



Possible Futures of Finnish Food Travel

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Abstract

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<p>Food travelling is travelling where food is one major motivation when choosing destination. Food travel is a growing sector of which connects all people, locals, and visitors. Food helps to understand local cultures and enables local authenticity strengthening. This qualitative research is commissioned by Hungry for Finland- Food Travel project by Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences in association with Visit Finland. It aims to bring insight to Food Tourism project and actors in food and travel sector in Finland offering insights of product and service development in 2021. Methods for this research is content analysis of competition application forms chosen because it allows both calculating and analyzing competition answers. 5 Steps Bold Vision Canvas method is adapted for creating 5 bold steps for achieving "Vision of Finnish Food Travel in 2030". Research was conducted between 1.6.2021-20.11.2022. Main research question is: What do the possible futures look like from the perspective of Food Travel Competition applications on development stage 2021? Sub questions are: How can food travelling be described based on competition products? How is sustainability present? What are the strengths and weaknesses of products and services on development stage? Theoretical part considers food travelling, food travellers, sustainability, and futures research. Finnish Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028 and Hungry for Finland Food Travel project are considered. Finnish Food travelling futures are tasty food experiences in restaurants based on locality and storytelling, guided cooking, enjoying a meal in the nature or cultural environment, food travelling paths, festivals, events, markets and marketplaces, small breweries and programs related to all of them. Future food travel can be considered responsible, versatile and in most parts following the Finnish Travel Strategy 2020-2028. Sustainability is present; socially by employing local service providers and operators, economically by supporting local economy and environmentally by using local wild food, seasonal ingredients, locally farmed products, and railroad usage. Weaknesses are in limited availability in selection, water and energy consumption, and customer feedback usage. Possible future is offered in a form of story of Food Travel in Finland 2030, based on adaptation of 5 step vision canvas method results.</p>
Keywords Food travel, Food Travel Competition, Future of Food travel

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1. Introduction

The topic is a part of Food Tourism project of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, and it is a natural second part for me to my Bachelor Thesis which was a part of "Food & Travel" project in 2015. For my Bachelor Thesis I investigated the food expectations of international travelers in Finland. I have worked in food, hospitality, and tourism industry nearly 30 years specializing in local and ecological food production and product sales, and I find the field familiar and interesting.

Food plays a role in all travelling, and it has a strong impact in sustainability in many levels from meat and dairy production to food waste and recycling issues, so it is important to research food travel from many different perspectives. This research considers possible futures of Food Travel in Finland from the perspective of Food Travel Competition 2021 applications on development stage and how food travelling could be defined based on 2021 Food Travel competition. Strengths and weaknesses of Finnish Food Travel based on 2021 Food Travel competition 2021 products and services on development stage are presented.

This qualitative research is commissioned by Hungry for Finland Food travel project, and it aims to bring insight to Food Tourism project as well as actors in food and travel sector in Finland since it offers insights of product and service development in 2021. Methods for this investigative research are content analysis of competition application forms since it fits well into this kind of research and allows both calculating and analyzing competition answers. Also, Bold Vision Canvas method is adapted to create a filter for "Vision of Finnish Food Travel in 2030".

Findings of this study can be used for product and service development and as a base for further studies. This study explains what kind of products and services were being developed in 2021 and whether the products and services follow the Finnish Food Travel Strategy. Food travel is a growing field in global and local tourism offers multidimensional opportunities especially to small, developed countries like Finland. Via food and food travelling Finland could showcase its nature's cleanliness, high quality kitchen know-how and versatile, imaginary product selection. But what kind of products and services are developing now in Finland based on latest Food Travel Competition 2021? Do the products in development follow Finnish Food Strategy? Is sustainability interweaved in the products and services in development stage? What are the strengths and weaknesses based on the competition applications?

After introduction, concepts of food travel and food travellers are considered, in second part sustainability aspects are introduced. Third part discusses about futures research and future of food travel and Finnish Food Travel Strategy 2020-2080. Fourth part defines research methods, data

gathering process from National Food Travel Competition 2021 application forms, and data analysis from application forms and further analysis by adapted Five Steps Bold Vision Canvas.

Fifth part presents results analyzed from National Food Travel 2021 Competition application forms.

Sixth part is discussion part considering limitations, reliability, and development suggestions, as well as summary of the results and bold vision canvas adaptation, 5 Bold Steps and a suggestion for “Vision of Finnish Food Travel 2030” in a form of a story is presented.

Main research question is:

- What do the possible futures look like from the perspective of Food Travel Competition applications on development stage?

Sub questions are:

- How can food travelling be described based on 2021 Food Travel competition products and services in development stage?
- How is sustainability present in 2021 Food Travel Competition products and services in development stage?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of Finnish Food Travel based on 2021 Food Travel competition 2021 products and services on development stage?

The main purpose of this research is to find new development ideas and future guidelines for food travel operators and to find focus points for future research in Food Travel sector in Finland.

Development of Finnish food travel is based on Finnish Food Travel Strategy. An updated version of Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028 was released in 2020. Food Travel Competitions are a part of Food Travel Strategy's (2015-2020 and 2020-2028) development actions. Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences is the executer and coordinator of Food Tourism project of Haaga-Helia UAS. Food Travel Competition has been arranged now four times; in 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021. The competition aims to encourage all actors in travel- and food sector to co-operatively innovate food travel products and experiences based on sustainability and locality which also interests international visitors. A winner is chosen in each competition and the prize is 3000e development money, and other top participants receive recognition “Remarkable Food Travel Action Award” in a national seminar. All finalists have received help with marketing and added visibility in the channels of Visit Finland. (Hungry for Finland 2019a.)

Throughout the times there has been different kinds of incidents and phenomena affecting travelling and tourism industry. SARS, terrorist attacks and economic depressions have affected travelling, but the industry has recovered quite fast after these situations have passed. Recently two

major issues have touched travelling in European countries and therefore also Finland like no other problems before: global COVID-pandemic which has not ended since it started in spring 2020 and the war in Ukraine 2022. In UNWTO research global international overnight stays decreased -85 % compared to 2019 due to pandemic and OECD estimated COVID-pandemic diminishing international travelling by -80 %. Change towards a better situation is estimated to happen slowly and at the earliest in 2024. (TEM 2021.)

Tourism is an important sector for Finland's national economy. Domestic demand accounts for nearly 70% of all tourism demand. The number of leisure-time trips Finns take with overnight stays in paid accommodation is nearly the same in Finland and abroad. Foreign travel is showing a growth trend but the COVID pandemic since 2020 truly highlighted the significance of domestic tourism. The study conducted by Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland examined the current state of domestic tourism. (TEM 2021.)

Traveling is meaningful sector in Finland and second biggest industry in service export. In 2019 23 million overnight stays were registered from which 13 million were domestic travelers. All travelers eat during their travel. Total travel demand was 5,7 billion in 2018 and travelling is considered to grow 3% annually in favorable circumstances. (TEM 2019.)

1.1 Food tourism

Professionals, academics, and others often use different definitions such as food tourism, culinary tourism, and gastronomy tourism with subtle differences in their meaning, says Eric Wolf, Executive Director of the World Food Travel Association and continues: "Practically speaking, these phrases are all equivalent to describe the same phenomenon." The World Food Travel Association (WFTA) defines Food tourism in 2018 as "The act of traveling for a taste of place in order to get a sense of place." WFTA considers the food tourism industry starting in 1999 when Lucy Long used the term "Food tourism" for the first time.

Some consider founding of the International Culinary Tourism Association in 2003 as the beginning of food tourism. Food tourism is often considered traveling into a specific geographical place for the purpose of tasting food in its place of origin and it is often connected to social experiences such as meeting local people, residents, sellers, and producers. Food tourism was acknowledged also by Erik Wolf in 2001 as President of the World Food Travel, when he presented that the interest in food and beverage tourism was growing and these requests for culinary tours should be driving local businesses to meet this growing demand. (WFTA 2021.) Comparing the perspective of WFTA with "Hungry for Finland" projects Food Tourism they are similar. "Hungry for Finland" describes

food tourism as activity where “the tourist encounters a variety of experiences based on locality and stories such as tasty restaurant meals, guided cooking, meals eaten in surroundings, food tourism routes and events, outdoor markets, specialty shops and microbreweries as well as any related activities “(Visit Finland 2020).

Food Tourism Strategy 2020-2028 by Visit Finland states that food is a unique aspect of travel: not all travelers visit museums, not everyone wants to participate snowshoe-walks or go for a sightseeing tour – but every traveler eats. Food is considered creating memories with all senses and food strengthens emotional and physical memories. Eating can be experienced as the most memorable and unforgettable part of a trip. (Visit Finland 2021.)

Food is an important part of peoples’ everyday lives and both at home and during travels. For some, food is a reason to travel or an exotic experience while travelling. Local, different foods and culture with different habits offer new adventurous experiences to travellers. Foreign visitors In Finland also are interested in authentic, Finnish food and nature. Finnish food travel products can offer a traveler something new to do and participate in and learn something new. Target customers for Finnish food travel are international travelers who are interested in Finnish food, nature, and culture. Another target are local travelers who are interested in food and food experiences. (Hungry for Finland 2020a.)

1.2 Food travel products

An interesting and high-quality food travel product combines the wishes and needs of a traveler with an acceptable price. Food products are safe and hygienic, and accessibility is considered both from the perspective of communication and infrastructure. Product must be responsibly produced, and it should take into consideration local people, workers, and environment. (UNWTO 2019.)

Some research claim that satisfaction on food travelers is affected by four main factors: quality of food, service, physical environment of the place and price-quality ratio. These factors also determine the likeliness of re-visiting a place. Satisfied customer speaks highly of their experience, are likely to re-visit and attract new customers with their experience. This again brings more money and fame to an area and maintains traditional food culture. (Zhang, Chen & Hu 2019.)

Food tourism is a crucial part of travelling plans and an important perspective of destination strategy. Increasing interest in food is an example of how tourism shows now; the culture has moved out from the museums and moved more into the field of experience economy where food tourism is one of its central circles (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte 2016). Food tourism is considered being one of the fastest growing sectors in tourism market (Stanley & Stanley 2015, 14). Food tourism is mostly integrated in traditional tourism activities but in some regions such as Italy and France it is becoming the main reason to visit the destination. It is also considered that food tourism is gaining

momentum in the last decade everywhere in the world due to two major reasons. Firstly, because of people's desire to discover where their food comes from and secondly due to the wish of finding new foods and food preparations. (Stanley & Stanley 2015, 16.)

World Food Tourism Association recognizes over 20 interrelated sectors belonging in the food tourism industry cluster (Figure 1.) including food and beverage businesses, travel and hospitality businesses and other businesses and organizations such as governments, media, and academia (WFTA 2021).

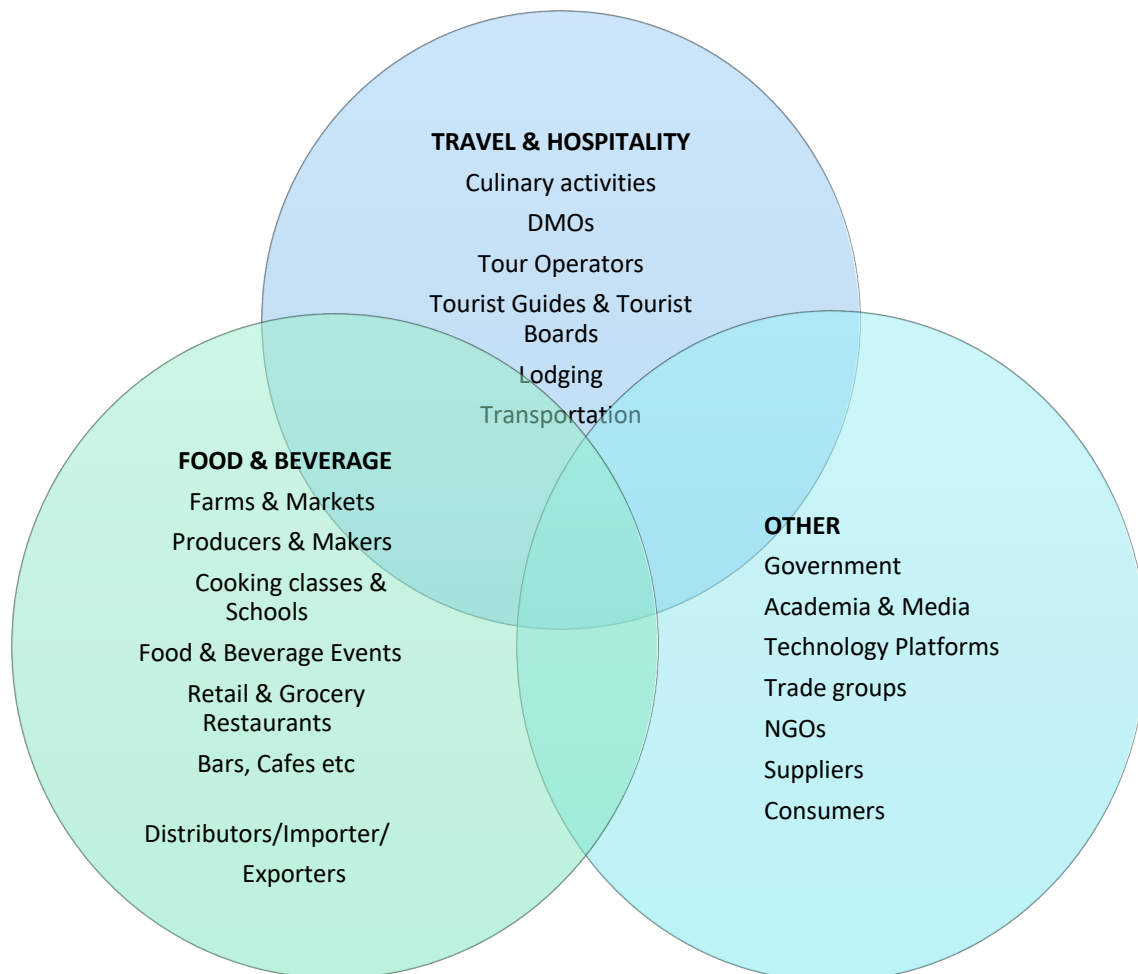


Figure 1. Food tourism industry cluster (WFTA 2021)

WFTA acts to unite these sectors into the form of food tourism industry cluster. Culinary Tourism on the other hand explained by Culinary Tourism Alliance includes active pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences and agritourism experiences connecting what is being grown and produced in an area to what is being prepared and enjoyed by locals. (Culinary Tourism Alliance 2020.) Food' n Road on another hand describes food tourism as "activities that provide experiences of consumption and appreciation of food and beverages, presented in such a way that

value the history, the culture, and the environment of a particular region. Food tourism is a relatively new term, and therefore it is more common to find terms in the same context such as Culinary Tourism and Gastronomy Tourism. (Food' n Road 2020.)

The World Food Travel Association like many others, also used the term "Culinary tourism" previously to describe food related travel but in 2012 usage of the term was stopped due to research showing it was giving misleading impression. Perception of the term "culinary" was viewed "elitist among interviewees" which led to the decision of using "food tourism" as a term instead. (WFTA 2021.)

Finnish food travel definition states that offerings of food travel are based on locality, stories, and clean ingredients. Traveler enjoys food in a restaurant, in the nature or by participating in a food related activity or route. Food travelers visit food travel exhibitions, marketplaces, special food stores, visits a cheese maker or small brewery. Good food product makes traveler participate and offers an experience to learn something new and experience something unique. (Hungry for Finland 2020a.)

Since food travelling is becoming more mainstream, also more research is performed in its field. Food travel is researched and classified from different perspectives. Three most common traveler perspectives are activity, motivation, and combination of the two. Food travel research is also often conducted from the perspectives of marketing and leadership for example in product development and brand awareness cases but also from sociocultural or geographical perspectives. At the moment, the five most dominant research perspectives are: motivation, culture, destination, marketing and leadership, as well as genuinity. (Ellis, Park, Kim & Yeoman 2018.)

1.3 Key drivers of food travel

Key drivers of growth in food travel from consumer perspective are various. There is increased awareness and interest in food in general (Boniface 2003, 16; Stanley & Stanley 2015, 20) and awareness of improved nutrition; consumers are more health-conscious desiring more healthier food options (Stanley & Stanley 2015, 20). Increasingly urbanized society and ageing population of Baby Boomers in western societies have large disposable incomes, and they are willing to pay more for food and a quality food experience. This aging population is believed to be looking for what tourist industry calls "soft tourism" where there is a learning experience such as in food and culinary tourism. They want safe and educational activities. In Asian societies instead of ageing Baby Boomer factors they have a young, massive middle-class sector becoming global tourists looking for new experiences. They will become important global culinary tourists in future. (Stanley & Stanley 2015, 20-22.)

Motivation on the consumer side comes from many directions such as people wanting to celebrate through food and drink on holiday, but also from needs such as comfort and an escape through non-routine foods. Consumers also have a need to show distinction, affluence, and individualism in which special food and drink acts as media and language. Some travelers also want to display their education and superiority to others through food. Traditional food and drinks are also becoming treated as heritage, due to unusualness and potential obsolescence; like rice and wine landscapes which are being designated as World Heritage Sites. (Boniface 2003, 16-24). The rise of the roles of media and media persons such as celebrity chefs has also affected the food travel growth. People want to travel to places which they have seen on tv and eat the foods which they see in social media. How wealthy people and celebrities act can mold markets and consumer trends. (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte 2016.)

Everyone posts nowadays pictures of foods they eat on various social media platforms. It is common to recommend foods and restaurants to followers. With the internet and social media being such a big factor and strongly influential marketing method, peer-to-peer apps have been appearing rapidly and becoming more and more popular. Internet has become widely accepted as the main search tool for discovering new information about everything. Now all tourists, including food travellers can now consider, reserve, and buy their wishes online before arrival based on information given by also their peers and not only by the product and service producers. Information concerning a destination is investigated and evaluated generally also but more and more crucial factors are feedbacks given by travelers who already experienced the service. This peer-to-peer evaluation is considered more reliable, trustworthy, true, and honest source of information. Peer reviews are especially strong factors when the person who is recommending a product is someone the traveler knows, appreciates, or appears to have similar taste. Nowadays a conscious tourist recommends not only positive experiences but equally important is also revealing false marketing and voicing their observations, warning all other travelers of issues which they believe are worth taking into consideration. Modern travelers therefore create "communities of travelers" who take care of each other. (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte 2016.) Peer platforms such as TripAdvisor are not without internal problems, and they face criticism due to the frauds concerning fake reviews. For example, TripAdvisor with their 26 million annual reviews (2020) recognizes there is a problem with fake reviews and has published their first Transparency Report in 2021. According to this report the in 2020 also more than two million review submissions were rejected or removed by TripAdvisor themselves, either by their review analysis system or manually by a member of their content moderation team. This amount represents 8.6% of all submissions in 2020. (TripAdvisor 2020.)

Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte identified five (5) driving forces which discourses of food tourism: (1) food tourism as political capital, where food is a key element of a nation's culture, identity, and history. Food tourism as a visionary state (2), since food tourism has political capital, it is presented as a vision with words such as "authenticity" and how food tourism can impact humankind problems such as climate change. Food tourism is also visionary due to images of "regionality branded", "authentic", "local" and with the focus "Economic development strategies" where "travelers are climate aware" and wish for a "sustainable experience". (3) What it means to be a foodie, where food is a focus for socializing and a way to enrich experiences, a way to show personality, identity, and quality of life (4) the drive for affluence and exclusivity formed by better income and wealth, major indicators of societal success. Increased prosperity creates a consumer-citizen, which is more demanding, more sophisticated, and more informed actor with extreme expectations of premium choices in everything. Mass tourism which is now available for the middle class demands redefining luxury as exclusivity. (5) Fluid experiences in a post-modernist world were tomorrow's tourists want "dynamic escapist experiences" but they also expect authenticity and social responsibility. It is about diversity of experiences through sampling novel and familiar experiences, fluid food tourism experiences meaning for example an authentic Turkish cooking class is combined with learning to use liquid nitrogen. These drivers affect, integrate, and overlap one another. Food tourism as a collective discourse includes consumers, farmers, producers, distributors, and retailers together and provides all stakeholders a vision of the future. Political capital is created through vision creation as politicians understand the chance to create dialogue with people through common purpose with the land, food, and tourists. (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte 2016.)

So, which is more relevant: food tourists or travelling foodies? The target market of food tourism are culinary tourists, who can more generally be referred to as foodies (Gajić 2015, 158). Not all of these "foodies" are food tourists and therefore it is important to target specifically the potential consumers of food tourism (Getz & al. 2014, 202). For food tourists, there can be remarkable diversity in terms of their interests and lifestyles (Getz & al. 2014, 54-68) including all their previous experiences and travels which means that for some travellers one particular food experience might be just an ordinary and boring one while for others it may be influential (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen 2014, 298). Domestic travellers create a subgroup with their own specific needs in each country. In research conducted in 2020 in Finland a survey indicated that domestic travellers are not only the largest group of travelers, but they also used most of their Spenditure (70%) on food services, which makes them a major player in the food product and service target group. (TEM, 2020.)

1.4 Food travel experience

Food travel offers travelers food and drink experiences. According to UNWTO the food travel experience which remains in our memory is consisted of unique environment or script. Limited access

and exclusiveness make a place more attractive because it is not available for everybody. A traveler has the opportunity to get to know local people, surroundings and to learn new things, which is worth marketing. Theme based food travel product offers entertainment, relaxing and escaping everyday life, it is provocative and awakens emotions. It is based on locality, and it offers something which you can take home with you. (UNWTO 2019b.)

Local food does not necessarily offer always the most memorable food- or drink experience. A restaurant, view or service can be enough to create an experience the most memorable one. On another hand, not one single actor can be pointed out to guarantee a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Carefully planned food travels and lucky moments are related to the most touching memory. (Stone, Soulard & Migacz 2017.)

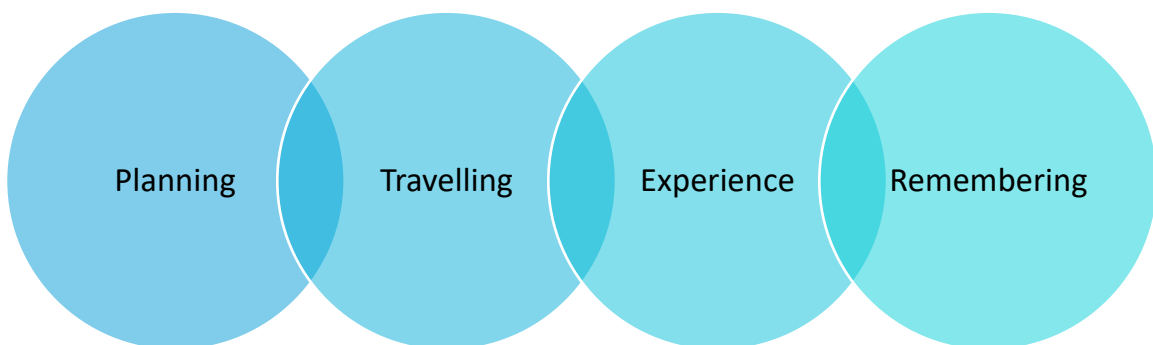


Figure 2. Four stages of traveling (Williams, Yuan & Williams Jr. 2019)

Most memorable moments can be connected to any of the four stages of traveling: planning, travelling, experience or remembering (Figure 2.). Nevertheless, in experience stage, in interaction with the host or hosts and the visitors the moments shared together are usually the most memorable ones. Traveler satisfaction and memorizing is affected by authentic, local food, people, and stories. The deeper the traveler participates, the more likely it is they feel the experience being real and memorable. (Williams, Yuan & Williams Jr. 2019, 327-348.) Food has a strong effect on a trip and in the outcome of a trip. Food also plays a crucial role on the experience of a trip being a success.

Travelers natural eating habits and preferences effects their eating also when traveling. Part of travelers do not want or dare to try foods which are very different compared to their own foods they are used to. No matter what the background of a travelers is, there should be enough options and different choices in food experiences. Travelers who do not prioritize food as a motive for traveling and who do not have expectations about unfamiliar foods are often more satisfied when they have tried flavors new to them. Companies should therefore take into consideration traveler's

background and offer food which offers local food but also has some similarities to their own food habits and culture. Trying new experiences has a positive impact on the satisfaction of a traveler and local food also influences travelers' intentions on re-visiting a destination and the likelihood of recommending that destination, even when local food would be in a minor part of visitors' activities and experiences in the destination. (Ji, Wong, Eves & Scarles 2016, 387-396.) It also seems that all kinds of destinations can create food related, memorable experiences and market them. Travelers are often happy to share their experiences forward and this can affect the future traveling plans of both the listener and storyteller. Culinary experiences can attract to another visit. Compared to other target of visit's restaurants, bars and other food related destination offer more reasons to re-visit and enjoy food, service, environment or to try experience something new. (Stone, Soulard & Migacz 2017.)

Traveling experiences don't limit into traveling days anymore. Experience starts already from the planning stage of the trip: inspiration, information searching, comparing and reservations. Experience ends when after the trip traveler reminisces, goes through pictures and shares their experience for example in social media (Figure 4.). This has also changed marketing of traveling. Food travel has always been experience-based, but now serious emotions are involved. More and more demanding travelers seek for authentic and once-in-a-life-time experiences. Food for many is no longer just a physical need to be fulfilled but a desired activity. Food travel products aim to give a multi-sense experience, and a food experience with all five senses: touch, sight, hearing, smell, and taste. Emotions must also take into consideration because they affect senses. For example, stress can make food taste bitter. Consumers seek for different emotions which are closely related to pleasure. (UNWTO 2019b.)

Emotions strengthen and advance the memorability of an experience. The most lasting memories awake pleasant and deep emotions at multiple stages of a trip such as admiration and amazement. In the remembering part experience is often described as "unbelievable" or "once-in-a-lifetime experience." (Williams et al. 2019.) Time is the currency of experiences. The more time the visitor spends within the company or service, the more money they spend on it. Getting customer attention in fierce full competition is not easy. Mobile applications, social media and all other service providers are all competing of the same customers time and attention. Often social media, phone and game applications win these battles. Customers spend nowadays less time and money on shopping and appreciate more memorable experiences. They also prefer to spend their money on experiences instead of traditional shopping. (Pine II & Gilmore 2020, 39-55.)

1.5 Food travellers and traveler profiles

Who are the targeted travelers of Finnish food travel? Food travel can be interpreted through understanding who food travelers are and what are their motives and needs. Gastronomy in a specific area can also be the main reason to travel or it can be desired experience while travelling. Gastronomy can also be secondary motive to travelling but it offers a significant added value to the traveling experience. If a traveler only eats to satisfy their physical hunger, that person is not considered a food traveler. (UNWTO 2019b.) Traveling is changing from product and service dominant traveling into so called collectively created, experience-based traveling where travelers motives are highlighted. This also guides growing food travel market segment. Food travelers are not the most average travelers since they have quite high expectations for their experiences. The better food travelers' expectations are met with the company's brand promise and offering, the more motivated the food travelers are to choose activity and the more positive are the word-of-mouth reactions. (Williams et al. 2019.)

From all travelers as much as 96 % are food travelers and they have participated in a food or drink related experience within the past year and not just visited a restaurant. Traveler might have visited a local cooking school, participated a wine tasting at a farm or small brewery or shopped in a specialty food store. Food travelers like to try local, famous delicatesses. Via food travelling a traveler can learn about the destination places food culture and customs. Food traveler wants to learn about their destination and they like stories and history. They are curious adventurers who travel near and far to participate in food- and drink experiences. Gourmet seekers and so called "Foodies" are a minority. (WFTA 2019b.) "Foodie" is a person who is passionately interested in food in long term. They are not however, food professionals. Foodie wants to learn about food and food is their number one motive for travelling. (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie 2016.)

