

REGIONAL TRADEMARKS AS AN INNOVATIVE TOOL FOR CLLD IN SLOVAKIA

CASE STUDY FINAL REPORT



SLOVAK UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE IN NITRA
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Case Study Final Report

Guided by:

PhD. Barbora Babjakova

PhD. Lucia Palsová

Presented by:

Renatto Cánepa

DooWhee Kim

JungWoo Byun

Carla Baldivieso

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SUMMARY

The Regional Trademarks in Slovakia have constituted in a strategy to direct the rural funds to initiatives that support the improvement of the life conditions in the rural areas. Through the support to local initiatives based in traditional economic activities, as well as to the traditions and patrimony of different geographical areas.

The case study permitted to analyze the development of the Trademarks in three regions of the eastern part of Slovakia. The basis of the study are the visits and interviews to different actors in the focalized regions.

The approach to rural proposals funded by the LEADER program, allows to know the practice of rural development projects with a participative and bottom – up strategies. Also, the field work permitted to do a qualitative analysis of the development of the Regional Trademarks Ponitrie and Kopanice. As well as to do suggestions for the development of the Regional Trademark of the Small Carpathian region.

The report is a qualitative based document, developed with information of secondary sources, field visits and interviews to different actors of the Ponitrie, Kopanice and Small Carpathian Regions. Hence, the report is divided in the following sections:

- A qualitative evaluation of the development of the Regional Trademarks Ponitrie and Kopanice. As well as an analysis of the internal and external conditions that each brand faces.
- A proposal for the reestablishment of the Regional Trademark of the Small Carpathian Region, considering:
 - o Analysis of the territorial potentialities
 - o Analysis of the territorial actors' ad potential holders of the regional brand.
 - o Proposal of criteria to be developed for the selection of the brand holders.
 - o Proposals for the implementation of the regional brand.
 - o Proposals for the marketing strategy of the regional brand.
- Final observations on the analysis of the Regional Trademarks Ponitrie and Kopanice. As well as lessons that could be considered for the development and reestablishment of the brand of the Small Carpathian Region.

1. ANALYSIS OF EXISTING REGIONAL TRADEMARKS PONITRIE AND KOPANICE

Image N° 1: Ponitrie and Kopanice Regional Trademark Logos



Reference: Promotion material of Ponitrie and Kopanice Regional Trademarks

The evaluation of the current situation of the Regional Trademarks is based on observation and secondary data. In both cases the observation was realized on the field visits. As well, the information was obtained in the interviews given by the coordinators of both brands. For the evaluation, the holders of each brand were classified in different categories (tables 1 and 3 vertical organization); and evaluated according to different criteria (tables 1 and 3 horizontal organization). The evaluation criteria per categories of holders, evaluates:

- Product/Service: Considering the procedure, ingredients/inputs used to produce the final good or service.
- Impact to the beneficiary: Considering the benefits that the certification gives to the holders.
- Impact to the region: Considering the contribution of the brand to improve the situation of the region.

The evaluation is elaborated considering the brand objectives, such as the promotion and preservation of traditions, local resources and the relationships generated within the region.

Later, the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis is developed for each Regional Trademark. It is useful to analyze the internal characteristics and potentialities of the brand; as the external conditions that influence the achievement of success for the brands.

Hence, the analysis of both brands allows to analyze the current situation of this approach in the territory. As well as to learn about the lessons of these brands and elaborate proposals for the development of Small Carpathian Regional Trademark (last chapter of the present report).

1.1. Ponitrie Regional Trademark: Current State of the Art

As set in the previous paragraphs, the following table presents the Evaluation Criteria used to analyze the current state of the art of the Ponitrie Regional Trademark. Hence, vertically it presents a classification of holder categories according to the certified products of the region. As well, horizontally presents four different selected criteria to evaluate the holder's categories.

Later, it is presented a brief explanation of each one of the groups of holders according to the evaluation criteria. The same analysis is realized in the next section for the Kopanice Regional Trademark.

TABLE 1: PONITRIE REGIONAL TRADEMARK: CURRENT STATE OF THE ART

		EVALUATION CRITERIA: CURRENT STATE OF THE ART			
REGION	HOLDER CATEGORIES	PROCEDURE	INGREDIENTS/INPUTS	BENEFITS (OF HOLDERS)	CONTRIBUTION TO THE REGION
PONITRIE	Vineyards	-	Local grapes	Opportunity for additional funds. Promotion	Native grapes promotion. Possible process in the long term: increase consumption of products of the region, maintenance (or increase) in local employment, capacity building. Visibility, preserving the tradition
	Non processed food (honey, pumpkin, milk)	-	Local ingredients	Opportunity for additional funds (e.g. technological support). Promotion	Visibility, preserving traditions.
	Processed Food (Bakery, gastronomy, chili)	Traditional recipe (e.g. bakery).	Local ingredients	Opportunity for additional funds, Promotion	Visibility, preserving traditions. Observation: Chili case, Zoo case
	Accommodation (restaurant included)	-	Cultural heritage	Promotion for the hotel. Promotion for others.	Cooperation strategy between certified producers. Visibility, preserving traditions
	Alcoholic beverages (honey wine)	Traditional Recipe	Local ingredients (e.g. honey)	Opportunity for additional funds, Promotion	Visibility, preserving traditions, cooperation with other holders.
	Crafts (handicrafts, gardening)	Traditional	Local inputs (e.g. wood)	Opportunity for additional funds. Other possible processes: effects on increase of the income due to new contracts. Promotion	Visibility, preserving traditions

Source: Own elaboration

1.1.1. Holder Categories Evaluation

Vineyards category: The procedure is not considered as relevant in the certification of the RT. This, because the wine elaboration is done through worldwide procedures. Hence, it is not a relevant procedure or technique the one that is certified for the brand. The local grapes are required for the certification of the products. The Ponitrie RT also promotes a specific variety of wines of the region: the Kadarka - Cetínsky variety. In the long run, the RT could have positive effects in the region. As an example, it could increase the consumption of products of the region, as well as maintain (or increase) the local employment, and support the capacity building. Also, as its objective points, it could increase the visibility of the region and preserve the traditions and uniqueness of the region. However, at the time there are no evaluation studies neither impact analysis studies that show the contributions of the RT Ponitrie to the region.

