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TESTEAT

O.1.1 TESTEAT online tool



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OUTPUT SUMMARY	
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Lead partner organization	Agency for rural development of Istria- AZRRI
Name of representative	Igor Merlić
Project manager	Jasenka Kapuralin
E-mail	jasenka.kapuralin@azrri.hr
Telephone number	+385 52 351 590
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WP leader	Juraj Dobrila University of Pula- UNIPU
Activity leader	Agency for rural development of Istria - AZRRI
Participating partner(s)	COV, UNIPU, UNIVE, SCF, CIVIFORM, DURA
Authors	Agency for rural development of Istria - AZRRI
Contact e-mail of team leader	jasenka.kapuralin@azrri.hr
Telephone number	+385 (52) 351 590
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Content

1. Introduction 1
2. Description of the output 2
3. Contribution to Project objectives 4
4. Cross border dimension 6
5. Target groups & beneficiaries 7
6. Testing, Demonstration and Implementation of the Solution 8
   6.1. Testing Phase 8
   6.2. Demonstration Phase 9
   6.3. Implementation Phase 10
7. Sustainability, Uptake and Transferability 12
   7.1. Transferability 13
   7.2. Uptake and Upscaling Strategy 13
      7.2.1. Actions for Uptake 14
      7.2.2. Actions for Upscaling 15
      7.2.3. Partner Commitment 16
8. Impact 17
   8.1. Short-Term Impact 17
   8.2. Long-Term Impact 18
9. Conclusion 19

1. Introduction

Output 1.1 – the TESTEAT Online Tool – represents the core tangible product of WP1 and a key contribution to the Programme Specific Objective under Priority 4.1 "Culture and tourism for sustainable development".

Developed through Activity A.1.5 and operationalized via Deliverable D.1.5.2, the Online Tool constitutes the concrete digital result emerging from the project's analytical and content-development activities. In line with the Programme intervention logic, an output is defined as the actual product resulting from the implementation of project activities and deliverables. The TESTEAT Online Tool fulfils this definition as a fully functional, publicly accessible and scalable digital platform that directly contributes to achieving the project-specific objective of strengthening sustainable, inclusive and heritage-based eno-gastronomy in the Italy–Croatia cooperation area.

Unlike preparatory studies or internal reports, this output provides a structured operational solution targeting a broad range of stakeholders identified for WP1. By integrating adapted traditional recipes, consumer-oriented and hospitality-oriented self-assessment modules, and multilingual accessibility within a single digital environment, the tool transforms project knowledge into a practical instrument capable of generating measurable territorial impact. The TESTEAT Online Tool therefore represents not merely a completed digital platform, but a strategic cross-border instrument that supports the alignment of intangible eno-gastronomic heritage with contemporary dietary needs, sustainability principles and evolving tourism demand. Through its interactive and transferable design, it strengthens service quality, competitiveness and innovation capacity within the gastronomy and tourism sectors across the programme area.

The tool remains publicly accessible and will continue to be available beyond the project duration, ensuring its long-term relevance and usability for stakeholders across the programme area.

2. Description of the output

The TESTEAT Online Tool is a fully operational and publicly accessible digital platform developed as the main product of WP1, with the objective of supporting the transition towards more sustainable, inclusive and heritage-based gastronomic practices within the Italy–Croatia cooperation area.

As a cross-border digital instrument, the output integrates adapted traditional recipes, structured self-assessment modules for both consumers and hospitality providers and harmonized multilingual accessibility within a single web-based environment. This integrated structure reflects the project's dual approach: addressing both demand-side expectations (guests and visitors) and supply-side capacities (hospitality operators and gastronomy providers).

By combining intangible eno-gastronomic heritage with contemporary dietary needs - including gluten-free, lactose-free, vegetarian, vegan and reduced-sugar dietary categories - the platform operationalizes the project's core concept of aligning tradition with inclusiveness. Rather than modifying traditional cuisine superficially, the tool demonstrates adapted heritage-based dishes while preserving authenticity, regional identity and cultural value.

The Online Tool goes beyond static dissemination of project results. It functions as an interactive and scalable digital solution that enables users to:

- assess dietary awareness and expectations through automated scoring systems,
- evaluate the level of adaptation of hospitality offers to modern guest needs,
- explore practical examples of adapted traditional recipes,
- engage with content through saving and sharing functionalities that support wider dissemination.

