### PhD-thesis Summary booklet

Doctoral School of Earth Sciences

# Exploring the tourism use of local products and related tourism attitudes in South Transdanubia

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#### 1. Introduction

Rural areas as complex spaces have undergone a major transformation over the past decades. As a result of this transformation, we can nowadays speak of a geographical space not only as an agricultural space, but also as a space for recreation and leisure, and sometimes tourism. To achieve this, it has been necessary to redefine rural identity, as a result of which rural values have been revalued and are more prominent alongside urban areas, including in tourism trends. The countryside has many advantages, rich in natural and cultural values, resources and a wide range of experiences where tourists can find the services they need. The choice of topic for my doctoral research was influenced by a number of preliminary research questions. Local products have the potential to catalyse the multiplier effect of tourism, based on literature findings, and the theoretical ceiling on their tourism potential is high. Their complexity is striking given the research that has been carried out on the subject, from the tourist attraction, through the producers of the products and indirectly the stakeholders in tourism, to the 'consumers' of the products and attractions, to the trends that influence the whole system. These trends ensure the interest in the various local products, which depends to a large extent on their visibility. In addition to maintaining and increasing their visibility, there are many other aspects of these tourist attractions that can be examined, one of the main ones being the attitudes of consumers - in the case of tourism exploitation, tourists - towards them.

One of the main questions is whether local products, which can be described as a heritage of rural areas, are nowadays emerging as 'miracles' of rural tourism. The second main research question is the geographical aspect of the research, how the first question is being developed in the tourism region of South Transdanubia. A region which, according to the preliminary research hypothesis, has a diverse and colourful local product offer. The visibility of these products ranges from the touristically unknown to those with a national reach. Moreover, the research carried out on local products in the region provides a solid basis for further research on the subject from other angles. My basic aim with this research is to obtain results that are useful for the tourism profession and applicable to everyday tourism. In order to achieve this basic objective, it is necessary to review the most important problems in this field and to explore the subject in depth, so that the main focuses of my

#### 2. Objectives

In my doctoral research, I have defined a set of four main objectives and related sub-objectives to investigate the tourism use of local products and the related tourism attitudes. The objectives were developed in several steps, on

research can be identified within the framework of a set of objectives.

the one hand, based on current directions in the literature, and on the other hand to achieve further research directions and results after reviewing these directions.

- Literature-based analysis of the relationship between rural tourism and local products
  - a. Identification of the focal points of the linkages
  - b. Exploring the supply of local products
- 2. Update the available local product databases
  - a. Analysis of the attractiveness of local products
  - b. Understanding the link with tourism demand
- 3. Examining the relevant tourism demand
  - a. General characterisation of tourists arriving in the region
  - b. Analysis of preferences for local products
  - c. Identification of consumer types
- 4. Understanding the professional attitudes involved
  - a. Understanding years of professional experience
  - b. Implementing professional control
  - c. To identify possible directions for improvement

The synthesis of the results obtained by implementing the objectives outlined will make it possible to understand the current position of local products in tourism and, based on primary results, to precisely determine the attitudes of tourism demand.

#### 3. Methods

During my doctoral research, I used several secondary methods, building on the results of which I selected and applied additional primary methods.

A key aspect of the secondary methods was to obtain information from a wide range of sources and to provide a sound basis for the primary methods and the potential results that could be derived from them. The secondary methods used were:

- Literature review,
- review of development documents,
- and statistical data collection and database construction.

In selecting the primary methods, I aimed to use solutions that were appropriate to the objectives pursued and adapted to the resources available. Among the primary methods:

- questionnaire-based guest survey (*Table 1*),
- statistical analysis,
- field survey,

- semi-structured in-depth interviews,
- and spatial visualisation.