Non processed food (honey, pumpkin): As the vineyards, the procedure is not considered relevant. The ingredients are mainly local and connected to the agricultural characteristics of the region. The holders of the RT are benefited with the opportunity to get additional funds and promotion of their products. In the same sense than the vineyards category, the RT could help for the visibility of the region and to preserve the traditions.

Processed Food (bakery, gastronomy, chili): For the bakery and gastronomy, the RT certifies traditional recipes of the region. However, also the RT certifies the chili production. This case could be considered inside the products that are certified to support the local producers of the region. Nevertheless, it is not certifying neither the local production neither the local procedure. As in previous cases the RT gives the opportunity for additional funds to the holders, as well as promotion for their products. The possible contributions to the region have been previously described in the other categories.

ILLUSTRATION 1: PONITRIE REGIONAL TRADEMARK: BAKERY



Description: Traditional bakery of the Ponitrie region. Holder Sladké Dobrotý s.r.o., certified by baking some specialties of the region with regional ingredients.

Accommodation (restaurant included): The accommodation is certified considering the cultural heritage on the buildings of the region. As well as the restaurants that offer traditional meals. However, the promotion of a zoo with exotic animals as part of the accommodation services in the Ranč Pod Babicou could be observed. This, considering that the zoo is not promoting directly the identity of the region.

The accommodation services also are platforms were to promote the regional trademark. Hence, it is possible to find synergies between holders that must increase in order to get more success as RT.

ILLUSTRATION 2: PONITRIE REGIONAL TRADEMARK: COOPERATION BETWEEN HOLDERS



Description: Promotion of regional products in the Hradná Stráz Hotel

Alcoholic beverages (honey wine): These kinds of beverages support the local identity by certifying a recipe that is well known not only in the region but in an extended area of Europe. As well, the beverages are prepared with local inputs.

Crafts (handicrafts, gardening): The crafts are certified by the traditional procedures and techniques, as well as for the use of local inputs. In the same sense than other products, the certification provides to the holders the opportunity to get additional funds. At the time that supports the visibility of the region through promoting the identity and hence, the traditions.

Other initiatives that are considered important to certify but are not included in the proposed holder certification, are the agritourism facilities such as holiday farms, as well as breeding animals. Such as the Ponitrie RT holder Erika Mésarošova.

1.1.2. SWOT Analysis of Ponitrie Regional Trademark

The Strengths and Weaknesses present the internal characteristics of the Regional Trademark. Hence, theoretically these are under the influence and/or control of the directives of the RT. However, these internal characteristics are also influenced by the external conditions of the environment. As an example, the “difficulties to do the monitoring and evaluation...” depends also in budgets that depend on external actors. However, the Strengths and Weaknesses identified, are a basis to analyze the current situation of the RT.

As well the Opportunities and Threats that are presented in the following table, represent the external conditions in which the RT Ponitrie develops. The directive body of the RT has to deal and to act within this scenario. Then, it is important to identify the external conditions in order to plan, take advantage of the opportunities, and minimize the risks.

It is important to analyze both - internal and external conditions - in order to establish strategies for the development and achievement of the objectives of the RT Ponitrie.

TABLE 2: SWOT ANALYSIS OF PONITRIE REGIONAL TRADEMARK

STRENGTHS		WEAKNESSES	
Financial Support from Leader and Leader – NSR		Lacking selling points.	
Diversity of products of the region		Difficulties to do the monitoring and evaluation due to lack of economic resources and lack of time (too many responsibilities for the coordinator of the LAG)	
Holders improving their products to follow the quality criteria		Definition of identity (diversity and phenomenon related with the geographical conditions)	
Connections between different producers of the region (local suppliers)		Lack of use of the regional brand in the labels of the product: Control and monitoring of the implementation of the trademark	
Marketing tools (printed material for promotion). It constitutes a motivation for the holders (and potential holders)		Lack of agreements for the use of the regional trademark: Conditions for the use of RT and penalties	
		Incipient initiative: Lack of information, vulnerability	
OPPORTUNITIES		THREATS	
Visitors due to the closeness to the capital city		High competition in the market due to the closeness to the capital (depending on the customer and the product)	
Possibilities of selling the products in the capital		Uncertainty generated by the situation with Nitrava Regional Trademark	
Connections between different producers of the region (local suppliers)		Lack of recognition and consciousness of population to buy the products.	
Reduces the asymmetry of information in the market >> Could increase consumers preference		Opportunistic behavior (one product certified and using those resources for other products produced by the same producer)	
Available funds to apply for the certified producers		Lack of interest of the Ministry of Agriculture and other authorities	
Incipient initiative: novelty		Bureaucracy (two ways: LAG and Ministry, LAG and holders)	

Source: Own elaboration

1.2. Kopanice Regional Trademark: Current State of the Art

Similarly to the Ponitrie RT Evaluation, the Table 3 presents a classification of holder categories considering the products of the Kopanice Region. These are evaluated according to the evaluation criteria. As set previously, the evaluation criteria focus on the product, the holder and the region. Later, the analysis of those three is presented in the Holder Categories Evaluation.

1.2.1. Holder Categories Evaluation

Non processed food (Organic Milk, Honey, orchards of plum): It includes local raw production that is traditional in the region. In the case of the orchards of plum (as for other fruits), it is considered that certifying these fruit varieties could support the local identity. As well, its certification could motivate the actual producers to continue with this activity. Hence, the people that cultivate these traditional raw productions could be also included as potential holders. Still, not all these potential holders comply currently with the holder's criteria.

Processed Food (Sausage, Fried Bacon, Dried Mushroom, Dried Fruit & Nuts & Vege & Med, Cake, jams): It is certified by the existence of traditional techniques, as well as for the local ingredients. Also, to be considered traditional, it must be part of the traditional products of the region and not recently introduced products without a historical background. In this sense, the products that do not have a historical background cannot be considered traditional.

Processing Services (distillation): The distilleries are certified considering the traditional techniques with the use of technological innovations. This is an example of the economic relations of the producers in the region in order to continue with the development of traditional economic activities. Then, the owners of fruit orchards are customers of certified distillation services.

Crafts (handicrafts, smithy, laces, etc.): Kopanice RT certifies crafts considering the traditional skills or techniques. Also, the share of local ingredients in the final product.

Even though some craft products are not certified because the producers do not comply with all the criteria (ingredients are not fully local), these are exposed for selling in the RT commercialization point. This could be a way of encouraging those producers to obtain the certification.