Through this interactive logic, the output transforms project-generated knowledge into an operational decision-support and awareness-building mechanism. It provides a structured framework that facilitates behavioural reflection, supports service improvement and

strengthens the capacity of the gastronomy and tourism sector to respond to evolving sustainability standards and consumer expectations.

As such, the TESTEAT Online Tool represents a concrete digital innovation within the project, offering a transferable and replicable model that can be further applied or expanded beyond the immediate partnership and project lifetime. The tool has been tested and validated through project pilot activities and user-based testing processes, ensuring its usability and practical relevance.

3. Contribution to Project objectives

The TESTEAT Online Tool directly contributes to the project's overall objective of enhancing eno-gastronomic heritage as a driver of sustainable tourism development within the Italy–Croatia cooperation area. As the core output of WP1, it operationalizes the project-specific objective by transforming analytical findings, pilot results and jointly developed content into a structured, accessible and scalable digital solution.

Specifically, the Online Tool contributes to project objectives by:

- promoting inclusive gastronomy through the structured integration of gluten-free, lactose-free, vegetarian, vegan and no added sugar dietary categories within adapted traditional recipes;
- strengthening awareness of ingredient origin, transparency and sustainability, encouraging more informed food-related choices among consumers;
- supporting hospitality providers in evaluating and improving their capacity to respond to contemporary guest expectations through a structured self-assessment framework;
- demonstrating, through practical examples, how intangible eno-gastronomic heritage can evolve responsibly without compromising authenticity, regional identity or cultural value.

By simultaneously addressing both consumers and gastronomy operators, the output contributes to reducing the gap between evolving demand patterns and existing service structures. This alignment fosters improved service quality, innovation capacity and competitiveness within the gastronomy and tourism sector.

Furthermore, by embedding sustainability, inclusiveness and transparency into a practical digital instrument, the Online Tool supports the implementation of Programme Priority "Culture and tourism for sustainable development." It contributes not only to the preservation of cultural heritage but also to its modernization and enhanced economic relevance within the tourism value chain.

Through this integrated contribution, the TESTEAT Online Tool reinforces the project's intended territorial change: positioning eno-gastronomy heritage as a contemporary, accessible and competitive asset within sustainable tourism development.

4. Cross border dimension

The TESTEAT Online Tool embodies the cross-border cooperation principle at the core of the Interreg Italy–Croatia Programme. It is the result of joint development, content alignment and coordinated implementation among project partners from both countries, ensuring that the output reflects shared territorial challenges and common strategic objectives.

The cross-border dimension is concretely reflected through:

- the integration of adapted traditional recipes originating from Croatian and Italian regions within the programme area, creating a shared eno-gastronomic knowledge base;
- full availability of the platform in Croatian, Italian and English, ensuring linguistic accessibility and equal usability across territories;
- the application of a harmonized scoring methodology and structured self-assessment framework that operates consistently across languages and national contexts;
- the joint response to common sectoral challenges in both countries, particularly the need to reconcile heritage preservation with sustainability standards, inclusiveness and evolving dietary expectations.

Rather than addressing isolated local issues, the Online Tool responds to a shared cross-border context characterized by similar tourism pressures, comparable gastronomic traditions and common sustainability goals. By developing a unified digital framework, the project ensures methodological coherence and mutual recognition of practices across the programme area.

The web-based and publicly accessible nature of the platform further strengthens its cross-border impact. It allows equal access for stakeholders in both countries and facilitates knowledge exchange, peer comparison and potential replication beyond the immediate partnership. Through this shared digital instrument, the project reinforces cooperation, promotes joint ownership of results and contributes to the development of a common sustainable eno-gastronomic identity within the Italy–Croatia area.

5. Target groups & beneficiaries

The TESTEAT Online Tool addresses a broad range of target groups identified under the Programme Specific Objective 1.1, encompassing both institutional and market-oriented actors within the gastronomy and tourism ecosystem.

Primary beneficiaries include:

- hospitality and gastronomy providers (including SMEs and micro-enterprises operating in the tourism value chain),
- tourism stakeholders and service operators,
- food producers and local suppliers linked to regional culinary identity,
- higher education and research organizations engaged in tourism and gastronomy innovation,
- public authorities and business support organizations involved in sustainable tourism development,
- consumers with specific dietary restrictions (gluten-free, lactose-free, vegetarian, vegan, reduced-sugar),
- visitors seeking authentic yet inclusive eno-gastronomic experiences within the programme area.

