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The Overview of Products and Actors of Agrobiodiversity Slow Food Tourism in Partner Danube Regions

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**Activity 1.3: Mapping the Slow Food Tourism Assets and
Stakeholders in Partner Regions**

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1. Introduction

The main objective of the “*Socially responsible slow food tourism*” (SReST) project is to promote “slow food” tourism in the Danube region and enhance the employability of vulnerable groups by providing solutions that enable the valorisation of agrobiodiversity and gastronomic heritage and a fair distribution of generated benefits, including the well-being of the host communities. Project specific objectives are:

1. to create a shared framework & tools for solutions by finetuning the slow food tourism model for the valorisation of agrobiodiversity and gastronomic heritage & engagement of vulnerable groups through capitalization of existing tools and stakeholders' mapping;
2. to test scalable SReST tools for solutions that lead to innovative tourism offer by valorising agrobiodiversity & food heritage, respecting socio-cultural authenticity & providing benefits to vulnerable groups and other members of host communities;
3. to evaluate pilots and transfer SReST final solutions along with the virtual ecosystem for acceleration of socially responsible slow food tourism, facilitate knowledge exchange with other Danube projects (capitalization) & mobilize relevant multi-sectoral and multi-level decision-makers.

The project will help enhance local agricultural high-value chains while preserving local communities’ natural and cultural diversity and promote sustainable tourism as a pathway for food heritage protection also by engaging vulnerable groups (youth, elderly, disabled, migrants) in rural and suburban partner areas. Joint solutions to enhance socio-economic development and to promote alternative models and competitive new tourism products of “slow food itineraries grounded in agrobiodiversity and food heritage” will be developed and tested in different territorial contexts of pilot regions.

As a starting point, project partners identified seven partner regions in which specific analysis and other project activities will be implemented. These regions are:

1. Primorsko-notranjska region in Slovenia,
2. Krk island in Croatia,
3. Prešov (and Bratislava in piloting stage) in Slovakia,
4. Hajdú-Bihar County in Hungary,
5. Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
6. Western Serbia region and
7. Northern Montenegro.

The implementation of socially responsible “slow food” tourism practices in SReST partner regions started with mapping inputs, outputs, processes and stakeholders. Partner regions that were mapped are presented at the beginning of this document, followed by the analysis of the questionnaires which were completed by stakeholders. Products (inputs and outputs) as well as processes and stakeholders are catalogued in two appendices to this report: Appendix 1: Catalogue of Products and Appendix 2: Catalogue of Stakeholders.

2. Profiles of SReST Partner Regions

2.1 Primorsko – notranjska Region in Slovenia

The **Primorsko-Notranjska region** of Slovenia, located in the southwestern part of the country, is a place of extraordinary natural beauty, cultural richness and gastronomic heritage. Nestled between the Adriatic coast and the Slovenian karst, this region is known for its diverse landscapes, including lush forests, rolling hills, karst plateaus and picturesque villages. It is less touristic compared to other parts of Slovenia but offers visitors a peaceful retreat into nature and an authentic taste of Slovenian rural life. The region is also celebrated for its culinary traditions, with locally produced foods and beverages at the core of its cultural identity.

Geography and Nature

Primorsko-Notranjska is a region characterized by **karst landscapes**, which include caves, underground rivers and rocky outcrops. One of the most famous natural phenomena in the region is **Cerknica Lake**, an intermittent lake that periodically floods the surrounding plains and then drains, disappearing underground. The region is also home to **Rakov Škocjan**, a protected area featuring a dramatic gorge formed by the Reka River, as well as **Postojna Cave**, one of the most visited natural landmarks in Slovenia. The natural beauty of the region is complemented by vast

forested areas, making it a popular destination for outdoor activities such as hiking, cycling and bird watching.

Cultural Heritage

Historically, the Primorsko-Notranjska region was influenced by its proximity to important trade routes and neighboring regions like the Karst and the coast. This created a unique blend of cultural elements, with traces of Italian, Austrian and Balkan traditions visible in local architecture, customs and gastronomy. The **Nanos Plateau** stands as a symbol of the region's natural and cultural landscape, where shepherds have grazed their flocks for centuries, producing some of Slovenia's finest dairy products. The region's modest but rich cultural tapestry is a reflection of the hard-working people who have lived and farmed here for generations.

Gastronomic Heritage

The cuisine of Primorsko-Notranjska is shaped by its natural environment, with an emphasis on **locally sourced, seasonal ingredients**. Traditional dishes often feature meats, dairy products, and vegetables grown in the fertile soil of the region, and many recipes have been passed down through generations.

Local specialties include:

- **Nanos Cheese (Nanoški sir):** A semi-hard cheese made from cow's milk, produced on the Nanos Plateau. The cheese has a distinctive flavor due to the herbs and grasses of the high-altitude pastures.
- **Jota:** A traditional Slovenian soup made with sauerkraut or turnip, beans and potatoes, often flavored with pork.
- **Štruklji:** Rolled dough filled with various fillings, such as cottage cheese or walnuts, and served as either a sweet or savory dish.
- **Honey:** Produced by the Carniolan honey bee, native to Slovenia, local honey is prized for its purity and variety, reflecting the region's diverse flora.

Slovenia's **commitment to sustainable and organic agriculture** is evident in the Primorsko-Notranjska region, where many small farms and producers practice eco-friendly farming methods. This results in high-quality, artisanal products that are central to the region's culinary identity.

2.2 Bratislava & Prešov regions in Slovakia

2.2.1 Bratislava region

The **Bratislava Region**, located in the southwestern corner of Slovakia, is the country's smallest yet most economically dynamic region. As the home of the capital city, Bratislava, it serves as the political, cultural and economic heart of Slovakia. Nestled along the Danube River and bordering Austria and Hungary, the region combines modern urban life with historical landmarks, vibrant art scenes and a cosmopolitan atmosphere. The surrounding area offers castles and easy access to the Small Carpathian forests, providing a blend of natural and cultural experiences. Renowned for its international character, innovation hubs and culinary diversity, the Bratislava Region reflects Slovakia's global connections and contemporary development.

Based on a study published in 2014 elaborated by Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, the Bratislava region exhibits a low share of organic farming compared to other regions in Slovakia. Specifically, only about 3.78% of organic farms are located in Bratislava, marking it as one of the regions with the least presence of sustainable agricultural practices. While the study cannot be considered recent, no follow-up research has been found and at the same time, given the nature of the region of the capital city, it can be assumed that no major changes happened in this aspect.

This limited adoption of organic farming in Bratislava may be attributed to factors such as urbanization, land use priorities and economic focus on non-agricultural sectors.

This is why we have decided to put our focus in the piloting process on the Prešov region, which in contrast, offers a deeper connection to Slovakia's rural identity, living traditions and community-based tourism potential. Its relative remoteness and lesser visibility on the tourism map provide fertile ground for sustainable development, cultural preservation and the promotion of regional uniqueness.

According to aforementioned study, Prešov region accounted for approximately 24.42% of all organic farms in Slovakia, the highest share among the country's regions. In terms of ecological farmland, Prešov led with 29.07% of Slovakia's total ecological farmland. This indicates a strong commitment to sustainable farming practices within the region.

In terms of culinary tradition, cuisine in Bratislava was shaped by a mix of **Austrian, Hungarian, German** and **Czech** influences, due to its geographic location, history as part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its urban character. On the other hand, Prešov region has a different culinary identity, more heavily influenced by **Ruthenian (Rusyn), Ukrainian,** and **Hungarian** traditions, and features more rustic, hearty, and peasant-style foods (like **pirohy, holúbky** (stuffed cabbage), **zemiakové placky** (potato pancakes), and dishes based

on **buckwheat, potatoes, and cabbage**) which are accepted as more traditionally Slovak also in the capital, thus it can be concluded, that **the culinary traditions of Bratislava are influenced by the Prešov region**. This has been historically, but also to this day, supported by internal migration: many people from eastern Slovakia have moved to Bratislava (especially since the 20th century for work or education), bringing their culinary traditions with them. This has resulted in some eastern Slovak dishes (like pirohy) becoming common in Bratislava

While the Bratislava Region thrives as a centre of innovation and international tourism, it is precisely this prominence that makes it less suitable as the focus of the project, aiming to highlight underrepresented, authentic and culturally rich destinations. Focusing on Prešov region supports balanced regional growth and aligns with goals of decentralization and inclusivity, making it an ideal case for highlighting meaningful travel and local engagement, while investigating the region out of which many traditional and symbolic meals are originating from. At the same time, **the SReST methodology for mapping requires us to delve deeply into agrobiodiversity specifics, which involves pinpointing genuine plant and animal species, along with their associated culinary traditions**. We believe, that this will be most efficiently achieved by focusing on Prešov region in our research. This is also why the data collected in the two Appendices—Catalogue of Products and Catalogue of Stakeholders—specifically pertains to the Prešov Region.

2.2.2 Prešov region

The **Prešov region** of Slovakia, situated in the northeastern part of the country, is a captivating area of natural beauty, cultural heritage and culinary tradition. Framed by the High Tatras and Low Tatras mountain ranges, this region boasts diverse landscapes, from majestic peaks and dense forests to serene valleys and quaint villages. While less frequented than other Slovak regions, Prešov offers visitors a genuine immersion into Slovakia's rural charm and rich traditions. It is known for its folk culture, traditional wooden architecture and vibrant festivals, as well as its time-honored culinary practices, with locally sourced ingredients and handcrafted specialties that are central to its regional identity.

Geography and Nature

The Prešov region of Slovakia is defined by its stunning mountainous landscapes, abundant forests and diverse natural features. It is home to parts of the High Tatras, a majestic mountain range with towering peaks, alpine lakes and scenic valleys. One of the highlights is Štrbské Pleso, a glacial lake that draws visitors year-round, especially for hiking, skiing and nature photography. The region also includes the Pieniny National Park, known for the Dunajec River gorge, where rafting and kayaking through dramatic limestone cliffs offer a unique adventure. Extensive forested areas provide a haven for wildlife and attract nature lovers for activities like hiking, cycling and bird watching. The Prešov region is a sanctuary of pristine nature, appealing to those seeking outdoor experiences and breathtaking landscapes.

Cultural Heritage

The Prešov region of Slovakia boasts a rich cultural heritage shaped by its location at the crossroads of historic trade routes and various cultural influences. This area showcases traditional Slovak architecture, from wooden churches and folk houses to UNESCO-listed historical landmarks like the wooden churches of the Carpathian Mountains. The region's culture has also been shaped by a blend of Slovak, Polish and Rusyn influences, resulting in unique customs, folk music and crafts. Generations of mountain communities have cultivated a strong connection to the land, evident in their vibrant festivals, handmade textiles and craftsmanship, particularly in woodwork and pottery. The cultural legacy of the Prešov region reflects the resilience and creativity of its people, who have preserved their way of life amidst the stunning natural backdrop of the Tatras and surrounding valleys.

Gastronomic Heritage

The Prešov region's cuisine reflects the hearty, flavorful traditions of Slovakia, deeply connected to the mountainous landscape and agricultural heritage. Local dishes emphasize fresh, seasonal ingredients, often sourced from family farms and forests. Traditional foods like bryndzové halušky (potato dumplings with sheep cheese), hearty soups, smoked meats and game are central to the regional palate. Dairy products, particularly sheep cheese, are a staple, as are wild mushrooms and forest berries, gathered seasonally from the surrounding woodlands. Many recipes have been passed down through generations, preserving the authentic flavors and culinary techniques that give Prešov's gastronomy its unique, comforting character.

Local specialties include:

- **Bryndzové Halušky** – This iconic Slovak dish features small potato dumplings topped with creamy sheep cheese (bryndza) and crispy bacon bits. It's often considered Slovakia's national dish.
- **Pirohy** – Traditional Slovak dumplings similar to pierogi, these are filled with ingredients like potato, cheese or sauerkraut and are served with a topping of sour cream or fried onions.
- **Kapustnica** – A hearty, savory soup made with sauerkraut, smoked meats and sometimes dried mushrooms. It's especially popular during the colder months and is a traditional dish during Christmas.
- **Mačanka** – A thick mushroom-based soup or stew, often prepared with sour cream and served with slices of hearty bread. It's a rustic dish that highlights local mushrooms from the region's forests.
- **Zemiakové Placky** – Potato pancakes that are grated, seasoned and fried until crispy. They are a popular side or snack and are often enjoyed with garlic and herbs.
- **Slivovica** – A strong fruit brandy made from plums, it's widely enjoyed in Prešov and other Slovak regions, often served as a warming drink in cold weather.
- **Medovina** - Slovak mead, is a traditional honey wine made by fermenting honey with water, sometimes flavored with herbs or spices. It has a long history in Slovakia, especially in mountainous and forested regions like Prešov, where beekeeping has deep roots.

Slovakia is steadily building its commitment to sustainable and organic agriculture, with an increasing number of small farms and producers adopting eco-friendly practices. This trend is also visible in regions like Prešov, where local traditions in small-scale farming are helping to preserve natural landscapes and support biodiversity. While Slovakia's agricultural sector is still expanding its sustainability initiatives, the dedication of local producers is resulting in a range of high-quality, artisanal products that reflect the country's rich natural resources and heritage. In areas like Prešov, these practices contribute to a distinctive culinary identity, showcasing locally sourced ingredients such as dairy, meats and forest products. Although Slovakia's journey toward widespread sustainable agriculture is ongoing, the early adoption of eco-friendly methods by small producers is paving the way for a greener agricultural future.

2.3 Krk Island in Croatia

Krk island is the largest island in the Adriatic, and the most northern Mediterranean island covering 157 square miles (405.78 square km). It is also one of the most populous with 19,000 inhabitants. It is 38km long, and up to 18km wide. Located in the center of the Kvarner Bay (Kvarner will be a European gastronomic region in 2026), less than two hours by car from regional centers such as Ljubljana, Zagreb and Trieste. It is well developed and very busy with tourists as it is connected by bridge to the mainland. Rijeka Airport is also located on the island.