Accommodation: The accommodation certified by the RT promotes the regional identity. It is not necessary to be a building constructed according to traditional techniques. However, it is necessary to create an environment that presents the local traditions. As an example, the Agroprenzi3n Adam presents different pictures related to the identity of the region.

In all cases, the certification provides to the holders the possibility to obtain additional funds. For the region, the RT works as an instrument for the visibility of Kopanice. In that sense, it supports the construction of a regional identity and preserving the traditions.

The RT Kopanice also promotes the systematization of local knowledge as part of its strategy to support the identity of the region. Even though it is not considered as a product with certification, it is considered that supporting the engagement of the research institutions for this is transversal to all product categories. Also, it is important to give promotion to academic efforts that could widen the historical understanding of the identity of the region.

ILLUSTRATION 3: KOPANICE REGIONAL TRADEMARK: RESEARCH AND SYSTEMATIZATION ABOUT REGIONAL TRADITIONS AND HISTORY



Description: Research works that systematize the traditions and contribute to the regional identity of the region are sold in the Kopanice RT promotion and commercialization point.

ILLUSTRATION 4: KOPANICE REGIONAL TRADEMARK: MEDIA ABOUT KOPANICE'S FOLKLORE



Description: Audio visual materials that promote the regional identity of Kopanice are sold in the promotion and commercialization point of the Kopanice Regional Trademark

The promotion of the music and audiovisual materials of the region is also relevant in the RT commercialization point. Even though the different materials that are sold there are not certified, certainly are important in the promotion of the identity of the region.

The coordinator of the RT Kopanice indicated that some of the holders are teaching the traditional craft techniques in public schools or by their own to other people. These kinds of activities are considered important to be promoted by the RT to give continuity to the traditional crafts. Hence, it demonstrates the importance of creating linkages with teaching institutions.

As the Ponitrie RT, the Kopanice RT do not have evaluation studies neither impact analysis studies that show the contributions of the RT to the region and to the holders.

TABLE 3: KOPANICE REGIONAL TRADEMARK: CURRENT STATE OF THE ART

EVALUATION CRITERIA: CURRENT STATE OF THE ART					
REGION	HOLDER CATEGORIES	PROCEDURE	INGREDIENTS/INPUTS	BENEFITS (OF HOLDERS)	CONTRIBUTION TO THE REGION
KOPANICE	Non processed food (Organic Milk, Honey, orchards of plum)	-	Local production	Opportunity for additional funds, Promotion	Visibility, preserving traditions
	Orchard (plum, pear, cherry, etc.) >> <i>importance as potential holder</i>	-	Local variety	Opportunity for additional funds, Promotion	Visibility, preserving traditions (connections with non-processed food sector)
	Processed Food (Sausage, Fried Bacon, Dried Mushroom, Dried Fruit & Nuts & Vege & Med, Cake, jams)	Traditional techniques (Sausage), treatment (Pig), recipe (Cake)	Share (%) of local ingredients.	Opportunity for additional funds, Promotion	Visibility, preserving traditions
	Processing Services (distillation)	Traditional technologies (innovation)	-	Opportunity for additional funds, Promotion	Cooperation strategy between certified producers. Preserving traditions
	Crafts (handicrafts, smithy, laces, etc.)	Traditional skills or Techniques	Share (%) of local ingredients.	Opportunity for additional funds, Promotion	Visibility, preserving traditions
	Accommodation	Connection to the tradition	-	Opportunity for additional funds, Promotion	Cooperation strategy between certified producers. Visibility, preserving traditions.

Source: Own elaboration

1.2.2. SWOT Analysis of Kopanice Regional Trademark

The SWOT Analysis could be used for the Kopanice RT as an instrument to analyze the internal and external condition that faces the RT. Hence, to establish a plan to take advantage of the opportunities, mitigate the risks due to the threats, and improve the weaknesses considered the strengths.

Then, the Strengths and Weaknesses are the internal conditions of the RT Kopanice. One of the weaknesses that is shared with the RT Ponitrie, is the weak control of the labelling. These, in both cases, is linked with the difficulties to follow up the development of the RT. As well as in Ponitrie, this is an example of how the weaknesses of the RT are also directly connected to the external actors. In the sense that the difficulties for following up the RT, are related to budgets assignation and then to external actors.

The external condition in which the RT develops are presented in the Opportunities and Threats Both reflect the characteristics of the environment in which the RT develops. However, these are not directly influenced by the RT directive body. Hence, the challenge is to take advantage of the possible opportunities and to reduce the risks due to the threats.

TABLE 4: SWOT ANALYSIS OF KOPANICE REGIONAL TRADEMARK

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Strong identity given by the characteristics of the region (e.g. products, geographical conditions, etc.	Weak control of the labelling
Recognition of local supply	Difficulties to do the monitoring and evaluation due to lack of economic resources and lack of time (too much responsibilities) of the coordinator of the LAG
Bottom-up approach	Incipient initiative: Lack of information, vulnerability
Existence of selling points. Location of the main selling point	
Financial Support from Leader and Leader – NSR	
Participation in various cultural events (e.g. Christmas markets)	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Visitors due to the closeness to the capital city	High competition in the market due to the closeness to the capital (depending on the customer and the product)
Possibilities of selling the products in the capital	Lack of interest of the Ministry of Agriculture and other authorities
Connections between different producers of the region (local suppliers)	Bureaucracy (two ways: LAG and Ministry, LAG and holders)
Reduces the asymmetry of information in the market >> Could increase consumers preference	
Available funds to apply for the certified producers	
Incipient initiative: novelty	
Capacity building (Schools and teaching of farming, ceramics, etc.) could assure continuity of traditions in the region	

