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**Undergraduate thesis / Završni rad**

**2018**

*Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj:* **RIT Croatia / RIT Croatia**

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# **Agro-tourism in Konavle**

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Dubrovnik, May 2018

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to define if there is a need and the possibility of sustainable growth for agro-tourism in Konavle region. The aim of the paper is to find out what local people and entrepreneurs in Konavle think about this topic, and see if this idea is interesting and possible, and what are the possibilities and challenges of such a growth. The secondary research has shown many similar cases in European countries close to Croatia who are already successful in this area. The collection of the data was conducted by a questionnaire which was distributed to Konavle residents and entrepreneurs. The final results show the importance of improving agro-tourism in the Konavle region, and define Konavle as a potential development destination for this type of tourism.

**Keywords:** agro-tourism, Konavle, development agro-tourism

## **Introduction**

Agro-tourism is an agricultural type of tourism. Visitors have the opportunity to see how things work within the production and can also participate in rural tourism. Agro-tourism has become a favorite destination for people from urban areas because they want peace and quiet. People who live all their lives in loud cities and always in a rush, need a calm rhythm of life and this is why this type of tourism is becoming more and more popular in the world. There are different attractions that make this tourism very interesting to tourists: people can see where food is made, excursions are organized to visit attractive fields and mountains, tourists can enjoy watching the production of certain foods and drinks (olives, olive oil, wine, etc.) (“The world of agritourism” 2016).

Rural environments within agro-tourism offer high value elements for organizing a variety of activities required by the need for active and quality holidays. This tourism movement raises rural environments and restores the accompanying economic activities typical of the village and the need for a new consumer. The statistics confirm the tendency of the urban population to stay in rural environments, attracted by their beautiful natural landscapes, traditions and cultural contents. It is well known that most of the city's population come from the village and this is an evident reaction to urban alienation and the desire to return to nature and life in the fields. Attractiveness in rural environments is especially drawn to family farms in special natural environments where fruit, vegetables, wine, brandy, culinary and other customs can be offered. Also, the development of rural tourism encourages investment in improving the quality of housing in family farms and agricultural production. In this way, agro-tourism supplements the basic activity of family farms, which furthermore increases their economic activity and helps them perform better and more successfully. (Demonja - Ružić, 2010).

According to another author, agro-tourism is a collective name for various activities and forms of tourism that occur outside cities and areas where mass tourism has developed. It is

conditioned by tourist attractions located in rural areas. The importance of rural tourism is reflected above all in the very important interaction of agricultural production, traditional products, presentation of tradition, traditional gastronomy and tourism services, and the use of already existing resources. (Demonja – Ružić, 2010)

Main activities in agro-tourism are catering (food preparation and provision of food services, preparation and serving of drinks and provision of accommodation services) and tourism activities (provision of tourism services). According to the same source, special forms of agro-tourism are divided into: tourism on peasant farms, hunting, fishing, recreation, sport and recreation, health, cultural, gastronomic, ecotourism, adventure, religious, tourism protected areas of nature, nostalgic and other forms of agro-tourism. (Demonja - Ružić, 2010).

When we look at agro-tourism as a whole, we cannot look at one's earnings at the final level. It is necessary to consider how much the owner can save during the work itself, and during the visits of the guests. In order to define a potential source of income in this type of tourism, it is necessary to explore the nearby regions and find what's missing. It also seems to be necessary to involve guests in all the work the household has, because in this way that entrepreneur will need fewer employees, and guests in turn will have the opportunity learn a lot. Many different events can also be organized to attract guests. Holiday cottages made for seclusion are ideal for tourists who want their peace, and sometimes it is enough for guests to just enjoy the silence. Therefore, many owners within the agro-tourism sector have real homes away from the farm, in the woods. Bed and breakfasts offers are very profitable; the owner spends little on it, and the guests are willing to pay very well for it. (Editors, 2016)

## **History of agro-tourism**

Agro-tourism has been around the world for the last 1000 years. It cannot be stated that it was the agro-tourism that exists today, since it was much less developed before, but it is clear that in certain forms this type of tourism already existed. It is clear that due to many reasons, it was impossible for agro-tourism to succeed in the past. Even though there was much more domestic production, still people who lived in the city could not have animals, and they always wanted to go to the rural area and enjoy it. Many people claim that agro-tourism emerged only in the 18th century, with the migration of population into cities in search for jobs and better living conditions. On the other hand, when town people would want to go on vacation, they would return to the village and enjoy the peace.