The Online Tool is structured to simultaneously address supply-side and demand-side dynamics. On the supply side, it supports gastronomy providers and tourism operators in evaluating and improving their capacity to respond to evolving sustainability standards and dietary expectations. On the demand side, it enhances consumer awareness, encouraging more informed choices and clearer communication of preferences.

By creating this dual-interface framework, the output fosters alignment between consumer expectations and service provision, reducing informational asymmetry and supporting quality enhancement across the tourism value chain. In doing so, the TESTEAT Online Tool strengthens the overall resilience, competitiveness and adaptability of the eno-gastronomy sector within the Italy–Croatia cooperation area.

6. Testing, Demonstration and Implementation of the Solution

The development of the TESTEAT Online Tool was accompanied by a structured process of testing, demonstration and implementation, ensuring its functionality, usability and practical relevance for target users.

This process combined controlled user-based testing with stakeholder demonstrations and practical application within project activities, enabling the assessment of the tool from different perspectives. Through these complementary phases, the tool was technically assessed, introduced to its intended users and applied in practical project contexts.

The following sections present the key steps of this process, outlining how the tool was tested, demonstrated and implemented, and how these phases contributed to its validation, refinement and readiness for further uptake and upscaling.

6.1. Testing Phase

The testing phase represented a structured user-based assessment of visual attention and interaction with selected content of the TESTEAT Online Tool. The testing primarily relied on eye-tracking analysis to examine how participants explored the website and interacted with recipes adapted to different dietary restrictions and preferences.

The TESTEAT Online Tool was subjected to a structured user-based testing process conducted by Juraj Dobrila University of Pula (UNIPU) using the Tobii Pro Glasses 3 eye-tracking system. The study was carried out on 18 May 2026 at the Faculty of Economics and Tourism “Dr. Mijo Mirković” in Pula and involved 15 students aged between 19 and 20 years.

The eye-tracking analysis focused on:

- Participants exploration of the website;
- visual attention distribution and content visibility;
- interaction with key functionalities (recipe content and color-coded dietary labels);
- the number, duration and distribution of visual fixations.

The participants were introduced to the purpose of the TESTEAT website and were asked to explore its content freely. Using the colour-coded labels displayed on the website, they were instructed to open recipes corresponding to specific dietary categories: gluten-free, lactose-free, no added sugar, vegetarian and vegan. Before each individual session, the eye-tracking glasses were calibrated to ensure the quality of the recorded data.

The testing generated 30.1 minutes of recordings, with an average session duration of 120.4 seconds. A total of 4,841 visual fixations were recorded, averaging 323 per participant, with an average duration of 241 milliseconds. The high average sample validity of 97.6% confirmed the reliability of the collected data.

The aggregated heatmap showed a pronounced concentration of visual attention on the TESTEAT website displayed in the central area of the participants' field of view. This confirmed that participants consistently focused on the assigned content and that the equipment enabled precise identification of areas attracting users' attention.

The findings provide a reliable basis for analysing users' attention patterns while exploring recipes adapted to different dietary restrictions and preferences. They may also support future improvements to the design, positioning and presentation of content on the TESTEAT website. In addition, the testing confirmed the suitability of the acquired eye-tracking equipment for further project-related research, teaching activities and studies of user experience, consumer behaviour and tourism promotion.

Overall, the testing provided reliable quantitative data on participants' visual attention and interaction with selected website content. The results support the assessment of content visibility and may inform future improvements to the presentation and positioning of information within the TESTEAT Online Tool.

6.2. Demonstration Phase

The TESTEAT Online Tool was actively demonstrated throughout the project implementation in order to ensure its visibility, usability and practical understanding among target users and stakeholders.

The demonstration process was structured in phases. Initially, the tool was presented within the project partnership, allowing all partners to become familiar with its structure, functionalities and potential applications, and to align on its use within their respective

activities. Building on this internal phase, partners subsequently introduced the tool within their regional HUBs through dedicated meetings with local stakeholders, ensuring its dissemination and practical presentation at the territorial level. These activities were documented through reports from the regional HUB meetings, providing evidence of the tool's presentation to relevant local stakeholders. In parallel, the tool was also presented to students of the Polytechnic of Istria, thereby extending its outreach to future tourism professionals and supporting early familiarization with its functionalities in an educational context.