It has been inhabited since prehistoric times, as evidenced by many archaeological sites. The Illyrian tribe Liburni were the first organized tribe that ruled the island for several centuries. With the island also part of the Greek Empire's Elektridic or Apsirtidik islands. From almost the beginning of the new era, Krk has been an integral part of the Roman Empire and as such a very important part of the cultural and economic life of Western European civilization. In the seventh century, Krk was inhabited by Croats who live there to this day. As with its neighbouring islands, Krk came under Venetian rule in 1480 (until 1797).

After the fall of the Venetian Republic, the island came to be part of the Austrian Empire, although this was briefly interrupted by Napoleonic rule for seven years, from 1806. Tourism played an important part to the island's development in this century; Malinska first started receiving tourists by boat even in the late 19th century (first form of tourism in Malinska was hunting tourism).

Post-World War I, the island was briefly part of Italy (from 1918 to 1920), then part of Yugoslavia. During World War II, the island once again fell to the Italians (from 1941 to 1943) and was then occupied by the Germans until 1945, before it was liberated on 17th April 1945. Following World War II, the island became part of Yugoslavia once more, within which it remained up until Croatia's independence in 1991.

Historically, it is located on the very border of Western civilization and Eastern European civilization, as is the entire eastern coast of the Adriatic. Because of this, it was strongly influenced by Central Europe through the Habsburg Empire, Eastern Europe due to the proximity of the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan countries, but also by Italy (Venice), which has dominated the island for centuries. Different cultures have equally influenced customs, language and gastronomy, which are therefore very specific. In gastronomy, however, the Mediterranean influence predominates.

During its history, Krk was known as "Golden island" (Insula Aurea), due to the richness of its wheat fields, olive oil, wine and a lot of sunny days. Until the middle of the 20th century, Krk was self-sufficient in terms of food production, food was even exported from Krk. With the development of tourism, less and less food is produced locally and more and more is imported, often from very distant countries.

North-western part of the island is quite green, with its rich and lush oak woods, whereas southern and south-east part is quite barren and rocky. Climate is mild Mediterranean. The rich soil, enough water, favourable climate and location equally influenced by the continent and the Mediterranean result in exceptional biodiversity, which has been favoured throughout its long history by the traditional sustainable way of managing the landscape. About 1,400 native species of plants grow on Krk, just for the sake of comparison, around 1,700 native species grow in the whole of Britain.

2.4 Hajdú-Bihar County in Hungary

Hajdú-Bihar County is located in the eastern part of Hungary, the whole area belongs to the largest landscape of the country, the Great Plain. Its most important landscape units are the Nyírség, the Hajdúság, the Hortobágy, and the Berettyó-Körös-region. Its surface is typically covered with plains, formed by various watercourses. The Tisza flows along the county border in the north-west, and the Berettyó and Sebes-Körös rivers are in the south. The county is relatively rich in artificial lakes and thermal waters.

The climate of Hajdú-Bihar County is similar to that of the other areas of the Great Plain: it is drier in summer, slightly colder in winter, most of it has a moderately warm-dry climate, only the climate of Southern Nyírség is moderately cool and moderately warm. The number of annual sunny hours is between 2020-2150 hours. The average annual temperature is between 10.5 and 11.0 ° C, increasing from north to south. In terms of precipitation, the county is one of the driest regions of the Great Plain, and the southern part of Hortobágy is one of the driest areas of the country, as the annual amount of precipitation doesn't reach 500 mm.

The most significant watercourse in Hajdú-Bihar, which is poor in surface waters, is the Tisza river running along the western part of the county for 53 km and drains the area directly or through the Berettyó and Sebes-Körös rivers.

The Eastern and Western main canals are also of great importance in the county's water management, residential, agricultural and ecological water supply, as well as in its recreational functions. The natural stagnant waters of the county are of various origins, abandoned riverbeds, cut-off bends and flats can be found next to the growing number of artificial lakes (Hortobágy fishponds, Erdőspusztá lakes).

The county is rich in groundwater. Thermal water from the deep-drilled wells in the area bursts to the surface in many places, several of which have a healing effect. It is a significant base for thermal and spa industry.

With an area of 6,211 km², Hajdú-Bihar County belongs to the large counties of the country. In terms of size, the fourth county accounts for almost 6.7% of the territory of Hungary, but only 5.4% of the resident population. Apart from Budapest, it also ranks fourth in the ranking of counties in terms of population. There are currently 82 municipalities in the county. A significant proportion of the settlements in Hajdú-Bihar have large area and population so the settlement density is low. The number of settlements per 100 km² is only 1.29. The average settlement area is almost 76 km², which is two and a half times the national average. The average population of the settlements is also high: 6,507 people, which is more than twice as much the national (rural) average.

Hajdú-Bihar County is a relatively young administrative unit in Hungary, as its existence can be counted from March 16, 1950. (The territory of the county has been practically unchanged since June 1, 1950, except for insignificant border changes).

As for natural values, the Hortobágy National Park is the first and largest national park in Hungary. It was transformed into a national park in 1973, which now includes more than 82,000 hectares of protected area. It is on the World Heritage List by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee since 1999. The purpose of the area is to preserve and develop the characteristic natural values of the steppe, to protect the unique flora and fauna of the Hortobágy, the landscape of the steppe. It is an important task to ensure the smooth nesting and migration of birds. It must preserve and present in an authentic and natural conditions the traditional steppe way of life, the endangered ancient Hungarian animal species, the cultural and historical values of the area (shepherds' culture). It has also a unique Starry Sky Park designated as International Dark Sky Park.

The county's natural resources significantly influence the development of several economic sectors in Hajdú-Bihar County. Among its natural resources, the most important for the economy is the arable land. 72% of the area of Hajdúhat is covered by lowland chernozem, and 63% of the area of South Hajdúság by meadow chernozem, which are optimal areas for arable farming. The products of agriculture based on favourable natural conditions have played a decisive role in the development of the county's food and light industry as a planting factor and still today create good conditions for preserving the role of food production and renewable energy in the local economy. It is also worth highlighting the thermal water resources, the exploration of which has led to the establishment of spas in the major settlements of the county (e.g. Balmazújváros, Berettyóújfalú, Kaba, Nádudvar), and Hajdúszoboszló and Debrecen have become one of the most visited spa tourism destinations in Hungary.

Debrecen, the county seat, is the third largest and second most populous municipality in Hungary. It is the intellectual, cultural, economic, tourist and transport centre of Eastern Hungary. The town's main sources of income have long been the cattle trade, animal husbandry and handicrafts.

Based on historical data, the birth of the taverns around Debrecen can be linked to the relatively calmer period after the expulsion of the Turks and can be associated with several causal systems.

The tavern ("csárda") buildings were built along the busy roads between the large border towns and villages, in the growing public safety after the expulsion of the Turks. They played an important role in transport and trade. Travellers and boatmen could feed themselves and their animals in taverns built at convenient distances between two feeding and watering stops.

After the suppression of the War of Independence in 1848, the Viennese court considered these buildings to be the strongholds of the resistance and had them demolished. In addition, the development and transformation of transport also led to the closure of many taverns.

When visiting to Hajdú-Bihar, Tavern of Hortobágy (Hortobágyi Csárda), Rosy Tavern (Rózsás Csárda) and the Fishermen's Tavern in Tiszacsege (Tiszacsegei Halászcsárda) offer the opportunity to get a short insight in the world of such taverns.

The **Hortobágy tavern** was built by the city of Debrecen in 1699, along the so-called Sóút (Salt Road), a road through the wilderness, next to the customs post and post office on the Hortobágy

River. It was rebuilt and enlarged several times according to the needs of the past, and it reached its final historical form at the beginning of the 19th century.

The history of the Hortobágy tavern, like that of the taverns along the major roads and river crossings, was closely linked to that of the adjacent wagon-house and bridge.

The famous Nine Hole Bridge was built between 1827 and 1833 using dacite tufa and cobbles from the Northern area of Hungary. It was also a central place for the Bridge Fair (Hídi Vásár), which played an important role in the life of the Puszta, where a successful business deal could immediately lead to a dream sale. The building is more than three hundred years old and, as in the past, it still serves the needs of travellers and tourists.



Image: Hortobágy tavern;
Photo credit: hortobagy.eu



Image: Rosy Tavern;
Photo credit: rozsascsarda.hu



Image: Tiszacsege Fishermen's Tavern;
Photo credit: csegecsarda.hu

According to oral tradition, the **Rosy Tavern** was named after the rose painted on its sign. The similarity in the pronunciation of 'rose' and the name of the landowning 'Józsa' family probably played a role in the naming. On the sign above the present entrance to the inn, an inscription dated 1723 refers to the founding and building of the inn. The inn, a listed building, was renovated in the late 1980s and the south wing was added.

Despite the transformations caused by the centuries, the Rosy Tavern in Józsa, which is still operating in its original function, is classified as a listed building and reflects the atmosphere and spirit of the old taverns as authentically as possible, with a high standard of quality and in a renewed, beautiful condition.

The **Tiszacsege Fishermen's Tavern** was built in the early 1900s on the bank of the Tisza River, where it stands today. The former landlord had a great imagination for catering to people crossing and waiting for the ferry. News of the fresh fish dishes, obtained from fishermen working on the Tisza, spread quickly and soon became a great success. The inn's hospitable service also became well-known, and not only ferry passengers but also people from far away came to sample the excellent food. Since 2008, the inn has been under new ownership and the interior, terrace, and boarding house have been renovated. The event is completed by live concerts, a craft fair, performances by local and regional art groups, children's and entertainment programmes, discounted fish juice, and the proximity of the Tisza. The fish soup is made from fish found in the Tisza (bream, carp, carp). The fish is boiled and strained and then the stock (sour cream, mustard, lemon juice, and various spices) is added. All this is cooked together and the carp and catfish fillet slices are added. The cooks learned the old recipe from the women of Tiszacsege, and they adapted it to their taste.

2.5 Sarajevo Canton in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is the second most rural country in Europe after Ireland. Forests cover more than 43 % of its territory and some areas are still covered by the last primary forests in Europe. Today, despite an important rural exodus trend, many families are relying on the agriculture activities and their lands as a main source of income for food security but also with more profitable products and sustainable economic models.

The Canton of Sarajevo is a still undiscovered tourist destination with exceptional natural, cultural and historical heritage and favourable climatic conditions. Various cultures, religions and traditions have intersected for centuries, leaving their traces, giving additional value for the creation of a specific tourist product. Bosnian cuisine is a “fusion” cuisine, where the visitor may taste homemade oriental pitas and Austro-Hungarian pastries. It is also known for its exceptional agro biodiversity with a diversity of climate and reliefs. Sarajevo region is located in the central mountainous parts of the country. The diversity of climatic zones and rich natural resources enabled the cultivation of a wide range of agricultural products, from traditional varieties of fruits and vegetables to indigenous animal breeds. This biological diversity and mountainous character contributed to the preservation of native plant and animal species, supporting sustainable agricultural development and the protection of cultural heritage.

The two target territories, **Bjelašnica and Nišići plateau**, are both located at the same distance from the capital city, Sarajevo and are part of Sarajevo Canton. They are already considered as tourist destinations for Sarajevo residents as well as foreign travellers. They have different characteristics. Bjelašnica is a very suited destination for mountain tourism. Nišići, with its livelier agricultural production (particularly different cereals) and its dense forests, is very suitable for agritourism. Both territories are protected from pollution and agricultural practices are sustainable, mostly subsistence agriculture combining extensive breeding with polyculture. Abundant water sources, preserved biodiversity, stary nights and absence of industries make them destinations of choice.

Mountain Bjelašnica, with its average 1700 m altitude, is part of the Dinaric Alps and already a mountain destination. Located 36 km from Sarajevo and having hosted the 1984 Winter Olympics. The mountain is covered by a rich flora and fauna and provides opportunities for hiking, skiing, biking and mountaineering. Rural tourism has been greatly developed in the villages since the last 10 years with mountain huts, pensions, high standard “vilas” for rental and B&Bs. It has a cool alpine climate with heavy snowfall in winter and mild summers. This area is very suitable for extensive breeding activities, particularly sheep, but also for its dairy production and the traditional collection of wild aromatic plants, berries and mushrooms. The surrounding villages, such as

Umoljani, Sinanovići, Lukomir or Bobovica are known for their well-preserved traditional Bosnian heritage. These villages offer unique cultural heritage, including local crafts, traditional foods and hospitality in authentic mountain homes.



Image. Village Bobovica, Bjelasnica mountain; Photo credit: Alterural archives May 2024.

In the area of Bjelašnica, the long-standing tradition of agricultural production is characterised primarily by growing potatoes, which is the most represented crop. Almost every household, besides potatoes, grows onions and carrots. On the other hand, the cultivation of cereals, especially wheat and oats, which used to be common, is no longer present. Fruit growing is poorly represented in the villages of Bjelašnica due to high altitudes, which are located on average at about 1700 m above sea level. In addition, shallow land further limits the choice of crops that can be grown successfully. Due to the mentioned conditions, this field is more suitable for the development of animal husbandry, which before the war was the dominant branch of agriculture in this area, with special emphasis on sheep farming. Today, agricultural production is significantly less common and mostly replaced by renting accommodation facilities. However, the question of sustainable development arises, given the decreasing number of local food producers.

Nišići plateau, located at an average of 980 m altitude and 37 km from Sarajevo, offers a milder climate and is mostly all covered by forests. It is also a well-known tourism destination in particular with Bijambare caves, which are an extensive cave system. The cave is a popular destination. The park surrounding the cave system features dense forests and a variety of wildlife, offering opportunities for hiking and nature observation. Nearby villages, such as Nišići or Crna Rijeka, offer cultural experiences, including visits to local farms, traditional Bosnian cuisine and artisanal products. These households often provide accommodations and guided tours, showcasing the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the region. The region has been known for a few years for the cultivation and processing of buckwheat and a rich set of processed wild products.