It cannot be said exactly where agro-tourism appeared first. As cities developed, many villages have become places where certain types of agro-tourism could be noticed. The development of cars in the 1920s also contributed to the development of rural tourism. People became more connected and it became easier for them to travel at a smaller cost, leaving space to have fun. According to the research, agro-tourism has only begun to develop into true tourism after the 1970s. Guests had many opportunities for fun, horseback riding, sightseeing of many animals, and holiday houses. It is clear that year after year, rural tourism is developing more and more, thus becoming more evident in the world and making more influence on the overall tourist scene (“The world of agritourism.”, 2016)

# **Agro-tourism in the World**

## **Europe**

In Europe, the concept of agro-tourism or rural tourism has been developing since the early 1990s. The Chianti Region of Tuscany is the first region that started to develop agro-tourism. In agro-tourism it is also possible to offer accommodation to guests, but typically this will require a reservation of at least three nights. It is also true that a guest in one day cannot see anything, cannot experience that lifestyle. (“Agritourism: Life on the Farm”)

Nowadays there are many different regions that base their tourist offer on agro-tourism. According to the research, Italian region Tuscany is not only the most developed region in Italy, but is also famous for agro-tourism. Agro-tourism in Tuscany offers organic food cultivation, overnight stay for guests, preparation and wine tasting. It can be said that Tuscany is one of the most attractive rural areas in Italy. Another region also famous for agro-tourism is the region of Umbria, in Italy. Umbria is the second most developed province in Italy, in regards to rural tourism.

Apart from Italy, the south of France is the most developed region of rural tourism in France, while New south Wales is the most developed in Australia. Catalonia is the most developed region for rural tourism and agro-tourism in Spain. South West England is a very peaceful and developed rural environment as well, while Wales is considered to be a rural part of the UK. The Algarve is the most developed part of Portugal for the same thing. Each region is special for its special offers. In some of them fisheries have been developed, while in others animal hunting is much more developed. But each of these areas is an excellent choice for vacation and enjoyment in nature, as well as preparing various products. (“World's Best Agritourism Farm Stays, Dude Ranches & Vineyard Hotels”)

Austria is probably the most well-known example of using rural tourism as a "tool" in the function of rural development. When Austrian mountain (alpine) agricultural production has lost competitiveness, the population has begun to leave that area that has been significantly lagging behind in economic development. In response to this situation within the national strategy for the development of depopulation areas, the rural area of the Alps begins to be revitalized by the development of non-farms activities in the rural area. Austria has become one of the leading European countries in agro-tourism with a long tradition and with important experiences, especially for the conservation of farms in mountainous areas. The beginning of a policy that will enable such development of agro tourism is the "eco-social model" introduced by the Austrian Ministry of Agriculture in 1988. Farm tourism has a share of 1/6 in total holidays in Austria. Agro-touristic services are provided by up to 15,500 farms. Although individual farmers have individual offers and individual rules, they all try to apply some basic rules that association Farm Holidays determined, such as: authenticity, quality at decent prices, variety and tradition, awareness of the environment. In addition to the individual offers of individual farms, the association has a range of thematic routes and are currently the following: bio & health; Farm Holidays with Babies and Children; Farm Holidays for People with Personal Needs; Wine Farm Holidays; Farm Holidays with horses.

