

# VIEWS OF EMPLOYEES IN THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY ON THE TOTAL POTENTIALS OF VOJVODINA TO ATTRACT TOURISTS MOTIVATED BY FOOD AND DRINK

*Bojana Kalenjuk<sup>1</sup>, Dragan Tešanović<sup>1</sup>, Snježana Gagić<sup>II</sup>, Jelena Babić<sup>III</sup>*

Received: 02.08.2013. | Accepted: 30.10.2013.

**ABSTRACT:** *Employees in the tourism and hospitality are key resources in the tourism development of a destination. Many countries in the world have their food industry put into function of tourism by organizing degustation, in the menus of restaurants introduced and marked local regional dishes, protected the origin of known products, opened museums that promote gastronomic cultural heritage, organize a number of culinary events and cooking schools as well as other activities which promote their own food and drink, thus developing culinary tourism. Vojvodina as traditionally important food producer in Serbia and the region represents an important destination for culinary tourism development. The aim of this study was to examine views of employees in the hospitality and tourism industry on the total resources of Vojvodina for attracting tourists motivated by food and drink. This paper aims to explore the views and knowledge of the employees on culinary tourism and the overall potential of Vojvodina for attracting tourists that influence on the development of this selective form of tourism, with the assumption that employees in the tourism and hospitality industry believe that Vojvodina has a potential that can attract tourists motivated by food and drink, which depends on their jobs.*

**Keywords:** *hospitality, gastronomy, tourism, food, drink, Vojvodina*

## INTRODUCTION

The current development policies and concepts that are related to the development of tourism, gastronomy, that is, feeding locals and tourists, did not have adequate development role as opposed to its primary role (Kalenjuk et al., 2012a), which refers to the

<sup>1</sup> University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences, Department of Geography, Tourism, and Hotel Management, Novi Sad, Serbia, Email: bojanakalenjuk@yahoo.com

<sup>II</sup> College of Management and Business Communication, Sremski Karlovci, Serbia

<sup>III</sup> School of hospitality, Irig, Serbia

satisfaction of physiological needs of people. Regions where wave technology and globalization did not influence the changes in the way of production of food and drinks, neither their culture of consumption, have become favorable for the development of selective form of tourism, which is internationally recognized as food tourism (Hall et al., 2003) culinary tourism (Wolf, 2006), gastronomic tourism (Hjalanger and Richards, 2002) gourmet tourism (Hall and Mitchell, 2002) and degustation tourism (Boniface, 2003 and Avie Cohen, 2004).

These forms represent a special form of tourism with the aim of bringing in or taking away tourists motivated by food and drink in different ways. Thus, the food and drinks have become an important tool in the tourism industry (Hall and Mitchell, 2000) which is to be further developed and grew, had something different to offer, such as local and national dishes and drinks as a reflection of the culture of the people (Tešanović and Koprivica, 2007).

Gastronomic tourism is realized by visiting and tasting at the primary or secondary producers of food and beverages, visiting festivals of food and beverage and consuming authentic food and drinks in a variety of catering establishments. An increasingly popular form of gastronomic tourism is an activity of tourists who attend different schools for several days of authentic regional cooking (Hall and Mitchell, 2006). Ignatov and Smith (2006) reported that gastro - culinary tourism can be defined as a journey in which the purchase or consumption of regional foods ( or drinks ), or observation and studying of food production (from agriculture to culinary school), is an important theme or activity (Ignatov and Smith, 2006; Iakovou et al., 2009). Gastronomic tourists visit places that offer them a unique culinary experience, they prefer to enter the host's kitchen, to ask about the typical dishes, to find out where they can purchase food and condiments for meals of visited destinations (Kalenjuk et al., 2011). Currently there is a growing demand for tourism for food and wine and culinary tourism is becoming crucial sector of tourism industry. Popularity of tourism for food and wine in the world has been known for several decades (Santich, 2004), but here only recently, in relation to the development of wine tourism (Pivac et al., 2008).

Vojvodina is traditionally a major producer of food in Serbia and the region (Tešanović et. al., 2013). In view of its geographical location, relief, climate and cultural heritage, it created many recognizable, authentic dishes, food and drinks that are produced in industry, prepared in restaurants and serve to feed the population and for export. Many countries in the world have their food industry put into function of tourism by organizing tastings and in menus of restaurants have also introduced a series of specially marked local regional dishes, protected origin of their own known products, created museums that promote gastronomic cultural heritage, organized a number of gastronomic events that gather even millions of people, organize a cooking school for tourists and undertake a number of other activities which promote their own food and drink, thus developing culinary tourism (Kalenjuk et al., 2012b).