Considering the hilly terrain and higher altitude, the inhabitants of Nišići are traditionally focused on animal husbandry, which is still dominant today. Thanks to the spacious pastures and incentive

measures, the number of cattle as well as their productivity has recently been increasing, which is a rarity for Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the post-war period, new plantings were introduced, among which stands out buckwheat, which was an almost forgotten crop in this area. It is also growing in importance the production of medicinal plants, the areas of which are expanding, which also contributes to the improvement of beekeeping production. Given the increasing possibilities of using medicinal plants, as well as some other crops such as alternative grains, their cultivation and processing represent potential for development of the agricultural sector in Nišići plateau.



Image: Plateau Nišići; Photo credit: FB Adventure Balkan

2.6 Western Serbia

Zlatibor region in Western Serbia has long been known for production of apples and plums, especially Lim valley. There are very good geographical and human potentials for production of fruit, especially plums, apples and berries (raspberries, blueberries) which are insufficiently used. Fruit growing is a very important branch of agriculture which can keep the inhabitants in rural areas, as this business offers possibility to achieve solid income for a household. Potentials of Zlatibor region, as a tourist oriented region, are great possibilities for making plantations of indigenous varieties of apples, plums, pears where the fruit would be raised as organic, and the new plants could also serve as a tourist attraction.

Raspberry, apple and plum are the three most common fruit varieties raised here. In 2023, about 98.674 tonnes of raspberry was produced in Serbia, a third of which is in this region. This area has the biggest surfaces of planted raspberries, greatest potentials for freezing of raspberry and the world record in achieved average income (44.763 kg/ha), so that raspberry is the most profitable fruit type. Most raspberries are produced in Arilje municipality and this type of raspberry is actually famous as Arilje raspberry (Ariljska malina). Arilje is also the centre of apple production, as almost two thirds of the total number of trees and the three quarters of production of the county is made in this municipality. Intensive commercial technologies in production result in high yield per tree, among the highest in Serbia. The city of Užice has about 300ha of apple orchards, mostly as a part of small garden plots. Indigenous varieties of apple in Zlatibor region are used in production of brandy, apple vinegar, sita (liquid pekmez – a type of liquid jam) and dried apple, and lately apple crisps. Indigenous varieties which are mostly raised are: Budimka, Kolačara, Senabija, Petrovača, Krstovača, Šumatovka, Zelenika, Zejtinka, and the modern varieties raised are: Ajdared, Granny Smith, Zlatni delišes (Golden delicious), Crveni delišes (Red delicious), Gala and Breburn.

Zlatibor region is recognized and identified with plum as a national fruit and a symbol of Serbian village, and in number of trees and surfaces it covers, plum is the most widespread fruit variety in the region. However, without more specific register of locality of raising plum and characteristics of the product in relation to other areas (fruit quality, certain flavours or presence of dry matter, yield, etc.), it is impossible to continue its development. Since the production is mostly extensive, a lot should be done in improvement of agro-technical measures of protection and nurturing, which would improve plum quality and create final products in order to improve additional value in the market. Raising new plants was supported by several municipalities of Zlatibor region resulting in increasing of surfaces and number of orchards in Prijepolje, Priboj and Nova Varoš municipality.

In the territory of Zlatibor region, as an ecologically preserved area, more attention is paid to collecting and raising medicinal herbs and collecting of wild fruits. Wild mushrooms (edible bolete, orange-milk agaric, chanterelle, sun-stroke, morel, lactarius, lactarius delicious, oyster mushroom, puffball, meadow mushroom, etc.) which are exported to the foreign market as a semi-product (dried, frozen, brined).

Besides mushrooms, wild berries (juniper, dog-rose, blueberry, wild strawberry, wild blackberry and other uncultivated fruit), are also being purchased and processed, classified, dried, deeply freeze, blanched and placed in Italian, Austrian, German and Poland market. If ordered by a customer, the products are exported fresh. In forest nurseries, many varieties of medicinal herbs are raised in sample fields and plantations (plantain, mint, thyme, gentian, yarrow, mallow, selenium, sage, lavender, angelica, oregano, mother thyme, veremovka (type of mint), basil, calendula, mercury, paint brushes, wall germander, valerian, nettle and selenium), which are highly demanded in domestic and foreign market. Zlatibor region forests are also rich in wild fruits: strawberry, raspberry, blackberry and blueberry.

Zlatibor region is known for extensive production of potato of an exceptional quality. Potato production reaches about 100.000 tonnes annually, which is 10% of the total amount produced in Serbia. In the past couple of years constant moderation in new varieties is being made. Land and climate conditions are ideal for commodity production of both seed and mercantile potato of exceptional quality. A high level of annual production stresses the need for production of new processing capacities.

Buckwheat is traditionally raised in Zlatibor region and used as a healthy, medicinal and herb used in making bread. Buckwheat is called the queen of the mountains. Due to its nutritional and medicinal characteristics, the demand for buckwheat is bigger and its raising is a great potential. Buckwheat is a crop, although botanically it is herbaceous vegetables. Unlike other herbaceous vegetables it has nutritional seeds which place it among crops. Buckwheat is not only used in nutrition. Buckwheat flakes are a protective part of the buckwheat grain which is separated from edible part in the process of peeling and in combination with dried medicinal herbs used as a stuffing of pillows and mattresses. It is mostly raised in the territory of Nova Varoš municipality. The ripening process lasts for about three months, so buckwheat is also feasible as a preceding crop as it helps in weed control with its fast growth. Buckwheat has one very interesting characteristic which no other crop has. In its herbaceous stem about 2.000 smelly, white, pink and red flowers are developed and arranged in a cluster of flowers, rich in nectar healthy for the bees. The flowers are not equally developed so flowering time can last up to thirty days. Therefore, the most sophisticated agricultural producers use the natural symbiosis of bees and buckwheat twofold: they bring hive of bees and increase the yield of buckwheat in maximum fertilisation which can be up to 50% higher than the one without the help of the bees.

2.7 Northern Montenegro

Montenegro is a Mediterranean country, located in the southeastern part of the Adriatic Sea. Its area is 13,812 km², with about 633,000 inhabitants and an average population density of 45 inhabitants/km². There are 24 municipalities and 1307 settlements in Montenegro. Montenegro is divided into northern, central and southern regions. The area of 13 northern municipalities occupies 40% of its total area, and this area is inhabited by about 25% of the total population.

As for the topography of Montenegro, it is first of all characterized by beautiful beaches, many of which bear the epithet of the most beautiful beaches of the Mediterranean. In addition to the beaches, there are also numerous rivers, lakes, valleys and mountains. The deepest canyon in Europe is located in Montenegro, the Tara River canyon, which is also known as the tear of Europe due to its sparkling water. The mountains of Montenegro are among the harshest in Europe. Their average height is more than 2000m. The highest peak is Zla Kolata, which is located on Prokletije, on the border with Albania, 2534m. The most popular high peak of Montenegro is Bobotov Kuk on Durmitor 2523m.

Climatic conditions and the terrain that Montenegro has, also conditioned the production of high-quality food. The agriculture sector plays an important role in the economy of Montenegro, with a significant share in the gross domestic product (6.5% in 2021, including forestry and fishing). Although agriculture, together with the tourism sector, is the development and economic priority of the national economy, based on official statistics (data from administrative sources), only 1.6% of the total number of employees in Montenegro is permanently employed in agriculture. However, according to the survey from 2016, it was reported that about 100,000 people are involved in agriculture, as household owners, employed or unpaid household members.

The rural area development strategy (2015-2020) established a quality policy with the aim of preserving quality and tradition in food production. Improving quality by integrating through various types of protection and standards of quality and safety of products of strategic importance.

According to regulations, agricultural and food products can be protected with a mark of origin, a geographical mark, a mark of guaranteed traditional specialty. In these cases, the protection procedure is initiated by the producer group. Since 2018, producers have been able to add value to their products and improve their placement by protecting the labels - "Higher quality", "Mountain product" and "From my farm".

There is a whole range of products that have been prepared in Montenegro since ancient times, and the recipe and technology have been preserved until today. These products are usually characteristic of certain regions in Montenegro. Such producers have decided to protect the origin

of these products, and to apply European quality schemes, so today we have several protected products – Pljevaljski sir, govedja prsuta, lisnati kolasinski sir, Durmitorski kajmak and etc.

The two regions which will be in the focus of our SReST project efforts are Bjelasica, Komovi and Prokletije region, both of them incorporating nine municipalities, surrounded by the mountains

The two subregions would be as follows: one will be municipalities of Bijelo Polje/ Kolasin and Mojkovac and second will be municipalities of Berane, Andrijevica, Petnjica, Rozaje, Plav and Gusinje.

The common thing which connects the first 3 municipalities is Bjelasica mountain and leafy cheese. Only in these 3 municipalities, housewives still have the knowledge how to produce this speciality. Originally the recipes came from village near to Kolasin (Moraca), but as local girls got married, they brought this recipe to other places and expanded it to other areas.

The second subregion incorporates municipalities that are close to Prokletije National Park: Plav, Gusinje, Andrijevica and Rozaje. Berane and Petnjica are between these two National parks and have a good connection via many hiking, biking or panoramic trails. This subregion is very popular in summer time.

What is characteristic for this subregion are katuns, small summer wooden cabins where shepherds stay in summer, keep animals and produce dairy products. Further, this area is very rich with herbs as well as other wild products, so during summer time, the locals collect them and keep for meals or sell for further distribution. Majority of families that live in mountain areas are very resilient as they eat the food which they produce or collect in nature. Housewives there have skills for processing vegetable, fruit or wild products. After summer time, they only need to buy oil, sugar, salt etc for winter time.

3. Analysis of Questionnaires

As a part of the mapping process, a questionnaire survey has been conducted in the project regions, collecting data from:

- a) Producers in partner regions, to provide closer details about their products/produce, either processed or raw
- b) Service providers in partner regions, asking whether and how are traditional product complemented, supported and distributed to their final users, the customers.

Each respondent was asked about 1-3 specific products/services. In order to protect the respondents and acquire honest answers the questionnaire collection was anonymous. At the same time, we have to conclude that in most cases producers and service providers were profound to talk about their products and activities, however we also kept in mind that promotion of specific business units might provide them with potentially unfair advantage in the market, as our primary goal in the current activity of the project was research, not promotion.

3.1 Producers

In our sample of producers, we have collected 60 answers from 56 subjects representing 7 countries of the SReST project, in the respective involved regions.

In the questionnaire our respondents were given 11 questions, each of which we will summarise and shortly comment upon. More detailed information, including information from the subsequent qualitative comments that were provided by the respondents will be further evaluated in the section where products will be also differentiated by category.

As shown in the following graph, most of our researched products are specific to a region or local community.

Figure 1. Region-specific products

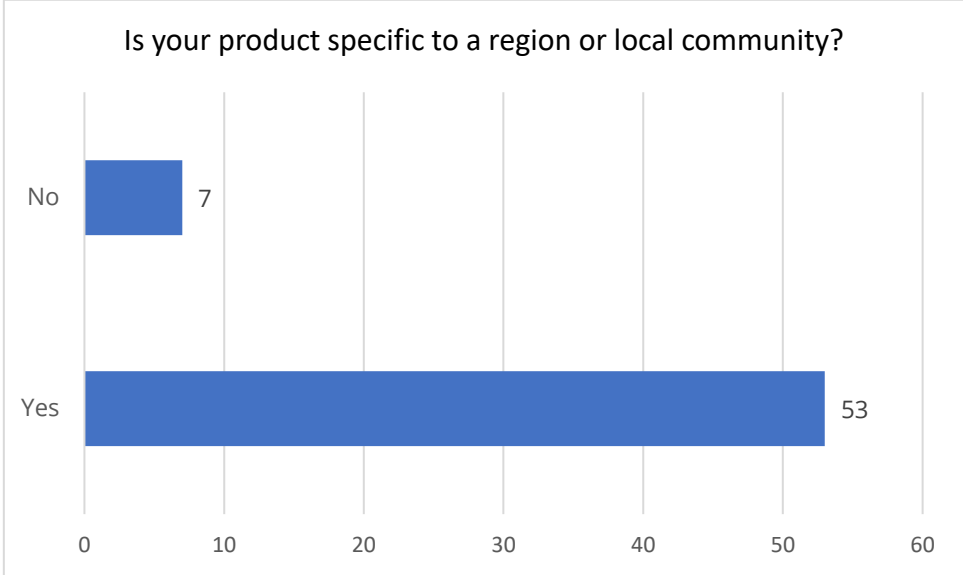


Table 1

Does your product have cultural or historical significance to your community or region?	
Yes	52
No	8

When asked whether products from the Danube region in our sample hold cultural or historical significance. Out of the 60 respondents, **52** (87%) affirmed that their products have cultural or historical relevance, while **8** (13%) indicated otherwise.

This high percentage highlights the strong cultural and historical ties of regional products to the community, underlining their importance in the Danube area's agrobiodiversity and food heritage.

Such findings emphasize the potential for these products to serve as pillars in initiatives aimed at sustainable development, cultural preservation and the creation of a catalogue of best practices.

Table 2

Does your product contribute to supporting the local economy?	
Yes	55
No	5

Table 2 reflects the responses in our sample to whether products contribute to supporting the local economy. Out of 60 respondents, **55 (92%)** confirmed that their products positively impact the local economy, while only **5 (8%)** responded negatively.

These results underscore the significant role that regional products play in bolstering the local economy. This finding aligns with the goal of promoting sustainable practices in the Danube region and highlights the economic value of preserving and valorising agrobiodiversity and food heritage.

Table 3

Does your product have a geographical indication (e.g. PDO - Protected Designation of Origin, PG - Protected geographical indication, TSG - Traditional speciality guaranteed)?	
Yes	12
No	48

The table shows responses regarding whether products have a geographical indication, such as PDO, PGI, or TSG. Out of 60 respondents, only **12 (20%)** indicated that their products have such a designation, while the majority, **48 (80%)**, reported that they do not.

These results reveal that most regional products lack formal geographical indication recognition. This highlights an opportunity to further explore and support the certification process, which could enhance the visibility, authenticity, and marketability of traditional and sustainable products in the Danube region.