Food Travel Monitor 2020 -research defines 13 different food traveler profiles. Three most common food traveler types are eclectic travelers, authenticity seekers and innovative travelers. Food travelers expect food travel destination being in incentive environment which offers experiences, and possibilities to learn and try new flavors. Positive food- and drink experiences get travelers also to return to the destination more likely. (WFTA 2020.) Food travelers are estimated to spend approximately 25% of their budget to food and drinks depending on the price level of products in the destination. In more expensive destinations the budget can be 35% and in cheaper destination it can be as low as 15% of the budget. "Foodies" spend more money on food than average food traveler. (WFTA 2020.)

Regardless of age, nationality or income, food travelers plan their travelling more, stay longer in their travels and spend more money while travelling. Encounter which includes learning of local

food and food culture and advances relationship of the food traveler, and the host person are more important than polished services and small gifts. (Williams et al. 2019.) Skift Travel Research – suggests that Chinese millennials between 23-38 years and Gen Z-generation (16-22 years) are interested in new, local food and culture. They also act as motivators to go on a trip. They wish to experience foreign flavors; local foods and they are interested in nature. All millennials and Gen Z-generations in all countries spent most money on food- and drink experiences. (Carty 2019.)

According to WFTA (2020) 63 % of the millennials gravitates to socially responsible restaurants. Skift Travel Research claims that to Chinese and Indian people sustainability (environment/sociocultural) issues especially affect choosing travelling destination. Regardless, nobody in the research was ready to pay extra for sustainability. (Carty 2019.)



Figure 3. Six motive-based customer segments (Visit Finland 2018 & Kuvapankki 2022)

Visit Finland has defined six motive-based customer segments (Figure 3.), traveler profiles, which are meaningful to travelling to Finland. These profiles, which are: “nature wonder hunters, nature hedonists, active adventurers, Finnish luxury seekers, city breakers and searchers of authenticity” have a common factor; the will to join in nature experiences. (Visit Finland 2018.) Finnish food travel offers interesting services and program to most of them. Nature is also the source for clean, fresh food to eat. So called “every mans’ right” in Finnish forests means that berries and mushrooms are available to not just all Finns but also all foreigners to be picked and eaten. Via food

travelers get to know local not just the food but also local habits and culture including holidays and diverse areas.

“Nature wonder hunters” motive for travelling is peace in the nature and “charging batteries”. They seek for experiences in the nature, beautiful sceneries, berry, and mushroom picking. “Finnish luxury seekers” motive for travelling is comprehensive well-being and “own time”. They are interested in the clean nature of Finland, clean ingredients, and well-being services. Especially Chinese travelers seek for luxury. For “City breakers” the cities in Finland with their restaurants, events with food services all over the country offer city- and food experiences. “Authenticity searchers” are interested in local way of life and local food culture. 22% of all travelers are “authenticity searchers”. (Visit Finland 2018; Hungry for Finland 2020a.) Finland offers interesting circumstances for international food travelers no matter which background they come from.

Before COVID-19 pandemic in 2018 Russians were the biggest group of foreigners in Finland with 826 000 overnight stays. Second biggest group were the Germans with over 628 000 overnight stays, which had increased 0,9% from previous year. British travelers were third most common group with 593 000 overnight stays and 1,2% increase from previous year and Swedish people were left on the fourth biggest group with their 560 000 overnight stays. (Statistic Finland 2018.) One of the biggest growth numbers were travelers from USA. (Visit Finland 2019a.) American travelers are also interested in Finnish local food and way of life. Americans imagine Finland being a country where one can enjoy culinary experiences and local delicacies. (Visit Finland 2020a.)

Food travelers are more and more aware of responsibility issues and seek for more clean food items, organic and locally produced food products, as well as berries and vegetables. Especially in the Nordic countries there are responsibly produced food communities and cooperatives which value local, clean food items, respect traditions and local culture. (Lab8 2019.) Over half of the free time travelers seeks to eat in places which are sociably responsible. Food Travel Monitor 2020 -research revealed that this number is especially high (63%) among Millennials. From the consumer perspective sustainable development includes for example usage of responsibly produced food items, favoring local food items in sales, nature friendly operations and diminishing food waste. (WFTA 2020; Visit Finland 2019c.) Food travelers don't wish to have ready programs set up for them, but they wish to participate, experience local living, and therefore get once-in-a-lifetime experiences. It would be beneficial for food travel operators to offer travelers sustainable activities such as cleaning local lake from fish and use it in cooking. A traveler first gets to participate in fishing, cooking, and helping clean up lake water. (Melissen & Sauer 2019, 90-91.) Intangible, authentic food culture offers travelers experiences and a reason for visiting. Participating in cooking gives the opportunity to learn about local food traditions. Participating personally adds feeling and deepens emotional effect of food travelling. Appeal is increased through mystique of traditional recipes

and emphasizing the importance of ingredient authenticity of raw materials. Protecting local food culture, traditional customs, and improvement of quality of local actors strengthens local food culture, which in turn grows customer satisfaction and sustainability which can then be again used in marketing. Travelers will buy more local food products, recommend destination to others, and revisit the place. Sustainable travelling experiences effect positively especially in the countryside destination vitality by increasing sociocultural and economic development of destinations. (Zhang, Chen & Hu 2019.) This positive circle is called sustainable circle of food travelling. (Figure 4.)



Figure 4. Sustainable circle of food travelling

It has been acknowledged for a long time that since all travelers eat, food products and services play a crucial role in tourism sector (Boniface, 2003, 27). Food traveler on another hand has a more precise and targeted interest towards food as a main factor in the travelling experience. To the food tourist, food is identity, and this identity is shaped by authenticity and hedonistic experiences. (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte 2016.) Food Tourism Strategy in Finland 2020-2028 explains it as: “Food traveler’s first motive for travelling is food and food related activities”. In research conducted by WFTA in 2016 total of 49% of the travelers categorized themselves as “Food travelers”. In similar research conducted in 2020 a total of 86% of the travelers said that food and beverages have a great effect on the decision on which destination is chosen. Travelers interested in food are clearly a significantly growing group of travelers for all businesses in the tourism industry. (Visit Finland 2020.)

Visit Finland conducted online research in 2017 among tourists who had either visited Scandinavia during the past year or were planning to visit Scandinavia during the upcoming year. Markets chosen for research were China, Japan, UK and Germany. Traveler numbers from these countries had been significantly growing which was the reason they were chosen. From these travelers most interest towards food showed two segments: "City Breakers and Authentic Lifestyle Seekers". "City Breakers" represent 22% of global tourists, from which 28% were considering visiting Finland in this research. They are motivated by city experiences and tourist attractions, they seek for urban culture, museums, design districts, food culture, events, and shopping possibilities. "Authentic Lifestyle Seekers" on the other hand represent 22% of all travelers globally and 29% of them in this study were considering traveling to Finland. They wish to get to know local lifestyle and they are interested in museums, events, festivals, concerts, nature, sauna, food culture, cultural attractions, design districts and special accommodations. Authentic Lifestyle Seekers were the biggest segment in both Germans and British travelers. (Visit Finland 2017).

Gastro-tourism seems to be growing steadily around the world; The Italian Food and Wine Tourism Report 2019 shows an increase of 48% compared to 2017 in terms of interest in gastro-tourism in Italy, especially concerning Italian domestic tourists. This confirms that almost all the Italians are looking for activities which genuinely describe the gastronomic history of a destination. (Tourism Review 2019.) In Japan 2017 a report on gastronomy tourism showed that Japan had 28.7 million international visitors. 71.2% of the visitors stated being interested in "eating Japanese meals" in Japan. (UNWTO 2017.) There are many different types of culinary tourists which can be categorized in more specific subgroups of culinary tourists based on their personal interests. Under term "culinary tourist" belongs a vast variety of different food interests which vary depending on the angle and perspective these travelers have on food: budget food travelers, authenticity seekers, adventurous food travelers, Michelin-guide oriented foodies and so on. (Wolf 2016.) However, the main type of culinary tourist is considered being high-spending and well-educated (Stanley & Stanley 2015, 24; Boniface 2003, 20; Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte 2016) who lives longer and is concerned about their health and well-being (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte 2016).

Culinary tourists are likely to return to their travelling destinations and they are eager to spread the good word around them to their friends, relatives as well as in the social media (Stanley & Stanley 2015, 24). Spenditure of the culinary tourists also tend to benefit more strongly specifically local economy, since culinary tourists are mainly interested in experiencing the products and services which are unique to that destination. Money spent in a local food market is therefore more likely to end up in the pockets of the farmers. (Stanley & Stanley 2015, 24-25.)

Food travelers make social and cultural statements through their choices of food and drink products and selection of shops, restaurants, and other contextual environment (Boniface 2003, 28).

This helps to separate different sectors of customers for example people whose focus is on gourmet food or massive drinking and people who wish to change their measured life for over-indulgence while on holiday (Boniface 2003, 20). Food travelers are interested in sustainability and ethics as presented in Food tourism trends 2020 blog (Havas, Adamsson, Huff & Moilanen) stating that conscious food tourism is a future trend due to people being more interested in sustainability in their everyday lives and therefore also in their travelling choices. Countries, cities, and chefs all want to now offer ethically sustainable, local food. Travelers wish to engage in “live like locals” experiences.

Growing food tourism trends recognized are authenticity and the significance of locality. The role of food is growing in an authentic experience because of the search for authenticity which is continuing. Instead of “International cuisines” many destinations nowadays offer local, traditional food. The trend showcases itself in the rising numbers of tourists attending local cooking schools, amounts of street food vendors and in popularity of food walks arranged by locals. (Havas et al. 2020.) Generations born between early 1980’s and mid-90’s, so called “Millennials” are recognized especially searching for memorable experiences. Well-prepared, ecological, and ethical food plays a significant role in this. Generation Z (born after 1996) is expected to be “The Super Foodie Customers”. (Havas et al. 2020.)

According to Yeoman and McMahon (2016) tomorrow’s food tourist wants “dynamic escapist experiences but at the same time social responsibility and authenticity”. Food tourists are and will continue being excellent at using social networks tools to search for better deals, creating communities, being informed and influence others. Future tourists want to experience in several ways, reflecting increasing aspirations and high expectations. The change of luxury into exclusiveness increases the importance of cultural and social capital, as this is how tourists talk about destinations and their experiences. The importance of cultural capital defines new identities as well as new status and it will eventually become the critical currency of food conversations such as “have you been to Heston Blumenthal’s Fat Duck Restaurant or the Blue Oyster in Los Angeles?” (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte 2016.)

2. Sustainability in future travel

The world is developing and changing rapidly. There are different methods to predict future changes ahead are such as scenarios, trend analysis and forecasts. Current megatrends and directions effect on societies and traveling sector. Technology will merge within everything in future using energy, electricity. The world faces massive concerns at the same time concerning wastage issues and energy resources. (Sitra 2020.) World population is estimated to reach 9 billion by 2040. Urbanization continues and in 2040 already 64% of the population lives in the cities. In 2040 there are 1,5 billion millennials. (Bremner 2020.)

Target travelling groups are more diverse and prospering elderly people also will travel more. In 2050 it is estimated that the amount of people over 60 reaches 2,1 billion. (Skift 2020.) Middle class is soon the largest part of society, more people live in the cities and the nature becomes unfamiliar to most. Sexual minorities are a growing traveler segment as well as three generations travelling together since trips with grandparents and grandchildren become more common. (TEM 2019.) Experience seeking, luxury, wellness, authenticity searching, different cultures, digitality and social media presence are trends which effect travelling industry. Growing sharing platform industries such as Airbnb bring new actors on the field. International, multilingual digital presence is crucial. Technology and digitalization together with sustainable development play crucial roles in the future development of travelling industry. (TEM 2019.)

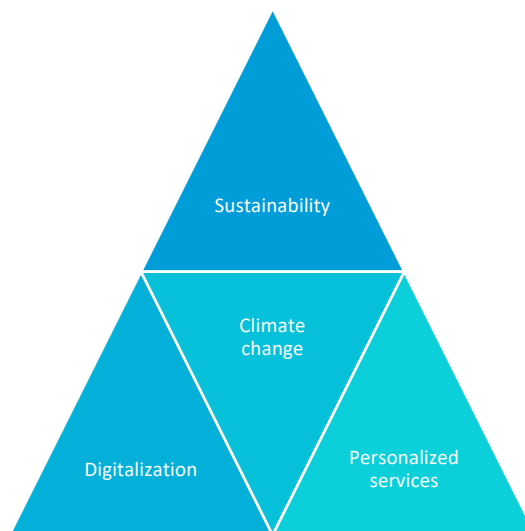


Figure 5. Forces impacting traveling (Bremner 2020)

In the next decades what impacts the view on traveling the most are digitalization, personalized services, climate change and sustainability (Figure 5.). Knowledge and concern about environmental issues will continue to grow phenomena such as “Flight shame”. (Bremner 2020.) Travelers in near future are already more aware of target destinations food products. Millennials and Gen Z

generations seek food- and drink experiences. Food and travel programs on TV and in internet such as YouTube channels and social media posts are more and more popular and lead and encourage into food travelling and food travel experiences. Food travel entrepreneurs invest more and more into sustainable development. The origin of food products, cleanness of the raw ingredients and certified organic products are more in focus. (WFTA 2020.)

Sustainability is a growing trend in Finland as well as in the world. Environmental issues such as micro plastics, recycling, cutting down food waste, global warming and carbon emissions are growingly in the headlines in the media. Travelers are more and more aware of the environmental impacts of travelling and they pay attention to sustainability issues starting from the planning phase when deciding destination. Carbon emissions which speed up climate change are caused by many factors such as air transport, bus transports and so on. Accommodation industry uses often non-renewable energy sources for many of their functions such as heating and hot water. Poor cleaning of sewage or releasing them in the nature pollutes land, beaches, and natural water resources. Collecting waste and trash in general is a massive problem in many travelling destinations. Tourism water consumption is often multiple compared to locals and uncontrolled growth of tourist numbers and poor planning increases the destroying of historical places and disappearing of natural plants and animals. Travelling has been noticed also to increase criminality and at its worst tourism changes local values, customs and furthers disappearance of local traditions. (UNWTO 2018.)

Sustainability includes three dimensions; environmental, economic, and socio-cultural perspectives. When travelling industry is sustainably planned and executed, it offers work and prosperity and increase the living conditions of people and maintains local culture and preserving its environment and nature. (UNWTO 2019c.) In travelling industry, a sustainably operating company is a profitable company which takes into consideration direct and indirect financial, environmental, and sociocultural effect on the surrounding society. (Business Finland 2019a.) UNWTO has created instructions for sustainable development in travelling industry which follows the line of Agenda 2030, action plan for sustainable development. The One Planet Sustainable Tourism Program aims to forward sustainable travelling and its development highlighting especially responsible consumption and production, taking care of nature, decreasing waste, and taking into consideration climate change and nature's diversity. (UNWTO 2019c.)

Sustainability and storytelling are strong themes and trends globally, also in Finland. These terms also come up in Hungry for Finland Food Travel Competition Food and travel competition 2021 questions. Sustainable business and communicating it to their customers are a prerequisite to competitive business. Research also reveals that the companies who operate responsibly have more satisfied customers who also feel the service is of better quality. (Business Finland 2019a.)

Government of Finland invests in sustainable development in travelling industry. Finnish Strategy for Travelling 2020-2028 goal is to be the most sustainably growing Nordic travelling destination. Development actions of the strategy highlight responsible business, digitalization, as well as in accessibility development and ensuring competitive environment for operations. Strong co-operation between different branches helps growing travelling sustainably. Developing travelling benefits local inhabitants, develops infrastructure by creating services and traffic connections helping other business operations to progress. (TEM 2019.) Investing in sustainable development is more and more important in Finland because of Finnish nature based travelling products which are based on winter and snow, which are especially vulnerable to climate change. Travelling operators can join Visit Finland's Sustainable Travel Finland- program, accomplish sustainable travelling development path and earn a Sustainable Travel Finland- responsibility badge. Companies also receive newest information concerning sustainable development and a continuous development model. In addition, Visit Finland offers businesses which are part of sustainability program support in marketing and visibility in different channels. (Business Finland 2019b.)

Travelling industry employs over 230 million people in the world, directly or indirectly. Service- and travelling field offers many young people and women their first job. (UNWTO 2019.) Companies which operate responsibly employ with their actions local people directly or indirectly for example as co-operatives and take care of their personnel's working conditions and rights. All operations obey equal rights and competence among their staff as well as their customers. (Visit Finland 2019c.) Food travelling can affect the growth of development for example in the countryside, bring financial growth, creation of jobs as well as employ disabled or long-term unemployed people. (Melissen & Sauer 2019.) Food travelling offers potential to transfer seasonal travelling into all-year-around travelling which also improves local employment. (UNWTO 2019.)

In future there will be more attention and focus on sustainability in travelling. Mass tourism time might be over and tourism destination might get maximum visitor limits set. (Müller 2020.) To prevent climate change travelling sector must diminish the use of energy throughout the whole sector. Visitation times should be pushed to be longer, and more nature friendly transportation methods should be encouraged. One example is rail traffic with remarkably smaller carbon emissions compared to the emissions of flying. New technology, usage of renewable energy resources improves energy efficiency and creates economic benefits. (UNWTO 2018.) Local co-operation can bring synergy; local food travelling company may participate in the costs of setting up solar panels and buy surplus energy if their own buildings are not suitable for producing solar energy. (Melissen & Sauer 2019.) Food travelling operators act responsibly when they pay attention to recycling, separation of waste, food waste or its usage and takes advantage of seasonal, local berries and vegetables. (Melissen & Sauer; Visit Finland 2019a; WFTA 2020.) Surplus food can be given away to

local welfare charitable organizations. Communication and guidance of visitors concerning recycling and cutting down food waste may affect the amount of food left over of the customers. Knowledge about the preferences and allergies before food services also helps to diminish food waste. (Melissen & Sauer 2019.)

Covid-pandemic has affected everything, including food travelling. Research after COVID estimates that travelers are still interested in local food and local food culture (Lab8 2022; Connelly 2020.) Sustainability, health, and security issues become more and more important in future. (Lab8 2022) New products which do not require physical contact are being innovated which creates opportunities to small and agile food travel companies. Luxury gourmet products on another hand are estimated to have less participants and the growth on this sector is estimated to slow down. Younger travelers are starting their food travels more slowly than expected. (Connelly 2020.)

Before the Covid-pandemic Food Travel Monitor 2020 Research predicted different restaurant food experiences growing most rapidly in food travel sector where travelers wish was to experience once in a lifetime experience in a fine dining restaurant, eat or drink in a famous restaurant or bar and eat for example street food from a food truck. (WFTA 2020.) More and more travelers avoid large or popular destinations and chooses locally produced, artisan products. Food markets and food halls where local food items are sold are top destinations of food travelers and food walks and paths led by locals are growing interest. (Lab8 2019.) Food travel interest is divided in near future more and more in three main sectors: manufacturing, consumption and travelling directions.

Food travelers interested in production will increase their visits to for example farms and fisheries. Interest towards distilleries and small breweries will increase. Cooking courses are growing interest and street food, food trucks, home visits, specialty stores, food and drink festivals gourmet experiences will increase their offerings. Interest towards active experiences such as combining sports and food, or several day food or drink trips increase their popularity. (WFTA 2020; Lab8 2022.)

Everyday life of people is busy, and time is limited. Mini-vacations, micro-travels, staycations, and stop-over-combinations is estimated becoming more popular. Countries previously not so popular and under-appreciated food travel destinations are growing interest. Travelers want to experience new and different experiences. Short so called micro-food-travels offer this kind of opportunities. Short trips are also done together with several generations, with a big family or entourage. Targets of interest and activities can be different from one another but around a dinner table experiences and wonders are shared and new experiences can be participated together. Food travel destinations must take into consideration traveler families and their differing interests also in their activity and program offerings. People travelling alone will increase popularity and these "solo-travelers" also need tailored activities for them. Most people find eating alone boring and eating together

more joyful. Cooking courses for singles are more common also. Cooking in local style is inspiring and offers a way to learn about the destination country and its culture. Internet platforms offer a growing selection of combinations of a single traveler and a local home cook, where dinner is cooked and eaten together. (Lab8 2019; Lab8 2020.)

Food and wellbeing are connected. Healthy food increases wellbeing and “Well-being travelling” as a travel marketing trend continuous to grow and it will overtake food travelling. When in the past people would travel to a destination because of food, now they are more likely to seek well-being and activity vacation with healthy food. (Barrie 2019.) “Sport & Food” travelling will continue to increase. Sport activities are participated alone or in a group for example a group cycles several kilometers and afterwards enjoys a healthy dinner. (Lab8 2019.) Growing demand for Wellness travels has many reasons: middle age issues, crisis, loneliness, or self-seeking for example. Mindfulness travels and yoga-travels are also increasing their popularity. Travellers seek experiences but they also look for peace of mind, deliberation of life or self-examination. (Skift 2020.) While wellness and food travelling are growing in the world Finnish food cleanness and its well-being enhancing abilities can be highlighted. Finnish food and nature are clean and healthy. Nature is calming. Wondering in the forest has a science based proven effect on lowering stress levels. (Visit Finland 2019b.)

2.1 Storytelling as a strategy

Stories are used in communications, marketing, sales, and services. They are especially used in leading companies and organizations, strategies, and staff training. Stories convey messages about change or for example sustainability. Storytelling can be used by companies to be distinguished from other companies. Things told in a storytelling way stay in mind and memory more easily. Stories can be used to distinguish a company from others and touching stories which awake emotions can motivate and engage both personnel and customers. (Rauhala & Vikström 2014, 30-31.) Stories about companies can be divided into different stories: “vision-, value-, service-, product-, customer-, reference-, background-, or birth story (Kalliomäki 2014,22-26).

Founding a company or major turns in operations, services offered, or customer experiences operate as motifs. Channels for storytelling must be chosen correctly and carefully consider who the story is told to, who is the target for example the customer. Also, every story needs a functional structure. (Rauhala & Vikström 2014.) Storyline is the heart of the story, and it must hold in its grip and surprise. Story has living, emotional characters to which the listener can identify with and feel empathy. Stories often have a hero, who has a real and meaningful challenge or hardship and in the end the hero overcomes his/her challenge and tension is released. Story has a comprehensive message or theme and an emotional connection to the brand. (Aaker 2018, 123-126.)

Story elements which are based on real happenings and positive emotions increase the likelihood of the story being remembered and the likelihood of visiting. Traveling destinations use stories to attract visitors. Story, which tells about a destination must include facts or pieces of information, so that the story is convincing and real to the traveler. Story which includes positive emotions helps to remember destination better increases willingness to visit destination. Audiovisual elements: videos, pictures and sound help to remember a story and therefore also increases the likelihood of visiting. Pictures of a food travel destination which are in line with the story operate as effective memory refreshers. (Kim & Youn 2016.) Storytelling offers new experiences and dimensions to food travelling by awakening emotions. Dramatic theater-dinners are in favor. Food travelers want to meet Chefs and hear their stories about food, its origin, how ideas were developed for a dish or about the personal philosophy of the chef. (Lab8 2019.) People and the stories they tell make the destination and the experiences it offers more attractive and alive. Businesses in travel field are encouraged to storytelling, where local food could operate as the messenger, Chefs as travelling ambassadors and so on. Storytelling in food traveling must be developed and new perspectives to strengthen and regenerate must be searched. (UNWTO 2019b.) Storytelling can create a strong and distinctive identity to a place or region. Storytelling requires strategic planning: marketing- and communication strategies, digital communication tools and correct channels. Virtual experiences and digital storytelling create meaningfulness and value also to the businesses in travelling sector, since digitality allows collecting information. Human- and artificial intelligence can be used to impact travelers wishes and choices. Travelers plan their visits based on newest trends, but they also wish to have individualized, distinctive experiences. Storytelling can affect the attractiveness of a destination, commit traveler, and keep local stories, culture, and history vital and healthy. (Bassano, Barile, Picciocchi, Spohrer, Iandolo & Fisk 2019.) Food can be used to create a brand to an area, whose strategy is connected to gastronomy in the area, values, and country brand. Story can present a destination creatively and inspiringly and target customers in line with travel strategy and other operators in the area. (UNWTO 2019b.)

Finnish food travel has an integral story defined already in the first Food Travel Strategy 2015-2020. With a story information is told concerning Finnish food travel highlighting pull-factors and strengths of Finnish food. These are for example authenticity, arctic, traditions, Nordic Cuisine with influence from both east and west. Food travel project has produced food travel industry freely usable material (leaflets) and a common story-video. (Hungry for Finland 2020b.)

2.2 Sustainable tourism

World Tourism Organization describes sustainable tourism as "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities". Tourism is in the middle of incredible

growth and transformation (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte 2016.) The growth from 50 million tourists in the 1950s into 1.2 billion international tourist arrivals in 2015 makes tourism undoubtedly one of the biggest and fastest expanding economic sectors in the world. Since natural and cultural heritage are considered tourism's greatest assets, it is obvious that sustainability has become an indispensable dimension of tourism. Sustainability must go hand in hand with tourism growth to ensure viability, wealth creation and empowering benefits for communities around the world. (UNWTO 2021). Sustainable development is in focus in all the elements of travelling and it is also a trend in food travelling and travelers are interested in visiting restaurants which prepare food from locally produced, seasonal ingredients. (Lab8 2022).

Sustainable tourism must also make optimal use of environmental resources, maintain essential ecological processes, and help to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity. Sustainable tourism should also respect socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage as well as their traditional values and contribute to intercultural understanding and tolerance. Sustainable tourism also should help ensuring long-term economic operations, provide socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are distributed, including stable employment, income-earning opportunities, and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation. (UNWTO 2021).



Figure 6. Dimensions of sustainability (Everett 2016, UNWTO 2019)

Three dimensions of sustainability are environmental, economic, and social dimensions (Figure 6). Each of these dimensions has different impacts within food tourism. Environmental impacts are strongly connected to the traveling methods of the consumers such as flying, driving by cars and so on. Other major impacts on the environment come from farming, food preparation, seasonality, transportation, packaging, and waste management. (Everett 2016, 314.) Economic sustainability is enhanced by the direct income earned by food producers, employment, and entrepreneurship (Everett 2016, 316). Food tourism products and experiences contribute to sustainability as for example farmers' market support for local production, bringing stable income and can portray authenticity and traditions (Everett 2016, 226).

Food production has a strong connection to sustainability. “Food and drinks” are some of the categories with the biggest environmental impact in tourism alongside with transportation and housing. Within this “Food and drinks” category especially meat, meat products and dairy products have the greatest environmental impact. (Tukker et al. 2006, 15-17.) Local food products are often considered more sustainable than global products. This is supported by a study where processed food products were compared along a local-global continuum. (Schmitt et al. 2017) Broad scope was maintained in terms of sustainability assessment. Results showed that the most global products in all sectors appear last in the rankings (cheese, bread, ham, and wine).

However, global products also had strengths especially in low prices and lower greenhouse gas emissions which are considered important in relevance. They are very important in terms of food security and climate change and prevent a clear “local is best” message and demonstrate the importance of assessments that account for different perspectives and social values. The analysis presented support to the argument that local processed food products are more sustainable than global products. The main factors improving sustainability in local products are linked to localness criteria such as identity, know-how, size, and governance, more than distance. What was important was to recognize that local and global foods are not separate from each other but a part of the one food system. Case studies show that products often have mixed local-global value chain profiles. The only certainty is that improvement should be made and that measures are needed and necessary to make the whole food system greener and fairer. Research suggests focusing on how food is produced and consumed being more efficient and purposeful than focusing on where it comes from. (Schmitt et al. 2017, 346-359.)

