

## The Role of Slovenian Local Government in the Wine Tourism Promotion

MAJA ŽIBERT, ČRTOMIR ROZMAN, MARJETKA RANGUS & BOŠTJAN BRUMEN

**Abstract** Wine, viticulture, and winemaking are an important cornerstone of economic development, culture, and tourism. Especially in wine-growing parts of the world where symbols related to wine are used even as local or national symbols. Viticulture and its complementary branches are differently developed in different parts of the world – the predisposition of further development, however, is also influenced importantly by positions of different identification referential groups which they have towards the use of wine and further development of the profession. Based on the research of standpoints of the mayors in the Republic of Slovenia, which could be presented as “wine-growing country” with regards to the extent of the vine, we can assert that mayors with their relationship towards wine and their operations influence the use of local wine for the tourist promotion of destination importantly. According to that, we figure out that mayors play an important role in the development of “public policy” in the local environment. In the forming of the positions towards the use of wine for the promotion, the direct experiences are important, as well as the environment where the mayors come from and all identification elements in the sense of cultural heritage, tradition, and development of the branch.

**Keywords:** • wine tourism promotion • local - self-government • local identity • national identity • mayors • Slovenia

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## 1 Introduction

The wine-growing areas of the world are divided into two parts (in Old and New World wine regions). These are places where wine culture implies the way of life with wine and the understanding of wine (Medved, 1997). However, the changes that occurred in the wake of globalization have led to worldwide knowledge of the term “wine culture”.

In the last decade, wine tourism became a key player in gastronomic tourism (López-Guzmán & Sánchez Cañizares, 2008; Hall & Mitchell, 2000), e.g. in Italy (Del Chiappa et al., 2019), France (Thach & Cogan-Marie, 2018), Australia (Sigala, 2019), Portugal (Lavandoski, et al., 2018). It plays an important role in preserving the cultural landscape. It is widely recognized as one of the key strategic development activities based on the high quality of wine production, the rich cultural tradition of wine growing, and well-developed infrastructure (UNWTO, 2017). According to Hall et al., (2000), the wine tasting and/or experiencing other specialties of the wine region are the central motive of the tourist who experiences the wine tourism service.

The wine or wine symbolism is closely connected to religions, poetry, and literature. In doing so, the wine is given a special symbolic value. That symbolism can be built locally or it can grow into national significance. Several authors explore the area of wine with the emphasis on regional identities, tourism or legal regulation (Soontiens, et al., 2018; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2019; Markowska & Lopez –Vega, 2018; Martinez & Morales, 2016; Tomazzoni et al., 2016).

On the local level where the wine is produced, the wine represents a context that plays an important identification role. This means that it is also used for promotion and, consequently, for tourism promotion. To connect concepts “wine production”, “viticulture promotion”, and “wine tourism”, we also need to consider the location where the activities are carried out and the main stakeholders that play a key role. In addition to winegrowers, there are also mayors (the representatives of local self-government) who help when it comes to the area of wine promotion. Mayors have a significant influence on decisions in the development and planning of the local community activities. The mayors take care of the enforcement of the decisions of municipal councils. The priority to form the proposals which are the basis for decision-making of the municipal council is in the domain of this executive power. Unofficial mayor’s power is also important. Mayors can help in organizing the tourism in the field of local self-government. They can order the preparation and implementation of various strategies (also the strategy of the development of tourism). They have all the competencies and powers to organize activities that connect tourist workers, companies, and experts. They have also opportunities for fundraising from national and international projects. All these are the activities by which the mayors can express certain

positions. Priorities and positions the mayors and other representatives of the local self-government in municipalities have are an important point in planning all essential strategic decisions, therefore the measurement and following of the latter are a very important activity.