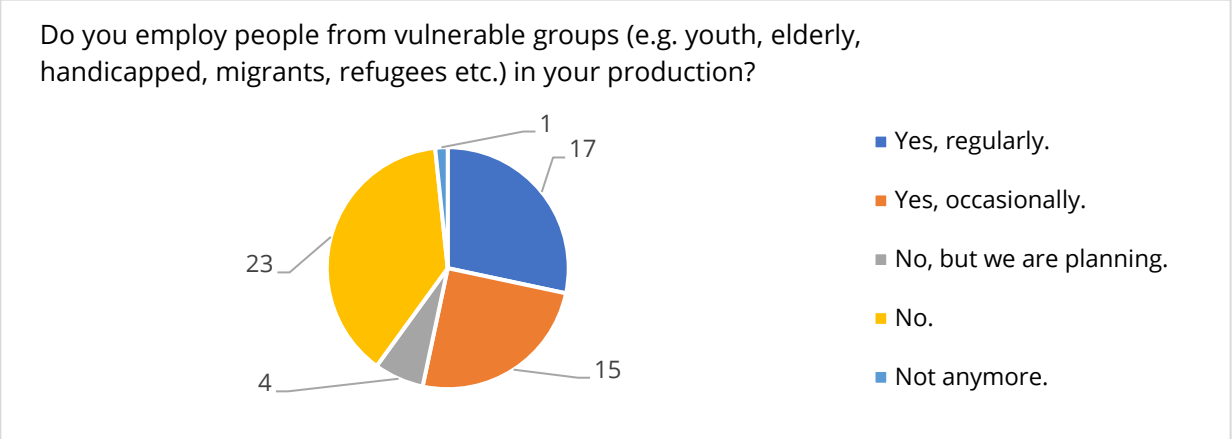
Table 4

For production, are the majority of your employees local workers?	
Yes	60
No	0

Table 4 reflects responses about whether the majority of employees involved in production are local workers. All **60** respondents (100%) confirmed that their workforce primarily consists of local workers, with no negative responses.

This unanimous result highlights the strong reliance on local labour for production in the Danube region. It underscores the social and economic importance of these products in providing employment opportunities and fostering community-based development.

Figure 2. Employment of vulnerable groups



The graph presents responses about employing people from vulnerable groups in production. Out of 60 respondents:

- **17** (28%) regularly employ individuals from vulnerable groups.
- **15** (25%) occasionally do so.
- **4** (7%) are planning to start employing from these groups.
- **23** (38%) do not employ them.
- **1** (2%) no longer employs individuals from vulnerable groups.

These results show that while a significant portion of producers engage with vulnerable groups, either regularly or occasionally (53%), there remains room for improvement. Encouraging more producers to integrate such practices could enhance social inclusion and align with socially responsible goals in the Danube region. In the categorical differentiation of product, it will also be specified which vulnerable groups were employed the most.

Table 5

Do you use traditional or artisanal methods in the production of your product?	
Yes	57
No	3

Table 5 reflects responses about the use of traditional or artisanal methods in production. Out of 60 respondents, **57** (95%) confirmed using traditional or artisanal techniques, while only **3** (5%) indicated they do not.

This overwhelming majority highlights the strong reliance on traditional and artisanal practices in the production of regional products. It underscores the cultural authenticity and heritage value of these methods, making them key assets for sustainable development and the preservation of agrobiodiversity in the Danube region.

Table 6

Does your product have an organic farming certificate or other similar certifications (e.g. Demeter, EU Organic, etc.)?	
Yes	9
No	51

Table 6 presents responses about whether products have an organic farming certificate or similar certifications. Out of 60 respondents, only **9** (15%) reported having such certifications, while the majority, **51** (85%), indicated they do not.

These results suggest that most producers in the Danube region lack organic or comparable certifications. This points to a potential area for development, where supporting producers in obtaining these certifications could enhance product credibility, align with sustainability goals, and open access to broader markets. Here we would also highlight similarity of results to the previous question regarding geographical indication of products.

Table 7

Do you use nature-friendly farming practices in production?	
Yes	58
No	2

Table 7 shows responses about the use of nature-friendly farming practices in production. Out of 60 respondents, **58** (97%) affirmed that they employ such practices, while only **2** (3%) indicated they do not.

This overwhelmingly positive response highlights a strong commitment among producers in the Danube region to sustainability and environmental stewardship. These practices are essential for preserving agrobiodiversity and align with the goals of socially responsible food heritage valorisation.

Table 8

Does your product contribute to the conservation of local biodiversity?	
Yes	56
No	4

Table 8 illustrates responses regarding whether products contribute to the conservation of local biodiversity. Out of 60 respondents, **56** (93%) confirmed their products play a role in biodiversity conservation, while only **4** (7%) stated otherwise.

These findings emphasize the significant contribution of regional products to preserving local biodiversity. This aligns strongly with the objectives of sustainable development in the Danube region, showcasing the ecological value of traditional and nature-friendly production practices.

Table 9

Can you ensure transparency and traceability of your production?	
Yes	58
No	2

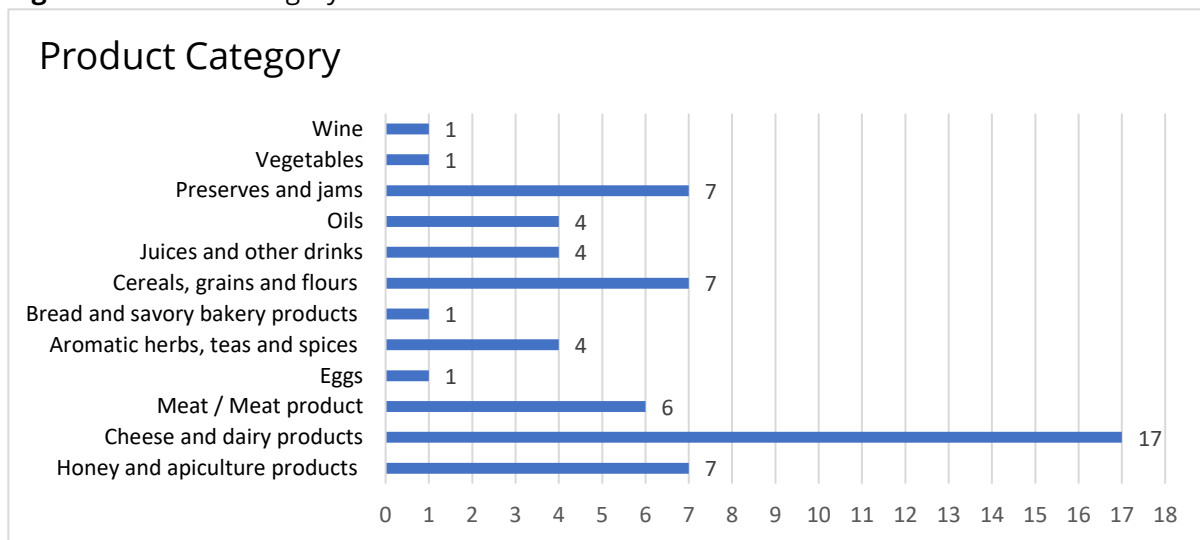
Finally, table 9 reflects responses about ensuring transparency and traceability in production. Out of 60 respondents, **58** (97%) affirmed they can ensure transparency and traceability, while only **2** (3%) indicated they cannot.

This high level of commitment to transparency and traceability demonstrates the producers' dedication to building consumer trust and maintaining high standards in the production process. Such practices are critical for promoting sustainable and ethical food systems in the Danube region.

From our sample, 31 entries were products, either raw or processed, of animal origin. Naturally, the remaining 29 entries were products of plant origin. We have also broken down the products into specific categories in order to be able to draw more detailed summaries and identify similarities between subjects in specific fields of production. The specific categories and amount of collected responses can be seen in Figure 3.

Review by Product Category

Figure 3. Product category



Cheese and dairy products

As it can be seen, the most prevalent product groups in our sample are products of milk origin, specifically cheese and other dairy products, represented by 17 entries. Out of these, 4 samples were raw products, in this case milk as basic raw material. Out of the other 13 samples of processed products, 11 entries were of various types of cheese. The remaining two consisted of cream (specifically Kajmak, this product was also mentioned multiple times as also being prepared besides cheese or other dairy products) and Žinčica, a drink made of sheep milk whey similar to kefir consumed mostly in Slovakia and Poland, which is a byproduct of making the Bryndza cheese. In general, it can be concluded that producers who decide to process milk do not stick to just one dairy product but behave logically and utilise the raw materials to their full potential, offering various dairy products.

When asked whether their product is specific to a region or local community, 15 respondents answered yes, and 2 answered no. The four respondents who only produce milk as raw produce all stated, that cattle breeding is traditional in their region (all are RPG) together with free grazing. This was supported also by respondents who produce processed dairy products, adding that local herbs affect the flavour of milk in cows, sheep and/or goats, having effect on the final product. Another reason are the traditional ways of processing the product to its final form.

On whether the product has cultural or historical significance to their community or region, 16 respondents answered yes, and only 1 answered no. Respondents declare strong cultural ties to breeding of cattle, sheep and/or goats but similarly to previous answer, cultural ties to usage of specific herbs in cuisine. Some even describe specific look of the product or historical importance, ranging back as far as 19th century. The one negative answer on the other hand calls out the potential for goat cheese to become new traditional product by usage of old artisanal methods.

Out of 17, only 4 producers declare that their products bear geographical indication (e.g. PDO - Protected Designation of Origin, PG - Protected geographical indication, TSG - Traditional speciality

guaranteed), specifically two Slovak cheese types, Cheese from Krk Island and Kolasin cheese from Montenegro. From the remaining respondents, 8 declare that there is no such opportunity in their region as this would require public support and a fair collective organisation from the local farmers, but also stating that they would welcome geographical identification of their products. One respondent sees this process as, quote, too much inspection and hassle with bureaucracy, and one has it in the long-term plan of their activities.

All but one of the entries declare that their product contributes to supporting the local economy. In the further description they explain that cattle breeding and subsequent milk and dairy products production is one of the main sectors of activity in some of the researched regions. Tourism is becoming a new opportunity and the linkages between these two economic sectors would enable them to generate new incomes and increase the sales on site. Other comments mention creation of jobs, while at the same time complaining about exodus from the agricultural regions. With milk producers, they also provide the source ingredient to other producers.

Next question asked was whether the majority of employees in production are local workers. To this question all subjects gave positive answer. In terms of fair working conditions and social benefits, most (12) respondents state, that they are a family business, working on their own farm. This creates a specific setting, in which very often there are no fixed working hours, whether minimal or maximal, as especially when it comes to work with animals but also crops and living things in general, work has to be done, and someone has to do it. This often includes also children or elderly. Industrial help in form of machines and technologies makes these things easier. Some of the respondents on the other hands were medium sized companies, those declared safe working environments, fair wages, and compliance with health and safety regulations.

Five subjects declare regular employment of people from vulnerable groups, nine of them occasional employment. Three declare no such employment, while one of them is planning to give it a try. Further descriptions declare seasonal workers, school practice workers or unemployed local individuals who belong to vulnerable groups and struggle to find employment.

In terms of social groups, mostly the elderly were mentioned, followed by youth and occasional employment of people with disabilities. Multiple respondents mentioned shortage of labour interested in manual jobs, especially in youth, who are leaving these regions. The main reasons for youth migration include the search for jobs, education, and escape from poverty.

All but one of the respondents declare usage of traditional or artisanal methods in the production, describing the process but some mentioned that there is a deviation from hand processing, adhering to high hygienic standards by using moulds or other technological advancement (milk pumps, packaging machines) while otherwise sticking to the traditional recipe and process (ie. temperatures).

Only three producers declare organic farming certificate or other similar certification, specifically, BIO certification, EU Organic. Others specify, that costs of certification and complicated associated procedures are the barriers, while at the same time they do not see the need as there is demand for their products even without it and their customers do not demand it as they know the quality of the products.

All of the respondents declare usage of local breeds of animals, nature-friendly farming practices in production and contribution of their product to the conservation of local biodiversity. Animals

are out in the pastures for the most of the year, consuming fully natural grass, building immunity to disease but also preventing invasive species or creation of monocultural grasslands. In winter they are fed with locally produced organic feed, in most cases grown on the same farm, with natural fertilisers only. Extensive breeding and polyculture and subsistence family farming model is used.

Lastly, all but one of the respondents declare transparency and traceability of their production. This is due to certification requirements, fact that the whole production is managed in a single location (from milk to cheese) or by organising tourist visits to farm where the process is fully shown and explained. One respondent who answered negatively stated, that most of the production is sold through direct, informal sale channel, they cannot guarantee the quality with certificates but have established strong trust in their product through many years in the community.

Summary: Cheese and dairy products dominate the survey with 17 entries, showcasing strong cultural ties, traditional methods, and contributions to local economies. Most producers employ local workers and use nature-friendly practices, supporting biodiversity and sustainability. While only 4 products have geographical indications and 3 hold organic certifications due to barriers like costs and bureaucracy, nearly all ensure transparency and traceability. Producers maximize resources by offering diverse dairy products influenced by local herbs, with family farms playing a key role. Challenges include youth migration, labour shortages, and limited formal recognition despite strong community trust.

Honey and apiculture products

In this category of products 7 samples in total were assessed, 4 of which as raw produce, while 3 samples dealt also with processed products. It has to be said, that when it comes to honey, it is hard to address whether it is a raw or processed product, as it is determined by how it is collected, processed and delivered to the customer. Our 4 raw samples clearly described their traditional and artisanal approach to collection, with minimal interference with the honey, in order to preserve its natural properties. One of the samples declared mixing of honey types, therefore we categorised it as a processed product and two samples produced honey but also shown strong focus on other apiculture products such as propolis, pollen, royal jelly health products or even beeswax. Specific types of honey produced in our project regions include linden, dandelion, wildflower or forest.

When asked whether their product is specific to a region or local community, 5 respondents answered yes, and 2 answered no. The regions with specific ties to apiculture were Nisici, Narin, Postojna and Prijepolje. The two negative answers came from Hajdu-Bihar County (HU) and Bjelašnica, where we would specifically highlight the effort of beekeeping in higher altitudes and therefore also cooler temperatures, environment which makes it more challenging to sustain bee populations but at the same time can offer very specific apicultural products thanks to higher altitude fauna.