In Italy, organized agro-tourism development began in the 70s of the twentieth century, and in 1981 the Law on Agro-tourism was adopted. Italy is the only country in the European Union that has a special law for agro-tourism, and the rest of the country has this form of tourism included in the general provisions. Agro-tourism is the fastest growing form of tourism in Italy where there were over 135,000 tourist beds at the turn of the century, with 6 million visitors coming, of which 25% of foreign guests. This type of tourism was most developed in central Italy, in the regions of Tuscany and Umbria. According to Grgić at all, it is estimated that in 2000 there were 9,314 agro-touristic households registered in Italy, mostly in Tuscany



and Bolzano. Tuscany is the leading region in Italy with 32% of all rural tourism units, and also the first Italian region to recognize the importance of integrated rural development, and since 1985 it has adopted the first regional law on agro-touristic activity aimed at developing a more complete tourism offer and prevent depopulation of the area. Factors of the success of agro-tourism in Italy are attractive and conserved areas, good traffic accessibility to farms and farm buildings that are no longer used by farmers and can be used to accommodate tourists, a large number of regional agricultural and food products and traditional dishes as well as offers including accommodation at sea, various thematic routes, visits to cultural heritage, archaeological sites and art events (Grgić, Zrajić, Gudelj-Velage, 2015)

While by 1970 there was no organized agro-tourism in Greece, it has gained importance in 1980s because of the policy setting that focused on the development of rural areas. Agro-tourism was also used as a significant means of social promotion of the female part of the rural population. The concept of rural tourism in Greece is based on the offer of rural lifestyle and rural landscape. (Grgić, Zrajić, Gudelj-Velage, 2015)

## **Croatia**

In Croatia, the first tourist family farms were registered in 1998, and it was 32 of them (Grgić, 2015). According to the same author, relatively accurate data at the national, county and local levels exist only for agro-tourism related to the number of peasant households or family farms where the hosts offer services in accordance with the law about catering business. In the period from 2000 to 2005 registered units have more than doubled so that in 2000 registered 151 agro-tourism economy, and in 2007 352 agro-touristic economies. However, in 2013 only 447 registered rural households were very unevenly distributed by counties. The only specialized organization dealing with agro-tourism is the Rural Tourism Association of the

Croatian Chamber of Commerce, established in May 2008, while the Community of Tourism Village Farms was established in 1995. (Grgić, Zrajić, Gudelj-Velage, 2015)

Croatia is a country of rich and high-quality natural resources: land of good fertility, climate benefits and abundance of water potentials. The importance of agriculture stems from its traditional role of securing the food needs of the population, as well as the need to preserve rural space, ecological balance and maintain traditional values. The main advantages of Croatian agriculture are three different geographic and climatic units: the flatland area in the north with continental climate, the coastal area in the South with the Mediterranean climate and the mountain area in the central part of Croatia. Various types of climate, relief and soil make it possible to produce a wide assortment of agricultural products ranging from agricultural and industrial crops to vineyards, continental and Mediterranean fruits and vegetables. The low level of environmental pollution also allows the development of ecological production. Agriculture is complemented by a diverse and developed processing and food industry, and agriculture is complemented by tourism, yet another significant economic branch. (Demonja - Ružić, 2010)

In Croatia, the rural area occupies 91.6% of the total area, which has great potential for the development of agro-tourism (Demonja – Ružić, 2010). Agro-tourism in Croatia has been very developed in the past 10 years, although it is believed that it has not reached its peak yet. While there are quite large numbers of agro-tourism in Croatia, none of them seem to be outstanding. In Croatia's agro-tourism, guests and tourists are attracted through some organized events that are connected with the agricultural production and when guests come they generally feel welcome and love the idea of being involved. It is necessary to mention that there are, however, different types of guests and some do not want to have productive vacations but just want to have silence and enjoy nature (Kovačević, 2017). According to the Spatial Planning Strategy of the Republic of Croatia, the rural area is considered to be the entire area outside the

cities, where small rural communities are spread and are closely related to life and work in a predominantly natural environment. On the other hand, in the Encyclopedia of Tourism it is stated that the rural area is a basic resource for the development of rural tourism and that this type of tourism relies on the need of city residents for peace and space and for sports outdoor recreation. Rural tourism involves visiting national parks and parks of nature and other heritage of the rural area, taking panoramic drives, enjoying in rural landscape and staying at tourist farms. (Demonja - Ružić, 2010)

It seems that there is not too much variety in agro-tourism in Croatia. Visitors who come to visit a place that offers this type of tourism, want to enjoy in peace. All agro-tourism areas are located outside of urban centers and are thus very silent places and all agro-tourism offerings are very similar: olives, wine, cattle's and calves, horse and pony, accommodations and similar activities. Offers and activities in agro-tourism are divided into areas, which means that in a given area various agro-tourism entities have different offerings. Tourists in one area can have a variety of activities and enjoy their holiday.