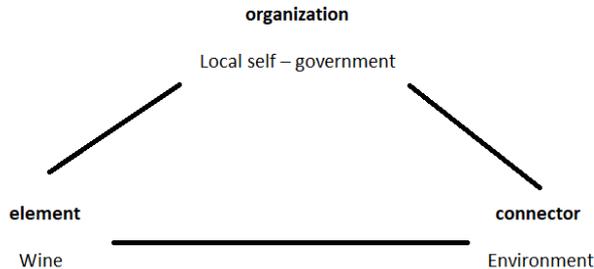
According to Dredge (2001), the local government has an important role in tourism planning and development. However, it has been criticized for not being more proactive. The public service provision for entertainment, culture, and arts remains a non-mandatory requirement (Borrett, 1991). Nevertheless, they play an important role in providing specific events in the community (Shone & Parry, 2001). According to Thomas & Wood (2004), the public sector is responsible for a large proportion of the special events (also touristic) provided for the community.

Slovenia is such a destination where municipalities and local self-government plays an important role in tourism development. The country of Slovenia has the potential to develop wine tourism (Jurinčič & Bojnec, 2009; Potočnik-Slavič & Schmitz, 2013; Kerma & Gačnik, 2015). The fact that Slovenia will be the European Capital of Gastronomy in 2021 also shows that this can be confirmed. On the national level and in strategy papers, however, wine, winemaking, and viticulture do not play a significant role despite the relative importance of the industry and rich tradition. Mayors may show the importance of wine and tourism development with their views on its use for tourism promotion.

Based on that foresight, the principal research questions are: A. What is the attitude of representatives of local self-government – mayors towards the use of wine for tourist promotion? B. Is there a difference between the mayors' attitudes and the actual situation concerning the use of wine for tourist promotion?

The article is based on a critical analysis of the research related to the concept of diverse symbols with the importance of the meaning of the attitudes in identity formation. The article is connected with the empirical part by analyzing the impact of attitudes on the use of “local symbols” for promoting the region and tourism (Figure 1).

**Figure 1:** Key concept of research - relation: Local self-government – Wine – Environment



The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to research the influences of the attitudes of local self-government representatives on the use of wine for tourism promotion while distinguishing between attitudes and actual use. In doing so, lessons that are relevant to other wine destinations (winegrowing areas where mayors play an important role in tourism development) need to be recognized. First, however, it is necessary to review wine as an element of wine tourism.

The structure of the paper is the following: in Section 2, we present the relevant literature connecting concepts of “wine”, “promotion”, and “symbols”. In Section 3, we describe our research methods and data. In section 4, we give the results, discussion and we conclude our paper with final remarks in Section 5.

## 2 Literature overview

To understand the full context of the empirical part of the research, we have to analyze the concept of wine represented as a local and a national symbol and its promotion related to that. We have to understand the role of mayors when using symbols connected to wine for promotion purposes.

Wine is primarily considered as part of agriculture, entrepreneurship, and cultural heritage. When considering wine as a means of tourism promotion on the national and local level, however, we have to understand its ambiguous role. Alcohol use is associated with a wide variety of psychological, medical, and social problems. Babor (1992) explained links to accidents and aggressive behaviors. While moderately enjoyed, it represents a high level of culture. The wine culture initially focused on wine production. Nowadays, however, it has begun to integrate into the experiential and tourism aspects of the industry (Williams, 2001). Professionals often discuss wine as a product, particularly in the context of enogastronomic tourism. Kerma (2014) points out that food and wine are complementary and related segments of the tourist market. Thus, tourism could

be perceived as an instrument that brings together local cultures (Jintalikhitdee & Laothamatas, 2018) and tourists.

By its second, equivalent role, the use of wine plays an important role in promoting the local identity. It shows the priority in the cultural enjoyment of wine which is a part of the tradition and a part of the local population.

Wine – a part of national and local identity is often depicted in various symbols. The next paragraph presents wine as a local and national symbol.

## **2.1 Wine – local and national symbol**

A symbol can represent intangible and invisible. It could be material and visual objects and it could symbolize special values (Monnet, 2011). Symbols have the role of an identification sign (Bourdieu, 1989). Among signs and symbols, there are differences. Symbols represent indirect image while the signs represent the meaning of the message indirectly (O'Connell et al., 2007).

All the symbols and their use are full of their main function: They are the sources of uniting, communicating, and presenting human experiences or impressions (Šifta & Chromý, 2017).