Exactly same distribution of answers was given to question whether the product has cultural or historical significance to their community or region. The respondents who confirmed such

significance described it through prevalent use of honey and other apicultural products in local cuisine but also as a natural remedy for treatment of various health issues.

Only three producers declare that their products bear geographical indication (e.g. PDO - Protected Designation of Origin, PG - Protected geographical indication, TSG - Traditional speciality guaranteed). Two declare "SMGO" - Slovenian honey with geographical indication; and one Hajdú-Bihar County Quality Product. Two of the "no" respondents stated their active interest in receiving geographical indication certificate.

All of the entries declare that their product contributes to supporting the local economy. In the further description they justify it by the existence of demand for the product within but also outside their regions, attracting tourism and thus cash flow. Other mention creation of jobs and while speaking of jobs, there is a logical dependence of local farmers on pollination of crops provided by bees. Generally, we can summarise, that presence of beekeepers brings provides huge added value to local economy.

Next question asked was whether the majority of employees in production are local workers. To this question all subjects gave positive answer. In terms of fair working conditions and social benefits, subjects declare fair wages, reasonable working hours, and a safe working environment. Additionally training and skills development is offered in some cases. Five out of seven subject clearly declares that they are a family business, stating that there is just a few actively working employees/members of family.

Two subjects declare occasional employment of people from vulnerable groups, specifically people who struggle to find job, elderly. Producers also declare that there is lack of young talent due to migration out of rural regions and requirement of very specific knowledge.

All of the respondents declare usage of traditional or artisanal methods in the production. These include (can differ from region to region), use of local breeds of bees, usage of traditional clay bee hives, placement of hives in natural environment, artisanal methods in honey extraction and collection by hand and minimal processing in order to preserve natural qualities.

Two producers declare organic farming certificate or other similar certification, specifically, "BaHabiocert" and "BIO" certification of their honey. Two respondents who answered negatively justified the absence of such certification due to complicated process of acquirement and high costs. Others did not provide a clarification.

All of the respondents declare usage of nature-friendly farming practices in production and contribution of their product to the conservation of local biodiversity. Quoting on of the answers, traditional beekeeping practices support local biodiversity by promoting natural pollination processes. The use of organic and sustainable beekeeping techniques not only ensures high-quality honey but also helps in preserving the region's unique flora. There is very minimal negative environmental impact of responsible beekeeping. No chemical treatments or pesticides are used on plants, as these could impact the quality of final products and also harm the animals.

Similarly, all of the respondents declare transparency and traceability of their production, given that the production process maintains detailed records of their beekeeping practices, including hive locations, flowering periods, harvest dates, and processing methods. This documentation helps track the entire production process from hive to bottle.

Summary: The survey on honey and apiculture products involved 7 samples, including 4 raw products and 3 processed (such as mixed honey types and additional bee products like propolis and royal jelly). Most producers focus on artisanal methods to preserve honey's natural properties. 5 respondents confirmed regional ties to beekeeping, with products from areas like Nisici and Narin, while 3 have geographical indications (e.g., Slovenian honey). All respondents support the local economy, with honey tourism and job creation being key benefits. Beekeepers use traditional methods and nature-friendly practices, contributing to biodiversity conservation. 2 producers have organic certifications, and all ensure transparency and traceability of their products. However, challenges include high certification costs and youth migration from rural areas.

Jams and preserves

Under this category of products, we have also collected 7 responses, all of which logically belonging to the group of processed products. To specify the products based on answers, all subjects specified jams, two mentioned juices and preserves such as ajvar or pickles.

When asked whether their product is specific to a region or local community, 6 respondents answered yes, and 1 answered no. Those who responded positively also declare in further comments that fruit (but also vegetable) processing was regionally traditional way to preserve the produce for winter season.

Similar distribution of answers was given to question whether the product has cultural or historical significance to their community or region. The respondent who denied specificity to a region or local community also denied cultural or historical significance. The second respondent with negative answer explained, that the knowledge to prepare the product (Pearsalma jam – Quince jam, HU) is dying out, signalling further the importance the necessity to preserve traditional products. The positive answer confirmed that the products bear historical value and have been culturally essential part of local cuisines.

None of the products bears a geographical indication protection (e.g. PDO - Protected Designation of Origin, PG - Protected geographical indication, TSG - Traditional speciality guaranteed). Hungarian responses stated reception of awards on national and regional level. One of Serbian respondents declares interest in protecting their product (džem od šumskog voća, forest fruit jam) as it is characteristic specifically for their area.

In the next question, all but one of the entries declare that their product contributes to supporting the local economy. Summarizing the comments, producers state that they collaborate with other producers in the area, exchanging it for other products, selling to restaurants or customers but also buying supply from gathers to produce more of preserves and jams. The one negative answer states, that the current goal is to make the fruit and product more known and popular, it is again the Pearsalma jam – Quince jam.

Next question asked was whether the majority of employees are local workers. To this question all subjects gave positive answer. Describing how are fair working conditions secured and what social benefits does your product have for the local community, all respondents stated, that they are a family business or a family farm, therefore working conditions are what the family agrees upon, not following strict working hours sometimes, but also working overtime when needed and having

little opportunity for sick leaves or vacations. The local community is supported by offering employment on the farms, establishing and supporting local communities.

Following question was related to employment as well, specifically if people from vulnerable groups were employed. To this question, 3 responses were negative, however the remaining 4 answers were positive, with 1 response declaring occasional, and 3 declaring regular employment of people from vulnerable group. In the description of experiences, youngsters are hired for collection of fruit at the farms, especially during autumn season and elderly are mentioned as they do reliable and accurate work, with added social value of work ethics and experience.

Speaking of experience, all of the respondents declared that they use traditional or artisanal methods in the production. This is further elaborated by preference of using artisanal techniques, fruit is to be handpicked, hand peeled, steamed and cooked in open pots, hand stirred. No preservatives or artificial flavourings are used. However, despite all of this, none of the products bear an organic farming certificate or other similar certification and only one respondent stated desire to pursue it in future.

All of the subjects declare use of nature-friendly farming practices, specifically use of natural fertilisers (manure and mulch), combination of various symbiotic crops, crop rotations. All of the subjects declare that their product contributes to the conservation of local biodiversity. This is addressed with selective mowing, cultivation of indigenous plants, trapping of insect pests, but also placement of insect hotels and bird boxes at the farms and surrounding areas to help biodiversity and pollination, maintaining breeding and overwintering habitat for worms and reptiles.

As the final question, all of the respondents declare that they can ensure transparency and traceability of their production, stating that they keep evidence of production in logbooks with details about composition, expiration etc through use of unique batch IDs. Others mentioned that the fact that everything is produced in-house, from their own produce or from produce of local suppliers. This is also further promoted both online but also by organising tours for curious customers, allowing them to see the production process and sample the product.

Summary: The survey on preserves and jams included **7 responses**, all processed products such as jams, juices, and preserves. **6 respondents** confirmed regional ties, with fruit and vegetable preservation being a traditional practice. These products are culturally significant, with some bearing historical value in local cuisines. None of the products have geographical indication protection, though one producer is interested in such recognition. All but one producer contribute to the local economy, collaborating with other regional businesses. Employment is local, with family businesses offering work, often to vulnerable groups like the elderly and youth. Traditional, artisanal methods are used in production, with a focus on hand-picking, minimal processing and nature-friendly farming practices, though none of the products are organically certified. All producers ensure transparency and traceability, often promoting this through farm tours and logbooks.

Cereals, grains and flours + Vegetables

Under this group of products, 7 responses were collected in the Cereals, grains and flours category, six of which fall under the raw produce, and one was a processed product. To specify the products based on answers, respondents mentioned wheat, oats, triticale, corn, buckwheat, rye or barley. Here we have to note, that some of the respondents stated multiple types of grains in one questionnaire, but given the nature of the produce and similarities in their cultivation we do not see it as an issue. We also see the importance of highlighting the fact, that some of these grains are primarily grown as feed for farm animals but are still an inseparable part of the cycle to a final product, regardless we are talking about dairy, eggs or meat. The one processed product in this category was flour made from various grains, including wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt, and buckwheat. We have also decided to combine this group together with the answers for the category Vegetables, as only one such sample was present, but also due to fact that multiple respondents stated that besides grains they also grow potatoes and other kinds of vegetables.

All of the respondents declared that their product is specific to a region or local community. The explanation provided was based on ties of produce to the culture and the agricultural history in the areas where the respondents operate, together with other activities related to grains, such as cattle breeding or sheep herding. These answers already interact with the following question of cultural and historical significance to the community or region, which was also answered positively by all respondents. The respondents further explain that growing of cereals and grains has been established for generations in their respective areas. They are reflected in local diet and cuisine as well.

It is however also stated that there are no subventions provided to these products (ie. Buckwheat, Bosnia) and it is becoming harder and harder for the produce to stay competitive on the market, despite its tradition, significance and nutritive assets.

None of the respondents declared any protection by geographical indication. Four respondents provided additional comments, where it can be summarised that there is a desire for this geographical indication, but at the same time it is seen as complicated to obtain, costly and would require concerted effort.

All of the respondents also think that their product supports the local economy, specifically by creating mutual support system between producers in the area, but also stating increased interest of tourists from the cities, that is not being utilised to its full potential and not supported enough by public authorities.

In the questions focused on workforce, all respondents declare that the majority of employees are local workers. When asked how fair working conditions are secured, all respondents stated that they are either sole workers or a family business. This means that there are collaborative efforts within families and local communities, promoting fair treatment and mutual support. The production of fresh high-quality produce is also seen as a social benefit to the local community.

Respondents were then asked about inclusion of people from vulnerable groups in their operations, to which three answered positively, stating regular employment of youngsters during harvest seasons and elderly, who are often unemployed or even unemployable under current market requirements. There is overall satisfaction with both these vulnerable groups.

Moving forward, all of the respondents declared that they use traditional or artisanal methods in the production. Methods described were the use of manual labour to both planting and harvesting of the crops, natural fertilisation with manure, not using chemicals such as pesticides or herbicides unless absolutely necessary, but also stone milling of the grains into flour. This is also true for the vegetables they produce.

However, when asked about organic farming certification, none of the respondents declared that they have it, stating as a reason that it is costly for small scale producers, the process of obtaining is complex and their local cooperatives and/or customers do not require it as they trust them and their work ethics.

All of the producers declare nature-friendly farming practices, referring to previously mentioned manual labour preference in farming practices, preferring natural fertilisers and avoiding use of chemical agents, using natural methods of pest control, crop rotation and cover cropping. Six respondents declare contribution to conservation of local biodiversity, by using indigenous grain varieties, autochthone plants, but also breeding of cattle and sheep herding of local species.

Lastly, all of the producers declare that they can ensure transparency and traceability of their production, primarily due to the fact that the production is fully handled internally by the farmers and their families.

Summary: The survey on cereals, grains, and flours, combined with vegetables, received **7 responses**. Most respondents grow raw produce like wheat, oats, corn, and buckwheat, with one processing flour from various grains. All producers affirmed their products are region-specific, tied to local agricultural history, and culturally significant, though challenges like the lack of subsidies and market competition were noted. None of the products have geographical indication protection, but there is interest in pursuing it despite challenges.

All producers support the local economy through mutual cooperation and tourism, and the majority employ local workers, with some hiring vulnerable groups like youth and the elderly. Traditional, artisanal methods such as manual labour and natural fertilization are used, but none have organic certification due to its cost and complexity. All producers practice nature-friendly farming and contribute to biodiversity through sustainable practices like crop rotation and the use of indigenous species. Transparency and traceability are ensured through internal production and detailed record-keeping.

Juices and other drinks

Under this category we have received 4 entries + we will be including some of answers from the respondent that declared vegetables as his main produce, as they also mentioned use of fruits for the purpose of making natural juices. Naturally, these products fall under the subcategory of processed products, specifically naming elderflower, mint, blueberry, rose, blackberry, forest fruits but also herbal sirups and "Raso" a winter drink made from cabbage.

All but one of the respondents declared that their product is specific to a region or local community. The most notable is probably the "Raso" - *Raso made of red cabbage is traditionally used in our region. It is made exclusively for the sake of the drink, and it can also be used for salad or cooking. In other*

regions, people pickle white cabbage, but to preserve the cabbage, not for the drink. The difference between white and red brine is in taste, not only in color. From another answer, Elderberry juice is mentioned as very important as traditional way of *strengthening the immune system, alleviating cold and flu symptoms, and detoxifying the body* but also providing vitamins. The one respondent that answered negatively is a small family business producing herbal sirups, they explained that the tradition comes more from their family than from the region and that if somebody wanted, they can grow their own herbs in other locations and produce the same product.

The same way they denied cultural or historical significance to the region, however we would dare to disagree as for multigenerational tradition of their family in the processing of herbs, the community impact is definitely present. Other respondents responded positively to this question, explaining that *Elderberry juice is important for the Prijepolje region* declaring tradition, supporting local economy and employment as well. The "Raso" drink also belongs to traditions of the specific area. Another respondent states, that they use fruit gathered and bought off local population, providing both economic trade-off but also added value to the community.

None of the respondents declared any protection by geographical indication. Only one respondent explained further that product is not traditionally tied to the location and while they could pursue BIO certification, they for now decided to not pursue it as they see it as costly and complicated, while they can prove the quality of the product to the customer in other ways than logos.

Three respondents declared that their products contribute to supporting the local economy, explaining local community purchasing, selling and bartering, creating jobs for farmers and harvesters, buying off produce from others and also supporting tourism.

All of the respondents stated that majority of workers are local. Four out of five respondents declare that they are a family business and do not employ people from outside family. The remaining two declare that their primary ordeal is to create work opportunities for local population, but of course while ensuring safe and supportive work environment.

Only one of the respondents declared that they occasionally employ people from vulnerable groups but did not specify their experiences. One respondent with a negative answer additionally stated that their elderly mother is helping to her best ability but is not an active employee anymore.