## **Dubrovnik**

### **Pelješac**

In Dubrovnik - Neretva County there are two regions best known for agro-tourism, Pelješac and Konavle. Pelješac is a peninsula in the south of Croatia and it is the most famous place in Croatia for wine production, but there are also many other tourist attractions on Pelješac. The production of wine on Pelješac is famous all over the world, so it is not surprising that there are 49 wineries and wine bars. All winemakers on the Pelješac peninsula can be proud of their excellent wines. Many of them, offer tourists the opportunity to produce wine with them, while some of them give tourists the chance to only wine taste. Sea currents allow shellfish cultivation and therefore the best-known and best shells can be had at restaurants in Pelješac.

Shelling is a very difficult and demanding job, and there are only 3 breeding places in Pelješac. Restaurants and rural households also sell the shells of these growers, along with a varied fish and meat menu. Pelješac has only a few households that deal with the production of domestic products (cheese, oil, wine, brandy, vegetables and many others, while there are two farms that breed cattle and offer this as a tourist attraction. Apart from these offers, there are other tourist sites that are attractive to potential guests and tourists (salt pans, the Ston walls and many other historical sights). (“Welcome to rural area of Dubrovnik-Neretva county”)

### **Konavle**

Tourism in Konavle is being developed in three phases. The first phase: Before the Homeland War. There were 3,000 beds in hotels and about 1,150 beds in private accommodation, 900 places in auto-camps. The company "Hotel Cavtat" was the leading hotel

company, and it also employed a large number of population. The second phase: During the Homeland War. It was a time of stagnation, from 1991 to 1993, with no tourist arrivals and income from tourism. Most of the buildings and cultural treasures have been destroyed, but in 1993 flights from the Čilipi Airport were introduced. The people of Konavle went to reconstruct their grandparents' homes and renovate the hotels. The third phase: After the Homeland War. Only in 2003 starts the true growth of tourism; until then all hotels have been renovated except hotel Macedonia, private accommodation has been improved, restored rural households, folklore performances continued in Čilipi. For the purpose of tourism, a new offer is created with an emphasis on the autochthonous area, and old mills, watermills, wine cellars, taverns are being renovated. Increasing accommodation capacities, new offer of tourist excursions, which contributes to better visibility and extension of the tourist season. (Pavlic - Peručić - Portolan - Bradvica - Butorac - Hajdić - Lovrić - Markota - Mladošević - Sršen - Šešel, 2011).

The Association of Agro-tourism Konavle was founded in the summer of 2010 on the basis of the previous long-term cooperation of Konavle entrepreneurs in rural tourism and today it brings together more than 100 members representing more than 60 business entities and through their work encourages the development of rural tourism in Konavle. All activities, based on previous good practice and cooperation, are carried out by the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, the Croatian Tourist Board, the Association of Croatian Travel Agencies, the Environmental Protection Fund and Energy Efficiency, Dubrovnik-Neretva County, the City of Dubrovnik, the HTZ system, the Zagreb Airport, the Dubrovnik Airport, the Regional Development Agency DUNEA, UNDP and other relevant institutions in the Republic of Croatia. (AGROTOURISM KONAVLE, from a personal interview with Jelena Gale).

The association is led by an executive committee of five members who elect the president. The development and promotion of agro-tourism in Konavle encourages a number of positive social processes: in economic terms, it promotes sustainable development, development through self-employment and employment of whole families, agro-tourism in a family business, restoration of traditional indigenous facilities for the purpose of rural tourism development and the formation of traditional kiosks, the environment and its valorization for tourist purposes, the preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of Konavle. The group of people gathered in the Association of Agro-tourism Konavle has already been emphasized with a series of activities and activities on the development of rural tourism, organizing the traditional manifestation of "Mirisi Božića", organizing educational trips for (potential) entrepreneurs in agro-tourism, promotion and a whole series of other activities. (AGROTOURISM KONAVLE, from a personal interview with Jelena Gale).