Source: Own elaboration

2. PROPOSAL OF REGIONAL TRADEMARK FOR THE SMALL CARPATHIAN REGION

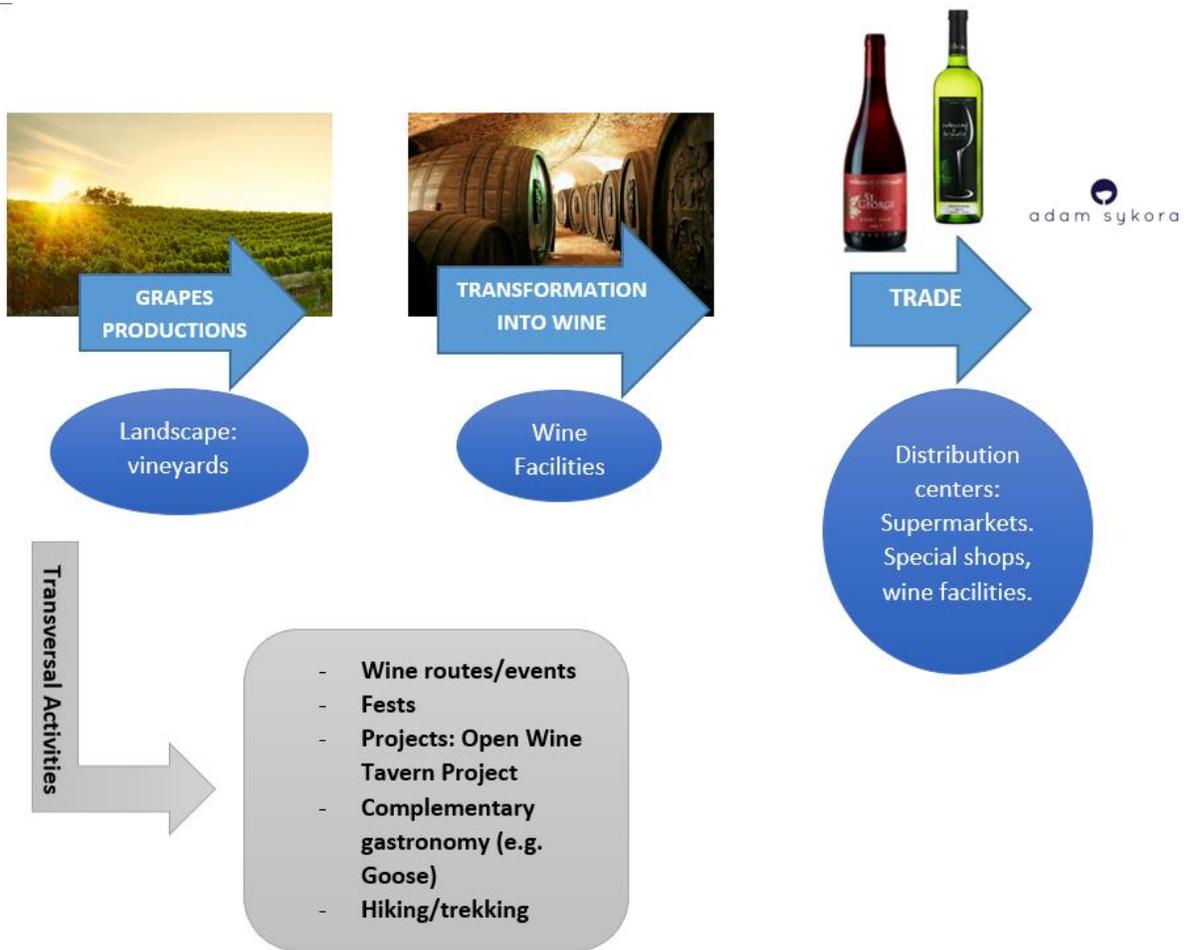
2.1. Definition of Regional Identity

The identity of this region is composed by their inherent production image which is the vineyards and winery industry. This conclusion is reached collecting the different secondary (sites, flyers, articles) and primary data (meetings and direct observation on field visits) during the case study. This industry is described through the production chain and its different stages as:

1. The Small Carpathian vineyards (grapes production) are the largest of the six wine regions in Slovakia and have grown on the sunny slopes for more than two thousand years. These vineyards are in a landscape covered by forests and hills (elevation over 700m in height) starting from Bratislava to Nové Mesto nad Váhom. This territory offers recreational opportunities such as mysterious ruins, cycling, trekking or hiking in which is possible to appreciate as well Red, Roe and Fallow deer, wild boar and 11 species of birds (e.g. Saker falcon and Eagle Owl). Moreover, from May to October is the period for visiting the Small Carpathian wine growers and participate in wine tasting events such as the Open Wine Tavern project. Since 1976, the entirety of the Small Carpathians has been declared a Protected Landscape Area. On the other hand, 2. As a following stage in the value chain, we can find the transformation of grapes into wine where it is possible to appreciate different enterprises which own vineyards and facilities to control the production operations and reach the quality standards required for purpose this product into the market. 3. Finally, the stage of commercialization covers different distribution centers such as supermarkets, special shops or the own shop inside the facilities of these mentioned enterprises.

Once having recognized these stages, it is important to appreciate different transversal economic alternatives supporting this production chain such as the ones already mentioned tasting events (wine routes, fests, projects) or even complementary activities such local gastronomy and sport tourism (hiking and trekking).

ILLUSTRATION 5: THE PRODUCTION CHAIN OF WINE AND ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES



Source: Own elaboration

2.2. Analysis of Potentialities of the Territory

The following analysis covers historical, natural, cultural, human and social, creativity and innovation potentialities on the Small Carpathian region. The following table states different types of potentialities classified (first column) for which each one covers different components (second column) which represent tangible and intangible values. There is also a third column which provide more details of the information collected per type of potentiality, weaknesses and elements to be considered for future strengthen strategies on the RTM.

It is important to highlight that the information displayed have been collected from field visits (meetings with different stakeholders on the RTM and direct observation) and secondary sources (reading material, merchandise and websites).

ILLUSTRATION 6: VINEYARDS IN SMALL CARPATHIAN REGION



Description: Small Carpathian Region, a vineyards territory. Vineyards owned by Dubovský & Grančič Vinery

TABLE 5: ANALYSIS OF POTENTIALITIES ON SMALL CARPATHIAN REGION

Type of Potential	Components (tangible and intangible values)	Remarks
Potential territory	Climate conditions (vineyards)	Potential for land resources and use (there used to be sharp area of wine growing areas). There is a conflict between urban and rural areas regarding the connection with Bratislava.
	Flora and Fauna (beekeeping)	Knowledge in wine production during generations.
	Protected areas (landscape, tourism-routes, beekeeping)	
	Land resources (soil) and use (vineyards, beekeeping/sunflowers, agritourism: route)	
	Viticulture (wine yards and production)	
	Wine growing areas (vineyards)	
Cultural-historic potential	Tangible heritage (castles, walls, museum, writer house, monastery)	Claudianum promoting traditional fests
	Intangible heritage (folk, apple fest)	
	Handicrafts (Modraska ceramics)	
	Wine route	
Economic potential	Tourism facilities (Accommodation and restaurants)	More than 80 facilities but not all of them are oriented to tradition aspects.
	Regional products (holders and potential ones)	Various agents from different economic sectors (profitable and non-profitable entities), human capacities, which makes the local economy more dynamic supported by the fact of a close distance to Bratislava region.
	Economic base, population and employment rate	

