

IRSA - CONGRESSO MUNDIAL DE SOCIOLOGIA RURAL (01/10/2025 A
20/01/2026) - IRSA 16 - PRACTICES OF COMMONING IN THE
COUNTRYSIDE: HISTORIES, RESISTANCES, AND FUTURES

**CULTURAL VOLUNTEERING IN RURAL AREAS IN NORTHEAST GERMANY
– A CHALLENGED SPACE OF FREEDOM**

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The diversity of voluntary cultural work is remarkable: theatre, dance, music, historical research, monument preservation, cinema, art, Low German groups and cultural venues that are being established. Its value for the quality of life is undisputed – especially in rural areas – since it often provides the only opportunities for local social gatherings and exchange, and cultural experiences due to missing or reduced infrastructure. Compared to other areas of voluntary work, cultural volunteering plays an important role in the German society, as it provides a broader framework that foster collective reflection to a greater degree. Based on the field research in the northeast Germany, this paper discusses cultural volunteering as an alternative space for social gatherings, participation, experimenting, and surprises considering its significance and impact of for rural communities and their limits.

Palavras-chave: cultural volunteering; social interaction; third spaces; negotiation processes.