In 2011, they organized the four-day educational trip for the members of the association who visited the Hungarian checkpoints rural tourism, then examples of two Croatian counties (Virovitica - Podravina and Brodsko – Posavska country), and the central part of Bosnia and Herzegovina. All the visits, except for theoretical and practical part of the education, have been used for the presentation of agro-tourism in Konavle. The educational tour of the regions with developed rural tourism continues the educational trips of active and potential concavity entrepreneurs in rural tourism. They began his visit to Istria and continued his visits to the Italian region of Tuscany, then to Baranja. These educational excursions are necessary to understand the experience of other regions and individuals in the development of agro-tourism and to achieve mutually beneficial cooperation in the long term. In the sense of the organization, these trips are valuable experiences for the organizers of the Agro-tourism Konavle Association, as well as experiences in organizing the promotional manifestation of the Konavle rural tourism "Mirisi Božića". Also, such educational tours take advantage of the opportunity

to present the agro-tourism offerings in Konavle. For example, in Austria, a Konavle evening was organized, where almost all Konavle products were presented to visitors, as well as entrepreneurs from Konavle agro-tourism dressed in traditional Konavle costumes. (AGROTOURISM KONAVLE, from a personal interview with Jelena Gale)

“Mirisi Božića” is a multi-day promotional event hosted by Konavle rural tourism, which is still in its infancy, and in 2008 and 2009 received the support of relevant Croatian institutions such as the Ministry of Tourism, County of Dubrovnik-Neretva, Croatian Chamber of Economy, Croatian Chamber of Crafts and others. Objectives of the event “Mirisi Božića” in Konavle are: to promote Konavle, in the media sense, as an agro-touristic destination, to include all the factors of agro-tourism Konavle (tourist entrepreneurs, oilseeds, winemakers, medals, souvenir producers and traditional products, etc.) in a unified manifestation; engage in agro-tourism, connect producers, consumers and agencies, position the fragrances of Christmas as a traditional manifestation and a tourist product. In February 2011, “Mirisi Božića 2010” fragrances were rewarded with the Golden Charter of the Sunflower Rural Tourism of Croatia and were declared the best manifestation of agro-tourism in Croatia for 2010. (AGROTOURISM KONAVLE, from a personal interview with Jelena Gale)

The structure of the offer of rural tourism Konavle includes tourist enterprises, agricultural producers, souvenir producers, cultural societies, traditional producers and traditional traders, in accordance with their marketing identity of agro-tourism. The structure of the members of the Association of Agro-tourism Konavle is as follows: 20 wine makers, 24 rural houses and rural accommodation owners, 14 rural households - taverns, 11 olive trees, 10 traditional convoy souvenirs, 11 craftsmen of traditional trades (blacksmith, sculptor, painters, etc.), 6 entrepreneurs in adventure tourism, 3 honey producers, 3 cheese producers and one dry fig producer. Other members of the association are potential entrepreneurs or volunteers who

want to contribute to the development of the Konavle agro-tourism project. (AGROTOURISM KONAVLE, from a personal interview with Jelena Gale)

The goal and mission of the association of agro-tourism, among other things, is to encourage property owners in the complex to be involved in projects of agro-tourism, as well as to develop awareness among the local population about the overall values and the importance of natural resources and preserved environment for this type of economic activity and to preserve the biodiversity of Konavle. (AGROTOURISM KONAVLE, from a personal interview with Jelena Gale)