Responsible food travelling can be considered including the same four main perspectives which are the same for all sustainability topics: environmental-, social-, economical- and cultural perspective (Figure 7.). Responsible food travelling considers environmental perspective for example by being ecological, lowering carbon footprint, offering climate friendly food, and using natural resources sparingly. Responsible food travelling also highlights social perspective by supporting diversity, cultural habits and promoting equality. Third aspect by responsible food travelling pays attention to cultural perspective and supports and strengthens traditions and customs, local development and by supporting respective and maintaining culture heritage usage.

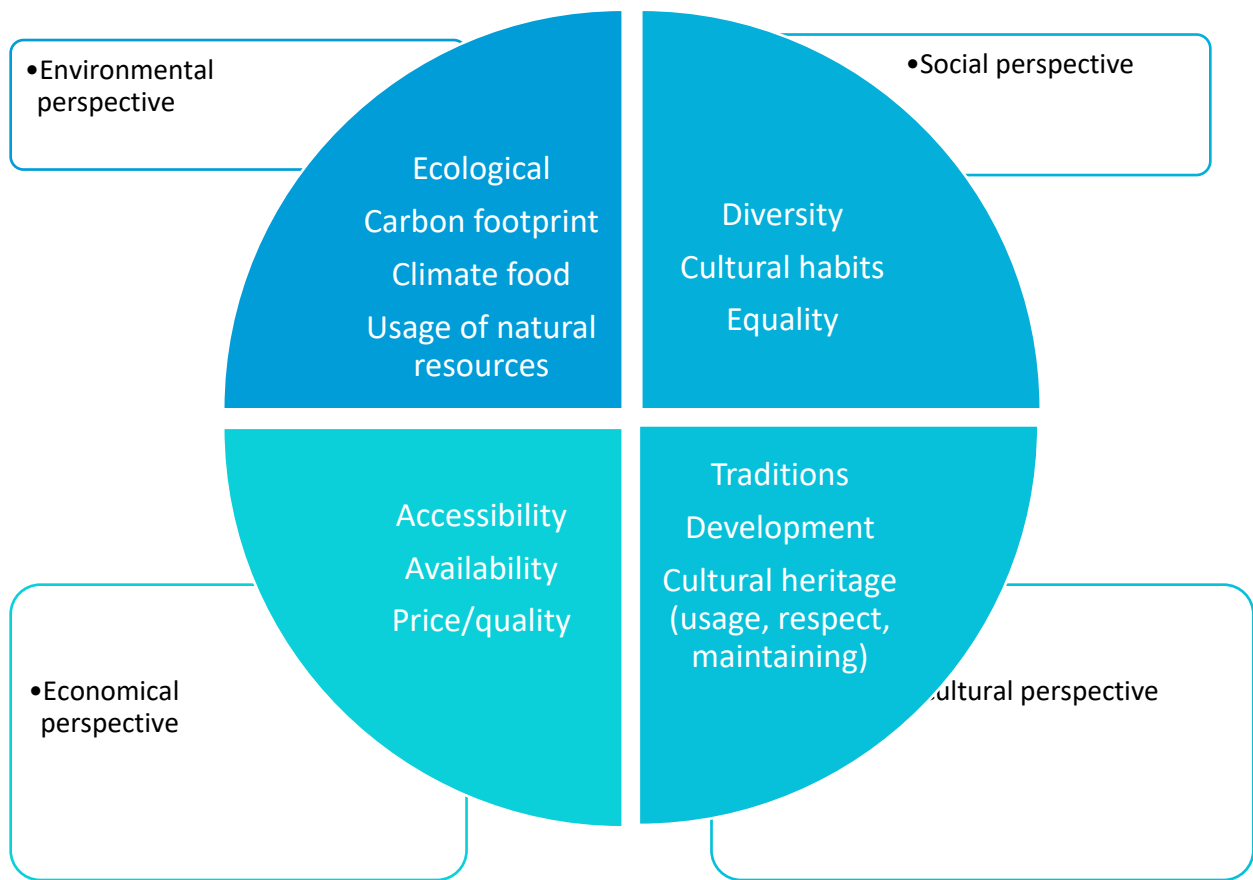


Figure 7. Responsible development in food travelling (Adamsson 2021)

3. Futures research and future of food travel

Futures studies is the systematic study of possible, probable, and preferable futures including the worldviews and myths that underlie each future (World Futures Studies Federation 2022). The study of the future has moved from predicting and forecasting the future into mapping alternative futures, shaping desired futures and anticipation for emergence, such as embracing novelty, uncertainty, complexity, and emergence both at external collective levels and inner individual levels. Futures Studies is a scientific research field involving scholars and researchers across several disciplines.

The development of the futures studies field can be characterized different ways. One contextual approach is to identify five traditions currently in the field by World Futures Studies Federation (2022), each of which represents different ideological underpinnings:

- The empirical-positivist tradition, focusing on trend analysis and prediction, originated in the USA. Supported by the formation of the World Future Society in the 1960s.
- The critical-normative tradition originated in Europe. Grew out of a critique of perceived overly empirical approach to futures in the USA, which led to the foundation of the World Futures Studies Federation in the beginning of 1970s.
- The cultural-interpretive tradition which rose from the work of WFSF members who sought to include non-Western cultures and to invoke a deeper consideration of civilizational and planetary futures.
- The empowerment-activist, prospective, action research approach which began in Europe in the 1990s and which has been taken up by some Australian researchers.
- The integral/transdisciplinary futures approach, which is emerging. This approach appears to have potential for authentic multi-perspectival and planetary inclusion.

Futures research differs from foresight, despite being sometimes paralleled with it. Futures research is more extensive, conceptual, systematic, and academic approach. Foresight is more pragmatic and attached to actors' action such as corporate foresight or regional foresight which is used by for example cities and municipalities. Future orientated approaches are often bonded to each other, and foresight often uses many methods of futures research. Timespan of foresight is usually shorter than timespan in futures research, where phenomena observed is mainly observed with timespan of decades. Also, it is important to separate foresight from prediction, forecasting,

foretelling or prophesy which are usually not used in futures research. (Tulevaisuuden Tutkimuskeskus 2022).

Future cannot be predicted but future can be crafted (Talvela & Stenman 2012.) With active actions development can be led towards the goals which have been set to future beforehand. It is important nevertheless to clarify what kind of future is developed, to make sure everybody involved is rowing towards the same direction which increases the probability of actualization. Creating the future requires and starts in identifying present and its foundation. By investigating trends, transition powers, weak and strong signals allow to define a set of potential futures and from this a part of plausible futures. Also, “undesirable-futures” can be examined, make value choices which act as the base for searching and deciding which future is desired and pursued. (Talvela & Stenman 2012.)

3.1 Food travel development globally

Travelling sector was in strong growing phase before COVID-pandemic took over the tourism sector and interest towards food travelling was also increasing. All travelers eat and drink many times during their trip, and according to FoodTravel Monitor 2020 research 86% of travelers are especially interested in the food- and drink offerings or activities of their destination. To keep interest and growth towards food travelling growing in future must food travel destinations and products be developed and planned. (WFTA 2020.) Coherent, well-planned strategy is the most valuable tool for all operators in food travelling sector. Good strategy includes a plan and actions which develop food travelling in that region. United strategy helps the operations of the local small entrepreneurs concerning issues such as law or operating expenses and it encourages different food- and travel actors to co-operate. (WFTA 2019.)

Action planning and strategy planning must be as simple as possible and therefore Wolf has created a ten-step development guide. When planning food travel destination, it is crucial to get local stakeholders to take part in planning and in action. Open, honest communication concerning destination and its effects makes satisfying co-operation possible. Thorough calculations must be made-up, as well as financing plan and how measuring is performed. Good food travel product offers experiences and sticks to a traveler’s mind. Stories must be used to wake up emotions and local people should be harnessed to help. Successful product is guaranteed by customer understanding and recognizing the needs and wishes of pursued target customers. Measuring customer satisfaction and value is crucial. Food travelers wish to experience real experiences, and flavors. It is important to carefully consider what local authenticity and authentic food means in that specific region and explain and market that to all stakeholders. (Wolf 2019.) All operations must be carefully planned, create a proper strategy based on customer research and so-called action plan. All

travelers eat, but not all travelers play golf or surf. Food travellers wish to participate and learn new things. Food activities with experiences stays in travelers mind so it is worth offering and selling memories. Emphasizing marketing and social media especially should be used and social media influencer in it. Followers are interested in visual stories and main character of a “story” can be a local cheesemaker or wine maker. Responsibly acting operator considers all stakeholders including environment and food travel operators should focus on increasing their quality and not quantity. Quality product ensures a satisfied customer, who uses more money in the destination and tell forward about the product. On the background a good food travel product has very good co-operators, continuously trained staff, and well-maintained economic situation. Product development must be continuous and therefore customer satisfaction enquiries should be performed habitually. (Wolf 2019.)

Food travel destination development and strategic work must be based on careful background and market research. Planning and action require in-debt, first-hand information about the target area and destination. This information can be collected from food travellers and entrepreneurs for example with interviews and questionnaires concerning for example motivation factors, activities, or customer satisfaction. Academic research performed concerning food travel can also be used. It is useful also to collect additional information such as what kind of services credit cards are used and comments and feedback from company’s homepages and other relevant web pages. Strategy of a food travel company including vision, mission and goals should be in line with the food travel strategy of that area and common travelling strategy. (UNWTO 2019b.)

3.2 Food travelling development in Finland

Food travelling development in Finland is based on the Finnish Travel Strategy and the Finnish Food Travel Strategy policy. Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has created a travelling strategy of Finland 2020-2028 at the end of 2019. Vision of the strategy is: “Distinctive and curiosity awakening Finland is the most sustainably growing destination in the Nordic countries” (TEM 2019). Mission is “Travelling is a responsible and growing service sector field which creates wellbeing and employment throughout Finland all-year-round” (TEM 2019). Goal is to increase sustainable travelling, digitalization of travelling, fluency of operative environment and ensuring accessibility to services. All development actions consider all aspects of sustainability. Effectiveness of the actions are followed up with different measuring methods such as travelling demand and travel related employment development. Travelling communication, marketing and product development is optimized. They are focused on themes such as food, nature and all-year-around strengthening travelling.

Travel marketing is divided in four major areas: Capital city area, Lake- Finland, Lapland, and Archipelago. Boosting communication can increase the brand of Travel Finland. Digitalization is highlighted via innovations, training, and product development. This way Finnish travelling services become more visible and easier to buy. (TEM 2019.) Under Business Finland operates Visit Finland which helps and supports companies in travelling industry with internationalization, marketing, and product development. Visit Finland co-operates with different companies and operators and the purpose of its operations is to strengthen the all-year-around travel offering, to build service networks around Finland and to help create quality products and services which are internationally interesting. Focus on product development is in digitalization and sustainable product selection. Visit Finland commissions customer research and other material to support entrepreneurs in travelling industry. (Visit Finland 2019d.) Finland is marketed in the media and food related international events as a high-class food travel destination. The mission is to strengthen the image of Finland as considerable food travelling country. (Visit Finland 2019e.) Finnish food travelling is being developed but there is a lot of work to be done. There are some good food travel products, but supply is limited and does not cover all of Finland. Food travelling services must be developed further concerning rising quality, by taking into consideration international travelers in services and by marketing Finnish food and drinks attractively to tour operators. Co-operation between travelling and food products is beneficial since food products are strongly connected to food travelling. (Business Finland 2018.)

Food travelling Strategy is a tool which aims to offer equipment for future travelling products and services. Since stated earlier by Talvela & Stenman (2012) that future can be crafted and with active actions development can be led towards the goals which have been set to future beforehand and this is exactly what Travel Strategy aims to do. It clarifies what kind of future travel should be developed and wants to make sure everybody involved is heading towards the same direction, and therefore increasing the probability of that future becoming reality.

3.3 Finnish Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028

Finnish Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028 is the second Food Travel Strategy, and it was published in September 2020. Strategy is developed to support development work of food travelling and as a tool to be used for operators and actors on traveling field. New Food Travel Strategy is an updated version of the previous one which was the first Food Travel Strategy of Finland 2015-2020. New steps have been set and goals have been brightened. Strategy 2020-2028 vision is: "Hungry for Finland. Food as an experiential, venal part of Finnish travelling, responsibly. "Strategy's mission is "The more chefs cooking, the tastier the soup - all-year-around co-operation!" Operators in travelling industry are encouraged to collaborate experiential and responsible food travelling products which are easy to access and easy to buy. (Hungry for Finland 2020a.)

Marketing core messages and curated product themes of the Finnish Food Strategy highlight Finnish diverse food culture, clean food, and innovative food products (Figure 8.). The aim of these is to strengthen the image of Finland as a food travelling country, and to guide product development.



Figure 8. Finnish Food Strategy themes (Hungry for Finland 2020)

"Taste of Place – Eat local and sense Finland!" -theme emphasizes local and traditional recipes, local food, natural resources, and Finnish way of life which can be used in product development. "Pure & Natural - Eat slow and healthy in Finland!" highlights healthy, clean ingredients and sustainable local food as well as wild food ("Villiruoka") from the nature. Third theme, "Cool & Creative - Eat wild and happy in Finland!" encourages entrepreneurs and companies to innovate new things, products, and services from the "diet of the happiest people on the planet" and to create new and easy-going services and products based on Finnish everyday life. In addition to the Strategy itself there is an updated version (2020) of "Product recommendations of Food travel" for all actors on the field to use freely as a support for product development. There is also "Our common story" video which presents Finnish Food travel with its special characters. (Hungry for Finland 2020a.)

Taste of place – Eat local and sense Finland! This product theme communicates local food culture, "Finnishness" and what Finnish lifestyle tastes like. Finnish Food Travel Strategy explains this theme communicating the rich, local, and regional food culture, where the impacts of the east and west can be freshly recognized. Theme has near produced food and wild food close by and the origin of the food is presented and made sure it is visible and clear to the customer. Travelers are

familiarized to” Finnishness” and to local way of life via food. Food culture and its” every man’s right” makes picking up your own ingredients by yourself freely. Mushrooms, berries, and wild herbs are part of this theme. Nordic and arctic is exotic. Short but intensive growing season creates powerful, intense flavors in Finnish products.” (Havas & Adamsson 2020.)

” Pure & Natural – Eat slow and healthy in Finland! This theme wishes to convey message about the cleanliness and greenness of Finland. Nature in Finland is very clean and clean food is good for your mind and body. Cleanliness offers peace and quality food products. Freshness of the arctic and uniqueness of wintery habitat is reminded of. Wild food is also the most appealing dimension of Finnish food travel. With cleanliness and wild food sustainability is interweaved. Food waste and minimal food production adds to climate friendliness and ecologicality. (Havas & Adamsson 2020.)

“Cool & Creative –Eat wild and happy in Finland!” Communicates the product being new, relaxed, and creative. Theme includes Finland being nominated as the happiest country in the world. Also, in 2022 Finland was chosen again as the happiest country in the World Happiness Report (World Happiness Report 2022.) Products in this theme are unique, cool, and courageous. Food adventures and experiences are important within this theme. Everyday things in Finland can be very exciting and exotic to travelers. Finland has many different kind and unique restaurants. Daring and courageous are strengths of Finnish food travel. (Havas & Adamsson 2020.)

The focus and goal of Food Travel Strategy is to develop food travelling. The most important strategic action areas for 2020-2023 are product development, responsible business, sales, marketing, communication, and co-operation. Entrepreneurs are encouraged to co-operate, creating new food travel products for example in a form of “food routes” or “food paths” and by creating new products by combining food and activities. Top of the line quality food travel products increases the conspicuousness of Finnish food culture and food travel and increases the general competitiveness of travelling and food sector. (Hungry for Finland 2020a.)

Actualization and realization are measured with for example different kinds of marketing and brand awareness research and by Food & Travel projects own, specifically determined measuring methods. Food Travel Competitions also act as a measuring tool for local business activity and product development. (Hungry for Finland 2020a.) Strategy is a joined effort of many different actors on the field including entrepreneurs, businesses, and students. Strategy work has included several layers of work in forms of workshops, expert interviews, questionnaires, benchmarking outside of Finland as well as conducting several Thesis projects and a comment round of the Food Strategy was also performed. Food Travel Strategy was funded from European agriculture development fund and with Haaga-Helias project coordination. (Hungry for Finland 2020a.)

3.4 Future of Food travel

According to the latest Trend Report food events are increasing globally and the popularity of food events has exponentially increased with the rising numbers of food travelling. In Europe there are hundreds of food events arranged ever year. More and more people travel to participate in local food experience and to connect with local culture. Travelers appreciate learning new things also concerning food. Food travel focuses now in real, authentic, exotic culinary experiences. Instead of traditional food destinations such as Italy or France travelers head now to Australia, Philippines, and south Africa to experience their local foods. Instead of fine dining restaurants these food travelers wonder around fairs and markets, festivals, street food vendors and local homes and search for local flavors and ingredients and cooked in local everyday kitchens. (Lab8 2022; Havas et al. 2020.)

Transformative travel is rapidly becoming popular, and it does not mean only travelling for leisure but also the aspiration to change the lives of others and oneself in some way. This change has already made a remarkable change in the diet of travelers and instead of unhealthy meals travelers who have joined the “eco-movement” favor places with nutritional, organic food. According to Booking.com 72% of travelers believe it is time to make more responsible choices in travelling sector to affect climate change. Food travelers search for once-in-a-lifetime memories which they want to share with their social circles via social media channels such as Instagram and Facebook. Immersive food experiences are being offered creatively since pandemic has thought consumers to search for unique, restaurant-like experiences. Hospitality field offers luxurious food and drink experiences which steps up the level of accommodation services with “Because you are worth it” message. Pandemic restricted food travelling but did not diminish the longing for new food experiences. As a result, many companies have started offering food packages to be delivered to homes to answer these needs. (Lab8 2022.)

Circular economy, cutting down food waste and diminishing carbon footprint has become more and more common and consumers seek for more ethical and ecological ways of living their lives which will inevitably lead to transformation of food industry. Sustainability are strong focus points in all travelling aspects, including food travelling. Making a positive change, near produced, seasonal, organic, and authentic food is now more and more interesting to the consumers. Shopping for food items from local markets and picking local food stuffs are now popular. (Lab8 2022.)

4. Research methods

Thesis is often a research or development project conducted with quantitative or qualitative methods. More than one method can also be used. Qualitative research aims to understand phenomena which is under research with different methods and to understand questions such as what, why and how. Qualitative methods are used when specific information in numbers is wanted from a vast amount of data. (Haaga-Helia 2018.) Which methods are used depends on the material which is being researched (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2010, 191-204). There are many ways to analyze qualitative materials. For text common was content analysis, which is based on coding performed by researcher. Researcher recognizes and gives names to content elements found in the material. (Kallinen & Kinnunen 2021.) Decision to choose qualitative research was natural due to the nature of the material, which was analyzed, the number of applicants was limited, and several open answers needed to be evaluated both content-wise but also as numeral unities. Therefore, content analysis was chosen. Qualitative research has a research problem which is solved using different research methods. Result of the research is only valid in that specific research and its objects, and the result is descriptive by nature. Researcher is the collector of the information and the main instrument for the analysis. Through the researcher real world filters and transforms into research results. Processes, meaning and understanding the phenomena via texts and pictures is in the center of the focus. (Kananen 2014, 19–20.) In this research qualitative research was chosen because it suits the research problem and the phenomena related to it. The aim is to get a comprehensive understanding of the possible futures of Finnish Food travel focusing on the content of the 2021 Food travel contest applications in development stage. Expressive or linguistic forms of the material are not analyzed. The aim was to find the information bits and pieces from the application materials which are relevant when aiming to build a proper image together with theoretic parts and my own experience combined of the possible futures of Finnish food travel. Qualitative content analysis focuses on which matters, subjects and themes material brings to surface and discusses (Hirsjärvi et al. 2010, 232-233) which is the reason it was chosen for this research. Coding for this qualitative content analysis is created from the elements found in the competition applications and directly originating from this material. The aim is to create a clear description of signs appearing in food travel development as a phenomenon with the perspective of Food travel competition development stage data. Data is arranged and systematically analyzed aiming to result a tight and comprehensive form without losing original content. After analyzing phase, the results are considered. Conclusions are then made based on the results.

4.1 Data gathering from National Food Travel Competition 2021 application forms

Data gathering includes National Food and Travel Competition 2021 application forms. Application questions were composed by strategic working group in Webropol-program and the material was in

Webropol. National Food Travel Competition 2021 (Hungry for Finland, 2021) was funded and judged by Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Business Finland/Visit Finland, The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK), Lomalaidun ry, Rural Women's Advisory Organization, D.O. Saimaa / Miksei Oy (Mikkeli), Finnish Chef Association, the City of Helsinki and it is coordinated by Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences. Competition aims to encourage companies in food and travelling industry to develop food travel services based on sustainability and locality and showcases innovative pioneers in the industry and searches for new food related experiences.

There has been a total of four National Food Travel Competitions and in 2021 was the 4th competition. Previous competitions were held in 2015, 2017 and 2019 (Hungry for Finland 2021). In 2021 Food & Travel Competition received a total of 77 applications from which 35 were in development stage at the time of the application. In comparison 2015 the competition also received 77 applications, in 2017 there was 73 applications and in 2019 there were 42 applications. Year 2021 was the first year when the separate section for products and services in development stage was introduced as a category in the competition. Material used in this research consists of the 35 applications which were defined being in development stage at the time 2021 Food Travel Competition. The aim of the competition is to strengthen product development in memorable food travel experiences, and it searches for the top-of-the-line products. It strengthens and deepens authentic cooperation on the field. Competition in 2021 was the 4th competition. (Hungry for Finland 2021.)

Competition time was 18.1.–18.3.2021. Finalists were published in June 2021 and 16.9.2021 the winner of the competition was officially announced. 77 applications were received and for this research the data consists of 35 products/services which were at the time in development stage. Relevant parts and components of information were searched and collected and rewritten into a tighter form and translated for further use. Material was then divided into classes and these classes were compared to each other and analyzed in relation to one another. Data was considered in their context, findings, and recognizing connections and relationships among the components. Linguistic or other form of expressions were not being analyzed in this research. Content analysis was text analysis which allowed arranging collected material for making conclusions based on it.

Hungry for Finland – Food travel Competition 2021 data gathering was collected with Webropol- from during 18.1. - 18.3.2021. Competition was open to everybody in the food travel sector: entrepreneurs, companies, organizations, and communities in Finland including Ahvenanmaa region to suggest their products or services related to food travel. To participate in the competition all applicants filled out a form on www.hungryforfinland.fi webpage. Applicants could participate in the competition with either an existing innovative food travel product or with an innovative product or service in development stage. Competition was announced and marketed in several channels.

Application form was not a traditional quantitative questionnaire, but it also collected qualitative data. Applicants were asked to explain their products and services also with open questions. There were totally 22 questions in the application form (Appendix 1.). Competition application form subjects followed the guidelines and topics of Finnish Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028. One of its purposes was to make the Food Travel Strategy itself and its topics more acquainted.

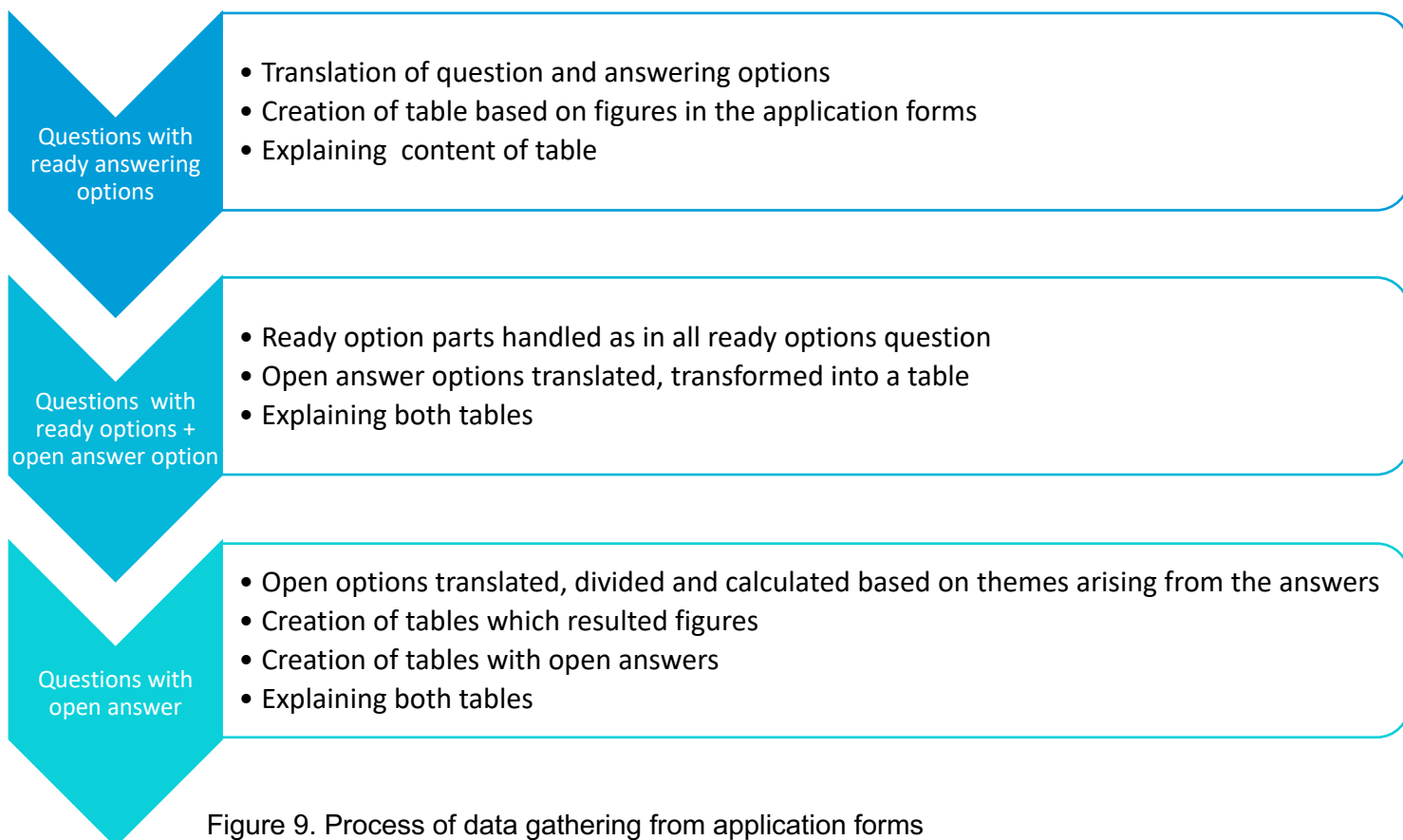
I started handling the applications in June 2021 by carefully reading all applications for the Food Travel Competition 2021 in development stage several times to create a general image of what kind of products and services were in the competition in development stage and what kind of material I had. I got access to the material originally in June 2021 and during June and July I was reading the applications and making notes. After reading the material carefully I started reading other related material and collecting material for theoretical part from beginning of June to the end of July. From August to December 2021 as well as from January to August 2022 I was reading articles concerning theoretical parts. I finally started writing everything together in the beginning of August 2022 and continued until the 20th of November. Originally, my plan was to conduct content analysis on the application forms of Food and Travel Competition 2021 products and services and then conduct expert interviews based on the findings of the applications. Due to time and scheduling challenges in October after discussing with commissioner decision was made not to conduct planned interviews due to limited time left, and instead adapting 5 Step Bold Vision Canvas method to create a "Finnish Food Travel 2030 Vision".

First, I copied and moved all the material from 35 application forms in Webropol into a text editor (Word) to get all texts in a form where I could store and work with them with easy access. It also offered a base to start coloring words based on topics. I wanted to let the application open texts surface the topics which naturally rose from the material to create themes of which I would calculate by appearance. I made notes and marked all calculate themes with different colors. For example, after reading all product descriptions carefully several times it was quite easy to find themes "nature" and "locality" in application product descriptions. To get data in numbers I re-read all descriptions again and colored first words with green marker when appearance of nature was included in the description. The same way, I colored next words in yellow if locality appeared in the description and so on. After coloring all four themes in the descriptions, I started calculating appearances.