The questionnaire survey of visitors is a survey (n=430) carried out within the framework of the project "Sustainable, smart and inclusive regional and urban models" (EFOP-3.6.2-16-2017-00017), which was designed according to the territorial priorities of tourism in the region, using an anchored questionnaire (Figure 1). The sampling period ran from early summer 2018 (May-June) to early autumn 2018 (September-October), in line with the tourism seasonality of the region, with sampling taking place during the pre-, high and post-season. The areas covered by the questionnaire survey are located within the South Transdanubian tourism region. The municipalities included in the survey were selected on the basis of the tourism indicator recorded by the Central Statistical Office (KSH), the number of guests registered in commercial accommodation establishments

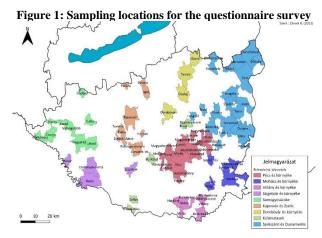
Table 1: General demographic characteristics of the tourists surveyed

<b>Sex</b> (n=408): male: 55%; female: 45%		
<b>Age</b> (n=399): Under 18: 3%; 18-25: 26%; 26-35: 21%; 36-45: 16%; 46-		
55: 20%; 56-65: 9%; 65+: 7%		
Family status (n=396): single: 33%; couple, married couple with		
child(ren): 32%; couple, married couple without child(ren): 24%; couple,		
married couple without child(ren): 11%		
Education (n=406): primary: 5%; secondary: 47%; tertiary: 49%		
<b>Income</b> (n=330): below HUF 100,000: 24%; HUF 100,001-250,000:		
49%: above HUF 250,000: 27%		

#### Source: own editing

Statistical analysis was performed to examine the existence, direction and significance of the relationship between variables and to analyse the relationships using cross-tabulation analysis and analysis of variance using IBM SPSS Statistics 25.

The field survey collected first-hand information on the supply of local products. During the work carried out in the framework of the project "Sustainable, smart and inclusive regional and urban models", EFOP-3.6.2-16-2017-00017, I built a database of local product producers and their products in Baranya County. In addition, a survey of the municipalities belonging to the Association of Border Municipalities of South Baranya was carried out, which focused on 88 municipalities and assessed their tourist attractions.



Source: own editing

Following the objectives of my research, the professional control was carried out by conducting six semi-structured in-depth interviews. In selecting the subjects for the in-depth interviews, I aimed to obtain information from a wide range of people on the tourism exploitation of local products. The in-depth interview was carried out along pre-defined questions, which allowed for full professional control of the data collected by other research methods and the results "extracted" from them

QGIS 3.12 geospatial software was used to spatially represent the results collected through the listed secondary and primary methods. The software allowed me to visualise the spatial aspect of the data by creating thematic maps.

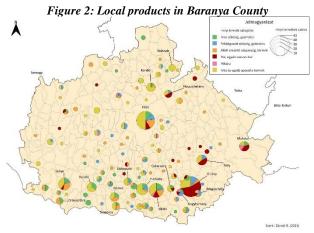
#### 4. Summary of results

In line with **objective 1/a**, I have carried out and will detail in the thesis the relationship between rural tourism and local products. I have highlighted the main focal points of the linkage system along the main lines of the national and international literature.

To achieve my **objective 2/a**, I updated the local product databases and mapped them using spatial data methods (*Figure 2*). Among the six predefined categories, honey and other speciality products have the highest share (38%), followed by animal raw materials and products (18%), wines and other spirits (16%), fresh vegetables and fruits (15%), processed vegetables and fruits (11%) and bakery products (2%). In terms of spatial distribution, besides Pécs

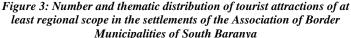
as a large city and consumer market, the South Baranya region - Ormánság, Villány and Siklós, Bóly and Mohács - is the clear regional focal point.

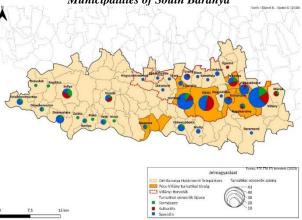
To achieve **objective 2/b**, the attractiveness of local products in the designated area was examined and mapped using spatial information methods (*Figure 3*). The study area for the tourism exploitation of local products was the 88 municipalities belonging to the Association of Border Municipalities of South Baranya. The range of attractions in the municipalities is wide, but cultural and special attractions dominate the area. The range of attractions with at least regional or regional attractions is much narrower, with small villages typically excluded. Not only in the western or northern part but also near the Villány Wine Region. Only the villages in the Villány Hills, which are included in the tourist area, really offer a greater number of attractions.



Source: Szabó et al., 2021.