When asked about traditional or artisanal methods in the production of their product, all respondents answered positively, declaring that traditional recipes are used, herbs and fruits are hand-picked, avoiding any additives or preservatives. None of the products has any organic farming certificate. The explanations provided repeat the answer about complicated acquirement of BIO certificates.

Producers declare use of nature-friendly farming practices, such as crop rotation, using mulch from plant residues, manure and use of pesticides only when absolutely necessary. Other respondents totally deny use of any chemistry and/or collect the herbs and fruit directly from nature.

Similarly, all respondents declare that their products contribute to the conservation of local biodiversity, mentioning soil conservation, preservation of native plant species, promoting sustainable beekeeping or promoting proper methods of harvesting of herbs and mushrooms in nature in order to protect and preserve resources for future generations.

In the final question about ensuring transparency and traceability of their production all of the respondents answered positively, stating that everything that is offered to customers was either grown internally or gathered in local nature, so information about origin can be provided. To further support this claim, producers organise excursions for tourists or promote the process through social media.

Summary: The survey on juices and other drinks received **4 responses**, plus additional insights from a respondent focused on vegetables. The products, including elderflower, mint, blueberry, and rose juices, herbal syrups, and the traditional winter drink "Raso" made from red cabbage, are processed. Most respondents confirmed that their products are specific to a region, citing local traditions like "Raso" and elderberry juice as important to regional health and cuisine. While none have geographical indication protection, three respondents noted their products support the local economy by creating jobs and supporting local trade. All producers use traditional, artisanal methods, hand-picking herbs and fruits without preservatives, and avoid organic certifications due to high costs. They also practice nature-friendly farming, such as crop rotation and minimal pesticide use, and contribute to local biodiversity through sustainable practices. Transparency is ensured through local sourcing and traceability, with producers offering tours and promoting their processes on social media.

Aromatic herbs, teas and spices

While herbs were present also in the previous category, they were combined with sugar, which is not the case here. Under this category we have received 4 answers. With teas and herbs, it is also complicated to assess the product as processed or raw, given the herbs come in a raw state, but are often processed by drying and packaged. In other final products they can be also processed into balms, potions, tonics, tinctures etc. The answers collected are for certified medicinal plants, herbs and aromatic plants grown for medicinal purposes and/or teas.

Three respondents declare that their product is specific to a region or local community, explaining that there is thousands of different species and subspecies in the regions, many of which are gathered, seasonally all year round. Some are gathered from nature, other are grown in herb gardens.

Similarly, three respondents answered that their products have a cultural or historical significance to their community or region. This is explained by stating that the populations have traditionally drank homemade teas and used natural medicines.

Only one of the products has a geographical indication, which is the Green Karst brand, belonging to the Primorje-Notranjska region. The brand demonstrates an orientation towards sustainable development, preservation of a healthy environment, respect for tradition and the promotion of knowledge and cooperation. It is the result of the cooperation between the municipalities of Bloke, Cerknica, Ilirska Bistrica, Loška dolina, Pivka and Postojna and shows a very inspiring good practice case of municipalities working together.

All respondents declared that their product contributes to supporting the local economy, by providing seasonal jobs and buying off locally gathered herbs from the community in the area

(Nišići, BiH). The same answers were received when asked whether the majority of employees are local workers.

When asked how fair working conditions are secured and what social benefits does the product have for the local community, two respondents stated that they are a family farm and do not hire staff outside family, the remaining two employ more people in the production and abide to regulatory requirements. Two of the respondents regularly employ people from vulnerably groups, one is planning to start. Those who do, describe that elderly are the main vulnerable group employed.

When asked about use of traditional or artisanal methods in the production all the respondents answered positively, further explaining that they dry their teas in a traditional manner, but other herbal products (ie. essential oils) are processed with modern equipment and have a modern storage place. Traditional recipes are also used for balms and medical drinks, products are processed and packaged manually. No preservatives or additives are used.

One positive answer was also collected for ownership of organic farming certificate or other similar certifications, specifically ECOCERT and KOSER, helping with exporting products Germany, Austria, USA, France etc. 25 essential oils from Nišići, BiH are certified this way.

All of the respondents declare use of nature-friendly farming practices in production, including using only natural fertilizers, organisation of training for the herb pickers to avoid overcollection, practices for safe collection of herbs (but also mushrooms). As previously mentioned, no pesticides or other chemicals are used in herb gardens.

Similarly, all respondents declare that their product contributes to the conservation of local biodiversity, specifically by valorisation of the variety of local flora while also protecting original plant species in the region. All respondents also declared ability to trace their production and ensure transparency, as the herbs are either grown on their own farm or in the local area. The respondent with organic certification also highlighted that this is obligatory for them.

Summary: The **aromatic herbs, teas, and spices** category includes **4 responses** focused on medicinal plants and herbs for teas or therapeutic uses. Three respondents noted their products are region-specific, with traditional practices of gathering and using local plants. One product, the Green Karst brand, holds a geographical indication. All respondents emphasized their contributions to the local economy through seasonal jobs and local herb sourcing.

Traditional methods are used for production, with no preservatives or additives. One respondent has organic certifications (ECOCERT, KOSER) for international exports. Nature-friendly farming practices are common, and all respondents contribute to local biodiversity conservation. Transparency is ensured through traceable production, with many herbs grown locally.

Meat / Meat product

In the category of Meat and meat products we have received 6 answers in total, 3 of which were raw meat and 3 of processed meat products. Of the three raw types of meat two were lamb and one was sheep meat. The processed products represented were rolled pancetta, salami and sausages.

All of the respondents stated that their product is specific to a region or local community and subsequent question if their product has cultural or historical significance to their community or region. In case of rolled pancetta, while this product is more associated with Italy, it is also present in Primorsko-notranjska region of Slovenia but also other regions of the country where there is a strong tradition of pork curing with combination of ideal microclimate for drying and curing of meats. The salami is associated to Liptov region in Slovakia but is also readily available in other regions of Slovakia and Czechia as the product is widely known and produced. Similarly, the sausages are associated to Spiš region and are popular across whole former Czechoslovakia and historically were prepared for Hungarian nobility. The raw meats from our sample are specific for the locations they are bred in (Krk, CRO; Nišići, BiH) and have strong tradition and go as far as 11th century.

Only two out of six products have a geographical indication, specifically both Spišské pácky and Liptovská saláma from Slovakia have TSG certificate which guarantees use of traditional ingredients and procedures. The rolled pancetta is in the process of certification, other mention complexity for small breeders and sale of their meat on smaller local markets where such certification bears no added value for the customer.

When asked whether their product contributes to supporting the local economy, five respondents said yes. The one who answered negatively added that the product (lamb meat) primarily serves the needs of his family and providing extra income, but it does not affect market largely. In case of the TSG certified products, these are produced all around Slovakia and Czech Republic, but they provide additional value of promoting the regions where they originated, possibly increasing revenue in other areas too, ie. tourism.

All respondent confirmed that majority of their employees are local, four of them specified that they are family businesses – farms. The two remaining subjects are larger meat processing companies aimed at general consumer in stores. Satisfaction was declared as good but lacking the responsibility of adult sometimes. They also regularly employ people from vulnerable group, most often young students during their preparations for careers, but also refugees of war from Ukraine. The satisfaction was generally positive, even though fluctuation was sometimes present as people were moving or were finding more suitable positions over time. From the small farmers two have experience with vulnerable groups, in their case it is the elderly, with whom they were really satisfied and described them as dedicated to work and motivated.

When asked about how are fair working conditions secured and what social benefits does your product have for the local community respondents explained that working on a family farm is very specific, both seasonally but also by work distribution among family members. The two larger companies declared their abidance to national laws and regulations with focus on fair wages for work and possibility of education, training and cooperation with smaller local producers in order to build a community.

Five out of six respondents use traditional or artisanal methods in the production, using traditional recipes or mixtures of spices during preparation or traditional ways of drying meat. The larger meat processing companies have to oblige to the TSG when it comes to use of ingredients and processes, however these are at the same time modernised due to hygienic regulations for sale in stores. Only one of the products from our collected sample has an organic farming certificate or other similar certifications, specifically the lamb meat from Krk, Croatia has an ECO label certificate.

The four respondents from small farms declare use of nature-friendly farming practices, grazing sheep all year round on natural pastures, using only natural pest repellents, use of natural fertilisers from animals on other crops, and generally being an eco-farm. The two larger companies are not involved in farming and source their meat from external providers. Same answers were received when asked about contribution to the conservation of local biodiversity. Here we have learned that Krk sheep are an endangered species that requires conservation and protection while on the other hand one of the larger companies from Slovakia is attempting to source most of their supply from local producers, but this would not be enough to meet the market demand and is therefore sourcing the meat also from other regions and countries.

When asked about transparency and traceability of the products, all except one subject responded positively, explaining that the products come from their own farm. This was also the case of the subject who answered negatively, stating that products are sold on small markets they know the origin of the meat, but are not able to provide documentation of origin but build upon trust. Completely different situation is with the larger meat producers in our sample who are legally obligated to be able to track down the meat used in production. They declare high level of transparency and traceability through technological innovation, certifications and direct cooperation with suppliers. Veterinary health certificate has also to be present for meat to be processed into products.

Summary: In the **Meat and Meat Products** category, **6 responses** were received, including raw (lamb and sheep) and processed (pancetta, salami, sausages) meats. All respondents stated their products are region-specific with strong cultural and historical ties, such as **Spišské párky** and **Liptovská saláma** from Slovakia, which hold **geographical indications**. Some products, like rolled pancetta, are in the process of certification.

Five respondents confirmed their products support the local economy, with some promoting tourism. Most businesses are family-run, and employees are primarily local, with some hiring vulnerable groups like students and the elderly. Fair working conditions are secured through adherence to national laws or family farm structures.

Traditional or artisanal production methods are common, with natural farming practices used by small farms. The **Krk lamb** holds an **ECO label** certification. Larger companies source meat from external providers but aim for local sourcing when possible. **Biodiversity conservation** efforts are present, particularly for endangered Krk sheep.

Transparency is high, with small producers relying on trust, while larger companies ensure traceability through documentation and certifications.

Oils

In this category, four answers have been collected, specifically from three producers of olive oil from Krk, Croatia and one producer of sunflower oil from Hungary. All of the producers declare that their product is specific to their region or local community, explaining that these oils are made from local breeds and varieties of plants. Likewise, all producers declare that the product bears a cultural or historical significance to their region, explaining that olive oil has over a thousand years old tradition on the island and is a staple of local diet, also used in religious and non-religious

customs. For the sunflower oil in Hungary, this was much later, in late 19th century, however the climate and soil conditions are ideal for the sunflower, and it quickly became an established and heavily exported product.

When asked about geographical indication of their products, only one of the respondents answered positively, despite our sample consisting of three olive oil producers from Krk. Through the further explanations we have learned that this respondent is the only producer that has a PDO for Krk olive oil and is proud about transparency of his product. The other two producers commented that they would be interested to also have the PDO certification, but it is hard to obtain through strict nutritional requirements, storage but also proper milling so that it is not contaminated in the process.

All respondents stated that their product contributes to supporting of the local economy, further explaining that subsequent payments and jobs are associated with the production, such as milling, cutting of grass, renting of land for orchard but also through promotional and marketing activities in order to support tourism.

All respondents also stated that the majority of their employees are local workers, specifying that in cases of olive oil the production happens within small family operations and there are no external workers, in case of sunflower oil, all workers, including seasonal workers are local and are working under appropriate conditions in accordance to national regulations of Hungary or Croatia. The sunflower oil producer is the only who regularly employs people from vulnerable groups, specifically young workers as seasonals for competitive salary and people with disadvantages under fair conditions. One of the olive oil producers is planning to employ people from vulnerable groups in the future, another one is considering it in case their business activities will expand in the future.

When asked about use of traditional and/or artisanal methods in production, three respondents answered positively, describing use of cold process in sunflower oil and use of only small machinery for processing of olives as the areas are unreachable with large technologies.

None of the producers has an organic farming certificate, the olive oil producers plan to obtain this certificate but need to overcome hurdles such as milling ecologically, or pesticide drift from other fields in the area. All of the producers state that they use nature-friendly farming practices, avoiding the use of pesticides, fungicides or artificial fertilisers. Only farmyard manure and mulch are used to fertilise. Other types of plants are used close to the olive groves in order to help pollinate and drive off pests naturally.

Three responses confirm the contribution of product to the conservation of local biodiversity, these three being the olive oil producers, using traditional varieties, and not using pesticides, fungicides or ploughing. One of the respondents stated that it their passion to revive old, abandoned groves with local varieties of olives.

All of the respondents stated that they can ensure transparency and traceability of their production, explaining that they monitor the amount of oil produced, most of their sales is direct and based on trust and workshops and social media content are used to further reveal the production process to customers. Modern technology advancements such as GPS coordinates of groves and publishing results of chemical sensory analyses are also used.

Summary: In the **Oils** category, **four responses** were collected: three from **olive oil producers in Krk, Croatia**, and one from a **sunflower oil producer in Hungary**. All producers stated their products are region-specific and culturally significant, with olive oil having a long tradition in Krk, while sunflower oil became established in Hungary in the late 19th century due to ideal soil conditions.

Only one olive oil producer has a **PDO** certification for Krk olive oil, with the others expressing interest but facing difficulties with strict certification requirements. All producers confirmed their products support the local economy through jobs, milling, land rentals, and tourism promotion.

The majority of employees are local, with the sunflower oil producer regularly hiring vulnerable groups, such as young workers and people with disadvantages. One olive oil producer plans to hire vulnerable groups in the future.

Traditional production methods, including cold pressing for sunflower oil and small-scale olive processing, are used. None of the producers have **organic certification**, though they all practice nature-friendly farming, avoiding pesticides and using organic fertilizers like manure and mulch.

The olive oil producers contribute to biodiversity conservation by using traditional varieties and avoiding harmful agricultural practices. All producers ensure **transparency and traceability** by monitoring production and using technology such as GPS coordinates and chemical analyses, along with direct sales and social media engagement to connect with customers.

Other

In some of the product categories we have only received one answer, and it was not possible to associate it to any other group of products. Therefore, we only provide a short summary of answers about these products.