National Food Travel Competition 2021 applications forms in development stage was originally 70 pages (21 854 words + tables) of material and after adding additional information from open answers and information behind links directing to company webpages 42 pages more material was discovered. 12 pages of information from company websites were considered (3227 words), and open question concerning product information included 16 pages (6155 words). Last open question

asking “Would you like to give additional information which should be considered, such as development plans” included 14 pages of material (5167 words). All together application material was 112 pages of material (36 403 words + tables). Application form had a total of 22 questions (Appendix 1.) to which participants answered. Not all applications included answers to all question but mostly application forms were adequately filled. I started by reading first each question at a time and then all answers to that question.

From all questions which were answered in figures, I used the scale of numbers and amounts in answers to create adequate table to present amounts and relations to each other for each option. I started coloring topics from open answer parts to get a clear image of all material and to find the key themes arising. Webropol in which the application form and answers were collected also was used for analysis, but only for collecting numbers. I couldn't use Webropol functions since all



applications except for one were in Finnish. Research I was conducting was in English, which required translating first all questions, then answering options and open answers in English to build tables in English and transferring material from the answers into the tables. Appendix material present material in their original form and language, except translations of questions which are in English. The parts I chose not to translate were Finnish names of the regions, following European Commission country compendium which states: “the EU’s Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics when referred to as such, are not translated” (European Union 2022.)

In each question I proceeded the same way. First, I translated the question and if there were answer options, I translated the options. I calculated numbers, created tables with these options and numbers, and then explained what that information in table presented. (Figure 9.) There were three kinds of questions in the application forms as presented in Figure 9. Firstly, there were questions with ready answering options. (1.) Secondly, there were questions with ready answering options + open answer option (2), and thirdly; there were open answer questions without any suggested answering options. Open answers were carefully read, reduced by summarizing, and summaries were then translated into English. Summaries were used to form groups with similar content which created larger theme groups. These theme groups I used for recognition and calculating appearance of subjects which were most visible in text to get numerical figures. From the beginning of September until 20th of November I went through material and wrote for 4-6 hours daily: reading, making notes, writing summaries, translating, and organizing material into a comprehensive form.

4.2 Further analysis by 5 Steps Bold Vision Canvas

5 Steps Vision Canvas is a visual tool originally by David Sibbet to create one page summary of strategic planning including vision statement, supports, threats and 5 Bold steps how to get there. It is a method that can be used to make a positive, future-oriented change in an organization when there is a will to go beyond writing paper visions and a wish to come to a shared agreement about what you are going to do together, and what steps you are going to take to get “there.” The 5 bold steps canvas is a tool to align teams inside an organization. (The Grove Consultants international, 2017.)

In this research 5 Steps Bold Vision canvas method is adapted to combine theoretical background of future food travelling with results of 2021 Food Travel Competition applications in development stage analysis and adding personal experience to create a Vision of “Future of Finnish food travel 2030” (Figure 10.). Key points from each of these three perspectives were chosen to create major themes around the Vision and to evolve a filter for story creation.

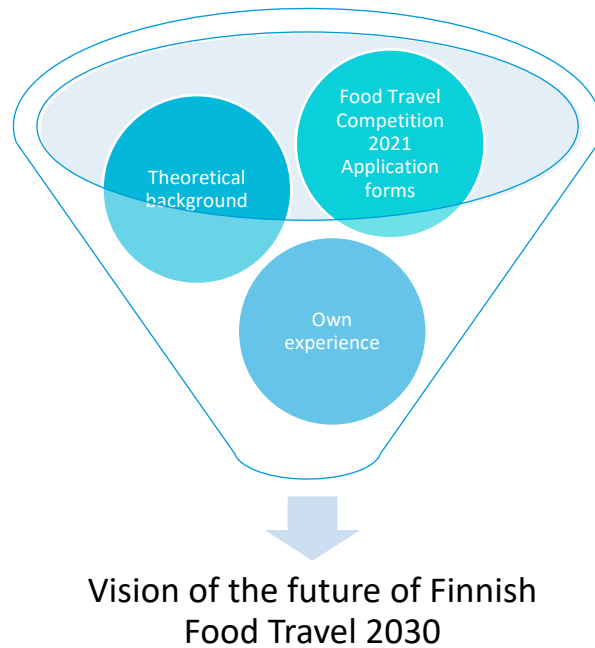


Figure 10. Process of Finnish Food Travel 2030 creation

This I approached by answering 5 Bold Vision Step process questions step by step to create framework for the vision.

Step 1: Vision Statement: What's your guiding food travel vision and mission?

Step 2: Essential Themes: What are the essential themes supporting your vision?

Step 3: Supports: What are the supports that enable you to reach your future?

Step 4: Challenges: What are the challenges that could potentially hinder you from reaching your future?

Step 5: 5 Bold Steps: What are the 5 bold steps to take to achieve your food travel vision?

After answering these questions, 5 bold steps were defined to present concrete actions towards achieving stated Vision. I started writing the story. The Story of Finnish Food travel 2030 offers an updated version to the story of Finland in 2028 in Food Travel Strategy.

5. Results

This part presents results of the application form of Food Travel Competition 2021 products and services in development stage. The results create an image of what kind of products and services were presented in the Food and Travel Competition 2021 in development stage. First, I describe the background information of applicants. Then I describe the products and services offered in detail and which parts of Finland they are from, and to which target groups the products and services are aimed for. I also explain what kind of strengths applicants believe their products and services have, what kind of quality systems are in use and how they handle customer feedback.

To understand the material, I started by first going through basic information of all applicants, what were the names of the products and services I had, what kind of organizations and companies were presenting their products. I started by going through material one application at a time and checked which product category each of the products stated they belonged to. Then I checked regional quantitative information. After these I started to consider themes within the information in the forms and their relation to the Finnish Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028. Some questions like question concerning product/service strengths gave numeral answers by how many chose each option, and some questions were answered with open answers and analyzed qualitatively with content analysis. Customer information was investigated quantitatively as well as targeted customers and pricing and profit information.

In the competition application form there were four open questions, questions number 2,7, 9 and 22. Also, five other questions had an open option in addition to ready options, questions 4,13,19, 20 and 21. Open questions were number 2 "Basic information" in which applicants stated in open answers the name of the company, name of the product/service participating in the competition, company email address, address, postal code and region, contact person, position of the contact person in the company and their email and phone number. Question number 7 was a question: "Description of product/service" where applicants were asked to add links to product page, picture material, video material, selling or distribution channel and social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat), if they had such. In question 9 applicants were asked to copy or add a link to their product/service card. Question 22 was an open answer question: "Would you like to tell something more about your product/service which should be considered by the evaluation council? For example, how are you planning to develop the product/service in future?"

Content analysis method was used to analyze the content of open application answers. Content analysis first reduces original information and prunes out the irrelevant information. (Sarajärvi, A & Tuomi, J. 2018.)

5.1 Application form answers

In Question 1. in the application form was a question in which applicants presented either being products already in the market or product/service in development stage. From the total of 77 applicants 35 stated their product/service being in development stage. Some of the applicants had had business before but that specific product/service offered in development stage was in development stage. In another words, all operators were not in development stage, but their products and service nevertheless were. Two operators offered two separate products/services in the competition.

5.1.1. Basic information

Question 2. In the second question applicants were asked to give their basic information such as name of the company, name of the product or service participating in the competition, company address, zip code, city, or region, contact person and who is applying and what is the position of this person within the company.

From all development stage competition applications (n=35) majority of the products (18/35) were represented by limited liability companies. Five products were offered by an organization or society, four products were from private, sole proprietors and three were offered by idea offices. One application for the competition came from a city and one from a foundation.

5.1.2 Regions

Question 3. Regionally product offerings were offered across the country. Most common region of the competition products/services to be offered was in Uusimaa-region (11/35). One product/service stated being offered in several regions, the rest of the products and services were offered only in one region. Regions of Pohjois-Savo, Pohjois-Karjala and Pirkanmaa each had three different applicants in development stage. Etelä-Pohjanmaa, Keski – Suomi, Lappi, Kymenlaakso and Etelä-Savo regions each had two applications and Varsinais-Suomi, Päijät-Häme, Pohjois-Pohjanmaa and Etelä-Karjala all had one application each. None of the products or services were available in Ahvenanmaa, Kainuu, Kanta-Häme, Keski-Pohjanmaa and Satakunta (Figure 13.).

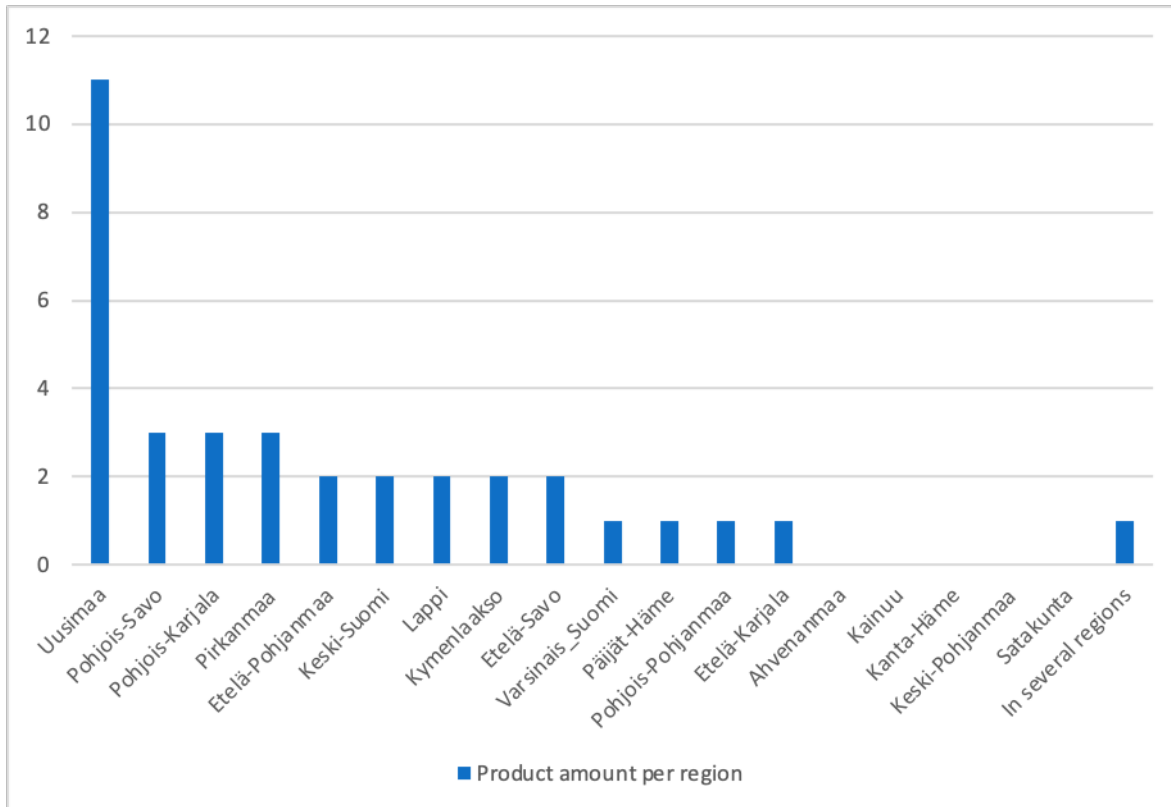


Figure 13. Regional product/service amounts in Food Travel Competition 2021

5.1.3 Categories

Question 4. Fourth question after that offered 9 +1 different categories (Figure 14.) where applicants could choose themselves which one their product or service represented. These categories were path related food travelling (1), food travel excursion (2), food event (3), destination for a visit (4), café or restaurant (5), marketplace or market hall (6), instructive preparation of food (7), brewery (8), home cooking (9). If the applicant could not put their product into any of the previous categories the application also offered additional category of “other food travel experience, such as lunch or dinner cruise etc what?” which could be chosen. If this “other food experience” option was chosen, an open part continued where applicants described with their own explanations what kind of product/service their application offered.



Figure 14. Categories in Food and Travel Competition 2021

Most applicants stated being “Other food experiences; lunch- or dinner cruise or something else” and this category had most applicants (13/35) (Figure 15.). “Food related travel” category had second highest number of applicants (8/35). 4/35 of the applicants were categorized as “Restaurants or Cafes”. “Food travel paths with multiple spots” and “Food events” both had three applicants each. Two applicants stated being small breweries or farms, and “instructed local food preparing” and “place to visit with food activities” both had one applicant each. There were no applications in categories “home food” or “food market, food truck or food store” in development stage applications.

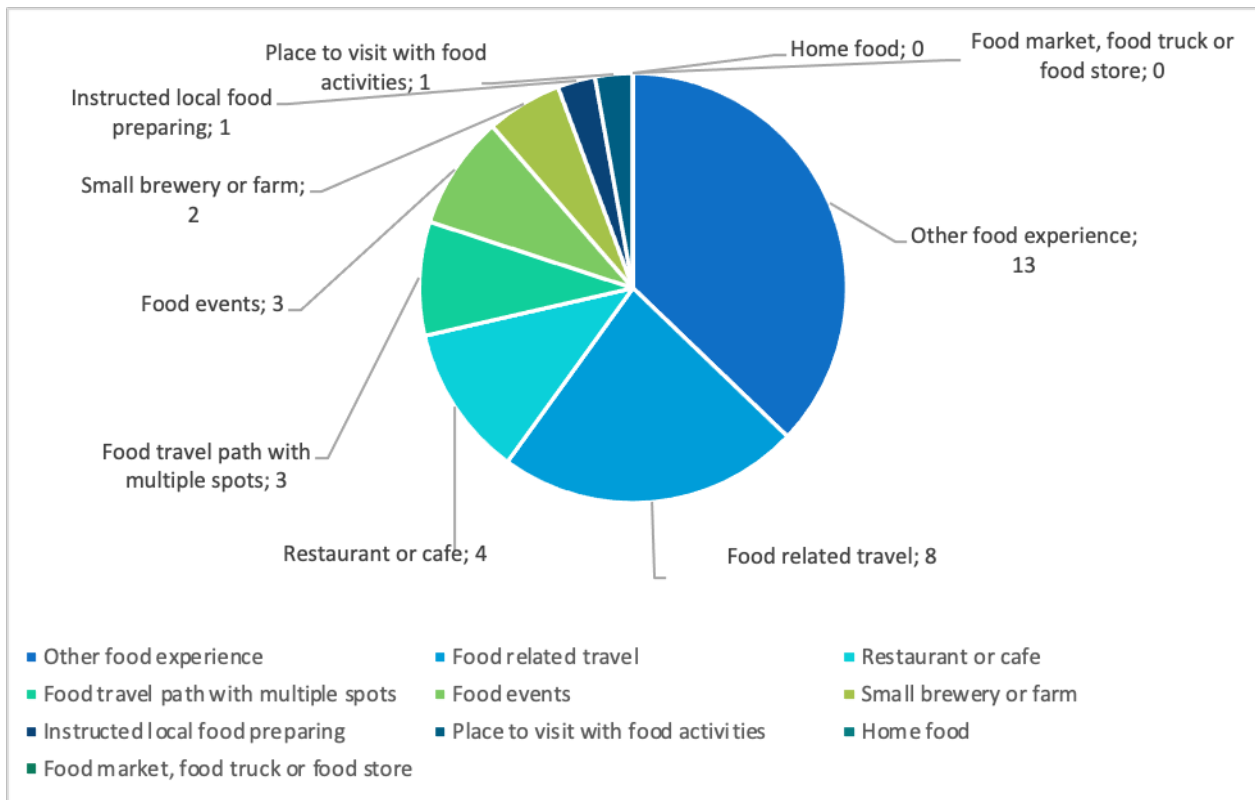


Figure 15. Division amounts per category

Most applicants chose option “Other food experiences, lunch- or dinner cruise or something else” which was chosen by 13 applicants. Applicants choosing this option explained in an open answer what kind of product or service they were offering. These products explained with applicants own words were: guided nature excursion where archipelago delicacies’ are tasted along the way, dinner with overnight stay and breakfast, ice cream tasting, steam rail experience with local artists, chefs and food producers combined with destination tours, immersive dinner experience, service application, food adventure, concert/experience package, dinner with traditional food products, path from Guest house to Guest house, Pizza cruise, Asian food cruise and a Design & Taste of Finlandia culture circuit.

Open answer option in this question was concerning which categories products or services belong to. Category options were path related food travelling (1), food travel excursion (2), food event (3), destination for a visit (4), café or restaurant (5), marketplace or market hall (6), instructive preparation of food (7), brewery (8), home cooking (9). In the last option an additional category of “other food travel experience, such as lunch or dinner cruise, what?” which could be chosen. When this “other food experience” option was chosen, an open part continued where applicants described with their own explanations what kind of product/service their application offered.

These open answers were first translated, then divided in subgroups based on the content of the product or service. These 13 open answers were subtracted to six groups with similar kind of content. One product was different from all other products and therefore creating a group of one product only. Groups emerging from this material were Culture & Food, Vehicle & Food, Food Path, Food Event, FoodTech and Accommodation with Food (Figure 16.). Some products which answered, “other food experience” represented products which could have been emerged into the ready categories. “Food path or adventure” products could have been added into “Food travel excursion” category and “Food Event: Dinner” products could have been added into Food event- category. Other Groups created clear groups of their own. From the open answers subjects which arose were pairing food with another activity such as accommodation or cultural activity such as music, concert, art or artist, design, or traditions such as sauna or baking. International influence was offered in a form of Cruises such as Italian style (Pizza) and Asian Food Cruise. Vehicles in use were considered being more sustainable choices such as train or boats. Interaction with customer came across either in the form of customers participating in collecting ingredients for cooking, participating in cooking or participating storytelling. Nature was strongly presented in products involving outdoor activities and they all stated weather also playing a role in the experience.

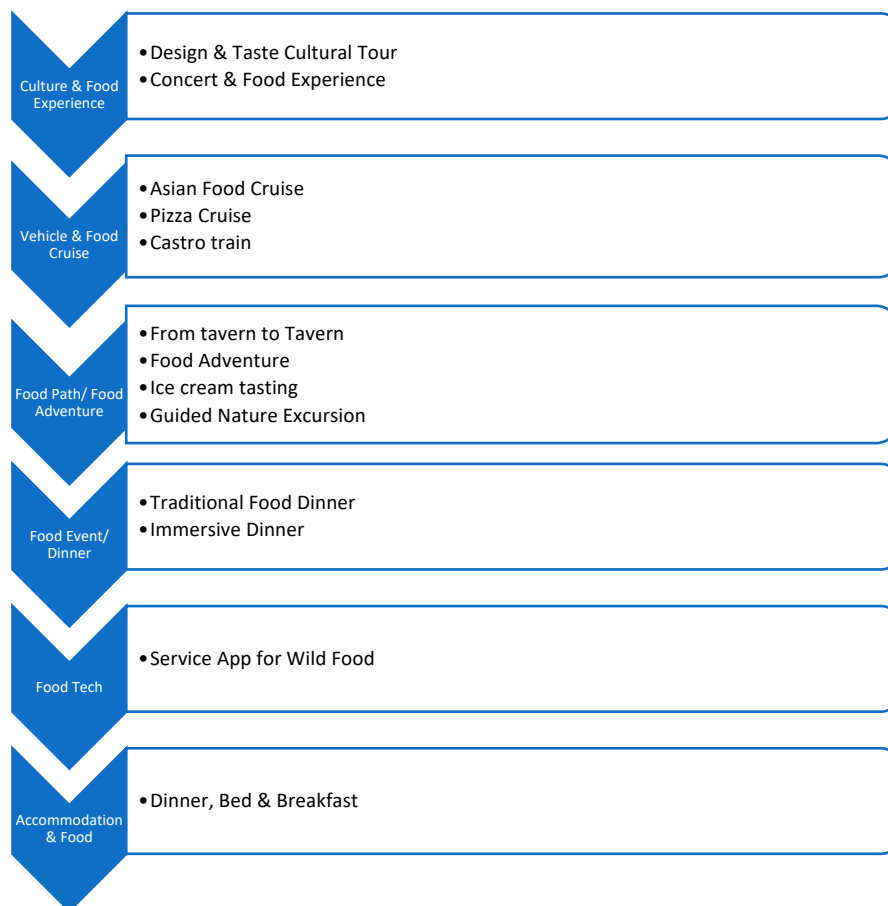


Figure 16. Product category open answer data

5.1.4 My Stay service

Question 5. Applicants were also asked in question number 5 if their product/service presented in Food Travel Competition is in Visit Finland's "My Stay" service. None of the products/services were in "My Stay" service. 13 applicants stated they are not in "My Stay" and 22 stated "Planning to be in future" (Figure 17.).



Figure 17. Is your product in visit Finland's "My Stay" service?

5.1.5 Finnish Food Travel Strategy main product themes

Question 6. In application form question 6. required applicants to choose in which of the Finnish Food and Travel Strategy's main product themes their product or service represents. The options given were the three main themes of Finnish Food and Travel Strategy: "Taste of Place - Eat local and sense Finland" (1) "Pure & Natural - Eat slow and healthy in Finland" (2) and "Cool & Creative - Eat wild and happy in Finland" (3) (Figure 18.) also one option was "none of the previous". Curated themes offered all applicants options where they found a theme to fit under and none of the applicants chose the option "none of the previous options".



Figure 18. Finnish Food Trave Strategy themes (Hungry for Finland 2020)

From the Visit Finland’s Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028 main product theme divisions majority, approximately 2/3 of the applicants in development stage (22/35) stated that their product or service represented category 1. “Taste of Place; eat local and sense Finland”. Second most popular category was chosen by 10 applicants: “Cool & Creative; Eat wild and happy in Finland” (2) and three applications chose category “Pure & Natural; eat slow and healthy” (3) (Figure 19.). Option for none the previous options was also available for the applicants, but nobody chose this option.

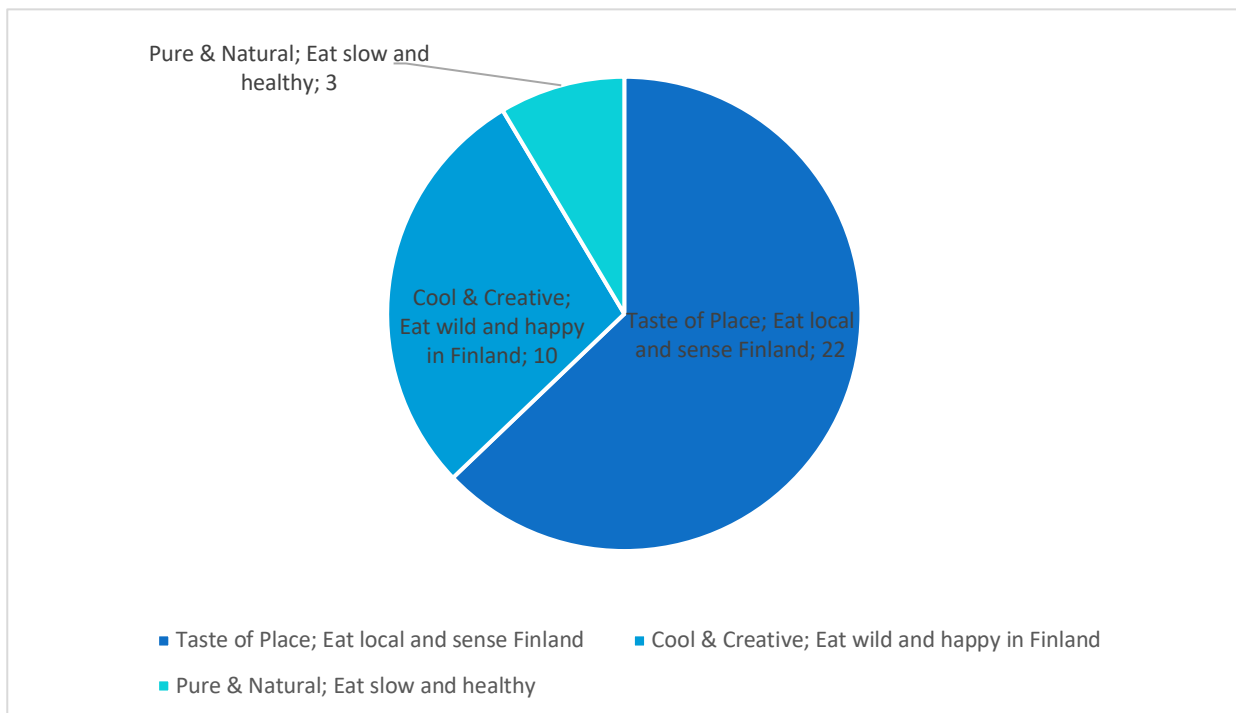


Figure 19. Applications divided in Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028 theme divisions

5.1.6 Description of product / service

Question 7. In this question applicants were asked to add a link to their product description, sales or distribution channel page or social media channels / Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat). 25 applicants gave a link to a webpage address at this point, one applicant answered there will be updated pages soon. One applicant stated not having webpages due to COVID challenges. 6 applicants left an empty answer. Original names of the products and services for National Food & Travel Competition 2021 in development stage were:

- Kulinaristin Kraaterinjärvi /Culinarians Crater Lake
- Pizzaristeily / Pizza Cruise
- Finnish Food & Food culture hands on

- Pellinge meny / Pellinge Menu
- Ruokaa läheltä lähiruokatapahtuma/ Food near by Local food Event
- Kohtalona kulinaarinen Ruotsinsalmi / Culinary Destiny: Ruotsinsalmi
- Asian Food Cruise
- Parhaat pitopöydät & paikalliset palkitut juomat ryhmämatka/ Best Buffet offerings & local rewarded drinks – group travel
- Luonnosta lautaselle / From nature to the plate
- Päivä muikunkalastajan mukana / A Day with a Fisherman
- Vantaa menu
- Saariston makuelämys / Taste experience of the Archipelago
- Taste of Salpausselkä
- Illallinen & Yö & Aamiainen / Supper & Night & Breakfast
- Viiden Aistin Apaja / Treasure for Five Senses
- Metsämaistiaiset / Forest Tastings
- Lappean Lohen Smörre / Lappea Salmon Sandwich
- Aholafarmin Riistalounas / Game lunch at Aholafarm
- Makumittelö videosarja / Flavor Battle – video serie
- Nuuksion Magia / Magic of Nuuksio
- Satumainen makumatka, Arctic Ice cream / Fairytale tasting travel
- This is Lohja
- Gastro-juna / Gastro-train
- Rapolan muinaiset matkat / Ancient travels of Rapola
- Alpakka piknik / Alpac picnic
- Makumatka Ahlmannille / Ahlman taste travel
- Laajennettu Illallinen / Extended Immersive Dinner
- Wild Food App for Travellers
- Tapani Löfvingin ruokaseikkailu saaristossa / Food adventure of Tapani Löfving in the Archipelago
- Makumatka runokylään / Taste travel to the Poem Village
- Tastes like Kalevala
- Tarina Illallinen / Story Dinner
- Perinneruokapäivälliset / Traditional Food diiner
- Majatalosta majataloon, herkullinen saunapolku / From Guesthouse to Guesthouse, Delicious Sauna path
- Design & Taste of Finlandia kulttuurikierros / Culture trip Design & Taste Finlandia

5.1.7 Strengths of the products

In question 8. competition applicants were asked to choose “Most important strengths” of their products or services. Most choices for “Most important Top 5 strengths” (Figure 20.) received option “Locality, local food and authenticity” which was chosen by 25/35 applicants (1). Second highest number of choices got “Co-operation with other service providers and actors in the area” which was chosen by 24/35 applicants (2) and “Storytelling” was third most popular choice and selected by 19/35 applicants (3). “Good taste of food” was chosen by 15/35 applicants (4) and “First class high-quality ingredients” by 11/35 applicants (5).

