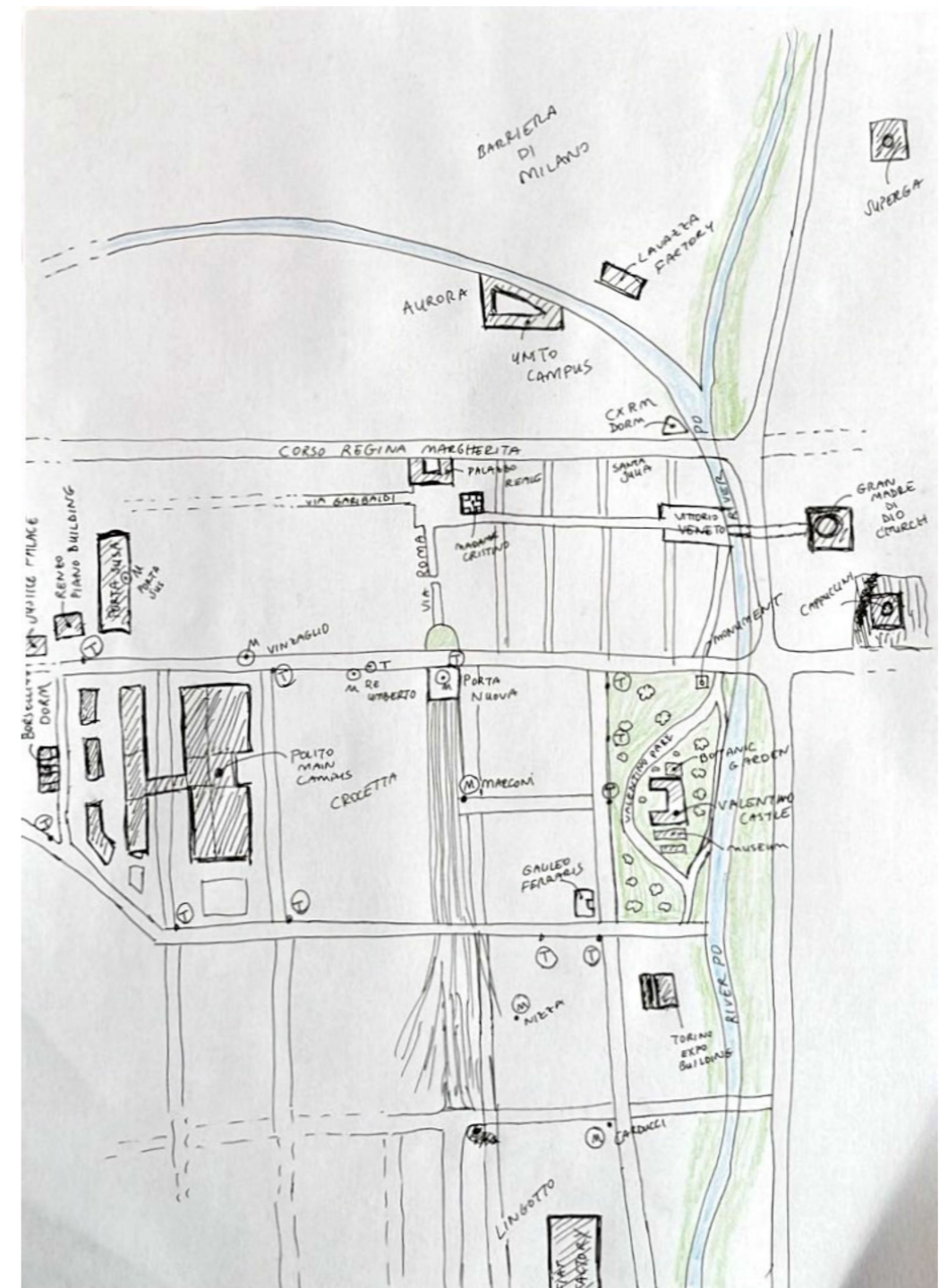


Figure x: Mental map done by interviewee number 19.

AYLIN DARICALI