The achievement of **objective 2/c** has made it possible to understand the link between local products and tourism demand. Looking at the number of mentions of the 15 most mentioned local products, wine (251 mentions) stands out among the other products, demonstrating that tourists arriving in the region are familiar with the wines of South Transdanubia. This familiarity can be seen in the wine regions of the region, of which the Villány and Szekszárd wine regions are also outstanding at a national level. The national recognition of specific wine regions is also demonstrated by the associations made by tourists with wine regions such as Villány (100 mentions) and Szekszárd (37 mentions). After spirits, the most typical product is honey, with 61 mentions, which has a high potential for future tourism exploitation, given the relevant supply





Source: Szabó et al., 2021.

Under **objective 3/a**, I have characterised tourists arriving in the region according to their travel habits, motivation, use of tourist space, etc. The main tourism characteristics of visitors to the region are male (55%), aged 18-25 (26%), single (33%), with higher education (47%), employed (33%), with an income between 100.001-250.000 Ft (49%). They come with family, children or parents (30%), as part of an individually organised trip (86%), visiting the region for the fourth time or more (63%), staying in a hotel (30%) and their main motivation is to relax and recharge their batteries (65%). The most visited internal destination during previous and current trips is Pécs and its surroundings (83% and 51%), the most visited municipality is Pécs (52%) and the accommodation is typically in Pécs (27%).

Under **objective 3/b**, preferences for local products were analysed. Regarding the distribution of local product preference levels for the whole sample, 65.5% of respondents have a positive attitude towards local products, i.e. a preference level higher than neutral. The most frequently purchased local products are spirits (53%), the most frequently used place of purchase is the market and local products are typically purchased within the place of residence (61%).

For **objective 3/c**, I identified consumer attitudes and categorised the sample subjects into consumer types. Consumer attitudes were explored along five dimensions (*Figure 3*).

The nature of the dimensions was used to select the variables from the questionnaire questions, with the main consideration being the content relationship between the dimension and the variable. The selected questions, i.e. variables describing different traits of consumer behaviour, are of high relevance to tourism, which is supported by the literature. The result of the factor analysis to filter the variables is summarised in *Figure 3*, which shows that 13 factors describe consumer preferences related to the demand realised.

Figure 4: Study dimensions used in the survey and consumer attitudes revealed

Traditional sources	Expert information Simplified information First-hand information
Online sources of information	Websites Applications Shared content
Infrastructue elements	Security Accessibility
Touristic services	Product range Folkloristic values Experience-oriented
General consumer preferences	Rational Elitist

Source: own editing

Using the defined consumer attitudes, I classified the participants into five types using cluster analysis.

The first and most populous type in the sample is the **goal-oriented tourists**, with 34% of the tourists surveyed belonging to this type. They are characterised by seven out of 13 consumer attitudes. When travelling, they place particular emphasis on accessibility and product choice, and rational consumer preferences are their main characteristics.

The second type is characterised by almost all consumer attitudes, 12 out of 13, and is therefore defined as a **meticulous tourist**. They represent 20% of the total sample. Their information-seeking habits are characterised by the use of websites, apps and simplified information. In addition, experientialism and product offerings play an important role in their consumption patterns.

The third type of tourist is defined as **classical tourists**, who are characterised by six of the 13 consumer attitudes identified. This type represents 20% of the

sample. Based on their most characteristic consumer attitudes, these tourists base their travel and consumption decisions on websites, apps and expert information.

The fourth type in the sample, based on their consumer attitudes, can be described as **exclusive tourists**, who make up 14% of the sample. Eight out of 13 consumer attitudes are typical. Their information sources are mainly shared content and expert information, and they have elitist consumer attitudes.

The fifth type is a special type of the sample, with **hedonists**, who have only two of the 13 consumer attitudes. They obtain their travel information from first-hand sources. It is important to emphasise that experientialism is a high priority for them in the tourism services available in the destination.

Within the framework of objectives **4/a**, **b and c**, I have carried out a professional control of the results collected and linked them to practice, thus making several findings that can be applied in tourism practice.

In my opinion, one of the directions for successful development could be to build on tourists interested in local products (with a local product preference level higher than neutral). Only then could tourists with a neutral preference level be prioritised. For tourists less interested in local products (with a local product preference level below neutral), it would be appropriate to use only the resources remaining after the previous priorities have been met.