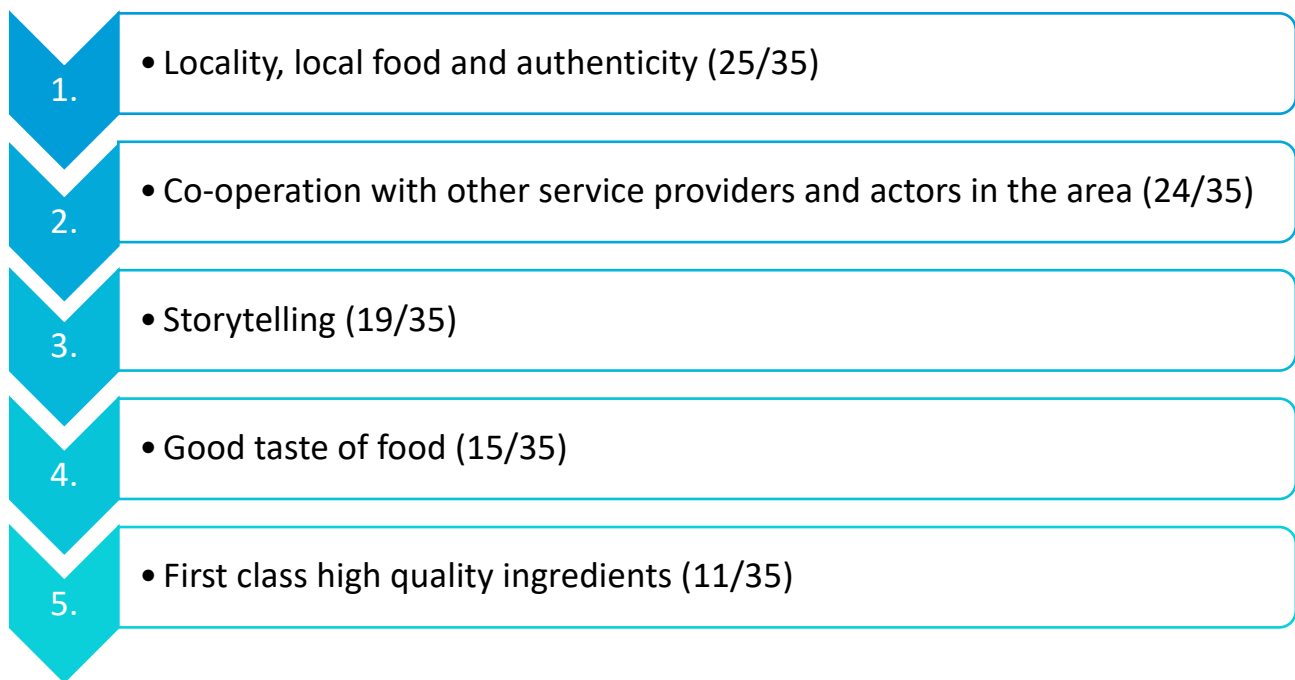


Figure 20. Top 5 most important strengths of products/services in development stage

Participating and learning customer was most important strengths in 10 applications and innovation was considered major strength for 9 applicants. Seasonality and professional staff were considered in top five strengths by 8 applicants. Responsible business, décor and esthetic matters, and all-year-around availability were all considered being top strengths by seven applicants. Six applicants considered understanding customer and customer path being among the most important strengths and five applicants stated visuality, beautiful presentation and successful products being their strengths. Easy buying process was important strength for four applicants and three companies state carefully selected drinks being in their top strengths. Price/quality ratio was considered being most valuable for two applicants. Profitability was not mentioned at all as an important strength by the applicants (Figure 21.).

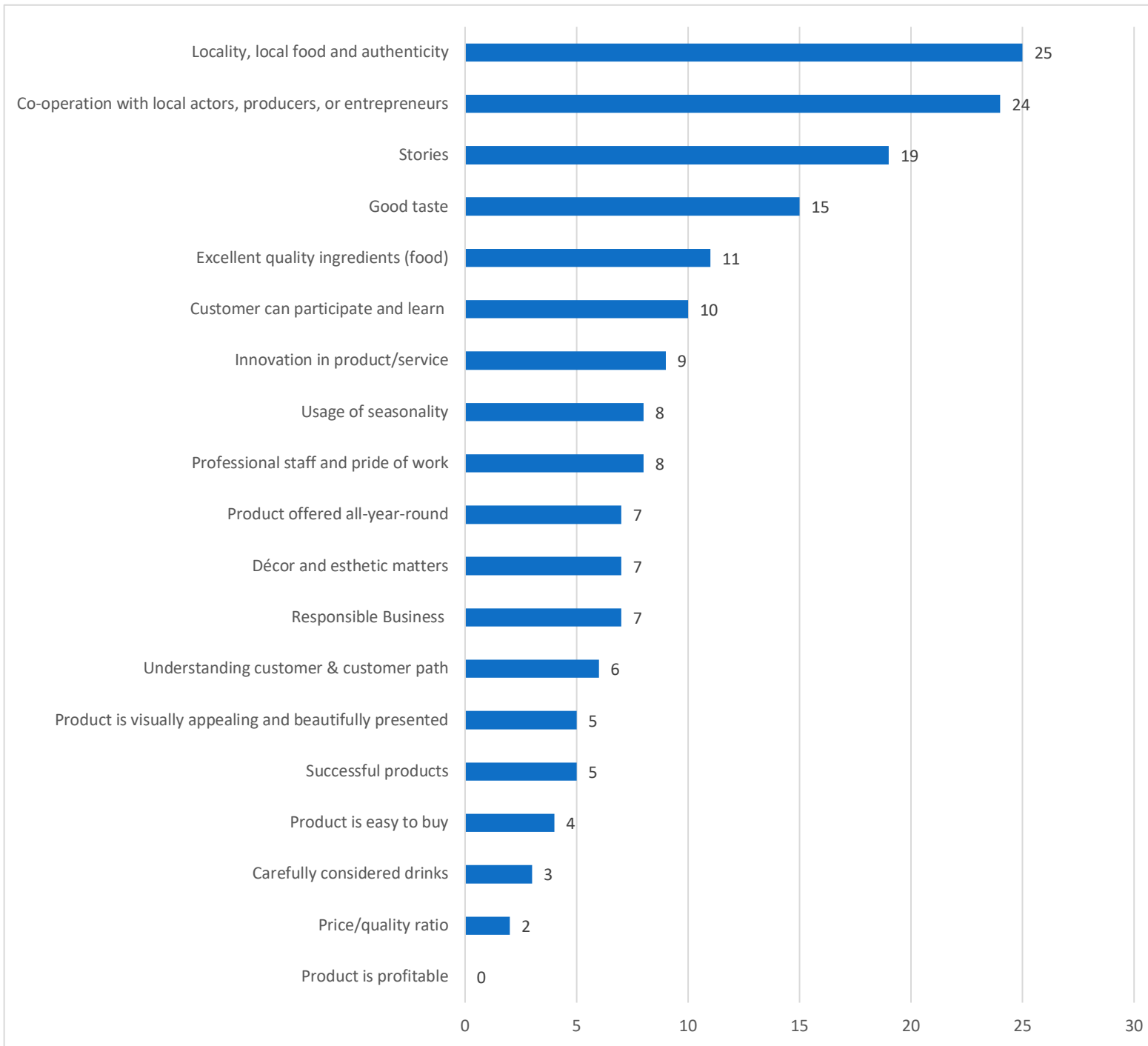


Figure 21. All strengths of the product/service answers

5.1.8 Product card information

In question 9. competition applicants were asked to present their product card for the product or service which they submitted into the competition. This question received a total of 33 answers, from which 10 applicants gave links to their webpages and 23 applicants directly offered their product/service information at these open answers. I started by transferring all data which was given by applicants into a Word-file. To find all necessary data from 10 webpage links which were given, I followed the links and information from the webpages concerning the products and services were collected and copied from their pages. All this material was combined thereafter into one Word-file to create a comprehensive unity of product information so that the answers to this question were in writing which could be analyzed. When information from the given additional links were combined with information given ready by applicants, all together material for this question alone was a total of 70 pages, 17 854 words. From this information I re-read the information several times to find which words and themes would naturally come up from it. From the very beginning it was clear that certain themes were repeated by many applicants, so I started to count the appearing of the words and themes of them in the material. I started coloring words which included the topics and themes which arose from the text: nature, locality, place affiliation and participation of customers.

From 23 applicants who submitted their product information most gave a comprehensive and clear image of their products or services. One answer from these did not include enough information to be used for more analysis. Key points of these 23 answers were translated into English and after that considered ready for analyzing. The applicants who did not explain their products with their own words had added webpage links to these open answer slots for product information. 10 applicants gave webpage links instead of explaining their products. These links given by applicants were then followed one by one to find product information for analyzing purposes. Five links out of the 10 given led into a webpage where information could be found and used. Five links led either to a non-functioning page or to a webpage where product/service information was not possible to find found or understood what the product or service could possibly be which was offered.

Product and services which were left out of the analysis at this question were Villisti luova, both products of Gunnel Smeds, Lappean lohi, Link by Villistiluova.com was not functioning at the time of investigation 10.11.2022. Two products seem to offer similar service by Gunnel Smeds, Taste of Pellinki, but information about the content of the Taste of Pellinki was not clear and according to the information given all "depends on the wants of the customer". Since no exact product information was given, only an "image of archipelago" this material was left out of this question. Link posted by Lappean Lohi led to a page which offers different services by this operator, but it was

unclear if there was any specific product/service offer which could have been the product/service meant for competition, so it was also disqualified from this question. Link by Bumicafe.com led to a webpage of a catering service page with Asian catering offer, but information was found from another competition question to give enough image of product which was an Asian style cruise.

One product card link was a page built by a Vocational school in Ähtäri. The link opened a file which explained that the products are “traditional food dinners” which would be available on every other Friday. Information given was the price 39e and duration 3 hours but no information about the actual food products included. Additional search was performed to find more information about the products offered but after 30 minutes of searching nothing “traditional food dinner” type of products was found. School pages were also searched, which vastly explained the school activities and programs. School pages stated there are cafés and restaurants, but no further information could be found to find any product offerings which could possibly be a part of competition products. Link presented by Visit Tuusulanjärvi also only led to the front page of Visit Tuusulanjärvi-pages. From this page no trace was found about any products or services related to a competition product. All applicants which gave unclear answers or no answers at product card description were left outside of content analysis in this question. In the end 27 answers were accepted to be used for creating analysis concerning this question.

In this question the most visible and popular themes were Locality, Taste of place, Nature & Wilderness and Learning by doing (Figure 22.)

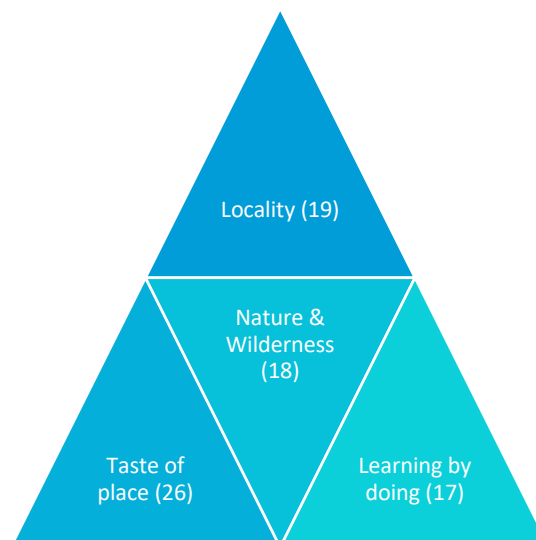


Figure 22. Top themes based on product cards

From all answers most used words were locality: “local food” “local ingredients” and “local producers” which were used in 19/27 answers. 8 applicants did not highlight locality in their product and

services. Within these 8 products and services focus was on technology such as virtual reality by two applicants, cultural or historical event or show by three applicants, one focused in cooking school activities and cruise as an experience was in focus in two answers.

Nature was strongly presented in 18 products and services which all had nature in a major role within their product or service. Nature which is meant here is nature as natural, physical nature including growing, living nature such as plants, forest, garden, or archipelago natural surroundings. Two products/services included nature surrounding in a cave 80 meters underground were calculated as representing products in "nature". Two products/services which included images of nature in an artificial, virtual form, were not considered being part of products in "nature" but in a technological surrounding.

Taste of place was a uniting theme for nearly all (26/27) applicants. Only one application described specifically that their product/service could be used anywhere in Finland, due to its virtuality. Cruise products could also in theory be operated in another surrounding with water element such as river, lake, or sea where pizza or Asian food themed cruise could be operated but due to the other elements needed from downtown Helsinki in these services, they are considered being place bound. Cooking school product could also be operated in many places but since this specific service takes in place in a physical kitchen premises in downtown Helsinki and includes a service option which is a tour in the nearby marketplace, it is also considered being tied into that specific place. All other products and services were strongly tied into that specific place where they were experienced, due to either local producers, places such as buildings, history or other element which creates a physical connection to the product or service.

Learning by doing was popular among the applicants and in 17 applications visitors were participating in one way or another with the product or service, which was in an important role of the experience. Most common form of participation was participating in the preparation of the meal for example by picking berries, wild herbs or mushrooms which became then a part of the food experience. Sitting menus, where a group of people is arranged to be sitting in a dinner table to listen or watch a performance were generally the products which did not include participation.

5.1.9 Top sustainability topics

In question 10. participants were asked to choose five most important topics concerning sustainability in their Food travel products/services (Figure 23.). The top choices for most important sustainability topics were Finnish and local lifestyle and food culture is presented (1.) Origin of the food products is known (1.), Food from the nature, wild food is offered (3.), Self-monitoring, hygiene and safety issues are in order (4.) and food waste is paid attention to (5.).

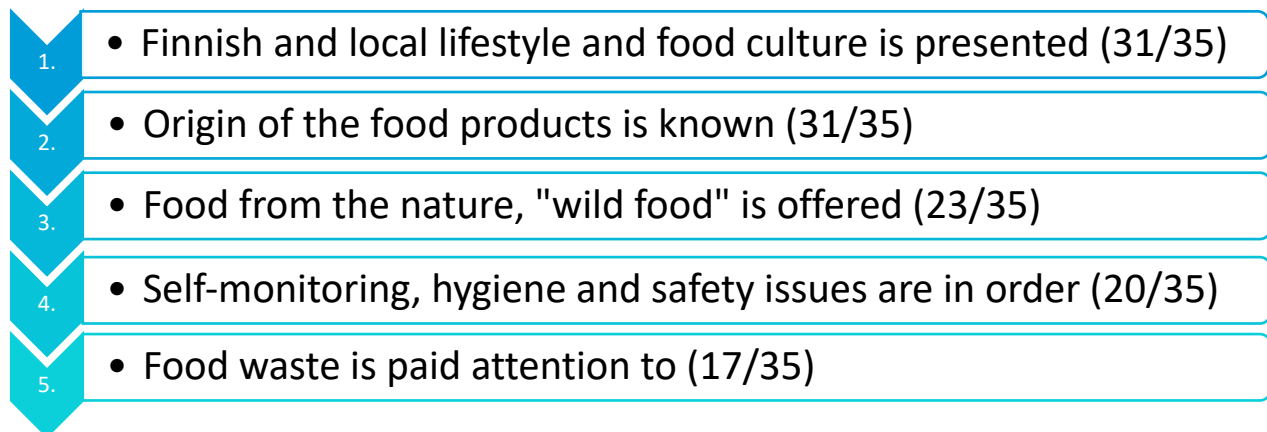


Figure 23. Five most important topics concerning sustainability

Most important factors mentioned were “Finnish and local lifestyle and food culture are presented” and “origin of food product is known” which both were chosen by 31 applicants. 23 answered using food from the nature and offering “wild food” and “self-monitoring, hygiene and safety issues are in order” was chosen by 20 applicants. 17 applicants stated paying attention to food waste and 12 applicants chose “special diets and limitations being taken into consideration”. 11 applicants stated avoiding single-use tableware and minimizing plastics and 9 applicants chose versatile vegetarian and vegan options available being in their top sustainability topics. 6 applicants chose production animals wellbeing being in top sustainability concerns and local knowhow being used in décor and setting up tables was also chosen by 6/35 applicants. Least choices received options concerning leftover food being recycled and composted (3/35) and energy consumption considering in food preparation and storage (2/35). One applicant chose staff well-being being in the topmost important sustainability factors (Figure 24.). Water consumption and offering tap water was considered by one applicant being an important topic concerning tap water.

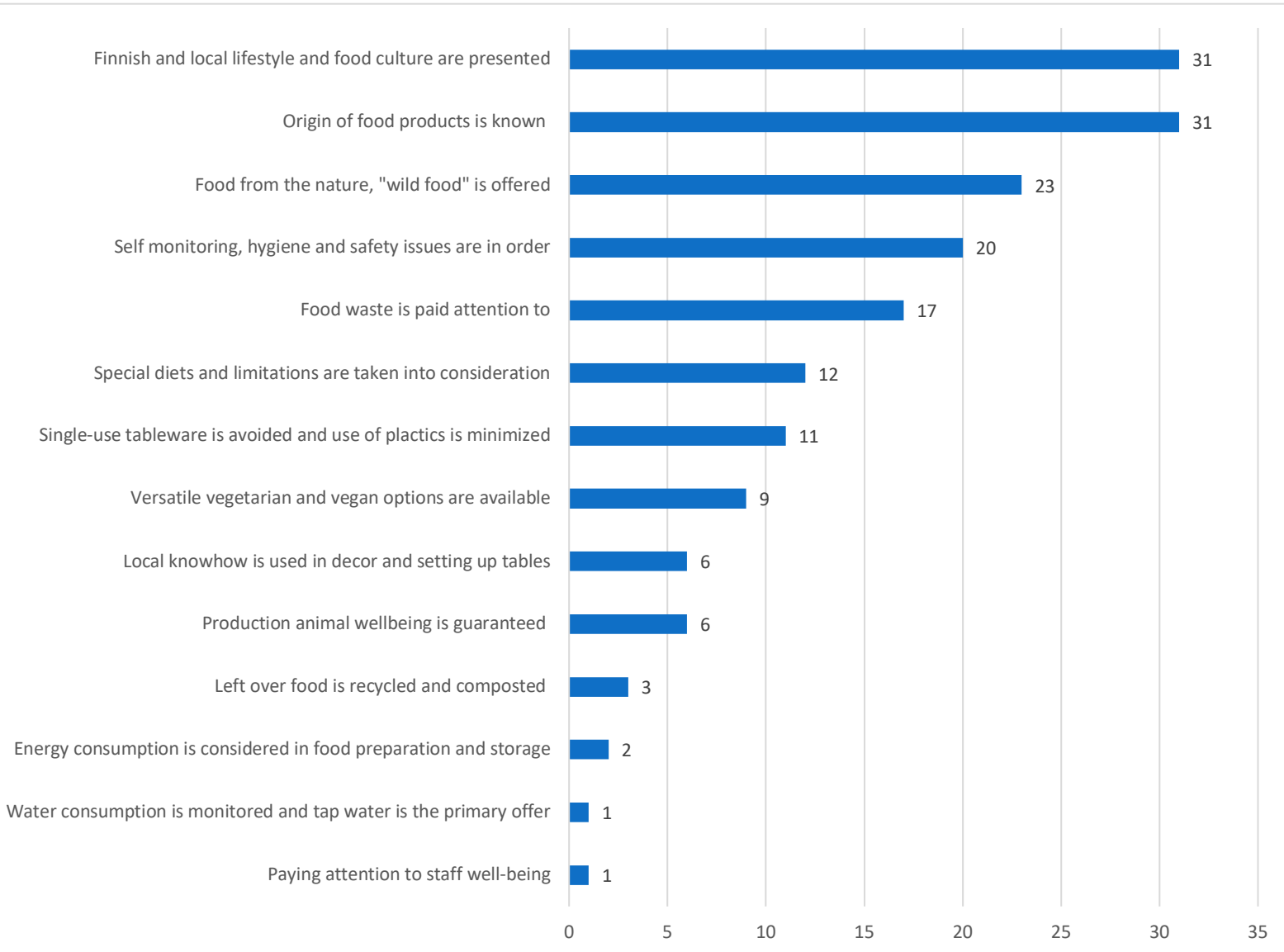


Figure 24. Topics concerning sustainability

5.1.10 Target customers

In 11th question applicants were asked whether their product or service is targeted to international or domestic visitors, or both. Majority of applicants stated they are targeting both international and domestic visitors (28/35), while six applicants stated that their products were aimed at domestic tourists only. One product was targeted for international visitors only (Figure 25.).

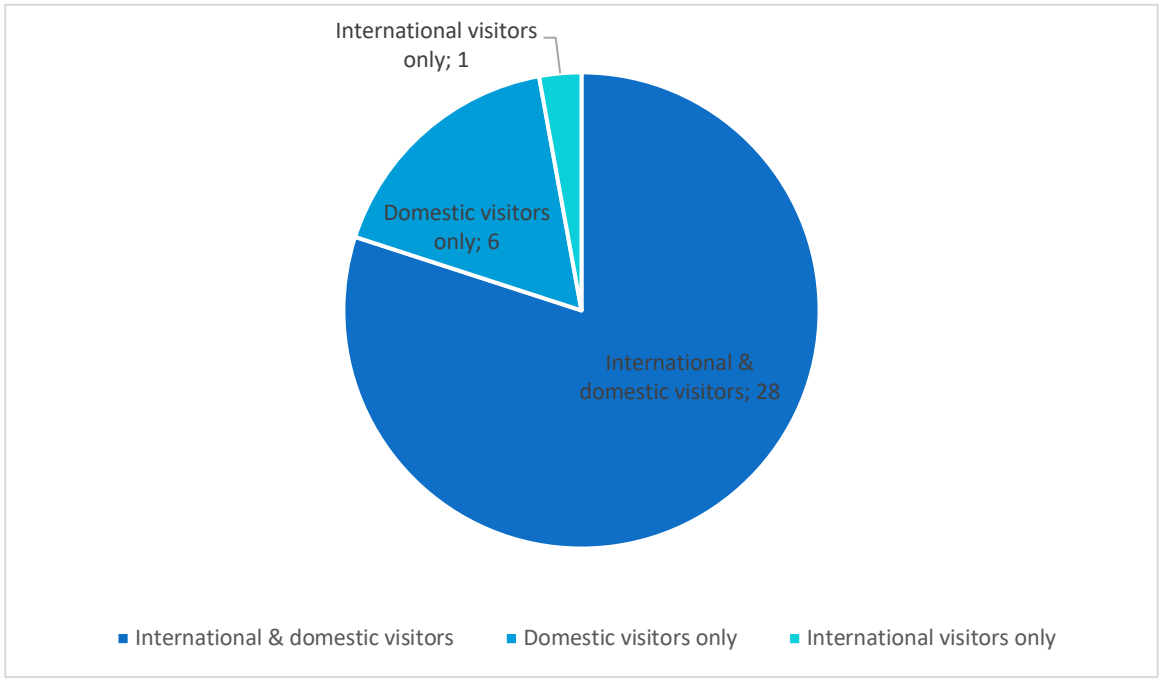


Figure 25. International and domestic visitor targeting

5.1.11 International customer percentage estimation

Applicants were also asked to estimate what percentage of their customers usually are international customers (Figure 26.). To answer this question the application form offered an option where applicant wrote a number to represent the percentage of foreign visitors. Estimations about the percentage of foreign customers for each business varied between 0,5% to 80% which was divided in three major sections. (Figure 26.).

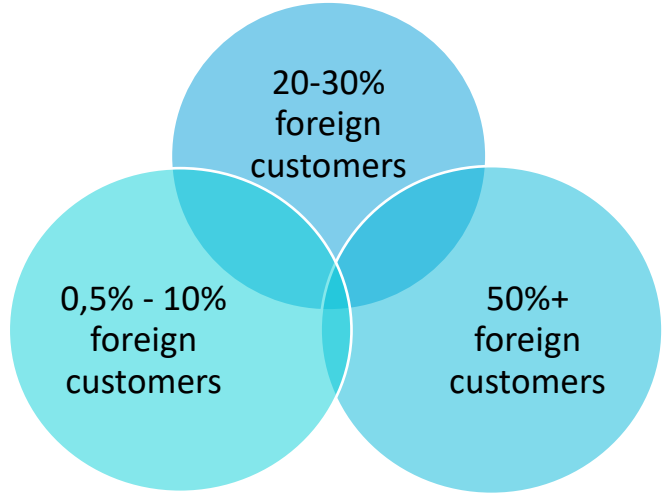


Figure 26. Major groups of amounts of foreign visitors

1/3 of the applicants (13/35) estimated having 10% or less foreign customers. Almost the same 1/3 of the applicants (11/35) estimated having 50% or more foreign customers and almost the same 1/3 of the applicants (10/35) estimated having 20-30% foreign customers.

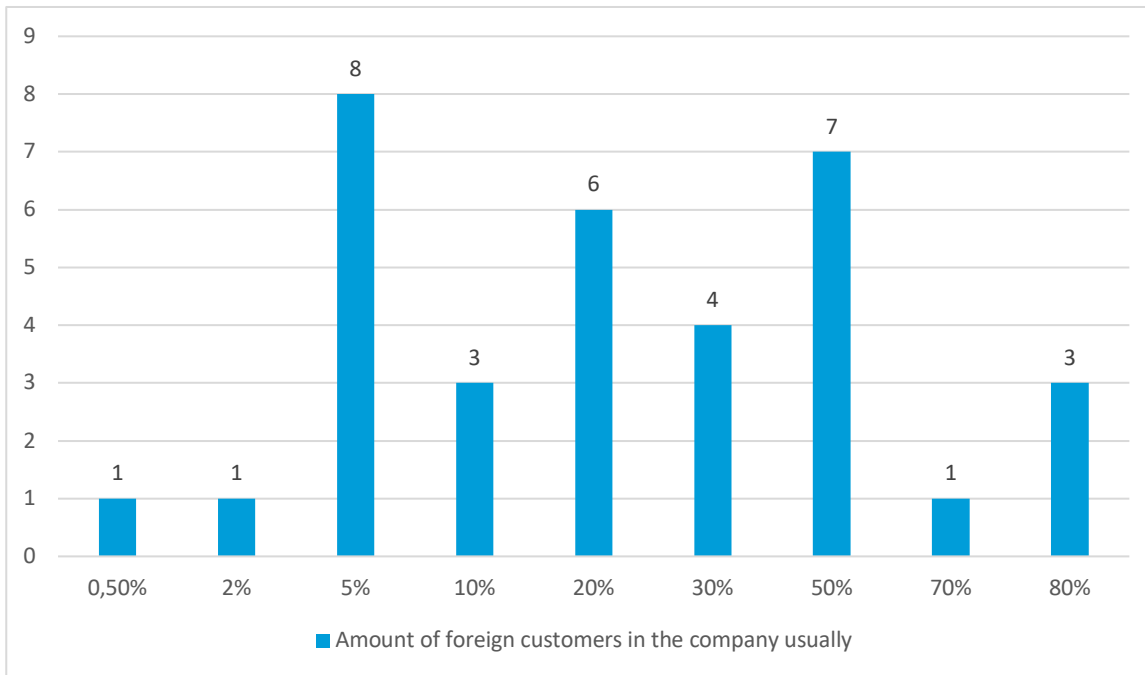


Figure 27. Estimated percentage of foreign customers usually

Most common estimation was having 5% of foreign customers which was written by eight applicants. Second most common estimation was having usually 50% of foreign customers which was estimated by seven applicants. Six applicants estimated foreign customers amount being 20% of all customers and four applicants estimated 30% amount for foreign visitors in normal circumstances. Having 50% of foreign customers were estimated by seven applicants and one applicant estimated having 70% of foreign customers. Three applicants estimated their product or services having foreign customers 80% of all customers (Figure 27.).

