

Tourism behaviour patterns research

D.1.3.2



DELIVERABLE SUMMARY	
PROJECT INFORMATION	
Project acronym	TESTEAT
Project title	Enhance Eno gastronomy heritage to establish and expand sustainable tourism
Programme priority	Culture and tourism for sustainable development
Starting date	1/2/2024
Ending date	31/7/2026
Lead partner organisation	Agency for rural development of Istria- AZRRI
Name of representative	Igor Merlić
Project manager	Jasenska Kapuralin
E-mail	jasenska.kapuralin@azrri.hr
Telephone number	+385 52 351 590
DELIVERABLE INFORMATION	
Title of the deliverable	Template for key actors and stakeholders list including time plan for meetings in each region
WP/activity/deliverable	WP1/A.1.3/D.1.3.2
Type (internal/restricted/public)	Internal
WP leader	Juraj Dobrila University of Pula- UNIPU
Activity leader	Juraj Dobrila University of Pula- UNIPU
Participating partner(s)	Ca' Foscary University of Venice
Authors	Juraj Dobrila University of Pula- UNIPU Iva Slivar, PhD; Tamara Floričić, PhD; Anica Dobran Černjul, MSc; UNIVE hecchin@unive.it
Contact e-mail of team leader	acernjul@unipu.hr
Telephone number	+385 (52) 377069
DELIVERY DEADLINE	
Date of the delivery	31/12/2024



Italy – Croatia



Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Key findings.....	2
3. Conclusion.....	4



1. Introduction

Questionnaire about food, wine, spirits and mixed drinks consumption had 281 respondents. The sample included both local inhabitants and tourists, ensuring a diverse and representative dataset. A minimum of 30 respondents per partner region was required, covering all eight project partners, which allowed for a balanced and comparative analysis across different locations. The research highlights significant trends in food and beverage consumption, particularly regarding traditional food choices, purchasing behavior, and the role of gastronomy in tourism.



2. Key findings

Respondents expressed a strong preference for authentic culinary experiences, with enjoyment, new experiences, and cultural curiosity ranking as the top reasons for consuming traditional food. This trend was observed among both locals and tourists, indicating a high level of appreciation for regional gastronomy. Restaurant recommendations, ingredient quality, and price were among the most influential factors in dining decisions.

When purchasing traditional food for home consumption, respondents prioritized ingredients, price, and country of origin. Ethical and organic production was a consideration for a smaller percentage, indicating that while sustainability is valued, it is not yet a decisive factor for the majority. Authentic storytelling was identified as a critical component of the traditional food experience, highlighting an opportunity for local producers and tourism stakeholders to incorporate narratives about production methods, historical significance, and regional identity into their marketing strategies.

The majority of respondents reported spending a moderate but flexible budget when dining out. Tourists showed a higher willingness to spend on premium experiences, particularly when dining in recommended establishments. However, there remains a gap between product quality and price expectations, which should be addressed through better market positioning and clearer value communication.

The study also examined consumption patterns of wine, spirits, beer, and mixed drinks, revealing several key insights. Wine is the preferred alcoholic beverage, particularly during meals, while beer and mixed drinks are mostly associated with social outings and nightlife. Spirits are more commonly consumed on special occasions. Quality wines are favored over table wines, with manufacturer reputation, recommendations, and price being the most important factors influencing purchasing decisions. Tasting opportunities and visits to local producers were identified as major incentives for purchasing local wine and spirits.

To support local producers and tourism stakeholders, respondents suggested several key strategies to increase the visibility and sales of traditional food and beverages. Expanding tasting opportunities was frequently mentioned, particularly in markets, festivals, and direct producer visits. Tasting events should be paired with storytelling elements to enhance engagement and



Italy – Croatia



consumer trust. Accessibility remains a challenge, with many respondents indicating that traditional products should be more widely available in tourist hotspots, airports, and hotels. Additionally, compact, travel-friendly packaging could encourage tourists to purchase products as souvenirs.

Digital engagement, particularly through social media and online storytelling, was highlighted as an opportunity to attract a wider audience. Many respondents indicated that online visibility influences their purchasing decisions, suggesting that an integrated digital marketing strategy could significantly boost sales. Many respondents noted that their introduction to traditional food and beverages occurred in restaurants, making partnerships between local producers and hospitality establishments a strategic priority. Encouraging restaurants to prominently feature regional specialties on their menus could create additional demand for locally produced goods. While respondents expressed a willingness to pay for high-quality traditional products, concerns were raised about the mismatch between quality and price. Ensuring transparent pricing strategies and offering special promotions for tourists could help address this perception gap.

The findings of this research provide valuable insights into evolving consumption patterns and consumer expectations, particularly within the context of enogastronomic tourism. The growing interest in authenticity, local storytelling, and immersive experiences presents a unique opportunity for the Istrian region and other participating partners to strengthen their positioning as premier food and wine destinations. By implementing targeted strategies, such as increasing tasting opportunities, improving accessibility, and leveraging digital marketing, local producers and tourism stakeholders can effectively capitalize on these trends. Additionally, fostering stronger collaborations between producers, restaurants, and tourism providers will be crucial for ensuring the long-term sustainability and global recognition of the region's enogastronomic heritage. Ultimately, aligning consumer preferences with strategic market initiatives will not only enhance regional tourism competitiveness but also contribute to the preservation and promotion of traditional food and beverage production, reinforcing the region's cultural and economic sustainability.



3. Conclusion

The research confirms that consumers highly value authentic culinary experiences, driven by enjoyment, curiosity, and the desire for new experiences. Traditional food plays a key role in shaping both local and tourist consumption habits, with quality, price, and origin being crucial factors in purchasing decisions. While sustainability is increasingly recognized, it remains a secondary consideration.

The findings highlight the critical role of storytelling, tasting opportunities, and digital engagement in enhancing the visibility and appeal of regional gastronomy. To maximize the potential of enogastronomic tourism, strategic initiatives should focus on improving product accessibility, addressing pricing concerns, and fostering collaborations between local producers, restaurants, and tourism providers. By leveraging these insights, stakeholders can strengthen the region's positioning as a premier food and wine destination, ensuring long-term sustainability and economic growth.