Source. Own elaboration

ILLUSTRATION 7: CERAMICS OF “MODRANSKA” BRAND IN THE REGION OF MODRA



Description: Modra Ceramics, traditional crafts of the region

2.3. Stakeholders Analysis and Potential Holders of the Regional Trademark

The Stakeholders Analysis on RTM, as a first stage, maps all the actors involved in the RTM and their classification by different sectors and sub-sectors in the sense of making a more organized analysis per each identified stakeholder. Once the mapping and classification have been done, the second stage is based on analysis per se for which three variables have been considered as follows:

Impact: The first one is based on the positive and negative impact caused in each mapped stakeholder by the fact of the RTM being implemented. It is important to highlight that in the case of potential RTM holders; the analysis is mainly focused on benefits obtained if the

certification would be implemented. On the other hand, for non-potential holders (non-registered producers, regulators, academy, supporters, service providers), the analysis is based on the benefits or disadvantages; the latter in the case of the non-registered producers. Furthermore, this variable responds to the following question: *In case the RTM would be implemented, would be a positive or negative impact on this stakeholder?*

Expectation: This variable means what the coordinator of the RTM expects from each mapped stakeholder in case the RTM has been obtained by the potential holders. Therefore, the coordinators expect some contribution in kind or funds from different stakeholders, in the case of non-potential holders, such as funds provision for implementing complementary projects and capacity building on the holders, increasing the demand of certified products, networking and partnership between the holders, among others. Moreover, the coordinator also expects from the potential holders and even the non-registered producers, their eligibility capacity for being part of the RTM system. Thus, this variable responds to the following question: *In case the RTM would be implemented, what do we expect from this stakeholder?*

Communicative Strategy: In order to make concrete these expectations as contributions from different stakeholders, there are some communicative strategies raised by the coordinator in terms of communicating the RTM initiative and, indeed, involved all these stakeholders. As can be appreciated in the following table, one of the most important communication tools repeated for all the mapped stakeholders are the platforms due to making all the stakeholders know about how the RTM works, benefits, results, among other aspects; being a perfect meeting point for the coordinator and holders introduce themselves and start coordinating with these stakeholders.

TABLE 6: STAKEHOLDERS ANALYSIS AND POTENTIAL HOLDERS OF THE RTM

Sub-sector	Stakeholders	Positive or negative impact for agents in the case RTM is implemented?		Expectation: What do we expect from them? From Coordinator view	Our communicative strategy. From coordinator view
		Positive	Negative		
Vineyards	Non-registered producers		X	Eligibility	Platform for communication (potential benefits). Collaborative projects (Legal representations apply for the projects where beneficiaries are the non-registered farmers).
Vineyards and winery			X		
Processed foods (Raw milking and meat)			X		
Handicrafts (Modraska Ceramics)			X		
HORECA (Accommodations: AirBNB)			X		
Potential holder of the certification					
Vineyards	Private (natural person, legal entities: Entrepreneurs, SMEs).	X		Eligibility and obtaining the RTM. Keeping the certification, obtaining benefits, building network-cooperation. Involvement in the local community	Before obtaining certification: Platform for communication (potential benefits). Once obtaining certification: Merchandising (brochures, flyers). Digital tools (website, social media). Platforms (learning exchange, technical and commercial roundtables). Setting rules, platforms (cultural and commercial roundtables).
Vineyards/ winery	Private (natural person, legal entities: Entrepreneurs, SMEs).	X			
Processed foods (Raw)	Private (natural person, legal entities: Entrepreneurs, SMEs).	X			
Handicrafts (Modraska Ceramics)	Private (natural person, legal entities: Entrepreneurs, SMEs).	X			
HORECA (Restaurants and Accommodations)	Private (natural person, legal entities: Entrepreneurs, SMEs).	X			
Wine route	Civil associations	X			
Intangible Heritage: Fests (associated with wine, apples)	Civil association, non-profit organizations, churches, municipalities.	X			
Tangible Heritage: Castles, museums, The Writer House)	Private	X			

Sub-sector	Stakeholders	Positive or negative impact for agents in the case RTM is implemented?		Expectation: What do we expect from them? From Coordinator view	Our communicative strategy. From coordinator view
		Positive	Negative		
Regulators					
Public sector	Municipalities	X		Coordination	Platforms (learning exchange, cultural, technical and commercial roundtables).
Public sector	Regional Government	X			
Academy					
Specialized training	ceramic, farming, and brewing schools	X		Training and connection with holders. Boosting new entrepreneurships. Evaluation and impact analysis.	Platforms (learning exchange, cultural, technical and commercial roundtables). Collaborative projects.
Higher education	Universities, technical institutes	X			
Supporters					
Research	Research institutions	X		Research associated to the RTM. Evaluation and impact analysis.	Platforms (learning exchange, cultural, technical and commercial roundtables). Digital tools (website and social media). Face to face meetings. Collaborative projects.
Non-profits organizations	NGO, civil organizations, churches, cooperation agencies	X		Economy support, training, platforms, selling points.	
Public sector	Municipalities	X		Economy support, training, platforms, selling points.	
Public sector	Public sector programs	X		Economy support, training, platforms, selling points.	
Service providers					
Loans	Local banks	X		Accessibility, competitive prices, low interest rates.	Platforms (learning exchange, cultural, technical and commercial roundtables). Digital tools (website and social media). Face to face meetings. Collaborative projects.
Logistics	Transportation services	X		Accessibility, competitive prices.	
Legal system	Legal advisory	X			
Tributary system	Accountability advisory	X			

Sub-sector	Stakeholders	Positive or negative impact for agents in the case RTM is implemented?		Expectation: What do we expect from them? From Coordinator view	Expectation: What do we expect from them? From Coordinator view	Our communicative strategy. From coordinator view
		Positive	Negative			
Market						
Private and public sectors	Distributors (B2B): Shops, tourist information spots.	X			Acquisition of the RTM products, constancy, telling stories, flexible conditions.	Platforms (learning exchange, cultural, technical and commercial roundtables). Digital tools (website and social media). Face to face meetings. Collaborative projects.