#### **Based on significant relationships:**

**Highest priority** target groups - have a strong preference for local products:

- Motivation: shopping
- Local products regularly purchased: syrups

High priority target groups - prefer local products:

- Motivation: cultural experience
- Other local products offered in the region: rather not important

**Medium priority** target groups - neutral level of preference for local products:

- Travelling companion: not with friends
- Internal destination (current trip): Szekszárd area and Sárköz

Low priority target groups - prefer not to prefer local products:

- Travelling companion: with family, children, parents
- Source of information (before/before/on/off): recommendation of relative, acquaintance (also-on)
- Other local products available in the region: not at all important
- Condition of natural assets: rather not important

- Condition of natural assets: not at all important
- Choice: rather not important
- "Luxury" character: rather not important
- Specificity: rather not important

#### Lowest priority target groups - no preference at all for local products:

- Motivation: not for the cultural experience
- Motivation: to attend a conference
- Source of information (regularity): travel fair (I use it regularly)
- Source of information (before/before/on/already): recommendation of a relative or acquaintance (during)
- · Choice: rather not important
- Specificity: not at all important

## Non-significant (0.1 or less, but the significance greater than 0.05) based on relationships:

#### **Highest priority** target groups - fully prefer local products:

- Motivation: not attending an event
- Motivation: shopping
- Specificity: rather important

#### **High priority** target groups - prefer local products:

- Motivation: attending an event
- Programmes, events in the region: not important at all

## **Medium priority** target groups - neutral level of preference for local products:

- Motivation: not shopping
- Source of information (before/before/while/else): guidebook (during)

#### **Low priority** target groups - prefer not to prefer local products:

- Programmes, events in the region: neutral
- Quality of accommodation offer: rather important
- Uniqueness: rather not important

#### Lowest priority target groups - no preference at all for local products:

• Quality of wellness services: rather not important

#### List of publications on this topic

#### Journal publications:

- Závodi, B., Szabó, G. & Alpek, B. L. (2021). Survey of the Consumer Attitude of Tourists Visiting South Transdanubia, Hungary. *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 34(1), 245-250. (Q2)
- Závodi, B. & Szabó, G. (2019). The Correlation of the Fame of Wine Regions and Wine Gastronomy Festivals in the Pannon Wine Region. Turisztikai és Vidékfejlesztési Tanulmányok, 4(1-2 különszám), 22-37. (Doktori Iskola B kategória)
- Szabó, G. & Závodi, B. (2018). The Tourism Geographical Characteristics
   Of Wine Gastronomy Festivals In The Balaton Wine Region. *PANNON MANAGEMENT REVIEW*, 7(2-3), 27-43.
- Szabó, G. & Závodi, B. (2018) The Wine Tourism of Hungary from the Point of Festivals. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 4(4), 74-83.

#### Publications published elsewhere:

- Szabó, G., Závodi, B., & Sass, E. (2021). A helyi termékek szerepe és lehetőségei a turizmusban In Mókusné Pálfi, A. & Nod, G. (Eds.), Interregionális kutatási eredmények a turizmusban: örökségvédelem, intézményrendszer, helyi termékek (Hun-Au-Slo-Ukr) (pp. 91-110). PTE TTK FFI Turizmus Tanszék.
- Szeidl, K., Horváth, A., Nod, G. & Závodi, B. (2021): A dunamenti svábok meghatározó turisztikai termékének vizsgálata: a Fekedi Stifolder Fesztivál. In Szabó, G., Alpek, B. L., Horváth, A., Mókusné Pálfi, A., Nod, G., Szeidl, K. & Závodi, B. (Eds.), Szubejktív élményföldrajz Tanulmánykötet Aubert Antal professzor tiszteletére. (pp. 231-241). Digitprint Kft.

#### Conference Bulletins:

- Závodi, B. (2017). A Szekszárdi Szüreti Napok helye hazánk borgasztronómiai kínálatában. In Keresztes, G. (Ed.) Tavaszi Szél 2017 Konferencia: Konferenciakötet I. (pp. 482-489). Doktoranduszok Országos Szövetsége (DOSZ).
- Szabó, G., Szeidl, K. & Závodi, B. (2017). Tradition and innovation in the festival tourism of South Transdanubia. In Hrvojević, M. P. (Ed.), 17th Contemporary Trends in Tourism and Hospitality: New spaces in cultural tourism, (pp. 1-9). University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management.