Bread and savory bakery products - Heljdopita - Buckwheat pie

The product is specific to a region or community, namely Prijepolje in Zlatibor district, Serbia. It is a savory delicacy that is traditionally present during celebrations, most often served as an appetizer. It therefore also bears cultural significance. It currently does not hold certificate of geographical indication, however the respondent declared that they have plans to pursue it in future as the product is characteristic only for this area. Production of the buckwheat pie supports local economy through sourcing of ingredients from local suppliers and creating jobs within the local community. While there is space for improvement of working conditions at the producers, it is a family-owned farm where typical labour rules do not apply, and people must be flexible at times but at other times they have more time to pursue other interests. There are community and cultural preservation aspects connected to owning and working on a farm.

When asked about employment of people from vulnerable groups, answer was given that they employ local people, mostly women between 45-55 years old, they belong to vulnerable groups who can't manage to find a job. As a negative, youth migration from this region was named. Key drivers of youth migration include employment, education, escape from poverty, etc...

When producing Buckwheat pie, traditional methods in the production are used, following a traditional recipe. The product does not have an organic farming certificate or similar certification, to what the producer declared desire to obtain it in time. The buckwheat for the pie is grown while using nature-friendly farming practices, while also contributing to the local biodiversity as old variety of buckwheat plant are used. Transparency and traceability of the product is ensured through media promotion, visiting the households and organizing tourist visits to households and suppliers where people will be able to see the process of making the product and consume the product.

Homegrown Eggs

While it might not seem so, even something as basic as eggs can bear specific qualities if produced in specific conditions. These eggs are produced in the high altitudes of Sarajevo canton, and even though they do not have a certificate of geographical indication, they are grown on a family farm, where traditional methods of raising chicken are used, these being free-range naturally foraging animals which is then reflected on the quality of eggs. These are often used as a barter commodity within local community, improving relationships and sense of belonging.

As this is a farm owned by a retired couple, only local workers are present who belong to the vulnerable group of elderly population. Eggs are not organically certified, as this would be financially not viable. Nature friendly farming practices are used at their farm and transparency and traceability of production is ensured as the whole production cycle - from raising free-range chickens to collecting eggs - detailed information can be provided about every step, ensuring full transparency and authenticity.

Wine - Ekološka žlahtina - Organic "Žlahtina" wine

This is a wine from the Krk island in Croatia, meaning it is specific to a region or community and has cultural and historical significance to the local community and region of Vrbnik municipality. It is produced on its historical location, in the way and from the grapes it has been made in the past. The wine has a PDO and "Croatian island product" certificate. It is produced by a family farm, mostly by a single person, but support to local economy is created by cooperation with local graphic designers and marketers in order to promote both the product and the region.

Artisanal methods are used in production of the wine which is only produced in small batches with organic certificate. In order to achieve this only nature friendly farming practices can be used when growing the vine. Only natural substances can be used, especially when considering requirement to keep up with the standards set by the organic certification.

Statistical Review

For the statistical evaluation, we used nonparametric tests, as they are appropriate given the characteristics of our data. The Shapiro-Wilk test for normality revealed a p-value of 0.0107, which is less than 0.05. This result indicates that the data do not follow a normal distribution. Since the assumption of normality is violated, nonparametric tests, which do not rely on this assumption, were chosen as the appropriate method for analysis. Nonparametric tests provide a reliable

alternative for evaluating differences and relationships in datasets that deviate from normality, ensuring that the statistical conclusions are valid and robust.

The statistical analysis focused on evaluating differences across product categories in four key areas: product processing (raw vs. processed), regional specificity, use of traditional methods, and organic certification. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H-test revealed a statistically significant difference in product processing among the categories ($H = 20.40$, $p = 0.026$). This indicates that the degree of product processing (whether raw or processed) varies significantly between the different product categories. On the other hand, no statistically significant differences were found in **regional specificity** across the categories ($H = 5.56$, $p = 0.851$). This suggests that products are similarly distributed in terms of their connection to specific regions across all categories.

Similarly, no significant differences were observed in the use of **traditional or artisanal methods** among the product categories ($H = 6.74$, $p = 0.750$). This result indicates that traditional methods are applied at comparable levels across all categories. The same trend was observed for **organic certification**. The analysis showed no statistically significant differences in the prevalence of organic certifications among the categories ($H = 12.18$, $p = 0.273$). This suggests that organic certification is evenly distributed across the analysed product categories.

To complement this analysis, a **Mann-Whitney U test** was conducted to compare product processing between the two largest product categories: **“cheese and dairy products”** and **“honey and apiculture products”**. The results did not reveal any statistically significant difference ($U = 79.50$, $p = 0.130$), indicating that the level of product processing is comparable between these two categories. In summary, the results show that product processing is the only factor that significantly differentiates the product categories. Other factors, such as regional specificity, the use of traditional methods, and organic certification, are evenly distributed across all categories.

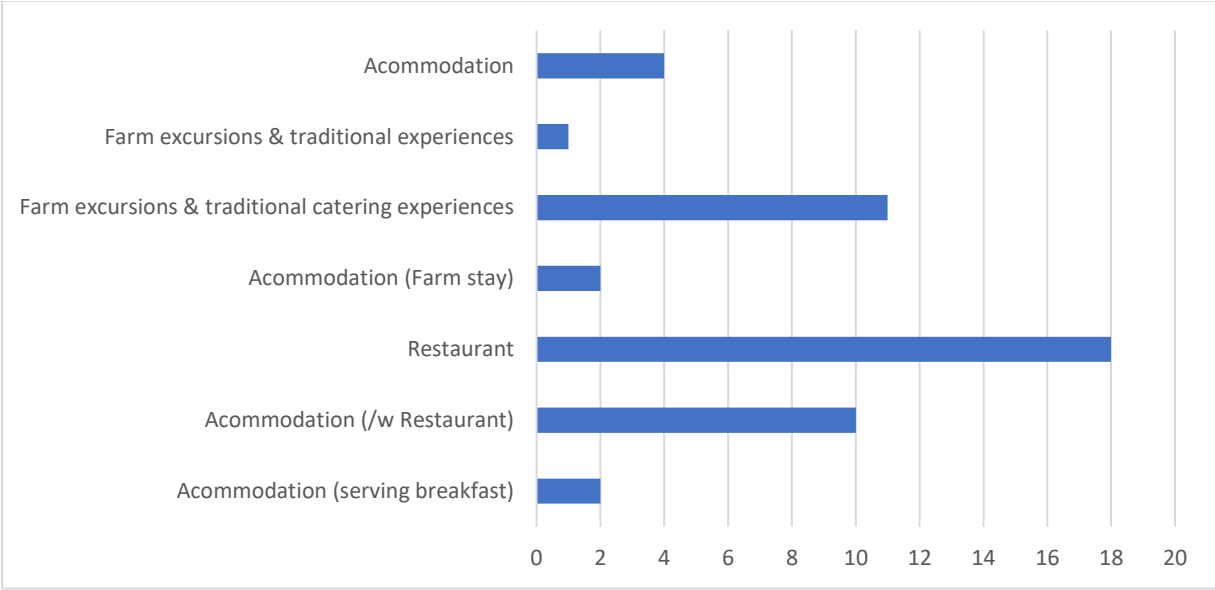
3.2 Service providers

In our sample of service providers, we have collected answers from 48 subjects representing 7 countries of the SReST project, in the respective involved regions.

In the questionnaire our respondents were given 10 closed questions with possibility to provide additional comments and 5 open questions. As the service categories were not as differentiated as in the case of products and the sample was slightly smaller, in this case we have processed conclusions for the data set as a whole, per question.

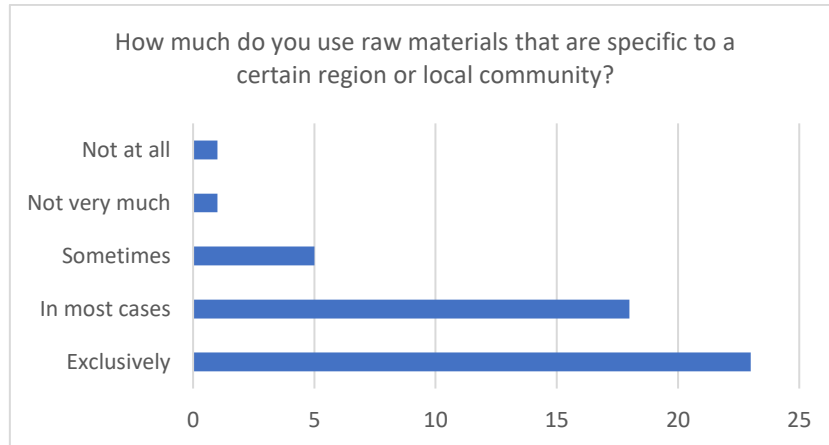
Our research focuses on analyzing entities operating in the field of services related to traditional gastronomy, accommodation, and agritourism. The sample on which we conducted our research consisted of 48 entities, which we divided into the following categories. Each of these categories reflects specific services and experiences provided by the entities to their guests, with an important part of our analysis being to assess their approach to using local and homegrown ingredients, presenting these ingredients to guests, and their significance for the service providers themselves. The graphical representation of the sample distribution is shown in **Fig. 1**, where we visualize the representation of individual categories within our dataset.

Figure 4. Type of Service



The use of region-specific or local raw materials shows a strong focus on local sourcing. 23 entities use them exclusively, 18 entities in most cases, and 5 entities occasionally. Only 1 entity uses them minimally, and 1 entity not at all. This highlights a predominant emphasis on promoting local identity in services Fig.2.

Figure 5. The use of region-specific or local raw materials



The survey results reveal a strong commitment to using nature-friendly ingredients in services. A significant portion, **22 entities**, rely on them exclusively, showcasing their dedication to environmental sustainability. Additionally, **19 entities** use them in most cases, reflecting a consistent but slightly less stringent approach. **6 entities** incorporate nature-friendly ingredients occasionally, indicating some awareness but less emphasis on sustainability. Only **1 entity** uses them minimally, and none reported not using them at all. These findings highlight the growing importance of environmentally conscious practices in the hospitality and agrotourism sectors. The data highlights contrasting practices regarding the use of certified organic raw materials and the communication of their origin and importance to customers.

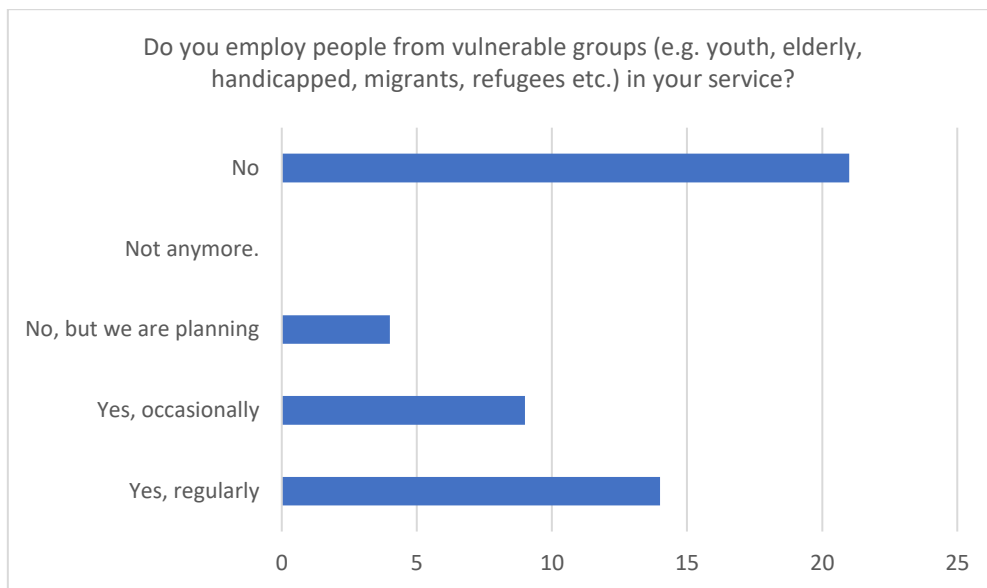
Use of Certified Organic Raw Materials: Only 9 entities reported using raw materials with organic farming certificates (e.g., Demeter, EU Organic), while the vast majority, 39 entities, do not use certified organic materials. This suggests that while sustainability is valued, formal organic certification may not be widely prioritized or accessible within these businesses. Factors such as cost, availability, or preference for locally sourced, uncertified materials may play a role.

Providing Information to Customers: On the other hand, nearly all respondents (46 out of 48 entities) actively provide their customers with information about the origin and significance of the raw materials they use. This strong focus on transparency and education indicates that businesses recognize the growing consumer interest in knowing where their food comes from, even if the materials are not certified organic. These results suggest that while certification may not be a common practice, there is a clear commitment to promoting local and sustainable sourcing through open communication with customers.

The use of traditional or artisanal methods by all participants (**48 out of 48**) highlights their dedication to preserving cultural heritage and authentic practices. A significant majority (**44 out of 48**) contribute to local biodiversity by incorporating old crop varieties or local animal species, reflecting their environmental consciousness. Similarly, employing local workers (**44 out of 48**) demonstrates a strong commitment to supporting local communities and fostering regional economic growth. The majority of respondents (**14 out of 48**) actively employ people from vulnerable groups regularly, indicating a commitment to inclusion. A smaller number (**9 out of 48**) do so occasionally, while some (**4 out of 48**) plan to incorporate such employment practices in the future. The absence of responses indicating discontinuation (**0 out of 48**) suggests a general

positive approach toward inclusive employment. However, there is still room for broader engagement from more organizations Fig. 3.

Figure 6. Employment of vulnerable groups in service sector



Support for Local Economy and Small Producers: The majority of respondents (43 out of 48) indicated that their service contributes significantly to supporting the local economy and small producers, emphasizing a commitment to sourcing locally and fostering regional development.

Cultural or Historical Significance: A large portion of respondents (42 out of 48) affirmed that their services hold cultural or historical significance to their community or region, reflecting the importance of preserving local heritage and traditions in their operations.

Summaries on the open questions.