Source. Own elaboration

2.4. Criteria for Selecting New Holders of the Regional Trademark

Before setting the selection criteria for holding the RTM in small Karpatian region, it is required to understand certain definitions of words used in all this section as follows:

Local:

- Definition 1: All the products or services which are being provided by regional entrepreneurs (no matter its introduced or native condition).
- Definition 2: Products and services which have been traditionally provided along the region history; for example, the number of years that a grape has been grown within the region (no matter its introduced or native condition).
- Definition 3: local products refer to “native species” or “indigenous species” as the species or genotypes which have evolved within a particular zone, region or biotype; and are adapted to the ecological conditions; for instance, native variety of grapes of the region.

Social contribution:

- This term has been discussed as part of the selection criteria meaning whether the potential holder of regional trademark support local community events as a provider, sponsor, or do collaborative projects with different stakeholders addressed to contribute to the region.

Once these definitions are clarified, the sectors and sub-sectors of the RTM environment are classified in the following shown below. As can be appreciated, each sector (products, services and local-based experience) includes four (wine, raw foods, processed foods, handicrafts), two (accommodations, restaurants), and two (tangible, intangible) elements. All sectors need to fulfill a general criterion which is complying with legal eligibility (legal entity or entrepreneur conditions). These general criteria are set taking into consideration efficiency on the management level (coordinator and regulators) and quality control.

TABLE 7: CLASSIFICATION OF SECTORS AND SUB-SECTORS

Sectors	Sub-Sectors
Products	Wine
	Raw Foods
	Processed Foods
	Handicrafts
Services	Accommodations
	Restaurants
Local-based experience	Tangible
	Intangible

Source. Own elaboration

To apply the specific selection criteria for all the sub-sectors, the weighted sum method is presented. This means that each sub-sector has its own specific criteria which could be sum up based on their level of importance. For instance, in the wine sector case, the ‘Contribution to regional identity’ is the most important criterion to be selected as RTM while ‘environmental contribution’ is the least important. As a more specific example, the contribution to the identity takes 60 percent of the total grade, while the contribution to the environment, only 5 percent. The composition could change; however, this kind of system could consider all the elements that are required to be put in a weighted criterion.

Basically, all the regional trademark holders should contribute to the regional identity in some way. However, each sub-sector has different way of contribution and that is not included in the general criteria. In addition, process and varieties are important elements for regional wines. Regarding the first element, wine should be bottled and processed within the region in order to obtain the RTM, efficient management and quality control. The latter element, native varieties, could have advantages in getting the RTM, since their attributes and ancestral use. However, this criterion has less importance, since introduced products could also be able to be certified as they have significant contribution to the regional identity.

TABLE 8: GENERAL AND SPECIFIC CRITERIA PER WINE SUB-SECTOR

Sub-sectors	General Criteria	Specific Criteria
Wine	Legal entities and entrepreneurs	Contribution to Regional Identity - Proof of connection with region, tradition, cultural heritage.
		Ingredients - Produced in the region
		Process - Bottled - Locally processed
		Native Variety - Native / Hybrid (with native variety) / Non-native.
		Social Contribution - Participation in community activities related to the regional identity.
		Environmental Contribution - Integrated production /Organic / Bio

Source. Own elaboration

Processed or raw foods need to use of regional ingredients and must be processed within the region under traditional recipes. Handicrafts sector is like processed or raw food sectors; however, they are different in terms of the ingredients and process origin; for example, the use of traditional patterns and techniques are more important than whether the ingredient is coming from in or out the RTM zone.

TABLE 9: GENERAL AND SPECIFIC CRITERIA PER PROCESSED (RAW) FOODS AND HANDICRAFTS SUB-SECTOR

Sub-sectors	General Criteria	Specific Criteria
Processed (Raw) Foods	Legal entities, entrepreneurs	Contribution to Regional Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proof of connection with the region in traditions, cultural heritage.
		Ingredients <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produced in the region
		Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Locally processed - Traditional recipes
		Social Contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in community activities related to the regional identity.
Handicrafts	Legal entities, entrepreneurs	Contribution with regional identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proof of connection with region, tradition, cultural heritage.
		Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traditional patterns, techniques - Locally processed - Shared of manual work
		Ingredients <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional ingredients (proof of infeasibility)
		Social Contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in community activities related to the regional identity

Source. Own elaboration

Both, the service sector (accommodations and restaurants) and the local-based experience sector, have similar selection criteria as well as the way of contribution to regional identity and society. This means that the holders have not just to prove the link with the region, in historic, traditional and cultural terms, but also to promote RTM certified products, services and heritage, and to transmit the message (history, traditions and cultural elements) about the region; for instance, traditional decorations of the accommodation environment, transcript of milestones historic episodes of the region on the walls, among others.

In addition, restaurants could have advantages to get the RTM if they would have a high proportion of traditional dishes on their menu. Furthermore, restaurants need to prove they are

using regional ingredients. If it is impossible to use regional ingredients (for example, the goose production is too small to provide enough goose to the restaurant in the region), they are required to submit the proof of infeasibility.

TABLE 10: GENERAL AND SPECIFIC CRITERIA PER ACCOMMODATION, RESTAURANT AND LOCAL-BASED EXPERIENCE

Sub-sectors	General Criteria	Specific Criteria
Accommodations	Legal entities, entrepreneurs	Contribution to Regional Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proof of connection with the region in traditions, cultural heritage. - Promotion of certified products, services, heritage. - Providing messages about cultural, historical and traditional elements.
		Social Contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in community activities related to the regional identity.
Restaurants	Legal entities, entrepreneurs	Contribution to Regional Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proof of connection with region by traditions, cultural heritage (Traditional recipes - share of the traditional dishes in the menu). Ingredients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional ingredients (Proof of infeasibility)
		Social Contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in community activities related to the regional identity.
Local-based experiences	Legal entities, entrepreneurs	Contribution to Regional Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proof of connection with the region in traditions, cultural heritage. - Promotion of certified products, services, heritage. - Providing messages about cultural, historical and traditional elements.
		Social Contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in community activities related to the regional identity.