The national sense of community is symbolized by an anthem, coat of arms, and flag (Bechhofer & McCrone, 2012; Elgenius, 2011; Eriksen & Jenkins, 2007). According to Šifta & Chromy (2017), regional symbols are an important characteristic in forming the identity of the region because the act in the role of local representative function which, according to Šifta (2016), emphasizes the local specificity and uniqueness.

In several parts of the world, many national and local symbols express close identification with wine because the images of grapes, grape berries, and glasses or bottles emerge as a part of local or national symbolism, among others, in coat-of-arms, flags, and anthems. The anthems of Hungary, Germany, and Slovenia mention and sing praise to wine. In as many as 23 municipalities of Slovenia, the symbol of grapes appears as a part of the local coat-of-arms. According to Palmer (1999), the main point with regards to such a sign or a symbol is their ability to transmit the meaning for a transfer of very specific messages about the nation and its culture. Therefore, the identification with wine can be understood as a consequence of the tradition of the region (tradition of viticulture). These symbols reflect the region's peculiarities and sovereignties (Semian et al., 2016; Šifta, 2016; Monnet, 2011). Palmer also said that national symbols can be appropriate and accepted to create a characteristic feeling of nationality for tourists.

When referring to wine as a symbol of a region or a nation, we understand not only geographical space (MacLeod, 1998) but also regional marketing and marketing of brands (Andersson, 2014; Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenker, 2013; Papadopoulos, 2004).

In a sense of regional and national symbolic identification, special attention must be paid to promote. The symbolism of a region is constructed from a series of regional symbols (Šifta & Chromy, 2017). In our case, therefore, we will discuss the promotion of the symbol of wine. We must mention ambiguity concepts when dealing with wine tourism. Despite all its good qualities, wine is an alcoholic beverage which can have damaging and lasting consequences for human physical and mental health. At the same time, it can have negative influences on society. Hence, ethical questions and regulations of the promotion of alcoholic beverages are very important and, therefore, a mandatory part of every discussion about the use and the consumption of wine. Thus, it is not senseless to warn of the possibility to promote something negative with the use of symbols which represent wine and its complementary activities.

## **2.2 The views of representatives of local governments**

People inside and outside of a region can have different attitudes and different ways to interpret things or symbols (Paasi, 2013). Views of local self-government representatives are decisive since they affect the connections of people in municipalities in some ways.

The social group to which an individual belongs has an important role in forming attitudes. The group asserts its influence by stressing the group value system. According to Ule (2005), if those groups are also the identification (reference) groups for the individual at the same time, i.e. the groups whose value system the individual accepts mostly and identifies herself with it, their impact is particularly outstanding (Ule, 2005). In our case, the representative of the identification (reference) group for the inhabitants of a municipality may be the mayor. That is only one of the mayor's additional unofficial roles of exerting the different public policies in the local community.

Therefore, the attitudes of representatives of local self-government towards the use of wine for tourist promotion are important. Attitudes of representatives of local self-government give additional appreciation to wine as an element of tourist promotion.

The mayors represent the executive power on the local level. The executive powers and priority to prepare proposals for decision-making of the municipal council is vested in the mayors, which we can understand as an important informal impact on the decision in municipalities. The informal mayor's power is also

important. Mayors can help in organizing the tourism in the field of local self-government. They have the power to decide for the preparation and implementation of various strategies (also the strategy of the development of tourism). They have all the powers to organize activities that connect tourism stakeholders in a local community: producers, various companies, and experts. They also have opportunities and responsibility for fundraising from national and international projects. All these are the activities with which mayors can express certain positions and execute their powers. Priorities and positions the mayors and other representatives of the local self-government have in municipalities are an important part of planning many essential strategic decisions. Therefore, the measurement and following of the latter are a very important activity.