In addition, the Online Tool was showcased during a range of project-related activities, including:

- workshops and capacity-building sessions;
- stakeholder engagement activities involving tourism operators and hospitality providers;
- broader promotional and dissemination activities of the project.

Through these demonstration activities, the tool reached a wide spectrum of users, including students, tourism professionals, hospitality providers and institutional stakeholders. This process facilitated user familiarisation, encouraged active interaction with the platform and enabled the collection of feedback in diverse operational contexts.

As a result, the demonstration phase contributed not only to increasing the visibility of the tool, but also to assessing its practical relevance and potential for wider use and future upscaling. The feedback and observations gathered during this phase complemented the structured testing process and contributed to the broader assessment of the tool's practical relevance.

6.3. Implementation Phase

As part of its practical implementation, the TESTEAT Online Tool was applied within selected project activities, enabling direct interaction with different target groups. The tool was applied in:

- educational activities, where it was used as a practical learning and self-assessment instrument within training sessions and academic environments, supporting the

development of competences related to inclusive gastronomy, sustainability and contemporary tourism demand;

- stakeholder-oriented activities, including workshops, meetings and engagement sessions with tourism operators, hospitality providers and other relevant actors, where the tool was presented and made available as a practical reference for improving service adaptation and better understanding diverse food-related needs.

Through this implementation phase, the Online Tool moved beyond a conceptual and testing environment and was effectively introduced into practical use, supporting its initial use and familiarisation among target users and stakeholders.

The experience gained during this phase provided valuable insights into its applicability, user engagement and integration potential across different operational contexts. In particular, it confirmed the tool's relevance as a support instrument for both education and practice, strengthening its role as a bridge between knowledge development and real-life application.

These findings further contributed to the validation of the solution and provided a solid basis for its continued use, refinement and future upscaling within and beyond the project framework.

7. Sustainability, Uptake and Transferability

Building on the results of the testing, demonstration and implementation phases, the following section outlines how the TESTEAT Online Tool will be sustained, transferred and further developed beyond the project duration. The TESTEAT Online Tool has been conceived as a long-term digital asset designed to remain operational, accessible and relevant beyond the project implementation period.

Its sustainability is ensured through three different dimensions:

1) Technical Sustainability

The platform is fully web-based and hosted under a stable domain infrastructure. Its modular architecture allows for scalability, content updates and future functional upgrades without structural redesign. The absence of complex installation requirements ensures low technical barriers and long-term usability.

2) Institutional Sustainability

The Online Tool will be maintained and administratively managed by the Agency for Rural Development of Istria (AZRRI), the project Lead Partner. As a regional development agency actively engaged in sustainable gastronomy, heritage valorization and tourism innovation, AZRRI ensures institutional continuity, visibility and integration of the platform into ongoing strategic initiatives and sectoral activities.

This long-term commitment has been formally reinforced through a Letter of Intent signed within the project framework, confirming AZRRI's commitment to ensure the continued availability, maintenance, promotion and further development of the TESTEAT Online Tool beyond the formal project duration.

The tool will be incorporated, where relevant, into AZRRI's future professional training activities, promotional initiatives, tourism development programmes and cooperation projects, ensuring its continued practical use and visibility. The Letter of Intent therefore provides a formal institutional basis for the long-term continuity and further development of the platform.

3) Financial Sustainability



The financial sustainability of the Online Tool is ensured through its low operational and maintenance costs, which are compatible with the regular operational framework of AZRRI. The digital structure does not require significant recurring investment, and basic maintenance, hosting and content updates can be integrated into existing institutional resources.

Furthermore, the platform offers potential for future integration into new project proposals, partnerships or sectoral initiatives, creating opportunities for additional funding streams that may support its further development and expansion.

7.1. Transferability

Beyond its technical, institutional and financial sustainability, the TESTEAT Online Tool demonstrates strong transferability potential. The structured methodology for adapting intangible eno-gastronomic heritage to contemporary dietary needs, combined with the dual self-assessment logic for consumers and hospitality providers, represents a model that can be replicated or adapted in other regions facing similar sustainability and tourism development challenges.