Source. Own elaboration

2.5. Implementation Procedure of Regional Trademark

ILLUSTRATION 8: SMALL CARPATHIAN REGION LOGO



Source: Case Study Handbook about the Small Carpathian Region

In this study, we suggest guidelines for trademark usage. The guidelines should be intuitional, including examples and guides for users to understand it easily. In this study, we suggest a necessity of guidelines and directions. However, setting guidelines should not be finalized in the short term, but should be the outcome of specific and in-depth consultation among the involved actors.

Membership fee should be imposed on every member who make profits for themselves.

Also, it is important to advertise for potential members in the first few years. Therefore, we suggest that membership fees in the beginning years should be indifferent among the members. Because in the beginning years, it is hard to promote the trademark only with the potential outcome for the holders. Then, lower or constant membership fee for few years is a practical publicity strategy. And then after some years of research and members' consensus, membership fee could be differentiated by holder's profit or size, economic activity, etc.

Using the label on their products and services should be mandatory. This is because the trademark itself should be distinctive and well-known to induce active involvement of members. Then, it is necessary to expose the logo to be known by the customers.

Additionally, this is to prevent behavior that someone belongs to the Regional Trademark system and only receives subsidies without using a label. As mentioned earlier, active participation of all members is essential for the new brand's successful settlement.

For these reasons, we present policies related to logo use:

- Firstly, members should indicate that their products or services are certified regional products by putting logo on their products, services(shops), price tag, websites, or social media. There is also an exception that if the new member has just made their own label or sign for the shop without regional trademark logo on, they can have some grace period for renewing their label or sign. If it is financially burdensome for the small-medium sized producers - who are majorities in the region - to change their label frequently, the coordinator may provide the stickers for those who are accepted for the use of the certification.
- Secondly, penalties should be imposed on those who do not use the logo on the products, services, etc. In case the member is not following the guidelines for logo usage, for instance not using the trademark logo on their products even though they already have been given a grace period for some time. In this case, they should have disadvantages on the selection criteria score when they are renewing the certification, the amount of subsidy, or even prohibited from renewing process for the following period.

2.6. Marketing Plan of the Holders

2.6.1. Preparatory Phase

In the preparatory phase, it is important to collect data as much as possible with the aim to feed the statistical research. This data may cover holders' sales, profits, general demographics, target market information, among other information elements. In the first instance, taking into consideration the limited funds, this data collection must be in charged by the holders and coordinator due to requires sharply time and resources. The latter would prepare some surveys addressed to the holders to collect quantitative and qualitative data.

Additionally, a benchmark analysis would be important to consider in order to evaluate the other regional RTMs and competitors in the Small Carpathian region in order to feed the marketing strategy which is the next step in the Marketing Plan.

Moreover, identify the target markets and feed the marketing strategy as well by doing an internal (SWOT and Value Chain Analysis per sub-sector involved in the RTM) and external analysis (Political, Economic, Social, Technological and Ecological analysis - PESTE)

2.6.2. Marketing Strategy

As we have seen in the Stakeholders Analysis and Potential Holders of the RTM section, the most important marketing strategies for all the stakeholders are the platforms, merchandising, and partnerships. It is important to highlight that these strategies must be validated with the information and analysis coming from the previous section, Preparatory Phase so it is possible that other activities can be considered as Marketing Strategies.

Platforms

The platforms are meeting spots where all the stakeholders involved in the RTM participate based on different goals such as promoting the benefits and performing apparatus of the RTM (even introducing the RTM to stakeholders that are involved but have not participated before on

this initiative), discussing about technological gaps and improvement, the impact of the political or socio-economic scenario, market barriers and strategies, customer trends, among others. The topics are diverse and besides being in touch with the current context of the RTM and the scenario where it performs, it is the perfect moment for reaching some opportunities from different stakeholders such as the supporters (public, cooperation or non-profit organizations), regulators (by agreeing to reduce some barriers or facilitating any sub-sector with some particular procedures for performing properly on the market, facilitating the procedures on complying with tributary system requirements, among others), or even within the holders group by coordinating common activities or dealing with promoting some certified products on other holder spaces such as accommodations, restaurants and historical buildings.

As we can appreciate, it is a perfect scenario to talk, to start discussing any problematic on the sub-sector stratosphere, to purpose practical and potential solutions on any gap within this stratosphere.

Merchandising

Holders shall focus on merchandising, through both offline and online (conventional and innovative ways), in order to cover a broaden market participation and, thus, to increase profits. Even the offline merchandising is still covering the biggest part on this share, the online one is potential if the food shipping service regulation on time limit (not allowed some hours during the day) is discussed and modified.

Partnerships

Mutual partnership is crucial by promoting certified products of one holder on spaces of other different holder; for instance, finding certified products on accommodations, restaurants and historic buildings which presents and reinforce the identity of the region. Partnerships also will help to create spaces for discussing about trendy topics or gaps for the different sub-sectors scenario for which they could come up with strategies or proposals to be shared with other stakeholders such as supporters and regulators. Thus, these discussed topics can be taken in

consideration to be formally presented on the mentioned platforms in order to promote a broaden brainstorm.

ILLUSTRATION 9: KOPANICE REGIONAL TRADEMARK INFORMATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION POINT



Description: Promotion and Commercialization Point of Kopanice RTM. Located at the Central Bus Station of Kopanice.

3. FINAL OBSERVATIONS

As further reflections, the observations related to Kopanice and Ponitrie Regional Trademarks are posed in the following paragraphs. These could be used as guides and suggestions for the development of the Small Carpathian RTM.

- The Bottom up approach allows people from the involved community to participate in decision-making about the RTM strategies. This is in line with the development of the LEADER in the local arena. As an example, the representative of the Regional Trademark Kopanice, indicates that the involvement of the holders is one of the keys of success for the current satisfactory development of the RTM.
- Importance of the location of the shops, even more considering that currently the RTM strategies of Ponitrie and Kopanice are based in the commercialization of the products. Hence, it is important to locate these shops in places such as touristic city zones (main square, particular streets, city information spots), shop windows in accommodation services and restaurants, shop windows in museums of each region, places of massive concentration of people, such as public transportation main points and local markets. As an example, the Bus Station for Kopanice RTM.
- No one left behind: Look for alternatives in order to incorporate more holders that comply with the holder criteria. Considering that currently the development of the RTM is focused on merchandising the products and that the actual budget is not enough to develop further work by the RTM directive group. It is proposed “not to leave no one behind” by different channels, such as:
 - Inviting to the current non-eligible potential holders to the platforms organized by the RTM.
 - Pursuing other spaces of negotiation with other implementing policies institutions, such as Agriculture Support Agencies. For them to focus on these groups and support them to comply with the first set of holder’s criteria. This could make an effect in a better public fund’s allocation.