The aim of this study was to examine views of employees in the hospitality and tourism industry on the total resources of Vojvodina for attracting tourists motivated by food and drink in the dependency of the workplace.

This paper aims to explore the views and knowledge of the staff of culinary tourism and the overall potential of Vojvodina for attracting the culinary tourists.

In this paper, we have started with the assumption that employees in the tourism and hospitality industry believe that Vojvodina has a potential that can attract tourists motivated by food and drink, which to some extent depends on their job, which will be proved or disproved by the research.

## RESEARCH METHODS

Research on the views of employees in the tourism and hospitality industry about the potential for the development of culinary tourism in Vojvodina was conducted by survey. Of the 150 surveys that were sent to institutions dealing with education in tourism and hospitality, tourism organizations and agencies, and restaurants, from September 2012 to March 2013, it was successfully completed and returned 127. The survey included 17 questions, the first seven questions provide an opportunity to examine the structure of respondents (gender, age and educational structure), and based questions about their work in facilities and institutions, their experience and the amount of monthly income, to confirm competence of their views on the development of culinary tourism in Vojvodina.

Survey data were analyzed with statistical software packages for data analysis and processing SPSS 20.0. (Statistical Package for Social Sciences - Statistical Package for Social Sciences)

In order to determine the basic characteristics of the observed variables (events), and their descriptions, in the research it was determined core indicators and descriptive statistics as well as Mann - Whitney test that is applied when testing the hypothesis of equality of two basic sets based on a random sample taken from these sets. This test is also applied to samples in which the characteristics were measured by ordinary scale. Perform the test in this case is based on the formation of the variation string which means that the values of both samples are merged into a new string with  $n + m$  members. It is assumed that  $n \leq m$ . Values of the string are given ranks of the minimum value that gets value rank of 1 to a maximum value that has the rank of order  $n + m$ . If in string there are two or more events of identical values, they are given the average rank. If the samples are of different sizes the first is basic set from which a smaller sample is taken.

Test for small samples is equal to the sum of the ranks associated with the units of the sample collected from the first basic set, which are located in the same string.

$$W = \sum_{i=1}^n R(X_i)$$

For large samples the value of W statistic is given by:

$$W^* = \frac{W - n(n+m+1)/2}{\sqrt{(nm(n+m+1)/12)}}$$

The calculated values and conclusions made based on them, are illustrated and confirmed by the appropriate graphs in the paper.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Competence of respondents*

The analysis of the first seven questions gave the information about the competence of the respondents. Of the total of 127 respondents, 69 were male and 58 female, that is, 54.3% men and 45.7 % women were interviewed. Also of the total number of respondents 88, or 69.3% are persons under 35 years, 27 were aged 35-50 years (21.3% ) and the least represented population is aged over 50 years with 9.4 %, that is 12 people in this age group are interviewed. Secondary school education have 25 respondents (19.7%), college or university education have 35 respondents (27.6% ), while the largest proportion in the survey have people with masters or doctorate with 52.8 %, that is, 67 are tested.

Performing activities in a particular workplace in the tourism and hospitality industry can influence the views of respondents about the development of culinary tourism in Vojvodina. Based on the answers to the fourth question in the survey it can be seen that of 127 respondents, 18 were employed in state or provincial institution engaged in tourism and hospitality. This group of respondents participate in the structure with 14,2%. In the second group are employees in tourism organizations and agencies. Only 29 of them participate in survey or 22.8 %. Most respondents are employed in institutions for youth education in tourism and hospitality (44) in high schools and colleges, and they are represented in the structure with 34.6%. Employees in restaurants that are primarily engaged in providing food and beverage and accommodation are represented with 28.4 %, or 36 of them were interviewed.

Information on the earnings of respondents (question five in the survey) can indirectly influence the formation of views about the development of culinary tourism. Specifically, respondents with inadequate level of income in their opinion, can in order to increase the level of their income, take part in the development of culinary tourism in Vojvodina. The answers to this question show that out of 127 respondents, 33 of them have an income of up to 50 000 dinars and 94 of them with incomes above this amount. Potentially 26 % of the respondents could improve their income by engaging in the development of culinary tourism, which of course does not exclude the 74 % of respondents whose incomes are higher than 50 000 dinars that are also employed in this field.