The use of raw materials with organic farming certificates:

1. **Own Production:** Some establishments use products from their own farms, which may or may not have organic certification. They strive to be nature-friendly without using mineral fertilizers and pesticides.
2. **Local Sourcing:** Many restaurants and hotels source ingredients from local producers and small family farms. While these products are often high quality and locally produced, they may not have organic certification due to the high costs and complex certification process.
3. **Availability and Cost:** The fast-paced nature of the restaurant industry requires a steady supply of ingredients, which can be challenging to find locally while meeting organic standards. The high cost of organic produce is also a barrier.
4. **Customer Preferences:** Customers often prioritize the local origin, freshness, and quality of the products over organic certification. Trust in local and homemade products is significant, and certification is more critical for larger producers.

5. Challenges: There are regulatory and declaration constraints that make it difficult to offer locally produced food. Many small farmers are not registered, and their products cannot be legally procured due to tax and traceability issues.
6. Future Plans: Some establishments are working towards obtaining organic certification or other eco-friendly certifications in the future.

Overall, while organic certification is valued, the focus is on local, high-quality, and nature-friendly production methods.

Do you provide your customers with information about the origin and importance of the raw materials you use?

Most restaurants make an effort to inform their customers about the origin of their ingredients, especially when they are locally sourced. This is often done through:

- Verbal communication: Waitstaff are instructed to mention the origin of ingredients when presenting dishes.
- Menu descriptions: Menus may highlight local or self-produced ingredients.
- Direct engagement: Some encourage guests to visit their farms or meet the producers.

However, the level of detail varies. Some provide in-depth explanations of sourcing and production methods, while others simply state that ingredients are local.

It seems that promoting the origin of ingredients is becoming increasingly important, likely due to growing consumer interest in local and sustainable food.

Summary on the use of traditional or artisanal methods. The responses indicate a strong emphasis on traditional and artisanal methods, particularly in food preparation. Many businesses utilize techniques like:

- Traditional recipes: Many rely on recipes passed down through generations for dishes like "pita", stews, and various local specialties.
- Artisanal food production: This includes making their own bread, pasta, jams, and preserves, often using locally sourced ingredients.
- Traditional cooking methods: Some use specific techniques like "sac" cooking (cooking under a metal bell), sun-drying ingredients, and using old-fashioned tools and utensils.
- Focus on local ingredients: Many prioritize sourcing ingredients locally and using seasonal produce, which often ties into traditional culinary practices.

Some examples include:

- Hand-picking wild herbs and creating spice mixes.
- Making cheese using traditional methods and no additives.
- Using a stone mill for grinding flour.
- Maintaining traditional ambience and serving styles.

It's clear that these businesses value preserving cultural heritage and offering authentic experiences through their use of traditional and artisanal methods.

Environmental benefits of the service and its effect on local biodiversity.

These businesses demonstrate a strong commitment to environmental sustainability and supporting local biodiversity through various practices:

Promoting local biodiversity:

- Using local breeds and varieties: Many businesses prioritize using local breeds of livestock and varieties of crops, which helps preserve genetic diversity and supports local ecosystems.
- Sourcing ingredients locally: This reduces transportation distances and supports local farmers who may be using more sustainable practices.
- Collaborating with local producers: Actively seeking partnerships with local farmers and producers strengthens the local food system and encourages sustainable practices.
- Sustainable harvesting: Some businesses engage in sustainable wild harvesting of forest fruits, herbs, and mushrooms, ensuring the long-term health of these resources.
- Preserving traditional practices: Using traditional farming methods, such as organic fertilization and minimizing chemical use, promotes soil health and biodiversity.

Specific examples:

- Breeding Pramenka sheep and Osmak corn in Bosnia.
- Offering local teas made from sustainably collected wild plants.
- Using stable manure for fertilization.
- Promoting and preserving old sorts of fruit and local corn varieties.
- Practicing organic farming principles, including crop rotation and composting.
- Supporting pollinators by cultivating diverse plant species.
- Using traditional and forgotten herbs.

Overall impact:

These businesses contribute to a healthier environment and a more resilient local ecosystem by:

- Reducing reliance on industrial agriculture: Supporting local, often smaller-scale, farms helps reduce the negative impacts of large-scale industrial agriculture.
- Preserving genetic diversity: Using local breeds and varieties helps maintain a diverse gene pool, making crops and livestock more resilient to disease and climate change.
- Protecting soil and water health: Sustainable farming practices help maintain healthy soil and reduce water pollution.
- Supporting local ecosystems: Promoting biodiversity through local sourcing and sustainable harvesting practices helps maintain a balanced ecosystem.

By prioritizing these practices, these businesses are not only minimizing their environmental impact but also contributing to the long-term health and well-being of their local communities and ecosystems.

Please describe how are fair working conditions secured and what social benefits does your service have for the local community

Fair working conditions seem to be a priority for many of these businesses, with a strong focus on complying with labour laws, providing competitive wages and benefits, and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. Many businesses also highlight their commitment to employee well-being and creating a positive work atmosphere.

In terms of social benefits, these businesses contribute to their local communities in various ways:

- Job creation: Providing employment opportunities for local residents, sometimes specifically targeting vulnerable groups like pensioners and young people.
- Supporting the local economy: Sourcing ingredients and services from local producers and businesses.
- Promoting cultural heritage: Showcasing traditional cuisine and preserving local culinary traditions.
- Boosting tourism: Attracting visitors to the area and contributing to the local tourism industry.
- Community engagement: Participating in local events and initiatives.

Many of the businesses are family-run, which often translates to a strong emphasis on mutual respect and care within the workplace. Some family businesses also actively engage with the wider community through events, workshops, or educational programs.

Overall, these businesses demonstrate a commitment to fair labour practices and contributing positively to their local communities. They recognize the importance of providing decent work and supporting the social and economic well-being of the people in their area.

Describe your experiences (both positive and negative) with employing people from vulnerable groups, what support they needed from you, or where do you see their potential for future involvement.

Experiences with employing people from vulnerable groups are generally positive, with many businesses highlighting the benefits of their contributions. Here's a summary:

Positive experiences:

- Skills and knowledge: Vulnerable groups, such as experienced beekeepers or individuals with disabilities, often bring valuable skills and knowledge to the workplace.
- Responsibility and dedication: Employees from vulnerable groups are often described as highly responsible, trustworthy, and dedicated to their work.
- Positive impact on workplace: Hiring from vulnerable groups can create a more diverse and inclusive workplace, fostering a positive environment for all employees.

Challenges and support needs:

- Lack of experience: Some young people may lack experience, requiring additional training and support.

- **Reliability:** There can be concerns about the reliability of younger workers, requiring clear expectations and communication.
- **Limited availability:** Finding available and trained personnel in certain areas can be challenging, especially in rural communities experiencing rural exodus.

Future potential:

- **Professional development:** Providing opportunities for training and skill development can help vulnerable groups advance in their careers and contribute more effectively.
- **Mentorship and support:** Offering mentorship and support can help vulnerable groups overcome challenges and succeed in the workplace.
- **Creating inclusive opportunities:** Businesses recognize the potential of employing more people from vulnerable groups and are open to creating more inclusive hiring practices.

Overall, the experiences highlight the valuable contributions that people from vulnerable groups can make to the workforce. While some challenges exist, businesses are generally optimistic about the potential for future involvement and recognize the importance of providing support and opportunities for these individuals to thrive.

Does your service contribute to supporting the local economy and small producers?

These businesses demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting their local economies and small producers. Here's how:

- **Sourcing locally:** They prioritize sourcing ingredients, products, and services from local farmers, artisans, and businesses. This helps keep money within the community and strengthens the local economy.
- **Promoting local products:** Many actively promote local specialties and products, raising awareness and creating demand for locally produced goods.
- **Collaborating with small producers:** They build relationships with small-scale producers, providing them with a reliable market for their goods and encouraging sustainable practices.
- **Creating jobs:** They provide employment opportunities for local residents, contributing to economic stability and reducing unemployment.
- **Boosting tourism:** They attract visitors to the area, generating income for the local tourism sector and supporting related businesses.
- **Networking and collaboration:** Some businesses actively participate in local networks and initiatives, fostering collaboration and promoting the region's offerings.

However, challenges exist:

- **Limited availability:** Some businesses face challenges in obtaining sufficient quantities of local products due to limited production capacity.
- **High prices:** Unrealistic pricing by some local producers can be a barrier to sourcing more locally.
- **Legal constraints:** Regulations can sometimes hinder the procurement of local products.

Despite these challenges, these businesses prioritize supporting their local economies and small producers whenever possible. They recognize the importance of strengthening their communities and contributing to a more sustainable and resilient local food system.

Please describe what historical or cultural significance does your service have to your community or region.

Many businesses have deep historical and cultural significance within their communities. They achieve this through various means:

- Preserving culinary traditions: Many emphasize using traditional recipes, cooking methods, and local ingredients, thereby keeping regional culinary heritage alive.
- Promoting local culture: Some showcase traditional crafts, architecture, and cultural experiences, offering guests an authentic taste of the local culture.
- Supporting local agriculture: By sourcing ingredients locally and promoting traditional farming practices, they contribute to the preservation of agricultural heritage and biodiversity.
- Sharing stories and traditions: Some businesses actively engage with guests, sharing stories and knowledge about local history, customs, and traditions.
- Acting as community hubs: They often serve as gathering places for locals and visitors, fostering a sense of community and connection.
- Educating future generations: Family-run businesses often involve younger generations in traditional practices, ensuring the transfer of knowledge and skills.

Examples include:

- Restaurants offering traditional dishes with a modern twist while emphasizing the quality of local ingredients.
- Businesses preserving old recipes and processing methods, showcasing traditional decorations and utensils.
- Farms passing down traditional knowledge and skills to younger generations through hands-on involvement in activities like olive harvesting and fishing net making.
- Restaurants organizing events and workshops on natural and cultural heritage, preserving hiking traditions, and connecting visitors with historical values and customs.

These businesses play a vital role in maintaining cultural identity, promoting local history, and supporting the economic and social well-being of their communities. They act as custodians of tradition, ensuring that cultural heritage is preserved for future generations while contributing to a unique and authentic experience for visitors.

Statistical Review

The data shows a strong positive relationship between informing customers about the origin of ingredients and a business's commitment to local sourcing and sustainability.

Here's a breakdown of the correlations:

- Informing customers and supporting the local economy: The correlation coefficient of 0.611 suggests a strong link between these two factors. Businesses that prioritize informing their customers about where their ingredients come from are also more likely to support local producers and contribute to the local economy. This could be because these businesses are more conscious of their impact on the community or because they see customer interest in local sourcing as a business opportunity.
- Informing customers and using local raw materials: A correlation coefficient of 0.586 indicates a strong relationship between providing information about ingredients and utilizing locally sourced materials. This suggests that businesses that emphasize transparency about their sourcing practices are more likely to prioritize local products. This could be driven by a desire to build trust with customers or because sourcing locally aligns with their values.
- Informing customers and using nature-friendly ingredients: The correlation coefficient of 0.525 shows a moderate to strong relationship between informing customers about ingredients and using nature-friendly practices. This suggests that businesses that are transparent about their ingredients are also more likely to prioritize sustainable and environmentally friendly practices. This could be because these businesses are more conscious of the environmental impact of their choices or because they see customer demand for sustainable options.
- Strong positive correlation between use of nature-friendly ingredients and local raw materials
- Cultural significance strongly correlates with traditional methods
- Local worker employment shows weaker correlations with other factors
- Supporting local economy has strong correlations with use of local materials and traditional methods

Overall, these correlations highlight the importance of communication and transparency in promoting sustainable and local sourcing practices. By informing customers about the origin of their ingredients, businesses can demonstrate their commitment to these values and encourage customers to make informed choices.

Accommodation with Restaurants is Leading the Way: Businesses that offer both accommodation and food services (restaurants or breakfast) demonstrate a stronger commitment to local sourcing and sustainable practices. This makes sense, as they have a direct need for ingredients and can readily showcase local products.

Farm Experiences Excel in Cultural Aspects: Unsurprisingly, farm-related services score higher when it comes to promoting cultural heritage and traditional methods. These businesses are often deeply rooted in their local communities and can offer authentic experiences.

Regular Accommodation Lags Behind: Traditional accommodation providers without a food component tend to show less engagement with local sourcing and sustainability initiatives. This might indicate a missed opportunity to connect with the local community and offer unique experiences

These correlations suggest that providing information about raw materials is strongly linked to supporting the local economy and using local/nature-friendly materials.

No Significant Difference Between Service Types: Despite the observed trends, the ANOVA results show no statistically significant differences between the different types of accommodation providers in terms of their sustainability and community engagement metrics. This suggests that all service types, regardless of their specific offerings, have the potential to contribute to these areas.

The ANOVA results show that there are no statistically significant differences between service categories (all p-values > 0.05). The most notable comparisons were:

1. Support for local economy (F = 1.22, p = 0.31)
2. Cultural/historical significance (F = 0.99, p = 0.40)
3. Local employment (F = 0.73, p = 0.54)
4. Nature-friendly ingredients (F = 0.53, p = 0.66)

This suggests that the type of service (Restaurant, Accommodation with Food, Farm Experience, or Accommodation Only) does not significantly affect these sustainability and community engagement metrics. All service types appear to have similar patterns in these aspects.

These findings highlight the growing importance of sustainability and community engagement in the hospitality industry. Consumers are increasingly interested in the origin of their food and the impact their travel choices have on local communities. Accommodation providers have a unique opportunity to cater to this demand by:

- **Prioritizing local sourcing:** Working with local farmers and producers not only supports the local economy but also provides guests with a taste of the region.
- **Promoting cultural heritage:** Showcasing traditional methods and offering authentic experiences helps preserve cultural heritage and creates a deeper connection with the destination.
- **Communicating transparently:** Providing information about the origin of ingredients and the business's sustainability efforts builds trust with guests and encourages them to make informed choices.

By embracing these practices, accommodation providers can enhance their appeal to environmentally and socially conscious travellers, contribute to the well-being of their communities, and create more meaningful experiences for their guests.