## **Methodology**

In order to gain a deeper understanding of entrepreneurial and residents' opinion about the development of agro-tourism in Konavle, this paper used a combination of relational research, qualitative research, and quantitative research. According to Mozer, "The survey is a technical process for collecting factual material by combining a statistical sampling method with a sample of interviews or questionnaires" (Mozer, 1962: 5). The data in this research was examined through observations numerical representations within the Excel spreadsheet. Fifty entrepreneurs in agro-tourism in Konavle and fifty residents of Konavle were surveyed and questioned through this surveys. The survey consists of sixteen questions for people who live in Konavle, and fourteen for entrepreneurs who already deal with agro-tourism in Konavle. The survey included 29 (29%) women, of which 12 (24%) of women entrepreneurs in agro-tourism, and 71 (71%) men of whom 38 (76%) of men who are entrepreneurs in agro-tourism. Most of my respondents are between 20-40 years of age, and some are above 40 years of age. In the "20-40" group I have 14 (14%) of women, of which 3 (21.43%) of women are already engaged in agro-tourism, and 19 (19%) of men, of whom 9 (47.37%) are engaged in agro-tourism. In the "above 40" group I have 29 (29%) of women, of whom 9 (31.03%) deal with agro-tourism, and 38 (38%) of men, of whom 30 (78.95%) deal with agro-tourism. The study was designed with the aim of knowing what the local inhabitants and what local entrepreneurs in Konavle think about the development of agro-tourism, and its purpose is to define what are the possible advantages and disadvantages of the future development of agro-tourism in Konavle.

## Results

The questions asked had their own logical sequence from the well-thought-out thinking about sustainable development and rural tourism, to concrete questions regarding the interest and the necessary information. As it was already stated in the previous research “Public relations play an important role in research, which is a prerequisite for further activities. Based on the research, it is possible to meet others as they themselves perceive that their own organization looks at the eyes of others. Because of the fact that starting from the standpoint of others, a thoughtful and creative public relations program is the most effective way to reduce any negative public reaction to your organization” (Skoko, 2009: 11).

The following is the opinion of residents agro-tourism Konavle. I am interested in how many inhabitants of Konavle are interested in agro-tourism, the result is less negative ( $M = 2.88$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ) Konavle residents take care of the ravines due to tourists coming to their place ( $M = 3.32$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ). Residents believed that the development of positive development of Konavle ( $M = 4.1$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ ) is maintained, and they also consider agro-tourism a good path for sustainable development ( $M = 4.3$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ). Some residents are concerned about the unsustainable development ( $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ), and are neutral to positive opinion to oppose mega projects developing entrepreneurial minds in average ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ). I was curious what the people think agro-tourism would contribute to the Konavle. The largest number of residents, 42, believed that the self-employment of the local population in the first place, then 33 residents believed that with the help of agro-tourism will preserve the natural beauty of Konavle. Cultural development in Konavle is centered on the opinion of the inhabitants, 29, while 28 believed that agro-tourism will help preserve the environment. Only 23 residents believed that agro-tourism will help maintain the autochthonous tradition. Konavle should be a self-contained destination considered to be 24, while 26 consider it not to be an independent destination. Also, 24 people consider themselves to be able to contribute to agro-tourism, and

26 think the opposite. A very small number of residents are familiar with the activities that are held in the concavities related to agro-tourism, 16 residents, while the other 34 residents do not know about the activities of agro-tourism. Residents are committed to participating in the agro-tourism organization "Miris Božića" as well as those who are not attracted to 25 people. Agro-tourism development is less negative ( $M = 2.9$ ,  $SD = 0.81$ ). Given that residents had the opportunity to write what they consider to be the Konavle's most desirable destination. There are many different answers, residents believe that much better farming in Konavle is being made, the possibility of using the convoy field for this purpose. Better promotion at the local and European level is needed. More activities, throughout the year. Education of entrepreneurs in agro-tourism, also residents think it is very important. Children's playgrounds and cycling trails are required for tourists who like to stay outdoors.