The modular and multilingual design of the platform enables its adaptation to different territorial contexts without fundamental structural changes. This enhances the possibility of future integration into new cross-border, transnational or regional initiatives focused on heritage-based tourism innovation and inclusive gastronomy.

In addition, the tool will be actively promoted and integrated into AZRRI's future gastronomy and tourism-related initiatives, ensuring continued visibility and practical use beyond the formal project period. Through its incorporation into ongoing professional training activities, promotional programmes and sectoral development strategies, the Online Tool will remain an operational instrument supporting sustainable tourism development in the long term.

7.2. Uptake and Upscaling Strategy

To ensure the long-term use, relevance and continuous development of the TESTEAT Online Tool beyond the project duration, a structured set of actions for both uptake and upscaling has been defined. These actions build directly on the results of the testing, demonstration



and initial implementation phases of the solution. The feedback collected through user testing, stakeholder engagement and pilot integration has provided valuable insights into usability, functionality and practical application of the tool. These findings form the basis for both its immediate uptake and its future expansion.

7.2.1. Actions for Uptake

The uptake of the Online Tool will be ensured through its systematic integration into existing and future activities of project partners, as well as through its promotion among key stakeholders in the tourism and gastronomy sectors.

In particular, the following actions are foreseen:

- integration of the tool into educational and training programmes, including vocational education (VET), higher education curricula and lifelong learning activities, ensuring its use as a practical learning and self-assessment instrument;
- use of the tool within capacity-building activities, workshops and stakeholder engagement processes, enabling direct interaction with tourism operators, students and local producers;
- targeted promotion among hospitality providers and tourism operators, positioning the tool as a practical instrument for self-evaluation, service improvement and alignment with inclusive gastronomy and sustainability standards;
- incorporation of the tool into regional and cross-border tourism development initiatives, including pilot actions, destination-level activities and promotional campaigns aimed at enhancing eno-gastronomic offers;
- dissemination through institutional communication channels, project networks and partner platforms, ensuring visibility among both professional users and the wider public.

Through these actions, the Online Tool will remain actively used by both supply-side and demand-side actors, supporting continuous knowledge transfer and practical application within the gastronomy and tourism ecosystem.

7.2.2. Actions for Upscaling

Beyond its initial implementation, the TESTEAT Online Tool has strong potential for further development and territorial expansion. Upscaling actions are directly informed by the lessons learned during the testing and demonstration phases, particularly in relation to user behaviour, content usability and functionality improvements. Potential upscaling actions, subject to identified needs, technical feasibility and the availability of appropriate resources, may include:

- continuous expansion of the content database, including additional adapted traditional recipes, new case studies and examples from different regions;
- gradual inclusion of new territories and stakeholders, enabling replication of the model beyond the initial partnership and strengthening cross-regional cooperation;
- integration of the tool into future EU, national and regional projects, where it can serve as a tested digital solution supporting sustainable tourism and gastronomy innovation;
- alignment with destination-level digital platforms and tourism strategies, including cooperation with Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), to enhance its visibility and practical use within destination management frameworks;
- potential development of additional functionalities, based on user feedback and testing results, further improving usability, interactivity and analytical capacity of the tool.

Through these actions, the Online Tool is expected to evolve into a broader digital reference platform supporting inclusive, sustainable and innovation-driven eno-gastronomy tourism development.

7.2.3. Partner Commitment

Project partners are expected to support the long-term visibility and continued use of the TESTEAT Online Tool within their respective activities and territories, where relevant and feasible, building on the experience gained during its testing and implementation.

AZRRI, as Lead Partner and the organization responsible for the Online Tool, has formally confirmed its commitment through a Letter of Intent to ensure the continued hosting, online availability, maintenance, promotion and further development of the platform beyond the project duration. AZRRI will also periodically review the tool's content and functioning and seek opportunities for its integration into future gastronomy, tourism and project-related initiatives.

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula (UNIPU) and Ca' Foscari University of Venice (UNIVE) will support the continued use and dissemination of the tool within educational and academic contexts, contributing to knowledge transfer, student engagement and further methodological development, while other project partners will promote and apply the tool within their respective territories, including its use in stakeholder engagement processes and local tourism development initiatives.