The fact that has a direct impact on views about the development of culinary tourism is the experience of respondents in the tourism and hospitality industry. Based on

their answers to this question, it can be seen that 46 of them relatively short period have worked in this area (less than 5 years). From 5 - 10 years of service in the tourism and hospitality industry have 30 % of the surveyed, or 38 of them, while 33.8% or 43 have worked in this field for more than 10 years.

Answers to the seventh question in the survey show that the vast majority of participants (97) introduced the concept of gastronomic and culinary tourism. 30 of them are not familiar with or are not sure what this type of tourism represents. Just the fact that 76.4% of participants have heard about gastronomic tourism justifies the expectation that their answers to the remaining questions in the survey are a good basis for forming views about the development of culinary tourism in Vojvodina.

Analyzing the answers to the first seven questions indicates that the respondents are representative to express their views on the development of culinary tourism in Vojvodina. Also, structure of the respondents is competent that can be stated on the basis of these questions, because they represented people of both sexes and different age groups, different levels of education, work experience, etc., all of which contribute to more objective views on the development of culinary tourism.

### *Views of employees in hospitality and tourism*

The assumption that has been analyzed is that the employees in the tourism and hospitality industry believe that Vojvodina has a potential that can attract tourists motivated by food and drink. Based on the responses, the median values show that employees in the tourism and hospitality industry generally believe that Vojvodina has potentials that are interesting to tourists. Most are in complete agreement that the food in Vojvodina is various and has authentic elements. They generally agree that the food and drink of Vojvodina attract the attention of many tourists. They think that food events attract tourists, while they are not sure about drink events. Also, respondents were not sure that establishments in Vojvodina offer enough local food and beverages, as evidenced in previous research.

If the employees' views about the potential of Vojvodina to attract tourists are seen by taking into account their work place in tourism and hospitality, there is some difference of opinion on certain issues. Between the views of employees of state or provincial institutions dealing with tourism and employees in the tourism organizations, results of Mann - Whitney test indicate that there are no significant differences. Also based on the test there is no difference of opinion about the potentials of Vojvodina between employees of state or provincial institutions and employees in restaurants.

Differences in views arise among employees in institutions for education of young people in the tourism and hospitality industry in relation to employees to other listed positions. Mann- Whitney test (Table 1) shows that the views of staff in education institutions and employees of state or provincial institutions differ in opinion about the diversity of cuisine in Vojvodina and in view of authentic elements in the cuisine. In other views about the potentials of Vojvodina to attract tourists there are no statistically significant differences between the two groups.

The observed differences is illustrated by a comparative view of views of the two groups of employees on diversity and authenticity of the cuisine of Vojvodina (Figure 1).

**Table 1.** Results of Mann - Whitney test of comparing the views of employees in public institutions and facilities for youth education in the tourism and hospitality industry about the potentials of Vojvodina for the development of gastronomic – culinary tourism.

Question	Government institutions	Education institutions	p – Probability achieved by test
	Median (N=18)	Median (N=44)	
Vojvodina has the potential to attract tourists oriented on food and drink.	5	5	0,27086
Vojvodina cuisine is diverse.	4	5	0,00938*
Vojvodina cuisine possesses the authentic elements.	4	5	0,00696*
Dishes of Vojvodina attract the attention many tourists.	4	4	0,23323
Drinks of Vojvodina attract the attention of many tourists.	4	4	0,20349
Food events of Vojvodina attract large numbers of tourists.	4	4	0,88899
Drinks events of Vojvodina attract large numbers of tourists.	3	3	0,95095
Vojvodina restaurants offer a sufficient number of local dishes that are attractive to tourists.	3	3	0,55565
Vojvodina restaurants offer a sufficient number of local drinks that are attractive to tourists.	3	3	0,68679