The following survey was conducted between entrepreneurs in agro-tourism in Konavle. Entrepreneurs have a slightly different opinion of the residents, and they believe that the sustainable development of the sea is positive for the development of Konavle ( $M = 4.66$ ,  $SD = 0.55$ ). Also, entrepreneurs think they care about their bounds more positive ( $M = 4.68$ ,  $SD = 0.55$ ). Entrepreneurs are disturbed by people who do not rely on sustainable development ( $M = 3.94$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ). Mega projects are supreme for the development of entrepreneurship ( $M = 3.94$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ). Also, I like entrepreneurs and residents, 41 of them are considered to be in the barn Konavle employment assistance people. Agro-tourism is good for preserving the environment of their minds 40, while 39 believe that agro-tourism is good in the development of culture. Agro-tourism is good for the preservation of natural beauty is believed by 38 of them, and 31 of them considered that assistance agro-tourism will help keep indigenous traditions. Konavle should be independent destination was considered by 22 entrepreneurs, while 28 of them considered that the development of Konavle should be in community with Dubrovnik. Many entrepreneurs think that they can contribute personally to development of

agro-tourism, 42 entrepreneurs, while only 8 of them consider that they cannot. All entrepreneurs, 50, are familiar with agro-tourism activities. Almost all entrepreneurs in agro-tourism will participate in all activities that are connected with agro-tourism, 46, while only 4 entrepreneurs will participate in the activities of agro-tourism. Also, entrepreneurs are neutral in the opinion of development of agro-tourism ( $M = 3$ ,  $SD = 0.79$ ). Entrepreneurs have a lot of similar comments as entrepreneurs on how Konavle can be a recognizable destination. Entrepreneurs commented that better advertising, more activities in agro-tourism, and attended individuals in these events. Product production is one of the most interesting comments, as well as the need for a better organization within agro-tourism.

Overall, the respondents in the survey believe that sustainable development is a more positive way of development for Konavle region, ( $M = 4.38$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ ) and that agro-tourism is a good way of that sustainable development ( $M = 4.48$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ). Respondents seem to be rather alarmed by people who do not care about sustainable development ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ). Respondents believe that mega projects are counter-productive to entrepreneurship ( $M = 3.79$ ,  $SD = 0.9$ ). A total of 83 respondents believe that agro-tourism will assist in recruiting people in Konavle. 71 respondents stated that agro-tourism affects the preservation of natural beauty of the place while a total of 68 respondents believe that agro-tourism is helping in the development of culture in Konavle and environmental protection. Agro-tourism helps to maintain the autochthonous tradition is considered by 54 respondents. Konavle should be promoted as a stand-alone destination is considered by a total of 46 respondents, while 54 believe that they should be promoted as part of Dubrovnik's tourist destination. The 66 respondents believe that they can contribute personally to the development of the convoy as a tourist destination, while 34 consider that they cannot. A total of 66 respondents are familiar with all agro-tourism activities, while 34 are not familiar with agro-tourism activities. Respondents said they would actively participate in the organization of agro-tourism activities,

71, while 29 said they would not actively participate. The development of agro-tourism in all respondents is less negative ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 0.8$ ).

## Discussion

According to the data collected, it is very interesting that such a small number of people ( $M = 2.88$ ) think about getting involved and starting to deal with agro-tourism, since Konavle as a destination is highly developed and any kind of agro-tourism could potentially be successful. Although residents ( $M = 4.3$ ) positively think that agro-tourism is a good way to maintain sustainable development, it is very strange and worrying that they seem to be nevertheless reluctant to give up on their own pursuit of agro-tourism.

Agro-tourism can clearly contribute to Konavle as a tourist destination since Konavle field can be used for agriculture, introduction of some interesting activities, and it can help Konavle region not to be destroyed and continue to grow. An interesting finding was also the fact that both local people and local entrepreneurs already engaged in agro-tourism stated that mega projects are counter-productive to sustainable development, only slightly above neutral ( $M = 3.79$ ). It is clear that mega projects are surely opposed to sustainable development since creating a golf course in the Konavle field can endanger the natural beauty of Konavle. All Konavle should be treated as a protected landscape. Agro-tourism can help the self-employment of the local population agree 83% of the respondents, and I am very pleased with that percentage, because people realize how much agro-tourism can help. If more agro-tourism are created in Konavle, most population will be employed, and Konavle will be revived.