This combination of formal institutional commitment by AZRRI and continued support from the project partnership strengthens the long-term sustainability, uptake and further development of the TESTEAT Online Tool.

8. Impact

The TESTEAT Online Tool generates multi-level impact within the gastronomy and tourism ecosystem of the Italy–Croatia cooperation area. Its effects operate across behavioural, operational and structural dimensions, contributing to both immediate improvements and longer-term transformation of the sector.

Beyond its technical and institutional continuity, the Online Tool contributes to long-term structural change within the gastronomy and tourism sector. By fostering awareness of inclusive gastronomy, promoting transparency and encouraging adaptation to evolving dietary expectations, the platform supports gradual improvement of service standards and competitiveness across the programme area. Its methodology for adapting intangible eno-gastronomic heritage to contemporary needs is transferable and replicable in other territories facing similar sustainability and tourism development challenges.

8.1. Short-Term Impact

In the short term, the Online Tool produces measurable awareness and capacity effects among its primary target groups.

For consumers, the structured self-assessment quizzes increase awareness of dietary diversity, ingredient origin and food transparency, fostering more informed decision-making when selecting gastronomic services. By categorizing dietary profiles and expectations, the platform reduces informational asymmetry between guests and service providers and promotes clearer communication of needs.

For hospitality providers, the self-evaluation framework offers an immediate diagnostic tool that supports reflection on current service standards, inclusiveness and sustainability practices. The automated scoring system provides actionable insights that can encourage incremental adjustments in menu design, communication strategies and service organization.

Through its interactive and practical structure, the Online Tool therefore facilitates rapid knowledge uptake and supports short-term behavioural adjustments aligned with contemporary tourism demand.

8.2. Long-Term Impact

Beyond immediate awareness-raising effects, the TESTEAT Online Tool contributes to gradual structural change within the eno-gastronomy and tourism sector.

Over time, the platform supports:

- mainstream integration of inclusive gastronomy principles into hospitality practices;
- improved adaptability of SMEs and micro-enterprises to evolving dietary expectations and sustainability standards;
- strengthened competitiveness of heritage-based gastronomy through modernization without loss of authenticity;
- reinforcement of eno-gastronomic heritage as an economically relevant and innovation-driven tourism asset.

By systematically linking intangible heritage with contemporary dietary needs, the Online Tool encourages a shift from reactive adaptation to proactive service design. This supports the evolution of the tourism value chain towards greater resilience, inclusiveness and sustainability.

At territorial level, the output contributes to a shared cross-border positioning of the Italy–Croatia area as a destination capable of combining cultural authenticity with modern accessibility. The transferable methodology and digital format further enhance the potential for replication, policy integration and continued innovation beyond the immediate project framework.

Through this combination of behavioural, operational and structural effects, the TESTEAT Online Tool contributes to durable impact aligned with the Programme Priority “Culture and tourism for sustainable development.”

9. Conclusion

The TESTEAT Online Tool represents a concrete, operational and strategically relevant output of WP1, fully aligned with the project's objective of enhancing eno-gastronomic heritage as a driver of sustainable tourism development within the Italy–Croatia cooperation area.

By transforming jointly developed knowledge and pilot results into an accessible, interactive and scalable digital instrument, the output bridges tradition and innovation. It enables practical alignment between intangible heritage and contemporary dietary needs, strengthens service adaptability within the gastronomy sector and supports informed decision-making among consumers.

Beyond its technical completion, the Online Tool demonstrates institutional anchoring, financial feasibility and transferability potential, ensuring its continued visibility and use after the formal end of the project. Through its cross-border scope, dual demand–supply logic and long-term integration into sectoral development initiatives, the platform contributes to durable territorial impact under the Programme Priority "Culture and tourism for sustainable development."

The Online Tool is coherent with the integrated tourism model developed under Output 3.1, reflecting the same principles of sustainability, inclusiveness and valorization of eno-gastronomy heritage within the broader TESTEAT framework. The TESTEAT Online Tool is therefore confirmed as a fully achieved and strategically significant project output, representing a final, operational and publicly accessible solution that will remain available beyond the project duration, ensuring its continued use, relevance and impact within the gastronomy and tourism ecosystem of the programme area.

The long-term continuity of the Online Tool is further supported by a formal Letter of Intent confirming AZRRI's commitment to its continued maintenance, promotion, use and further development beyond the project duration.