Positions of the representatives of the local self-government are the basis for strategic decisions also in the field of (wine) tourism. We have decided to ask about the opinions of the mayors because of the strategic importance the mayors have in local communities. Namely, mayors are those who decide on the strategies in local communities, from decisions about water management to support for cultural events. Execution of strategies lies in the hands of their subordinates, either directly of the municipal administrative workforce or of the external entities linked to the strategy execution. If mayors do not emphasize or support a particular field of operation in the local community, no lower-level work can supplement the lack of support. Hence in the present research, we are interested in the viewpoints of mayors and their opinions and not in opinions of, for example, owners of local tourist companies. Other players in the field may indeed have different opinions and views; however, the opinions of makers of strategic decisions are of interest in the present research. Positions towards the use of wine for tourist promotion can be positive or negative.

In human behavior (mostly in the model of explaining and its prediction), positions play a central role in the context of social psychology. Positions direct our actions in the world. Because of the close connection between positions and behavior, positions are key to form a social construction of a subject (Ule, 2005). They influence our thinking, judgment, and evaluation (Babšek, 2009).

Relationships (or positions) of actors of national, regional, and local development influence the function of regional symbols (Šifta, 2016). It depends on their interpretation of symbols whether and how these symbols will express the continuity of a region through time in a way how they connect the past with the present (Šifta & Chromy, 2014) and how this will contribute to strengthening (or weakening) of a region in international competition, e.g. with attracting tourists and investors (Šifta, 2016). For regional symbols to fulfill the role of the including factor, they, first, have to be an expression of the consensus of those who should present them (Šifta, 2016). Motivations of different actors in the use of symbols are different. By their use, some strive for economic development, others for

political goals, and the third for recognizability (Hospers, 2011). This is how it is emphasized additionally that symbols represent the essential meaning in forming the image of the region – mostly from the perspective of marketing (Papadoupoulos, 2004; Ikuta, Yukawa, & Hamasaki, 2007; Hospers, 2011).

### **2.3 Wine in Slovenia**

Slovenia as a wine region is divided into three winegrowing regions. Vineyards are located in 124 of 212 municipalities (SORS, 2017). Wine is also used for other products. In Slovenia creams, soaps, wine vinegar, liqueurs, and spirits are made from wine. In some parts of the country, especially in the Dolenjska and Štajerska region, winemaking and viticulture is a part of everyday life. The oldest vine plant in the world grows in Slovenia. This vine plant is over 400 years old and is recorded in the Guinness book of records (Glenday, 2004). The Mayor of Maribor where the vine is growing uses the wine produced from the oldest vine in the world for protocol presents. In recent years, there has been an increase in wine tourism in Slovenia (Kerma & Gačnik, 2015). Among other promotional activities, the title of the Wine Queen of Slovenia is also dedicated to the promotion of viticulture, wine culture, and other activities.

Many national and local symbols in Slovenia express close identification with wine. For example, the greatest Slovenian poet France Prešeren, the author of the Slovenian national anthem, addresses his fellows in the first strophe of the poem “Zdravljica” (The Toast) and offers wine. He also wrote the whole poem in the shape of a wine glass. Additionally, the figure or the symbol of grapes appears in the coat-of-arms of 23 out of 212 local communities.

In the EU, states offer legal and regulatory bases on the wine market together with their institutions (Meloni & Swinnen, 2018). In Slovenia, this is the case too.

Based on a review of municipal development strategies, wine is connected with many tourism activities in most municipalities located in Slovenian winegrowing regions. In many municipalities, documents related to strategic tourism development can be found. All these documents identify the existing tourist offer of the municipalities, development potentials, and development priorities of the sites.

## **3 Research**

Using the participative method (questioning method - use of a survey questionnaire) and further with other methods (compilation method, method of reduction data - factorial analysis), answers to research questions were sought. Based on our research question we state the research hypotheses. Next, we present

the instrument used to collect the relevant data, then define our population and sample. Finally, we present the use of factorial analysis on the collected data.