Another surprising finding was the results on the question whether Konavle should be an independent destination. Even though it is the author's opinion that there are many reasons why Konavle should be an independent destination 54 respondents said that Konavle should not be an independent destination. It is not clear why this number is so high, but it could be because then it would have to compete with the city of Dubrovnik itself, which is not an easy

situation. Still, Dubrovnik Airport is located in Konavle, and this fact only can contribute to the overall development of tourism in Konavle region.

Another question that needs to be answered is how altogether developed agro-tourism in Konavle is. The respondents rated the development with a good rating. Nevertheless, it is clear that the promotion of agro tourism is not at the level it should be. People do not try to participate in all the activities that are already organized in Konavle and they fear that there will be not too many interested tourists and guests to come. They already seem to be negative. Promotion of Konavle as destination clearly needs to be more aggressive and visible: sometimes big and interesting posters will help people to make decisions and participate in certain events. Then there are many other things that could be offered in Konavle: all the land is cultivated in Konavle, and farming is possible. With the cultivation of healthy vegetables and fruit, many people would come to Konavle to buy. This proves that Konavle can be used in agro-tourism in many aspects and most of the time it takes just the willingness of the local people to get involved to introduce changes.

My family for 15 years has a family restaurant in Konavle. After long-standing stores in Cavtat, Plat and Dubrovnik, my father decided to open the restaurant. Although it was risky to open, because of the crowd of well-known restaurants, my family had the courage and after 9 months of preparation opened the restaurant. Our restaurant is now a well-known restaurant throughout the world. The work on this paper has helped me better understand the situation my family's business is in. Since our major business is to offer local food and beverages to our guests, it became obvious that this is not enough. Many of our guests would like to have the opportunity to have some activities to be organized aside from food and beverages. Our offer therefore could be extended to other things, such as bike tours, or animal breeding, since we own a lot of untreated land. In Konavle there is no agro-tourism with that option and this could be potentially interesting to guests. In the future, I am sure that our family restaurant will grow

into something much larger, and thus will become more of an agro-touristic destination than just a restaurant offering local food and products. Although the guest market is changing, in today's world full of people living hectic lives there seems to be a constant need for quiet places, in the countryside, which is why I believe we can find our place and our role in the development of agro-tourism in Konavle as well.



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## MY QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. Gender:

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Other

2. Age:

- a. Under 20
- b. 20 - 40
- c. Over 40

3. Circle the group of people in which you belong to:

- a. Resident of Konavle
- b. Entrepreneur of Agrotourism in Konavle

PLEASE INDICATE HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

1-disagree    2- can disagree to a certain extent    3-neutral    4-positive  
5- absolutely agree

IF YOU ARE AN ENTREPRENEUR IN AGROTOURISM PLEASE FELL FREE TO SKIP 4<sup>th</sup> AND 5<sup>th</sup> QUESTION!

4. I am interested in the agrotourism business.

1      2      3      4      5

5. I am not an entrepreneur in agrotourism, but my garden is arranged for tourists.

1      2      3      4      5

6. Sustainable development is a positive direction for the development of the Konavle region.

1      2      3      4      5

7. Agrotourism is a way of sustainable development in the Konavle. 1 2 3 4 5

8. I am disturbed by the behavior of people who are not concerned with the sustainable development of Konavle. 1 2 3 4 5

9. The idea of megaprojects is contrary to the development of small and medium entrepreneurship in Konavle. 1 2 3 4 5

10. This form of tourism contributes the most (please mark all that apply):

- a. Development of culture in Konavle
- b. Maintaining the autochthonous tradition
- c. To preserve the natural beauty of this region
- d. Conservation of the environment
- e. Improving self-employment of the local population

11. Konavle should be promoted as an independent destination, not as part of a Dubrovnik tourist destination.

- a. YES
- b. NO

12. I think that personally can contribute greatly to the development of Konavle as an independent destination.

- a. YES
- b. NO

13. I am familiar with all activities organized by Agrotourism Konavle.

a. YES

b. NO

14. I will be actively involved in organizing “Mirisi Božića” and invite friends during “Miris Božića” in Konavle,

a. YES

b. NO

15. In your opinion, rate the level of development of the destination of Konavle on a scale 1 to 5 (1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest scale of development):

1

2

3

4

5