5.1.12 Language options

In question 13. applicants were asked on which languages their webpages were available in. This question had ready options for Finnish, English and Swedish languages. Fourth option was an open answer option: “Other language, which?”

Most of the applicants (33/35) had internet pages available in Finnish language (33/35). English pages were available for nearly 2/3 of the applicants (21/35). Third most common language was having pages in German (7/35) and six applicants stated having pages in Swedish. Other languages offered or are planned to be offered in future were Spanish (4/35), Italian (1/35), French (1/35), Vietnamese (1/35), and Chinese (1/35) languages (Figure 28.).

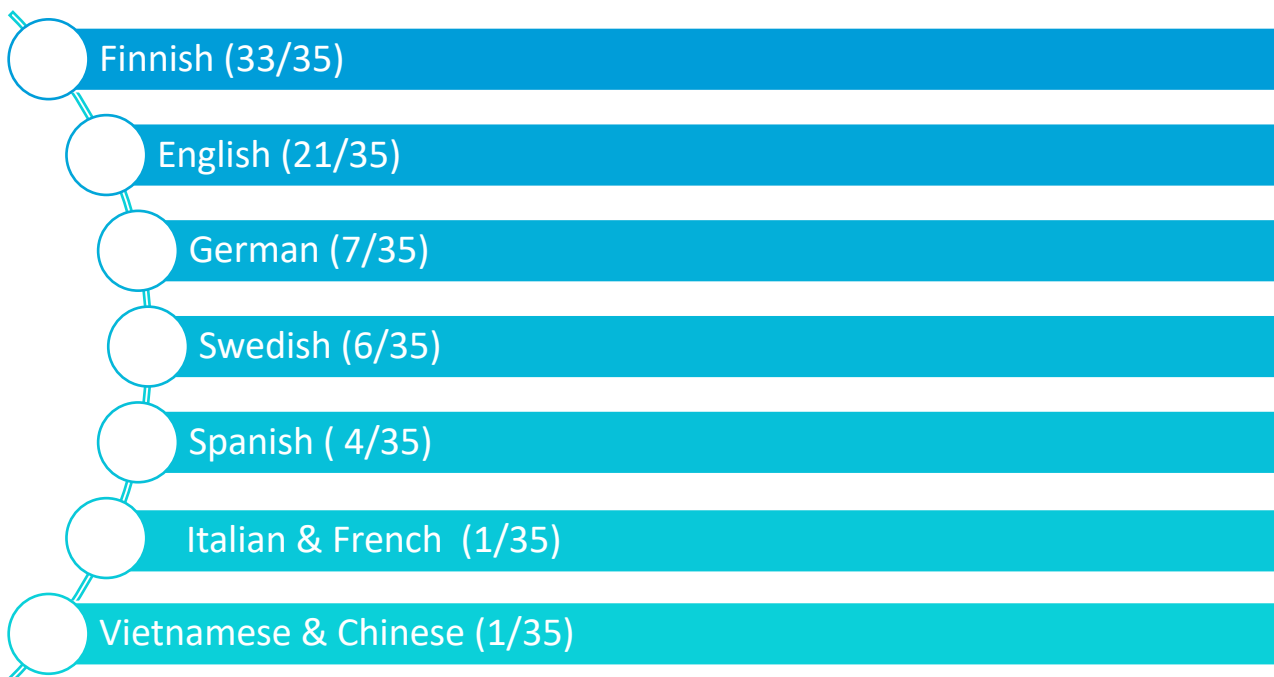


Figure 28. Languages available on product/service webpages

5.1.13 Target customers

In question 14. applicants were asked to state to whom their products or services were mainly aimed at. This question had ready answer options: solo travelers, traveler groups, or both. Most applicants aimed their product and services to both solo travelers and groups. 11 applicants stated aiming mainly solo travelers. 3 product or services were mainly aiming groups (Figure 29.).

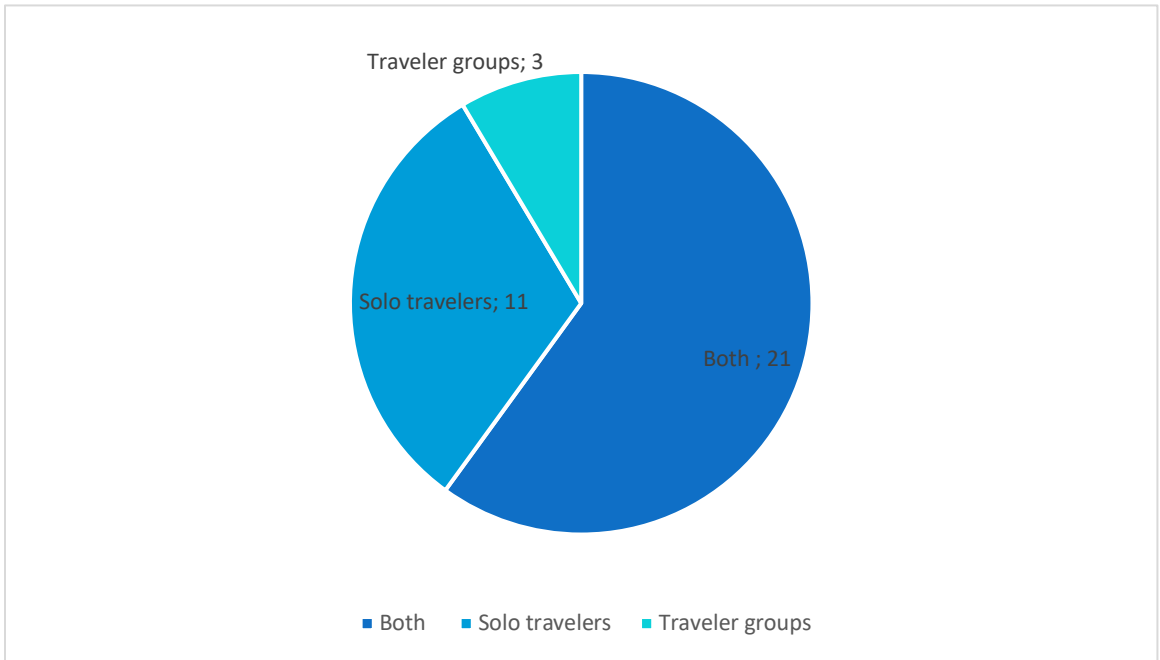


Figure 29. Target travelers

5.1.14 Time Spenditure

In question 15. applicants answered a question concerning how much time the traveler spends with the product or service. Question had 8 ready options between “less than 2 hours” and “over a week”.

Time spent with competition products varied between “less than two hours” and “5-7 days”. Most common answer was to spend “2-5 hours” with the product or service, which was chosen by 21 applicants. Next common answer was “less than 2 hours” which was chosen by 6 applicants. 3 applicants chose duration being in average “24 hours”. 2 applicants stated that average time usage was 2-4 days. One applicant chose the option where time spent using service usually was 5-7 days. None of the applicants chose the option for product or service taking longer than 7 days in the application form (Figure 30.).

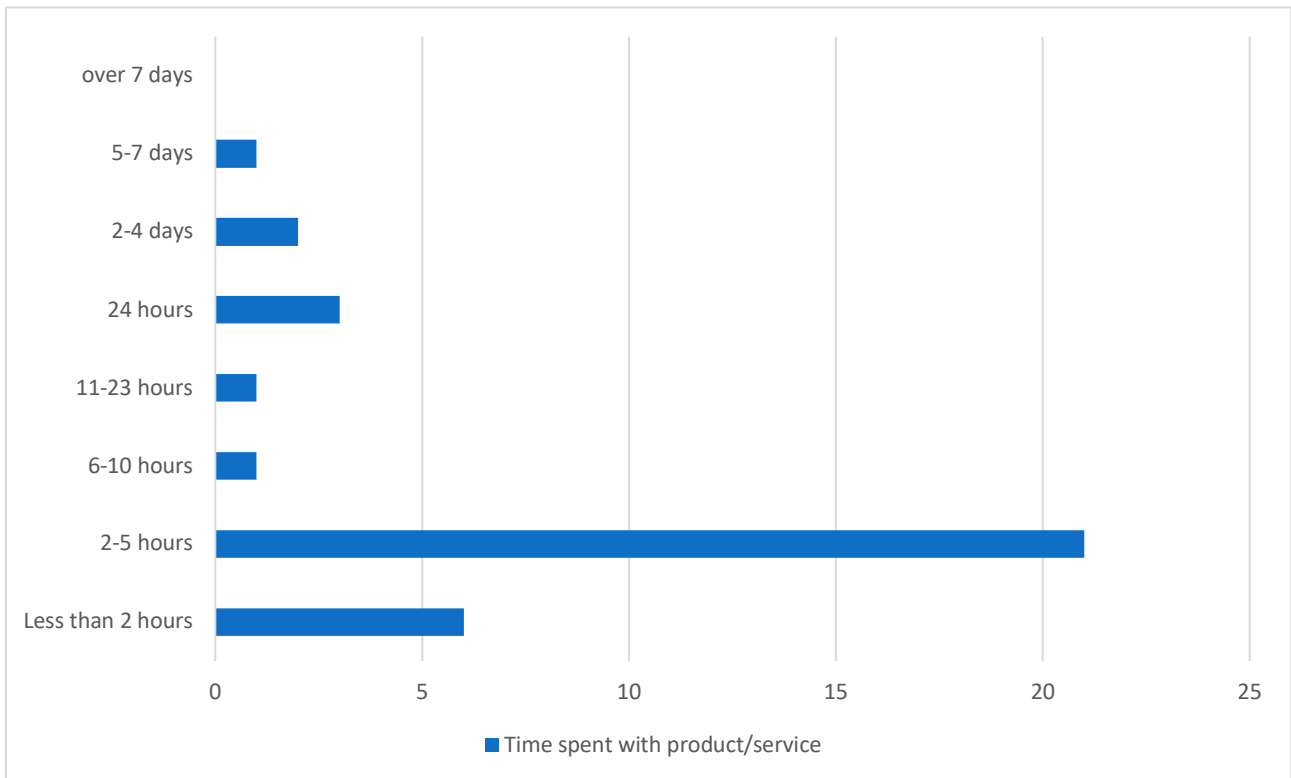


Figure 30. Time spent by customer in average with product/service

5.1.15 Price

Question 16. concerned the price of the final product to the customers. This was an open answer question to which applicants' answers varied between 0 and 830 euros with median 64,5 euros. There were more than one prices on some application product forms depending on the group size and contents of the product. The bigger the group participating the service, the cheaper the price per each participant became. Two applicants (Ahlman taste traveling and MakuGassi) did not give a price to their products or services (0e) which meant 33 prices were given totally in this question. Cheapest prize mentioned in open answered was 10 euros and most expensive product was 830 euros.

Majority, one third (11/33), of the products were in the cheapest price range, products under 40e (Figure 31.). Second lowest price range (41e-80e) had similarly nearly one third of the products in its range (9/33). The higher the price range the less products were in it. 81e-120e range had six products in it and price range 121e-160e had four products in it. Product ranges above 160e (161e-200e, 201e-400e, 401e-600e and 601e +) all had only one product in each range.

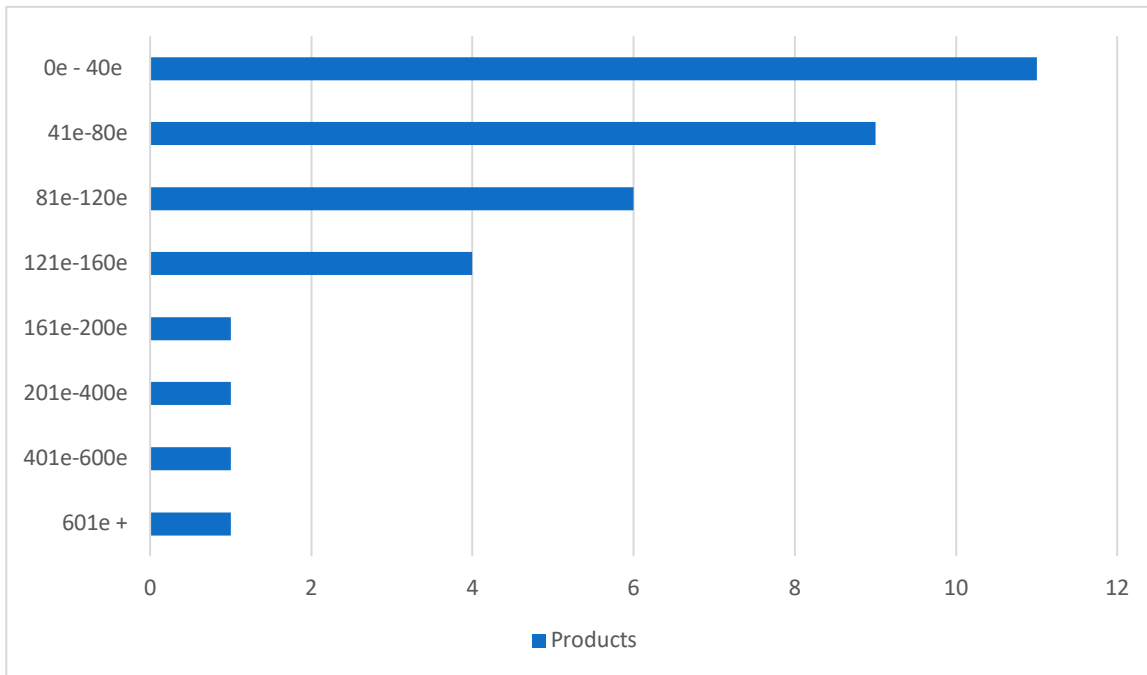


Figure 31. Product prices in price ranges

Lunches were cheaper than dinner menus, and price increased if wine package was added to a menu. Products and services under 50 € were typically a lunch or other quite simple food products and the more expensive products included activity or something else added to it. Added services included services such as VR equipment, animal interaction, use of boat, train or other equipment, or a visit to a tourist destination, or a path including several places or accommodation. (Figure 32.).

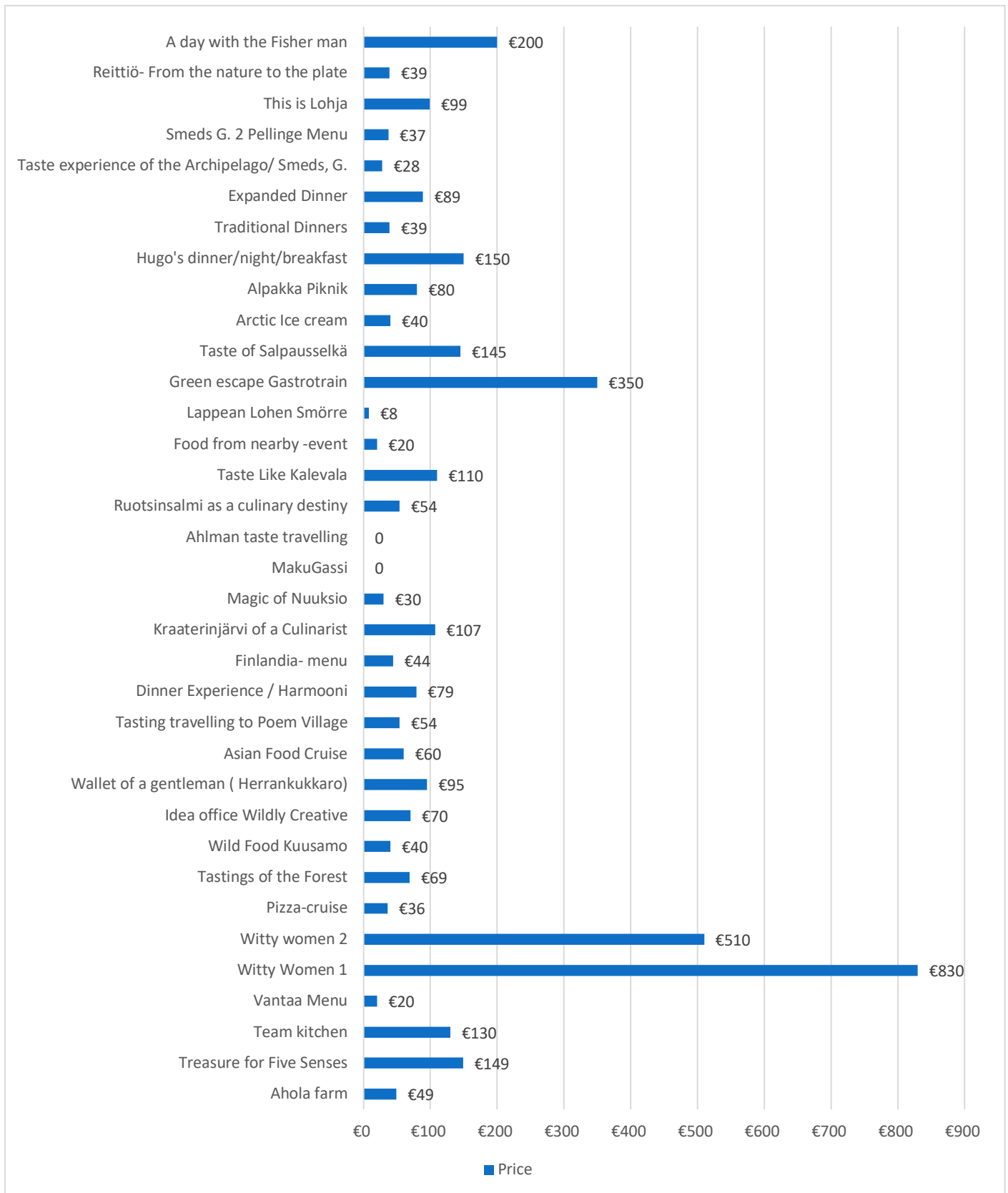


Figure 32. Prices of the services/products

5.1.16 Profit

Applicants were asked in question 16. about profit / estimated profit of the product/service offered. To this question 4 applications did not give an answer. The rest, a total of 31 answers estimated their profit between 20% and 80%. Most of the products, over one third (13/31), were in range 51%-75% and nearly same over one third of products were in 26%-50% range (12/31) (Figure 33.). Over half, a total of 17 applicants estimated their future profit being 50% or more from which 3 applicants estimated 50% profit and 5 applicants estimated being in between 60%-65% profit. 9 applicants estimated their profit being 70% or more from which one applicant estimated having 75% profit and one applicant estimated their future profit being 80% (Figure 34.).

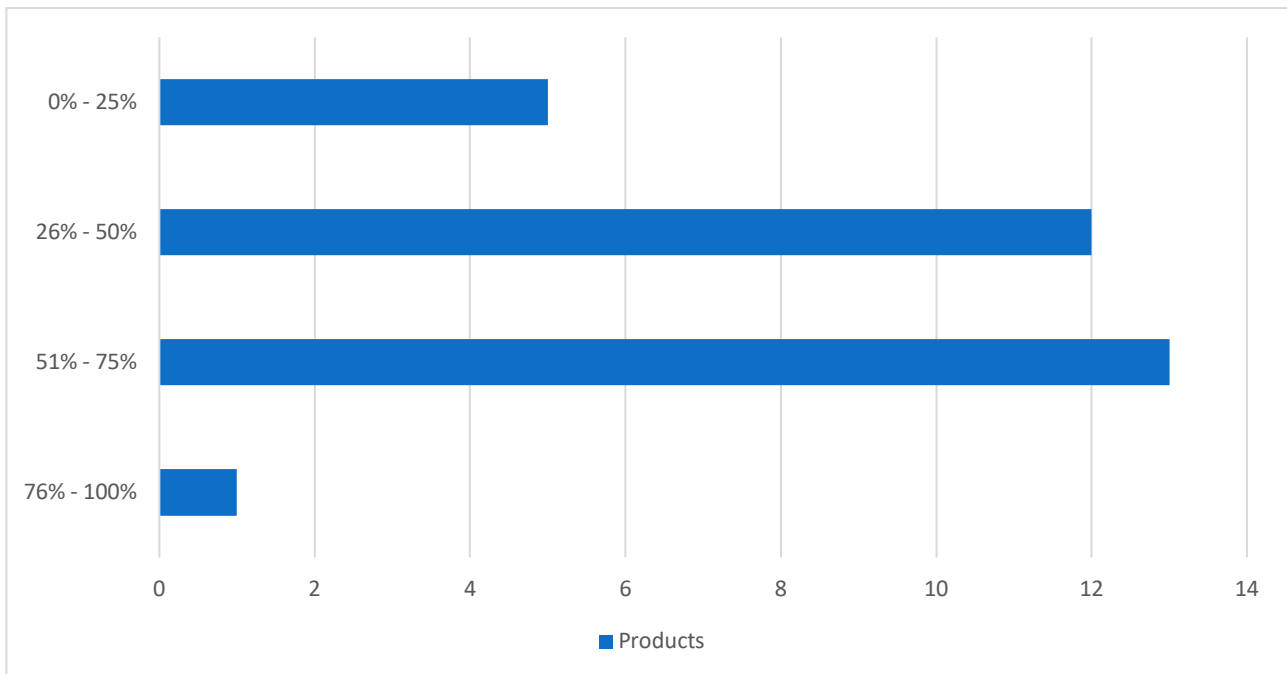


Figure 33. Target profit ranges

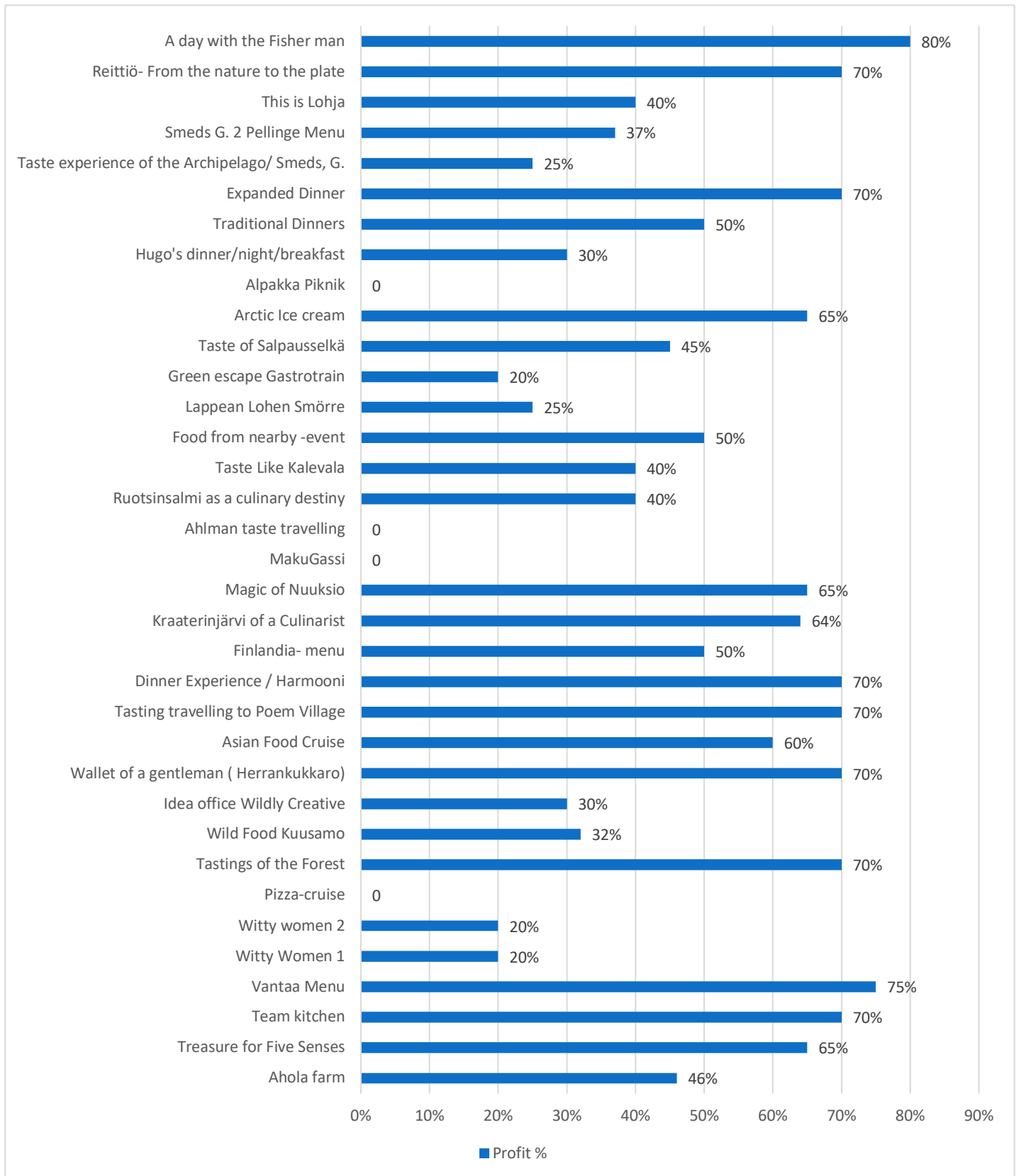


Figure 34. Estimated target profit percentages

5.1.17 Time on the market

In question 18. applicants were asked how long time their product or service has been in the market for. Answering options were ready options: in development stage, less than a year, 1-3 years, 4-7 years, 8-10 years, more than 10 years. Majority of the applicants stated being in development stage (29/35) and 6 applicants stated their product or service had been less than a year on the market. None of the applicants had been on the market for more than a year (Figure 35.).

Since this category was products in development stage 29/35 of the products were in development stage only. Six applicants stated they had been in operation for less than a year but still considered being in development stage when it comes to the competition product or service.

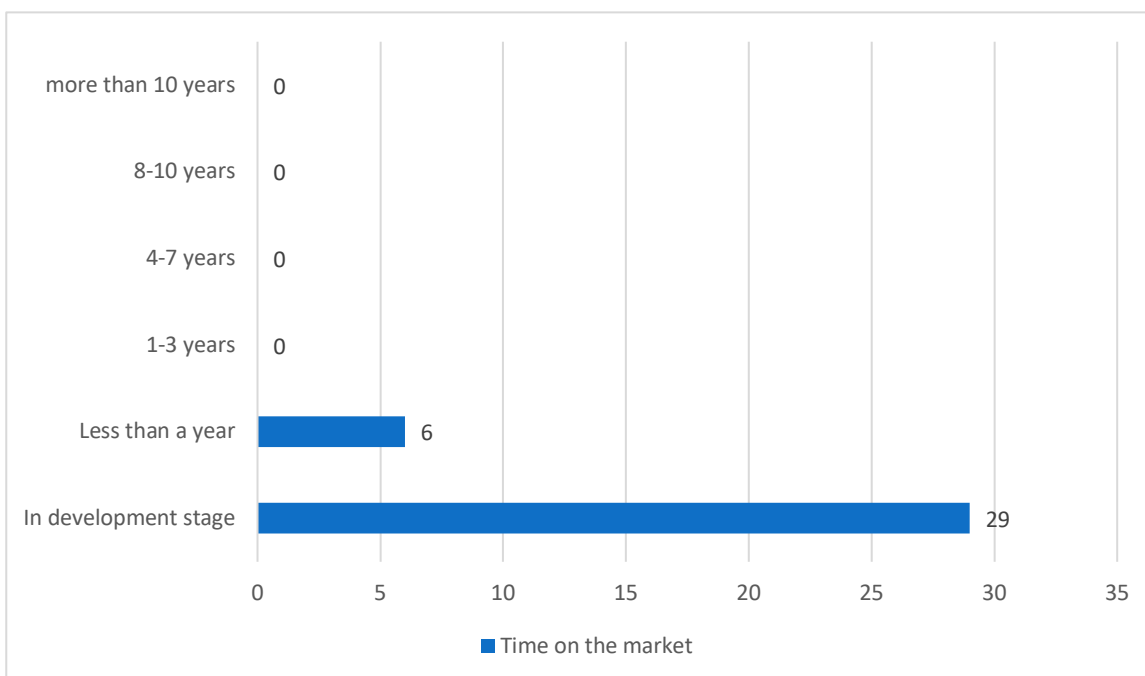


Figure 35. Time on the market

5.1.18 Cooperation partners

In question 19. applicants were asked about their co-operation partners. Question had ready options for local food producers and farmers, other travel entrepreneurs, breweries and producers of local drinks, companies of other fields of business in the same region, and local travelling organizations. Also, an open answer option was available.