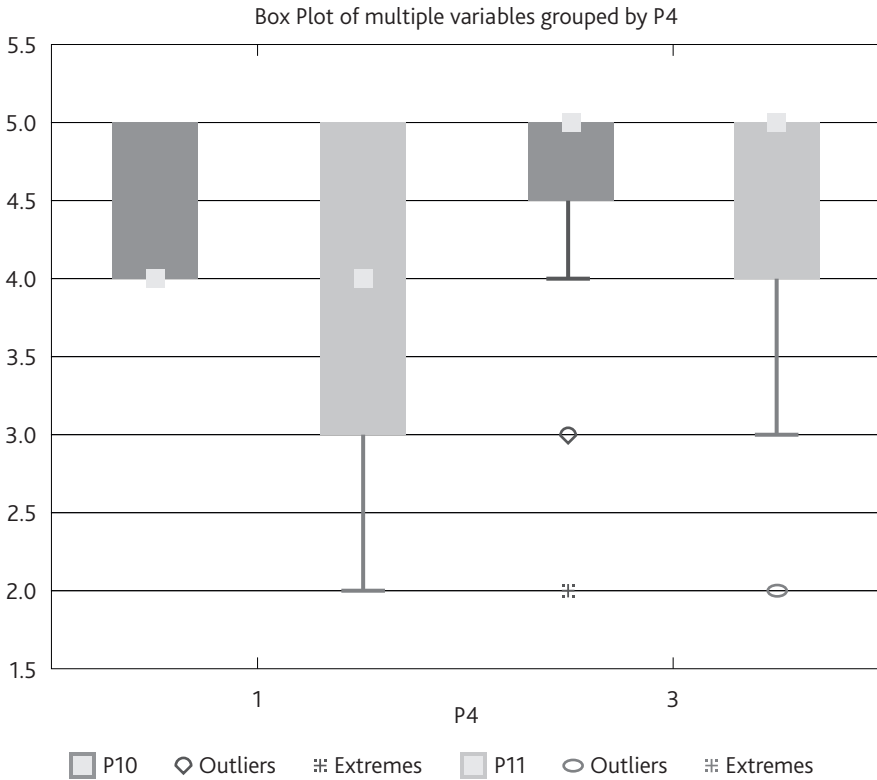
\*  $p < 0,05$

Employees of travel agencies and organizations and employees in institutions for education of youth in tourism and hospitality, in their views that Vojvodina has the potential to attract tourists who are motivated by food and drink, mostly agree, except for the authenticity of the cuisine in Vojvodina (Table 2).

Employees in travel agencies and organizations generally agree that the cuisine in Vojvodina possesses the authentic elements, while employed in institutions for education of youth in tourism fully agree with the opinion that cuisine of Vojvodina is authentic.

Employees in institutions for education of youth in tourism and hospitality and employees in restaurants also agree about potentials of Vojvodina to attract tourists motivated by food and drink. The difference of opinion between the two groups of employees in the tourism industry exists only in view about whether food events in Vojvodina attract large numbers of tourists (Table 3).

Employees in institutions for youth education in the tourism and hospitality industry generally agree that Vojvodina food events attract large numbers of tourists, while employees in the restaurants do not have very clear position on the issue, that is, they are undecided on the issue.



**Figure 1.** Views of employees in public institutions and facilities for youth education in the tourism and hospitality industry about diversity (R10) and the authenticity of the cuisine (R11) of Vojvodina

**Table 2.** Results of Man - Whitney test of comparing the views of employees in tourist agencies and organizations and institutions for education of youth in tourism about potentials of Vojvodina for the development of gastronomic – culinary tourism

Question	Travel agencies	Education institution	p – Probability achieved by test
	Median (N=29)	Median(N=44)	
Vojvodina has the potential to attract tourists oriented on food and drink..	5	5	0,71829
Vojvodina cuisine is diverse.	5	5	0,19874
Vojvodina cuisine possesses the authentic elements.	4	5	0,00261*
Dishes of Vojvodina attract the attention many tourists.	4	4	0,53523
Drinks of Vojvodina attract the attention of many tourists	4	4	0,50958
Food events of Vojvodina attract large numbers of tourists.	4	4	0,87459
Drinks events of Vojvodina attract large numbers of tourists	3	3	0,94607
Vojvodina restaurants offer a sufficient number of local dishes that are attractive to tourists.	3	3	0,92366
Vojvodina restaurants offer a sufficient number of local drinks that are attractive to tourists.	3	3	0,77807

\*  $p < 0,05$



**Table 3.** Results of Mann - Whitney test of comparing the views of employees in institutions for education of young people in the tourism and hospitality industry and employees in restaurants on the potentials of Vojvodina for the development of gastronomic – culinary tourism

Question	Restaurants	Education institutions	p – Probability achieved by test
	Median (N=36)	Median (N=44)	
Vojvodina has the potential to attract tourists oriented on food and drink..	5	5	0,97685
Vojvodina cuisine is diverse.	5	5	0,14553
Vojvodina cuisine possesses the authentic elements.	5	5	0,12412
Dishes of Vojvodina attract the attention many tourists.	4	4	0,37361
Drinks of Vojvodina attract the attention of many tourists	4	4	0,96143
Food events of Vojvodina attract large numbers of tourists.	3	4	0,02081*
Drinks events of Vojvodina attract large numbers of tourists	3	3	0,38408
Vojvodina restaurants offer a sufficient number of local dishes that are attractive to tourists.	3	3	0,33591
Vojvodina restaurants offer a sufficient number of local drinks that are attractive to tourists.	3	3	0,63558