- Directives and penalties for the use of the logo: Contradictions between paying to obtain the certification and not using it. Hence, it is recommended to establish penalties to avoid opportunistic behavior.
- Regional Trademarks as an instrument to avoid imperfect information in the market: A step towards the support of consumer consciousness.
- Research and involvement of the academia: Important for:
 - o Technical development of the regional trademark >> Evaluation and advice. Considering that both analyzed brands, Kopanice and Ponitrie, do not have an evaluation neither an impact analysis to study the effects of the RTM implementation. This fact is counterproductive because does not permit them to have an external advice to improve the development of the taken strategies.
 - o Systematization of local knowledge >> e.g. Cultural Research. Taking into consideration the importance of preserving the local knowledge and traditions by promoting academic publications referred to it. As well as to create more places of promotion of the RTM in museums and other centers that promote the regional patrimony.
- In the same sense than the previous point, the fact of supporting relations with the schools that are focused in the continuity and preservation of the traditions (E.g. agricultural schools, ceramic teaching, etc.) could be considered as a strategy for the Small Carpathian RTM. This could influence increasing the number of potential holders for the RTM. At the time that reinforcing the identity particularities of the region and supporting the development of traditional economic activities. Hence, as seen with the RTM Kopanice, the holders of the RTM could be people that are already teaching and doing workshops related to traditional activities. If not, the RTM could promote the connections with teaching institutions to spread the traditional knowledge of the holders. As well, the RTM could promote field visits to the holder's entrepreneurs where trainees can experience the concepts in practice.
- Take advantage of the *strong identity* of the Small Carpathian Region. By promoting the current impression of the "Slovak region of vineyards" as a basis for merchandising the

products. But also supporting the other economic activities that are developed in the region. This could be done by promotion material (printed and electronic material), and the websites. Moreover, it can be also considered supporting the current fests organized in the region as well as the wine routes and other fests related to the agricultural production. In these fests, other complementary economic activities – such as crafts – should be promoted by offering merchandise to the public. Hence, it could support the creation of synergy between holders, as well as taking advantage of the current fests that are already institutionalized in the region.

- Platforms (learning exchange, workshops, seminars, technical and commercial roundtables) is a way of involving different stakeholders on the RTM initiative. This can be considered a first step for reaching opportunities in: new RTM potential participants, support funds for addressed for the current RTM holders' group, increasing the public image and recognition at regional and national level, among others.
- Understanding the limited funds addressed to the holders, involving stakeholders on the RTM initiative would be important, besides the opportunities mentioned in the previous statement, to coordinate with research institutions in developing research oriented to fill a gap on the RTM value chain, impact assessment, monitoring and advising improvements for the coming period program.
- Thinking in developing inspections on the sustainability of the RTM criteria implementation or even improvements, it would be possible to coordinate with a consultant group, third group party, NGO or even a research or academic institution for considering packages of inspections composed by areas or sectors; for instance, the holders established in a particular area with a close distance from each other and even matched at the same entrepreneurial activities (wine producers from the same area) can reduce the costs of inspection instead of quoting separately.

REFERENCES

Ponitrie Regional Trademark Promotion Material

Kopanice Regional Trademark Promotion Material

Field visits and interviews related to Ponitrie Regional Trademark:

- Ponitrie Regional Trademark Coordinator Interview, manager of the Local Action Group, Radosinka Renáta Lelovská
- Visit to the archeological museum in Bojná. Conversation with the mayor of the village Bojná, Jozef Stankovsky
- Visit to the Ranch pod Babicou with Zoo in Bojná (Ponitrie Regional Trademark holder)
- Solčany - Sladké dobroty - Solčanský skladaník. Conversation with the owner, Mrs. Benzova (Ponitrie Regional Trademark holder)
- Visit to the Vinárstvo Radošina in Radošina: wine from agricultural cooperative. Conversation with the manager of the winery (Ponitrie Regional Trademark holder)
- Visit to Vinoma in Velký Cetín: accommodation and winery. Conversation with the owners (Ponitrie Regional Trademark holder)
- Visit to the Hotel Hradná stráž in Topoľčianky. Conversation with one of the managers (Ponitrie Regional Trademark holder)
- Visit to honey makers form Choča - Cera mel. Conversation with the owners, Mrs. Grgulova and family (Ponitrie Regional Trademark holder)

Field visits and interviews related to Kopanice Regional Trademark:

- Kopanice Regional Trademark Coordinator Interview, manager of the Local Action Group
- Visit to the commercialization and promotion point of the Kopanice Regional Trademark
- Visit to the Adam Pension, agritourism facilities and fruit processing facilities. Conversation with the owner.

Field visits and interviews related to the Small Carpathian Region:

- Conversation with the manager of the Local Action Group Malokarpatsky region Mima Petrušová.
- Goose restaurant in Slovenský Grob. Conversation with the owner, Mr. Haško.
- Winery in Svätý Jur - Dubovský & Grančič. Conversation with the owner.
- Winery Adam Sýkora. Conversation with the owner, dam Sýkora.
- Dubová municipality. Conversation with the mayor Mr. Rúžička.
- Winery Karpatská Perla in Šenkvice. Conversation with the owner Mr. Šebo, technologist Martin and the mayor of Šenkvice Mr Peter Fitz
- Modranska ceramics shop. Conversation with Mr. Lišk.
- Museum of Modra Majolic and visit to the exposition of Ignac Bizmayer.
- Visit to the Manor house Budmerice: residence house for writers.
- Visit to the Claudianum in Modra - rehabilitation center for mentally disabled people.
- Farm visit near Modra: Podgastankou.
- Visit to the accommodation in Píla. Conversation with the owner Mrs. Kočíšek-Skálová
- Visit to the Red Stone castle - Červený kameň

Field visits and interviews to other producers and actors in the visited territories:

- Visit to the productive initiative of Potato chips in Čechynce. Conversation with the owner, Mrs. Sarazova.
- Visit and conversation with the representatives of the Civil Association LIRA in Limbach.