Most common cooperation partner with food travel products and services were local food producers and farmers (31/33), other travel entrepreneurs (22/35), breweries and producers of local drinks (19/35), and companies from other fields of business in the same region (14/35) (Figure 24.). Local travelling organizations were mentioned as a partner by 14/35 applicants and different projects (“Hanke”) was chosen by 14/35 applicants (Figure 36.). Travelling agency liaison was mentioned by 11/35 applicants. 7/35 applicants stated cooperation with local educational establishments. “Other, who?” option was answered by 12 applicants. In this open answer part applicants following cooperation partners stated were local restaurant operators, catering and consulting companies, public transportation companies, accommodation services, local guide association, Business Finland, Brainy Day Visuals, 3D-House, screen writers, illustrators, musicians, actors and actresses, artists, Katajanokanluoto, local cultural producers, events, event producers, theater amateurs and professionals, Alvar Aalto Foundation and LAB Design Institute.



Figure 36. Top Co-operation partners of food travel products

5.1.19 Quality systems

Question number 20 in the application asked whether the applicants were using quality systems. Question was: "Is there a quality system at use in your organization?" Answering options were: "Yes we do, which", "No, we don't" and "We are planning to use one in future".

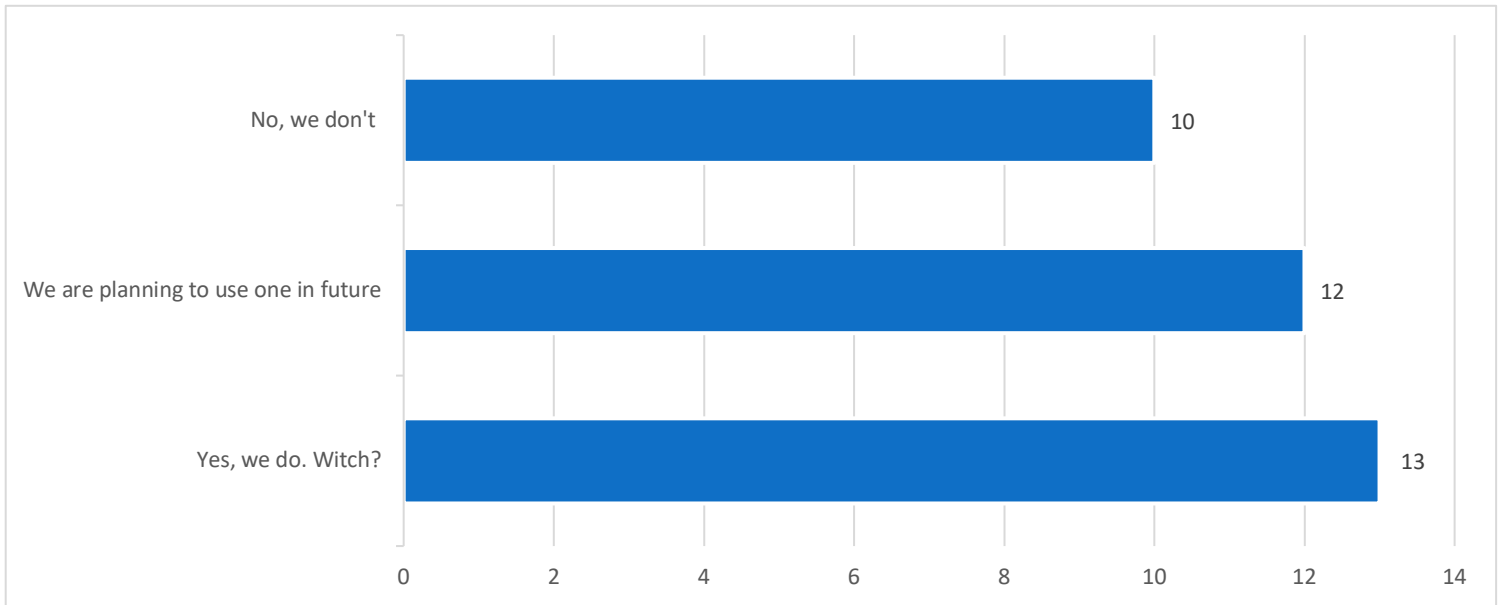


Figure 37. Quality system usage

13 of the applicants stated using quality system. 12 applicants were planning to have a quality system in future and 10/35 of the applicants responded that they do not have any kind of quality system (Figure 37.). After choosing using quality system applicants were also asked to name the quality system they have in use. Most mentioned quality system was "Laatutonni" which was named by one third of the applicants which stated having a quality system (4/12) and one third of applicants (4/12) mentioned companies using their own quality systems. Other Quality systems mentioned in open answer part were Greenkey, Ekokompassi, EFQM, Luotettava kumppani, Toursert, Sustainable Finland, ISO9001-quality control, and ISO14001-environment system (Figure 38.). Two applicants had two different Quality systems and one applicant had three different Quality systems. 10 applicants had therefore a total of 13 Quality systems at use.

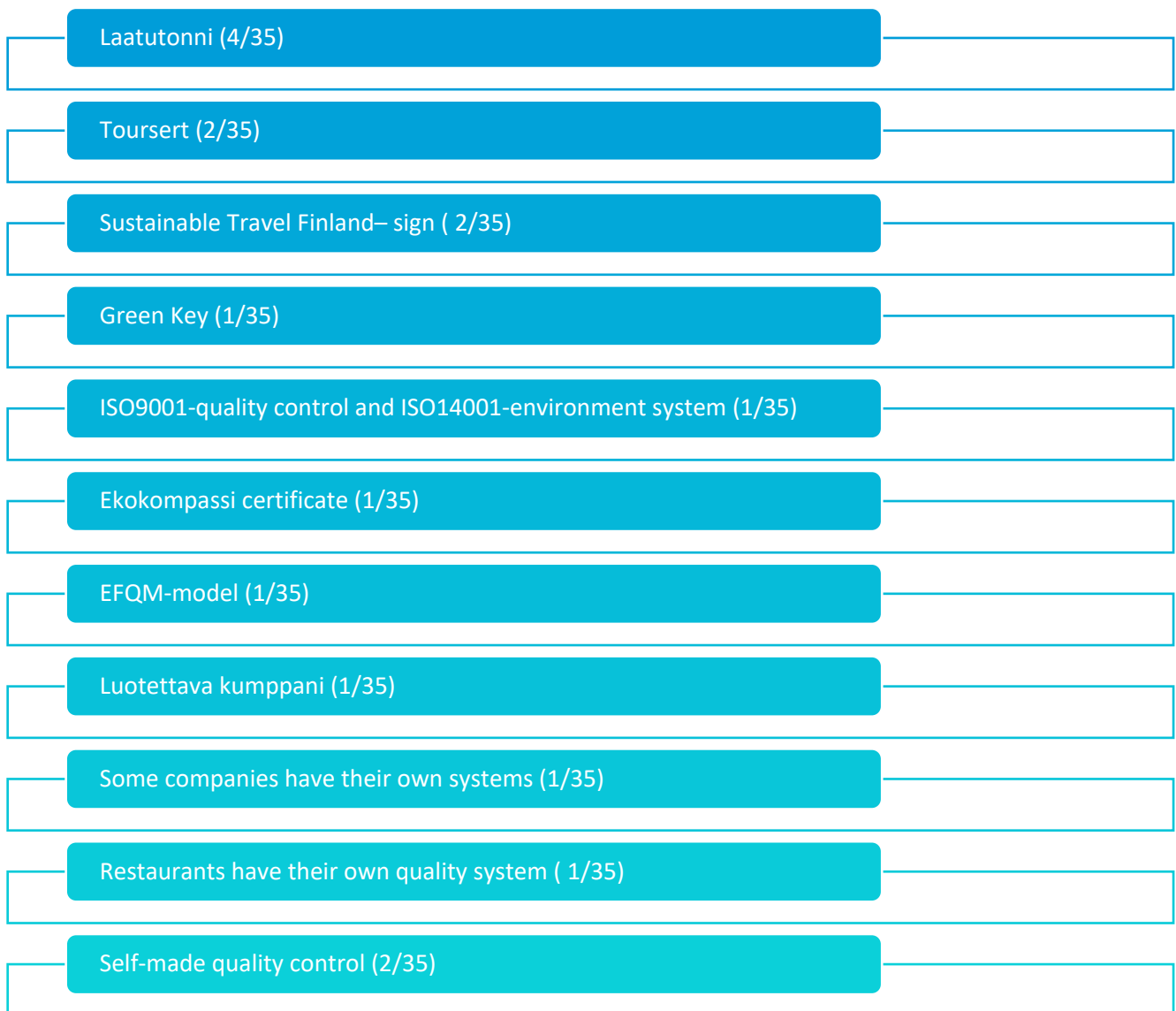


Figure 38. Open answers in quality system in use

5.1.20 Customer feedback

Question 21 asked about customer feedback utilization, and it was in a form of a statement which was: “We collect and utilize customer feedback for development in our organization.” Four answering options were given: “We systematically utilize feedback, how?”, “We sometimes utilize feedback”, “We don’t utilize feedback” and “We don’t collect feedback” (Figure 39.). If applicant chose the option “We systematically utilize feedback, how” and open answer option was also filled.

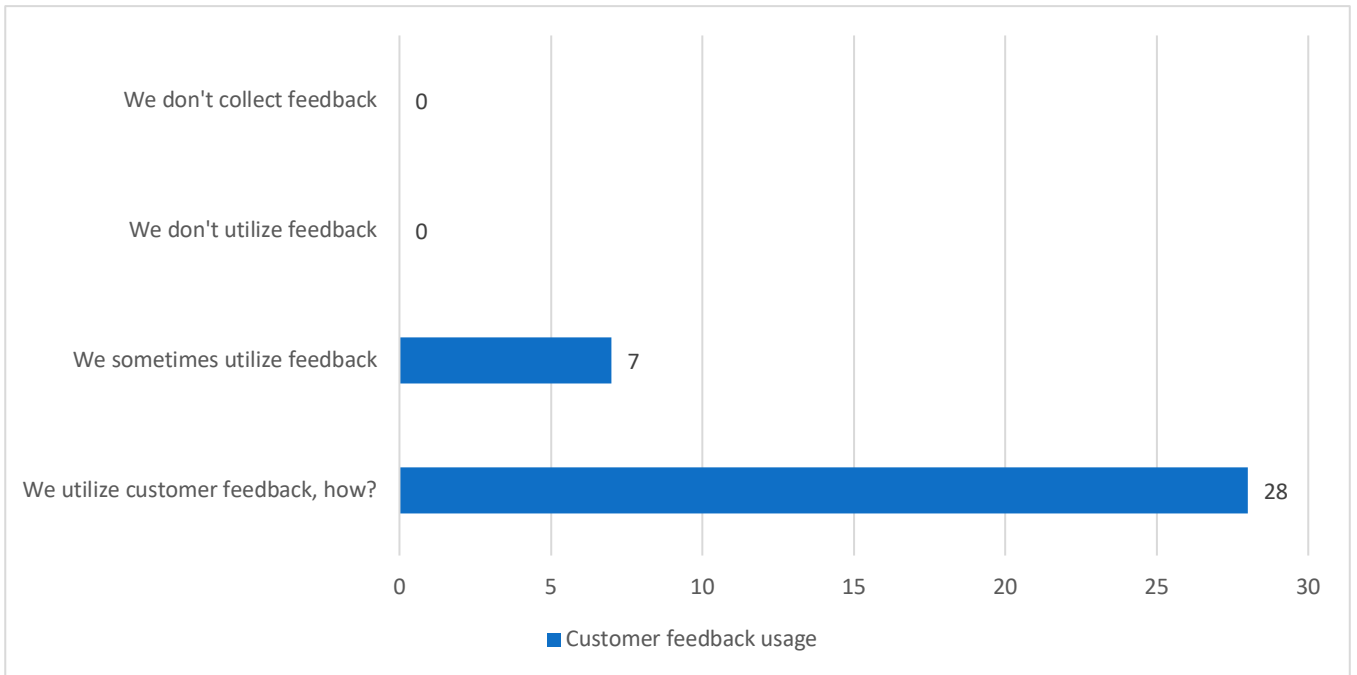


Figure 39. Customer feedback utilization

Majority of the applicants (28/35) stated that they utilize customer feedback systematically for development. 7 applicants stated that they “utilize feedback sometimes” (Figure 39.). None of the applicants stated that they would not at all utilize feedback and none of the applicants stated that they would not at all collect customer feedback.

Applicants who chose option “We utilize customer feedback systematically, how?” had an open answer space where they could further explain how they systematically utilize their customer feedback with their own words. (Figure 40.) Most common open answer with nearly 2/3 of all applicants (21/35) was that customer feedback is collected and utilized after the visit. 7/35 answers stated using feedback form or questionnaire. 6/35 open answers explained that they utilize feedback for development of products and services. 4/35 applicants mentioned having automated, electric feedback system. Other open answers to customer feedback utilization were for example: “Restaurants have their own systems”, “Feedback is used systematically”, “Feedback conversation”, “We aim to fulfill local wishes in flavors, especially if they are not available in that area”, “All feedback is considered one by one”, “We immediately pay attention to feedback”, “When we start operation”, “Working on it, depends on situation” and ““If there are improvement suggestions to the product and it is possible considering the resources and if it doesn’t change the cost structure, we fix it.”

"Restaurants have their own systems"
"Feedback form"
"Sales channels send feedback request form after visit which is taken into consideration in development"
"Contacting after"
"We collect regularly feedback cards from customers, which we utilize in development. We collect feedback and ideas also in our social media channels."
" Feedback is collected from all customers and operations are developed based on feedback."
" We ask for feedback, go through it, consider together the feedback, and based on it develop our operations."
"Feedback is used systematically"
"Feedback conversation"
"Detailed review for pre, during, post trip service and one-on-one meetings for customization"
"From every event feedback is collected"
"Feedback Automat after"
"Automated electrical feedback from all customers"
"Company has a customer questionnaire on website and Facebook, also paper version in the restaurant. Answers are being followed and feedback is registered. "
"We aim to fulfill local wishes in flavors, especially if they are not available in that area"
"Feedback is a dialog, which is the base for improvement and developing new products"
"All feedback is considered one by one"
"Feedback form"
"All participants collect feedback separately, and feedback is processed with each company and together"

“We immediately pay attention to feedback”
“Feedback is observed, processed and plan is made based on feedback how to develop operation and products”
“Working on it, depends on situation”
“Our working group considers feedback together and use for product development”
“Feedback questionnaire after shopping. Feedback is monitored and responded on social media channels”
“Electrical feedback form”
“Feedback for organizer in Survey Pal Digi and customers digital inquiry machines”
“When we start operation”
“If there are improvement suggestions to the product and it is possible considering the resources and if it doesn’t change the cost structure, we fix it.”

Figure 40. Open answers to utilizing customer feedback systematically

5.1.21 Additional information

In question 22 applicants were asked if they wish to present additional information which should be noticed by the panel of reviewers, such as how the product is planned to be developed in the future. All 35 applications gave an answer to this question. All applicants supplied some additional details about their company or product at this stage. Most of the applicants (32/35) stated they were still working on their product/service to develop further the product/service which they presented in the competition. Nearly half of the applicants (15/32) explained they were going to expand their product range, or services. Two applicants were expanding their service and product selection because they were going to get more animals; one applicant was going to buy 3 alpacas and the other applicant was going to receive 50 cows from Pelso- jail. Most common way of expanding stated was plans to add products or services selection. 3 applicants stated their products/services could be taken in use in another area in Finland in future. All applicants were planning to develop competition products and services further. 15 applicants highlighted hoping to increase co-operation with other operators in the area in future.

6. Discussion

Food Travel Strategy of Finland 2020-2028 Strategy's mission states: "The more chefs cooking, the tastier the soup - all-year-around co-operation!" and according to this research this strategy can be found, and it is supported by the applications of the products and services in Food Travel Competition 2021 in development stage. Many operators recognize the value and importance of co-operation and all-year-round-availability and aim to develop products with these qualities. When there is a little or no co-operation it is not a conscious decision by producers but a consequence of not having the time to search and develop the kind of co-operation which would be easy to take into natural part of operations. This highlights the importance of different projects (Hanke) to support co-operation and to help small producers. Projects presence is strong among the applicants and one third of the competition applicants co-operate already with different food and travel projects.

Taste of place - Eat local and sense Finland - Food travel product theme was the most popular theme from all Hungry for Finland Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028 themes in Food Travel Competition 2021. This theme highlights locality and location. This is strongly represented in the application form answers where "Locality, locally produced food and authenticity", "Co-operation with other actors, producers, and other travel companies" were at the top of the product strength list. Most applicants were committed to using local products which increases the sales of regional products, supports the likelihood of the local production and services remaining in the area and is an important part of sustainable business. Sustainability is included in the Finnish Food Travel Strategy and in the creation of the strategy adjectives describing Finnish food and Finnish Food travel were collected and the most important topics which were described were cleanness, sustainability, and safety. These topics were strongly present also in the competition applications.

Food travelling in Finland based on 2021 Food Travel competition products and services in development stage highlights nature, local food and services with known producers and farmers. Finnish Food Travel also includes storytelling and tasty, high-quality ingredients. The future of food travel based on Food Travel Competition products and services can be considered responsible, versatile and in most parts following the Finnish Travel Strategy. Majority of the products and services emphasize sustainability in different dimensions; socially by employing local service providers and operators, economically by supporting local economy, buying from local producers and farmers and monitoring topics like food waste. Environmental sustainability was present in highlighting usage of local operators and products as much as possible to avoid long transportations and additional storage.

Sustainability showcases in many ways especially in strong emphasis of local food usage. Sourcing ingredients from local producers, farmers, and breweries, as well as use local and Finnish ingredients is nearly unanimous. It is common to use game, local fish, berries, mushrooms, and wild herbs. Some operators highlight organic products, emphasizing their caring for the environment and animals. Waste is monitored, single-use cutlery and containers are avoided. Local tap water is used instead of bottled water and vegetarian food options are more common than before. Seasonality is mostly well understood and used, and seasons are made visible.

Some topics of sustainability are understood better than others; water for example seems to be an unknown topic in Finland in sustainability issues based on this research. It was quite surprising to find that only one applicant considered water consumption and tap water offering being important sustainability factor. On another hand, this explains more about Finland's exceptional ground water situation which enables Finns having the luxury of not knowing and understanding how valuable and crucial elements of sustainability water and water consumption are. Also, energy consumption in food preparation and storage was not considered important sustainability factor by competition applicants, which suggests that energy consumption in Finland is a question mainly concerning price. Attitude towards energy issues has changed some due to massive increase in electricity prices in Finland 2022 due to global supply problem and war in Ukraine. This has forced the Finns to consider their electricity usage. Interestingly, more is discussed in the media about how to get cheaper prices than the fact the actual usage should and could be cut down. Energy consumption in a country like Finland where heating is crucial for big part of the year plays a major the source of energy place a big role in sustainability questions.

Strengths of the Finnish Food Travel are having products and services spread across the country even though majority are to be experienced in Uusimaa-region. Nature is presented well and presented in different ways using various possibilities and forms of nature from underground caves to archipelago, cultural sites as well as forests, gardens, farms, islands, and lakes. Locality, authenticity, and strong local co-operation are dominant strength factors, as well as storytelling, high hygiene, high food safety and ingredient quality level. Strengths can also be considered strong Finnish and local lifestyle and food culture being presented. Also, origin of food product is known which is a strength. Paying attention to food waste improves profitability which can therefore also be considered a strength as well as special diets and limitations being taken into consideration.

Weaknesses of Finnish Food Travel based on competition application forms is still quite moderate amounts of operators in the field. The lack of products and services offered in fields such as home food (0) and street food (0) suggest that these sectors for example need a lot development and there are not many actors in this sector in Finland. This can be partly due to complicated regulatory issues in the past which made starting a business in this field quite difficult. City of Helsinki for

example has significantly changed their approach and applying for street food vendor license or a terrace in downtown Helsinki is nowadays quite an easy task and it should not create a notable obstacle anymore.

The number of farms, breweries and food events participating in Food Travel Competition was quite small, but on another hand, breweries were mentioned in the top co-operation partner list. Also, this can partly be a consequence of COVID years which has forced many operators to cancel their events. This should naturally increase the further we move from the lockdown from the pandemic. Still, COVID situation it is not quite over, and event organizers and participants are still quite slowly entering back to field. Slow Food Festival in Fiskars for example had in 2019 more than 70 small producers participating the Slow Food Event. For the following two years (2020 and 2021) they cancelled the event quite late, which got producers worried about the future of the event. This year (2022) they had approximately 35-40 producers. Therefore, having a quite short history of successful food events can be considered a weakness. Growth and importance of food as an element can be detected in many events which started with a strong theme in another field such as Slush, have added food into their structure. Food has grown its importance inside the event creating more and more operators involved. Customers nowadays expect a good quality food selection being offered at all events no matter what the topic of the event is. The more years go by and food paths, events, festivals and other happenings take place, the image of food activities grows stronger across all business sectors which will help events to expand their offerings.

Food travelling in Finland is based on locality and storytelling in multiple forms such as different restaurant experiences, guided cooking, wild food activities, food in the wilderness, cultural surrounding, food paths, food events, market halls, specialty shops, cheeseries, breweries and all activities and services built around it. These main ideas from the Food Travel product recommendations by Hungry for Finland 2020 are well presented in the Food Travel Competition products and services in development stage. All products and services connect to at least one of these topics. According to this research majority of the products and services in development in Finland follow the product recommendation guidelines. Only parts which remain quite limited are home dinners and street food. Nevertheless, according to the competition applications there are versatile and interesting products and services in development in Finland. This predicts a rich future including more and more competitive products and services in the field of Finnish Food Travel. Co-operation is strongly appreciated and performed which also predicts richness in future product selection, since co-operation has the possibility to surface notable more new ideas and product combinations that any one person or company could come up with by themselves. Based on Competition application forms the future of Finnish food travel looks to be going in the right direction and being aligned with the Finnish Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028.

Finnish Food travelling of the future is tasty food experiences in restaurants based on locality and storytelling, guided cooking, enjoying a meal in the nature or cultural environment, food travelling paths, festivals or events, marketplaces, markets, specialty stores, small breweries and programs related to them.

Research results indicate that some key parts are of Finnish Strategy for Travelling for example are presented well and strongly in the product selection such as the importance of stories, usage of local products and value of co-operation. Finnish Strategy for Travelling 2020-2028 goal is to be the most sustainably growing Nordic travelling destination highlighting responsible business, digitalization, accessibility development and ensuring competitive environment for operations. This ambitious goal has not yet fully reached the grassroots level, even though operators in the field wish to increase responsibility and sustainability but not all means are understood nor taken into use.

Due to the geopolitical situation of Finland as a neighboring country to Russia makes Finnish travelling industry more vulnerable to changes which involve Russia. The travelling sector has not recovered from being totally shut down due to COVID-pandemic and now 2022 that Russia has started a war against Ukraine Finland faces new challenges which only affect areas nearby Russia. This change in global scale has meant new alliances such as rapid NATO-membership applications by Sweden and Finland which on another hand can diminish long-term travelling numbers from Russia and its allies but also it can mean growing interest towards Finland from other NATO countries. The feeling of security and safety has become a major role in travelling and tourism sector. How this will affect travelling in long term will be seen in time.

6.1 Development suggestions

Development suggestions are presented for the future application forms and questions are suggested for the next Food Travel Competition as well as for topics and operations to consider in future.

Many applicants had difficulties putting their products and services to the ready options in "Which category of Food Travel products your product/service belongs to?" Most applicants therefore chose in application form category option "Other food experiences, lunch- or dinner cruise or something else" which suggest that the application form did not offer applicants enough category options which they could easily relate to. More options could be offered in the selection of what type of product/service is applying for competition to get more easily more specific information to start with. Applicants choosing "other food experience" explained in their open answers what kind of product or service they were offering. On another hand, many of these products could have been put into categories which were offered, but for some reason they were not chosen. Since applications were filled autonomously online by applicants there has been possibility to open and

explain options further. "Other food experience" option gives all applicants "an easy way forward" without having to have to seriously think and evaluate the content of each category. Removing this "other food experience" would push all applicants into considering their category more carefully but it might also prevent them from answering the questionnaire at all if question was considered too complicated, which encourages to keep open options available also.

The question of how much time and effort an application takes to fulfill plays a big role for small producers. If it is too complicated, requires too much time of effort it will not get done. Some sort of system like "LinkedIn" would be good to start for small producers, a digital platform which would offer a place where a producer could basically build a virtual CV concerning their products and services. This platform could be then used for example for information sharing, searching, and connecting with co-operatives and so on. Also, when a project or happening such as Food & Travel Competition would be announced, all "members" could apply easily with their virtual profiles without having to have to spend the additional time for filling applications which might prevent entrepreneurs from participating. This could increase the number of applicants participating the competitions like Food & Travel Competition, which in turn would improve its recognition and result in increasing popularity among actors in the field to participate in it. Applicants could get ideas from other applicants, suggest ideas to each other and this way possibly naturally give birth to more and more ideas.

Also, since one of the goals was to promote this Food Travel Strategy and product recommendations, it would be crucial that on each question on each word is an easy "question mark option" offered for clarifying all key concepts and key words used. For example, when the question is "Are you using a Quality system, if so, which one?" there should be link from the word "Quality System" automatically directing to a page or pop-up box which explains what a Quality system is and possibly even also what it is not. To get useful, accurate data which answers a question correctly requires not only the right question but also a way to make sure that the person who is filling the application truly understands what the question is about, so they can give the correct answer.

Quality systems and quality management usage is not common in Finland based on the results of this study and understanding of what quality systems are, is quite limited. From applicants in development stage one third stated having a quality system. From these 13 applicants only 7 applicants had a quality system. The rest of the applicants who believed they had quality system at use, explained having something else they believed is quality system. From the applicants who did not have a quality system, most seem to have been describing self-monitoring (Omavalvonta). This self-monitoring, which is a mandatory procedure Finnish Food Authority requires all food operators to perform as minimum requirement to operate in any way in food and beverage business. It is important, yes, but how much of a quality system is fulfilling mandatory minimum to be able to

operate at all is another question. On another hand, one third of the companies who were using quality systems had more than one system in use. The value and purpose of these systems would be fruitful to be supported among actors in food and travelling sector. It is very likely to assume that it would be quite an affordable investment to permanently step-up the level of food products and services in all of Finland by offering a free of charge period of one year for example of an agreed, same quality system for all operators.

One big question mark is the question about customer feedback. Question to ask about customer feedback utilization, was in a form of a statement: "We collect and utilize customer feedback for development in our organization" which basically required everybody to answer "Yes, we utilize feedback" because who would ever answer "We don't collect feedback" or "We don't utilize feedback"? The open answers then explained the real situation. Four answering options were given: "We systematically utilize feedback, how?", "We sometimes utilize feedback", "We don't utilize feedback" and "We don't collect feedback". Seven applicants stated that they were "sometimes utilizing feedback", and 28 stated utilizing feedback systematically. All applicants stated collecting and utilizing customer feedback either systematically, either always or sometimes.

