

**Hungry for Data:
Studying court dining and using sensory data (1300–1800)**

Call for papers

International Workshop, Vilnius, Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania,
May 29–30, 2026

Organisation: **COST Action 24164: *Sensing Europe's Court Spaces at the Crossroads of Past, Present and Future* (SENSES)**

What data can we use to understand and even measure sensory experiences and dining at court?

Dining at court may have been a feast for the senses – but what kind of data do we have to understand and measure these feasts? Court studies has a strong interest in dining as a core part of court life. To understand dining at court we have used economic accounts, travel descriptions, printed ceremonials, and the very rooms used. Adding to this mix there are now new and exciting opportunities. Has new technological breakthroughs allowed new forms of data and measurements of data?

SENSES (<https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA24164/>) has established a working group focussing on dining at court in the early modern period (with a generous definition of the time frame of that period). We hope to encourage and stimulate both new research and new methods to form a deeper understanding of courtly dining. This SENSES workshop will have a focus on the identification and feasibility of sensor-based data and other measurable proxies relevant to court dining (e.g., lighting conditions, room acoustics, circulation paths for serving, thermal and ventilation aspects, and spatial patterns of seating/order and visibility). The workshop will therefore explicitly aim to attract additional members and partners (heritage professionals, engineers, data specialists) who can advise on data acquisition and experimental designs that remain historically responsible.

The „Hungry for Data“ workshop will be divided into three parts. The introduction will be a presentation of research into court studies and the role of dining within that context. This will also highlight spatial issues about where dining took place. We are lucky to be able to hold this workshop within a recreated princely space (the rebuilt Grand Ducal palace in Vilnius).

Then follows the second part of the workshop, focussing on practical approaches/methods. As indicated above, we hope this will cover a wide range of sensory aspects of courtly dining such as: lighting conditions, room acoustics, circulation paths for serving, thermal and ventilation aspects, and spatial patterns of seating/order, visibility – and not to forget, taste! There might also be other forms of sensory experiences that can be measured and which would be of interest.

The third part can be termed the computational approach. Here we will discuss dynamical systems, modelling AI and other forms of what is commonly referred to as big data. This is intended to discuss the definition of analytical approaches for statistics, dynamical-systems modelling, and AI-supported visualisation, in order to move from descriptive reconstructions toward new levels of analytical abstraction and comparison, thereby enriching different fields by combing different methods.

We stress that the ethos of the meeting is very much a hands-on workshop. Practical demonstrations of methods, sharing of and discussing how data can be used is warmly encouraged indeed. Bringing your methods and your data „to the table“ (pun intended) to be shared will be useful to everyone.

Participants must register with **COST** (free of charge). Travel and accommodation costs of accepted speakers will be reimbursed according to COST rules. Early career researchers may also apply for Short-Term Scientific Missions.

Up to 20 workshop places are available, and selected participants will be invited via e-COST and may receive travel reimbursement and daily allowance in accordance with COST rules; all funding decisions are made by the Management Committee (MC) or its delegated Core Group following COST procedures. Applicants must be affiliated with a legal entity, and selection follows COST's principles of openness, transparency and inclusiveness, including mandatory e-COST invitations, attendance lists, and reimbursement based on post-event claims with complete documentation; double funding is prohibited, and daily allowances and travel reimbursements adhere to MC-defined country rates under Annex A1-3.1/3.2 of the Annotated Rules.

For more information see: <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA24164/>

We especially welcome contributions that

- explore sensorial data gathering and measuring from an interdisciplinary perspective
- present proof-of-concept projects using digital, virtual, or AI-based methods

We particularly encourage participation from art and architecture historians, historians, researchers from heritage conservation studies and heritage sciences with focus on using and evaluating sensor data (e.g. building physics), digital humanities researchers, computer scientist with focus on geo-spatial/ sensor data analysis/ data visualisation, experts in the application of artificial intelligence and simulation to the humanities questions relating to this call. Early career researchers are strongly encouraged to apply.

Please submit:

- an abstract (max 300 words)
- a short CV (max one page)

by **April 10, 2026** to Stephan.hoppe@lmu.se and Fabian.persson@lnu.se

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