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Culinary Practices in Nove Fužine: Food and Processes of Cultural Exchange in a Slovenian Multi-Ethnic Neighbourhood

Nove Fužine is the most notorious neighbourhood in Slovenia: a suburb of Ljubljana with the highest proportion of immigrants from the other former Yugoslav republics stands in Slovenia as a signifier of 'Balkanness', and is consequently a place around which negative stereotypes are constructed. The research about the culinary habits among the biggest three ethnic groups in the neighbourhood (Slovenians, Serbs and Bosniaks), shows that while there are very few actual cultural differences between the ethnic communities, the social distance between them remains substantial: any forms of cultural exchange in this multi-ethnic suburb are almost completely absent, at least in as much as they can be inferred from eating habits. In several instances, immigrants include various typically Slovenian dishes on their menus and vice versa, but it appears that they do so for other structural reasons, not because of cultural contact within the neighbourhood.