Most common answer explaining how customer feedback was utilized was: "after the visit". 21/35 applicants answered that customer feedback is collected and utilized after the visit. Seven applicants answered that their way of utilizing customer feedback was that they are using feedback form or feedback questionnaire. Four applicants answered they have an automated, electric feedback system. Six applicants explained collecting feedback and that feedback was being used for development of products and services.

This question again, was a statement: "We collect and utilize customer feedback for development in our organization". Applicants gave open answers about utilizing feedback with answers such as this: "Feedback is used systematically", "Feedback conversation", "Company has customer questionnaire, answers are followed and registered", "We aim to fulfill local wishes", "Feedback is considered one by one", "Feedback form", "We are working on it, it depends on the situation" or "If it is possible to fix it considering the resources, and if it doesn't change the cost structure, we will fix it". These answers quite clearly reveal that the original statement which aims to clarify this matter is not clear enough. Maybe a simpler question like "If you collect customer feedback, what do you do with it?" could give more insightful material. Now from 35 answers only 6 applicants actually explained in their open answer that they collect and utilize customer feedback, and they utilize it for product and service development. 29 applicants answered something else.

This also raises the question about the need for and importance of education. The key would be to explain why customer feedback is collected, what feedback collecting is about, what would be

useful to ask for and what kind of opportunities feedback opens. Many answers had a lot of negative expectations written between the lines. One applicant stated: "If it is possible to fix it considering the resources, and if it doesn't change the cost structure, we will fix it". This answer could be interpreted as an assumption of the producers assuming that feedback is a written complaint, it should be fixed but it usually costs money, so it is probably not possible. Surely, if a producer only gets negative feedback and continuously their customers suggest fixing their products some speculation can be drawn. Generally, in my experience I dare to claim that customers more often than simply complain if there is no specific reason for complaint, usually simply wish to state their wishes and opinions about products and services they have used. Material received from customer feedback gives absolutely priceless data about their thoughts. If a customer made the effort to share their thoughts and took the time to write it down for you, it is more valuable than a campaign on the radio, and it should be used wisely and with respect. This crucially important basic protocol needs to be explained carefully step by step to all actors in the field.

In 2021 complete demand for travelling recovered some after major fall caused by COVID in 2019 and 2020 up to 11,2 billion euros due to domestic travellers. Domestic travelling demand grew from 67% in 2019 up to 84% in 2020 and approximately 90% in 2021. Domestic travelling grew higher compared to the time before pandemic, but international travelling kept decreasing in 2021. Since most competition products in development stage were designed for both international and national visitors, this raises a question concerning product development. Expectations and needs of national tourists are different than expectations and needs of international tourists. When expectations are different it is important to make sure that products and services developed really meet the needs and expectations of each group. Domestic tourist can find a local specialty equally exotic than an international tourist but there might still be subtle differences in perspectives in product selection. Also, emotions should be carefully considered as well. Product and service selection needs to be designed so that both target groups find something safe to choose and something extra to feel special and to make sure that they both feel equally welcome and appreciated.

The parts of sustainability aspects which were noticed not being strongly recognized should be promoted more strongly via new projects, incentives, or competitions. Themes such as water usage, recycling, energy saving in food preparation and storage, minimizing the energy consumption of refrigeration appliances, and favoring suppliers that use renewable energy could be topics which could benefit if they were actively taken into the product and service production level. More research is recommended, especially concerning customer feedback, customer thoughts, expectations, wishes, and opinions concerning products and service selection. I believe producers and service providers in Finland are from the most parts fruitful ground for positive push, sparkles of inspiration and co-operation opportunities, which could be used for common advantage. Technology

enables virtual meetings for keeping up inspiration after physical contact has once been made at least once.

I started handling the applications in June 2021 by first reading all applications for the Food Travel Competition 2021 in development stage several times. I got access to the material in June 2021 and during June and July I was reading the applications, re-wrote applications questions and answers in English and making notes. After translations I started reading other related material and collecting material for theoretical part. From August to November 2021 as well as from February to June 2022 I was mainly reading articles and collecting material concerning the topic generally. I finally started writing everything together in the beginning of August 2022. I proceeded writing 4-6 hours daily until the 20th of November. Originally, my plan was to conduct content analysis on the application forms of Food and Travel Competition 2021 products and services and after conducting expert interviews based on the findings of the applications. Due to time and scheduling challenges and after discussing with commissioner decision was made not to conduct planned interviews due to limited time left, and instead using Bold Vision Canvas method to create a Vision statement for future Food Travel in Finland. This Vision could then be continued in 2023 by the next following Food and Travel project.

6.2 Limitations

This research does not take into consideration products and services which already exist in the market by the application time for the competition. From the perspective of future development, the products, and services on the market at present time represent the development recognized prior to that moment. Therefore, they always represent the actions to circumstances before that moment. The products and services in development phase on another hand offer a different kind of perspective. Products in development stage in 2021 are considered by the researcher being unique, reflecting and representing the ideas and views emerging from that very specific, exceptional time. Since time like this is quite unique due to global COVID-pandemic affecting the whole world since the early 2020's the products and services in development stage in 2021 represent the up-comings and learnings received and considered during these conditions. They showcase the results of quite speedy transformation and adaptation towards the changing needs of the future food travel and the continuously changing demands all businesses in this category must take into consideration in future. This thesis does not aim to result wide abstract concepts including interpretation but instead to focus specifically what is written, and how things are described in the material.

Limitation arises also from the collection of material; all applicants filled out the application form on a webpage, so it only represents the companies and entrepreneurs who know that there is a Food

Travel Competition and who find their way to that webpage. It is strongly dependent on how well Food Travel Competition is known and how well all actors and projects around it are known and marketed. Division of structure of business for example does not represent the natural division of structures in Finland so it is obvious that the proportions of the answers do not offer a possibility to make assumptions according to suggestions in wider range. In 2021 in Finland for example there were 261 316 registered limited liability companies and 227 712 sole entrepreneurs, which suggest that to make any wider assumptions the relation of these two for example should be approximately the same in answers. Also, there were only 552 organizations and 46 foundations; but despite their minimal presence in business scale in Finland, in this specific material according to basic information there are more organizations applying than sole entrepreneurs. What this does suggest is that organizations are more likely to know or to find out about Food Travel Competition and apply, when sole entrepreneurs are most likely simply more focused in their actual business which might prevent them from spending their time looking for this kind of competitions or other opportunities for development. How to get the Food Travel Competition 2023 more applicants to give more material for research should be carefully considered. Is there more than money to be given as a prize? Is there something more valuable than money that could be offered? How to promote the competition and its relevance to a company to make it “worth” spending the time on filling up applications? When I was investigating projects around one of the applicants (Vantaa-menu) I started to search further what all kinds of projects they had had before this project which they were offering now to this competition. One of their previous projects consisted of several workshops where entrepreneurs were asked to brainstorm with project workers of Vantaa. Entrepreneurs gave feedback to the city of Vantaa after this project was finished stating that it is nice to have the opportunity to state their opinion and present their ideas; but for them this was volunteering, working free of charge, for the city of Vantaa which basically means they used their time (and time is their currency) for helping the city of Vantaa. This is quite the opposite to the idea which was presented to them presenting the idea which was that the project was launched to help them.

In my eyes, they worded out one of the key problems of development projects in Finland. The organizing level often seem to overestimate the ability of small companies’ participation to additional work/project/networking. Project teams often wonder why it is difficult to get small producers to cooperate with project that from their perspectives would help them – and small producers think that why on earth are they asking me to do more, when I already work for 60 hours per week just to survive? Many small producers literally need every single one of their days simply to manage their everyday business. This is the real situation and status of small producers in Finland at the moment. Instead of asking them to do more, we all other actors in the industry should ask ourselves what more we can do for them.

6.3 Reliability

The reason qualitative research and content analysis was chosen was due to limited number of application forms to analyze and having the need to look at open answers carefully. 5 Bold Steps Vision Canvas was suggested by the commissioner. Material was ready material collected via Webropol, to which Competition applicants answered themselves. To analyze product and services in development stage was suggested by the commissioner, since there was already another Thesis conducted concerning Competition products and services already.

The aim was to find the information bits and pieces from the application materials which are relevant when aiming to build a proper image. Coding for content analysis is created from the elements found in the competition applications and directly arising from the material itself. All material was copied into a Word-file and carefully considered one application at a time, word by word. While reading themes arising themes were written on piece of paper. After reading the material several times, I continued by re-reading the themes which had surfaced. I calculated appearance of each theme and created new themes based on the appearance in the original stage. I calculated products and services belonging in each theme group to create a table presenting figures in numbers of themes appearing.

In the beginning it was quite difficult to get a proper understanding of the content of the material. Applicants had answered the competition question in different styles, some had answered very business-like, shortly, and directly, some applicants painted pictures and images with stories which were like reading a fairytale. To make sense to these very different materials I decided to start by writing first summaries on each answer and continued by translating the summary. On every question I re-read the question and answer of each applicant several times, to make sure I correctly understood the question and that the translation I had made was according to the question. On each open question after reading each answer several times, I summarized the content first in Finnish and then translated the summary in English. After creating summaries, I started calculating appearance based on the summarized information. On every question I went back and forward with the applications answers to make sure I had conveyed the correct idea. Webropol material is easy to access so it was possible to go back and forward reading repeatedly the questions and answers given.

The main goal of this qualitative research was to bring insight to Food Tourism project as well as all operators in food and travel sector in Finland since it offers insights of product and service development in 2021. This was approached by investigating Finnish Food & Travel Competition 2021 products and services in development stage. All applications and applicants were thoroughly

studied. Information loss is inevitably possible when translations are made, so there is a risk of misunderstanding Finnish open answers as well as a risk of translation from Finnish to English which can affect the results. The focus was in translating the thoughts and meanings more than anything so not every answer is translated word by word. Exceptions are some of the open answers which I had difficulties to understand what applicants meant with their answers. These answers I translated word by word exactly to convey the at least the written words correctly, even if the message was a little unclear. How the answer is then understood and interpreted depends on the reader. One example is the question concerning customer feedback utilization. Most application answers did not answer the question which forced me to go back to the structure of the application form to check if I had misunderstood the question.

The reliability of this research also suffers from having a limited number of applicants in development stage in Food & Travel Competition 2021. The structure of applicants is strongly based on having the knowledge of Food & Travel Competition and does not correlate to realistic division of operators in the field.

6.3 Evaluating own learning

It has been interesting to learn how quite limited amount of material keeps growing and growing and transforming from hundreds of pages of nonspecific material into data which slowly forms structures and makes sense. It has also been interesting to find how all things are related in traveling sector. Since I am interested in both subjects separately as well as the combination of food and travelling, I ended up reading hundreds of articles, research, strategies, news, and plans within the field. Reading I could have continued for another year since there is so much to study which effects one part or the other. Translations took more time than I expected, but it felt natural and important because I hope in future more future will be conducted in this field and it would be important that enough background material is available in English, since it is quite a limited number of researchers who can get the best use of materials in Finnish. I felt quite confident to conduct research in English but when I was translating open parts I found myself struggling wondering if I am translating the content correctly. Time management was not the best from my part, and I am a little disappointed for not being able to conduct interviews as a part of this research – but for the time and resources I had available at this point, I am quite satisfied with the result. After re-doing several tables and figures I also gained a lot of respect for all people who create tables, articles and any kind of written material trying to convey a message. To find the right scales to present information in an easily comprehensive way, requires a lot of working hours.

6.4 Finnish Food Travel Bold Vision Canvas



Figure 41. Food travel Vision of Finland 2030

Food Travel Vision of Finland 2030 is: “Restorative & Responsible Food Travel Leader in the Nordic” (Figure 41.) It follows the Finnish Food Authority’s vision which is: “Responsible food – good life” by deepening the responsibility of consequences and effects of travelling into becoming a major positive impactor of the destination. Finland aims to be the most sustainable choice to travel in the Nordics but also being the world leader in actively showing that travelers should always leave better conditions behind, being a leader by example in restoring the nature with the help of tourism.

Questions for creating base for Food travel Vision are following:

- Step 1: Vision Statement: What’s your guiding food travel vision & mission?
- Step 2: Essential Themes: What are the essential themes supporting your vision?
- Step 3: Supports: What are the supports that enable you to reach your future?
- Step 4: Challenges: What are the challenges that can hinder you from reaching future?
- Step 6: 5 Bold Steps: What are the 5 bold steps to take to achieve your food travel vision?

Answering question and adding perspective themes Food Travel Vision 2030 is created (Figure 42.) and 5 Bold Steps are suggested (Figure 43.).

Mission: Transformative travelling ideas are used to create restorative mind-set in tourism bringing success and positive impact in economical, ecological, and ethical perspectives.

Essential Themes: Food travel as an experience, locality and authenticity, sustainability, responsibility, safety, control, science, and circular economy.

Supportive factors are continuously, increasingly worsening climate situation, people's interest to better the condition and diversity of the environment and nature, better self-sufficiency ratio and interest of local people to promote Finland to the world. Important themes are cleanness of nature, transparent, safe, and responsible food value chain, open communication, and positive attitude towards co-operation. Support is needed from all stakeholders in governmental level (Ministries), regional stage (City Councils, Educational Institutions), as well as local actors (local communities, producers, farmers, actors in tourism cluster). Continuous research needs to be conducted as well as collect feedback from all users and utilizing collected feedback to develop product and services systematically.

Challenges hindering Finland from achieving this goal arise from the current stage of the world in many different aspects. The world and tourism have not recovered from COVID pandemic and in Europe Russia attacking Ukraine has created tensions in Europe which have not existed since the end of Second World War. The geopolitical situation where Finland is and will remain unclear. Status quo of the world when it comes to great war powers such as Russia and USA, China, India, Korea for example set a shadow over all tourism development where dramatic changes might take place quite suddenly and this could have unpredictable consequences. A problem in one part of the supply chain radiates further and further in the chain. Speeding urbanization creates challenges as well, which will continue without massive actions to support the infrastructures and opportunities the countryside can offer. Epidemics and natural catastrophes can strongly affect locally and globally, as well as excessive tourism. Economic situation strongly affects traveling where bear market and recession, as well as inflation and rising prices may cause trouble for driving mission forward with full speed.

Future of Food travel in Finland

<p>Theoretical perspective</p> <p>Safety, hygienic & accessibility Sustainability & Responsibility Locality " Eat like locals" Nature Ecological & Ethical Technology, Digitalization Sharing Platforms</p>	<p>Food Travel Competition 2021 products in development stage perspective</p> <p>Locality, local food, local producers authenticity Nature, storytelling Co-operation Responsibility, Sustainability, caring for environment</p>	<p>Researcher perspective:</p> <p>The world will radically change in 10-15 years in main three sectors of society</p> <p>Transportation, Energy & Food production Climate issue Restoring movement Circular economy</p>
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Figure 42. Themes used for creation of vision for Food in Finland 2030

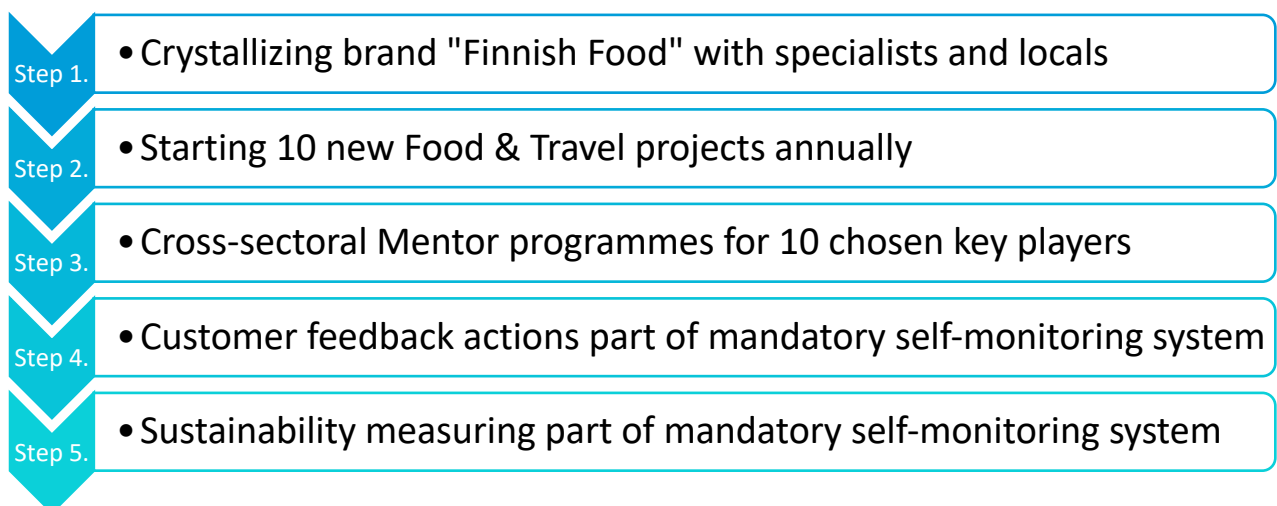


Figure 43. Concrete 5 Bold Steps towards 2030 Vision

6.6 Food travelling in 2030

The Food travelling will continue to grow. Finland is the leader of the world in a new restorative tourism movement, which has evolved after 2025 “Leave no trace” movement. After realizing it is not enough to stop the damages anymore, but it needs to be restored and fast, the restorative movement spreads like a virus across the world. Tourism and food travel sector in Finland was quickly transformed to restorative by nature, after “Leave no trace” Campaign. The same year Finland became news topic internationally after the Parliament of Finland decided to forbid combustion engines and all single use plastics.

Finland leads by example and has banned all commercial flights across the country to act on climate change from Finland’s part. All airplanes are now landing in Helsinki-Vantaa Airport, or Helmi as she is called nowadays. Helmi has quickly grown bigger than Helsinki after the decision by the Government of Finland of closing airspace from commercial airplanes to stop growing emissions. National airline Finnair has transformed into the market leader in autonomous vehicle operations.

From Helmi also begins a new all-across-the-country spreading railroad network with Finnair’s new, autonomous vehicles which take travelers to all destinations in Finland ecologically, faster than ever. Helmi-city is built on circular system creating its own energy from its waste, and feeds local inhabitants with large outdoor roof top gardens operating with surplus heat from the infrastructure. Urban gardens create not only food production and home for pollinators but also a blooming outdoors experience for all daily visitors from childcare units, workers, and elderly, who all come to enjoy the mandatory Green Siesta ordered by the Parliament. Since 2027 after a 2-years Aalto-University research showed that an hour of nature exposure between 11.00-14.00 notably prevented suicides, diminished depression, and increased work efficiency the Parliament decided to take it in use throughout all working agreements for a 2-year trial period. Since the results were even better than expected, this “Green Siesta” quickly merged into the everyday life of the Finns. This is estimated being the main reason behind Finns returning to the top of the “Worlds happiest people” list after 10 years of down fall.

In 8 years, Finland has high quality food travel products offered extensively across the country. Domestic travelers have doubled the number of trips and food travel activities are the most common activities locals participate in when they travel. New, autonomous electric trains take families and solo travelers around the country to learn how to bake traditional pastries in Imatra, to have lunch in Malmgård castle while virtually watching how annoyed Countess Christina slaps Danish Prince Peter on his left cheek when he is trying to get her attention and kiss her on 22nd of July 1927 in her garden, where she was taking care of her roses.

It is a common habit for a family in Munkkiniemi to reserve places to enjoy a family Saturday dinner in Itäkeskus, where Siva, a single father of four small girls is preparing a Kurdish dinner combining Kurdish recipe and best, fresh, local, Finnish ingredients. Siva is selling his home cooking meal seats on “Dinner with my extended Family” FDaaS (FamilyDinner as a Service) online service portal to celebrate his roots and to participate in cultural exchange with others. This idea he got originally after participating a national project of social integration where immigrants invite a neighboring family to have dinner with them. Siva enjoyed cooking with his kids and decided to start a small company which now employs him and his oldest daughter.

Finns are proud of their food and food culture. The field of hospitality, food production and farming are steadily growing as employment and business sectors. Food travel products are accessible, affordable, and easy to buy. Technology has evolved especially around the food production, energy and transportation sectors which has resulted lowering of prices and therefore made products and services more affordable. This in turn filled the sector with hundreds of entrepreneurs wanting to be a part of the new service sector.

Finland has a wide-spread versatile selection of food travelling paths, festivals and other events produced by local communities and businesses supported by local educational centers, artists, transportation, and accommodation services. Government has strongly supported this by building infrastructure to support it, such as an extensive electrical fast railway system where new “Finnish Railroad Card” can be purchased by anyone with an affordable 20-euro monthly fee which allows customers to travel basically anywhere in Finland. This opportunity was possible after all trains became autonomously driving and human resources costs dropped by 90%.

After extensive railroad was built and new high-tech trains were taken into use, the whole country became more available and reachable to everybody, locals, and visitors. Movement from the countryside to the cities slowed down dramatically since people could come to work in Helsinki from Jyväskylä 30 minutes by train with 20-euro monthly fee. This also enabled food travel products being created and moved literally anywhere in the country.

Cross-sectoral co-operation has punctured all fields combining food in imaginary ways and product and service development has been done based on big data and algorithms which collects information from visitors from all points of their travel. Customer profiles are based on this collected data so product and service selection changes according to each customers personal preferences, ethnic background, age, and operation language for example.

Services are easy to use and available flexibly, service providers take care of their customers from beginning until the end with private, virtual companion to make sure the customer has everything they always need. This virtual guide can be personalized, and it also suggests places, products,

and services nearby. Settings can be automated and used manually as well. A family can enjoy Virtual Grandmother who will lead them to child friendly restaurants, amusement park with least crowd at that moment and remind you to stop by a little café to pick up some snacks to go. Group of young men can enjoy the company of a friendly, virtual, young man who can recommend the best small breweries nearby, lead to a local football stadium and talk about its history, or reserve places from a private wine tasting and poker game evening in a secret location.

Responsibility and sustainability are considered self-evident, and scarcity is translated into limited editions and upscale, rare specialties. Menus are seasonal, mainly vegetarian, or vegan but ethical and ecological local game, locally produced poultry, and wild and ecologically farmed fish are also available. All food products are excellent quality, fresh and farmed nearby. Business owners, big and small, aim to better the life of each traveler by offering proudly healthy, tasty top of the line food products. Finnish food is described as delicious, fresh, wild, courageous, and unique. Food travel products are imaginary, interesting, and strongly emotion awakening. Profitability is guaranteed by governments support to small producers, with minimum value added taxes and extensive possibilities for support, financing, education, and access to a co-operation community for sharing experiences and ideas. Open pricing information where the customers see which part of the price is ingredients, which part goes to service provider and which parts is taxes, leads to customer satisfaction, willingness to pay for products and services and a warm memory of supporting local producer or service provider. Finns are considered professional, hardworking, reliable, innovative, service-minded, personal, caring, trustworthy and interesting. Co-operation has grown rapidly in all Nordic countries after border crossing autonomous new railways were introduced in 2027. Travelers entering the Nordics are easily accessible from a “Your Nordic Guide” App which is a common platform all service providers in Nordic countries. From this App the traveler chooses who they are, how many they are, what is their preferred destination, time they have available and personal interest topics. The “Nordic Guide” creates and suggests travelling combinations with product and service packages which gives best quality/price ratio for the customer yet being the most sustainable and ecological choices. App naturally enables easy purchases, reservations and confirmations of all products and services. Via “Nordic Guide” visitors can also communicate directly with service providers if they have questions. “Nordic Guide” also registers travelers’ choices, sends, collects, and answers automated feedback forms and performs a quick weekly and monthly analysis to each service provider with analytics of their activities, products and services sold, and automated “Guide for Service provider App” offers weekly summaries of feedbacks, suggestions for actions to be taken and future improvement suggestions. App includes future research section which continuously collects and analyses data for creating weekly and monthly “Forecasts” which takes into consideration massive amount of big data openly available including service activity data, weather, traveler amount numbers, their movement and forecasted traveling plans.

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Appendices

Appendix 1.

Translated questions of the application

1. Service/product attending competition?
2. Basic information?
3. Which region/s service/product can be experienced?
4. Which food travel product category the service/product belongs to?
5. Is the products/service in Visit Finland My Stay-service?
6. Which core message of Finnish Food Travel Strategy 2020-2028 product belongs to?
7. Description of the product/service?
8. Strengths of the product/service?
9. Product card?
10. Which sustainability factors are especially highlighted in competition product/service?
11. Targeted customers/ to whom is product aimed for?
12. What is the percentage (%) of foreign visitors of your current customers?
13. On which languages are your webpages available?
14. To whom is product/service mainly targeted to?
15. How long time does the customer in average spend with the service/product)
16. What is the price of the product/service to the customer per person in euros?
17. What is the planned profit percentage of the product/service?
18. How long has the product been in the market?
19. What kind of co-operatives are used with this food travel product/service?
20. Is there quality systems in use in your organization?

21. Customer feedback is utilized for development in my organization.

22. Is there any additional information You wish to state about your product or service which should be noticed by the reviewers such as development plans of the product in future?

Appendix 2.



Valtakunnallinen ruokamatkailukilpailu Yhdessä luonnosta ammentaen

Kilpailulla rohkaistaan ruokaan ja matkailuun liittyviä verkostoja kehittämään vastuullisuuteen ja paikallisuuteen perustuvaa ruokamatkailutarjontaa. Kilpailuun haetaan yrityksiä ja yhteisöjä, jotka ovat innovatiivisia ruokamatkailun edelläkävijöitä ja tarjoavat matkailijoille ruokaan liittyviä elämyksiä. Kilpailun tavoitteena on vahvistaa elämyksellisen ruokamatkailun tuotteistamista Suomessa, etsiä ruokamatkailun kärkituotteita ja vahvistaa aitoa yhteistyötä.

Kilpailuun voivat osallistua Suomessa toimivat yritykset ja yhteisöt 18.1.-18.3.2021 välisenä aikana jo olemassa olevalla ruokamatkailutuotteella tai kehitteillä olevalla innovatiivisella, uudella ratkaisulla. (Kyseessä ei kuitenkaan ole raaka-aine- tai elintarvikekilpailu).

Finalistit valitaan kesäkuussa 2021. Voittajat julkistetaan 16.9.2021.

Kilpailun rahoittajat ovat maa- ja metsätalousministeriö, Business Finland / Visit Finland, Maa- ja metsätaloustuottajain Keskusliitto, Maa- ja kotitalousnaisten keskus ry, Suomen keittiömestariyhdistys ry, D.O.Saimaa / Mikkelin kehitysytio Miksei Oy ja Helsingin kaupunki. Kilpailua koordinoi Haaga-Helia ammattikorkeakoulu. Kilpailun arviointiraadin muodostavat rahoittajien edustajat.

Voittaja palkitaan 3000 euron tuotekehitysrahalla. Sijoittuneista (1.-4.) tehdään edustavat markkinointivideot yritysten käyttöön. Lisäksi sijoittuneille järjestetään sparrausta ja ne saavat markkinoinnillista näkyvyyttä Visit Finlandin kanavissa.

Ohjeita

Kilpailulomakkeen täyttämiseen kuluu noin 30 minuuttia. Monet kysymyksistä heijastelevat Suomen ruokamatkailustrategiaa 2020-2028 ja Visit Finlandin ruokamatkailun tuotesuosituksia 2020. Vastaukset käsitellään luottamuksellisesti. Kilpailuun ei oteta vastaan materiaalia muuten kuin kilpailulomakkeen kautta.

Tutustuthan koko lomakkeeseen ennen sen täyttämistä, tarvitset tueksi yrityksesi sähköisiä materiaaleja. Voit tarvittaessa keskeyttää kyselyn täyttämisen yhden kysymyksen välein. Saat linkin, jolla pääset jatkamaan kyselyä myöhemmin uudestaan. Huomioithan, että linkin saat vain sinä, sitä ei ole mahdollista saada muualta jälkikäteen.

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