\*  $p < 0,05$

## CONCLUSION

Based on overview of the international literature on the development of culinary tourism in the world and the survey conducted among employees in the tourism and hospitality industry in Vojvodina with the use of Man - Whitney test we came to the conclusion that there are no significant differences in the views of employees of state or provincial institutions and tourist organizations on the potentials for development of culinary tourism in the region. Differences of opinion emerged among employees in institutions for the education of young people in the tourism and hospitality industry in relation to employees of other listed positions, which partly confirmed the assumption that the position of employees in the tourism and hospitality industry affects the forming of view on the potentials of Vojvodina for attracting tourists who are motivated by food and drink, which indicated that the employees believe that the region has the potential for the development of selective form of tourism.

### *Acknowledgement*

*The paper is part of project III-46009 and III-46005 financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of Republic of Serbia, which we thank.*

## LITERATURE

- Boniface, P. (2003), *Tasting Tourism: Travelling for Food and Drink*, Ashgate, Aldershot.
- Cohen, E., Avieli, N. (2004), Food in tourism. Attraction and impediment. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(4), pp. 755- 778.
- Hall, C.M., Mitchell, R. (2000), We are what we eat. *Food, Tourism and Globalization. Tourism, Culture and Communication*, 2(1), pp. 29-37.
- Hall, C.M., Mitchell, R. (2002), The changing nature of the relationship between cuisine and tourism in Australia and New Zealand: from fusion cuisine to food networks. U knjizi: A.M. Hjalager and G. Richards (Eds.), *Tourism and Gastronomy* (pp. 188-206). London: Routledge.
- Hall, C.M., Mitchell, R. (2006), *Gastronomy, food and wine tourism*. U knjizi Buhalis Dimitrios, Costa Carlos, *Tourism Business Frontiers - Consumers, products and industry*. Elsevier Ltd, Oxford.
- Hall, C.M., Sharples, L., Mitchell, R., Macionis, N., Cambourne, B. (2003), *Food tourism around the world: Development, management and markets*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Hjalager, A.-M., Richards, G. (2002), *Tourism and Gastronomy*, Routledge, London.
- Iakovou, E., Vlachos, D., Aidonis, D. (2009), A strategic methodological framework for the development of gastronomic tourism: a Greek region's experience. *International Journal of Innovation and Regional Development*, 1(3), pp. 301-318.

- Ignatov, E., Smith, S. (2006), Segmenting Canadian culinary tourists. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 9(3), pp. 235–255.
- Kalenjuk, B., Đerčan, B., Tešanović, D. (2012b): Gastronomski turizam kao faktor regionalnog razvoja. *Ekonomika*, 3/2012, 136-146.
- Kalenjuk, B., Tešanović, D., Rudić, LJ., Korbatfinski, M., Gagić, S., Vuksanović, N. (2012a): Gastronomski potencijali severne Bačke u funkciji gastronomskog turizma. *Zbornik radova Departmana za geografiju, turizam i hotelijerstvo*, 41, PMF, Novi Sad, 337-349.
- Kalenjuk, B., Tešanović, D., Škrinjar, M., Vuksanović, N. (2011b): Gastronomski potencijali Vojvodine u funkciji razvoja turizma. *Zbornik radova Departmana za geografiju, turizam i hotelijerstvo*, 40, PMF, Novi Sad, 180 – 187.
- Pivac, T., Romelić, J., Košić, K. (2009), Ocena potencijala za razvoj vinskog turizma u Vojvodini. *Zbornik radova - Geografski fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu*, 57, str. 215-228.
- Santich, B. (2004), The study of gastronomy and its relevance to hospitality education and training. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 23, pp. 15-24.
- Tešanović D., Koprivica M. (2007), Influence of quality definition of regional gastronomic products on formation of touristic offer of Serbia. *International Participation Conference, Recognisable national gastronomy-tourist potential*, Bled, Slovenia, pp. 217-223.
- Tešanović, D., Vuksanović, N., Kalenjuk, B., Vukić, M., Gagić, S. (2013): Danube tourist ships as an opportunity for export of agricultural and food products, *Economics of Agriculture*, Belgrade, Year 60, No. 1 (1-216), pp. 179-194.
- Wolf, E. (2006), *Culinary Tourism: The Hidden Harvest*, Kendall/Hunt Publishing, Dubuque.