### 3.1 Research questions and hypothesis

Our research is aimed at finding out what are the attitudes of members of local self-government towards using wine for tourist promotion. To that end, we set two research questions. **A. What is the attitude of representatives of local self-government – mayors towards the use of wine for tourist promotion? B. Is there a difference between the mayors' attitudes and actual situation with respect to the use of wine for tourist promotion?** To answer these two research questions, we set the following hypotheses:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Majority of mayors have a neutral attitude towards the use of wine for tourist promotion.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Majority of mayors have a neutral position on the wine as the identification element important at local scale.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Majority of mayors have a neutral position on the wine as the identification element important at national scale.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no difference between the mayors' attitudes and actual situation with respect to the use of wine for tourist promotion.

In the case of the research question A and the hypotheses H<sub>01</sub>, H<sub>02</sub>, and H<sub>03</sub>, we are essentially interested whether the positions of the representatives of local self-governments towards the use of wine are actually connected with the tourist promotion in their respective communities. Here, we are looking for the answers to the questions whether *a)* wine represents an identification element of region or the municipality to a certain extent, where mayors use wine as promotion means by means of business presents and the choice of the so-called “mayor’s wine” or *b)* they see it as an distributional inns and stores element or *c)* have no special position towards the use of wine and are undecided or *d)* they do not see the role of wine in the function of the element of tourist promotion.

For research question B and the hypothesis H<sub>04</sub> we checked whether there is a difference between the positions that the mayors have towards the use of wine for the purpose of the tourist promotion on one side and the real situation on the other side, i.e. how the mayors in the local environment understand the function and the use of wine.

### 3.2 Instrument

After reviewing the scientific literature (studies and theories related to the development of the tourism and wine sectors, promotion activities of local symbols of local self-government) presented in the previous section, we have prepared a questionnaire on attitudes of representatives of local self-governments towards wine as an element of tourism promotion.

212 questionnaires were distributed among respondents, out of which 67 surveys were returned i.e., 31.6% of all respondents. In the first part of the questionnaire the respondents evaluated 14 statements with marks from 1 (absolutely do not agree) to 5 (agree completely), giving an estimate of the extent of agreement with the statements widely related to attitudes towards the use of wine for promotion purposes. In the second part, we verified how much the individual statements are true for the individual mayors. The second part of questionnaires comprised 4 statements. The mayors had to mark the statements with “true” or “not true”.

### 3.3 Population and the response

The validity of the response was evaluated within all received surveys.

Taking into account the population of 212 municipalities, the response representativeness was tested by chi-square test ( $X^2$ ). For validity verification we checked geographic location, sex and size of municipality (number of inhabitants).

For the variable geographic location, chi-square was 0.087 and significance level  $p = 0.768$ . For the variable sex, the chi-square test was 3.326 with significance level  $p = 0.068$ . The variable municipality size gave a chi-square value of 4.285 and the significance level was  $p = 0.369$ .

As none of the results is statistically significant (based on null hypothesis of no difference between the population and sample), it can be concluded that the research sample is representative and applicable to the entire population.

The data on municipality size, geographical location and gender of mayors are presented in Table 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

**Table 1:** Municipality size

Municipality size (according to the number of inhabitants)	Number of all municipalities in the country	Responses	response %
100.000 inhabitants and more	2	2	3
20.000 up to and including 99.999	16	3	4,5
10.000 up to and including 19.999	34	12	17,9
5.000 up to and including 9.999	48	13	19,4
Up to 4.999	112	37	55,2
Total	212	67	100

**Table 2:** Geographical location

Geographical location	Responses	%
wine-growing region of Slovenia	38	56,7
non wine-growing region of Slovenia	29	43,3

**Table 3:** Gender

Gender	Responses	%
male	58	86,6
female	9	13,4

### 3.4 Factorial analysis-formatting merged variables

As individual variables (mayors' attitudes towards use of wine for tourist promotion, attitude towards wine as an element important at local and national level) were not meant to be analyzed individually in our research, we decided on merging the variables using a factorial analysis. Before the start of merging, the statements in negative form were inverted so all statements were set to equal form of value.

The factorial analysis was effected on the first part of the questionnaire, i.e., among 14 statements where respondents in their answers indicated the degree of agreement with individual statements according to Likert's scale.

Table 4 presented below is presenting the results of the factorial analysis, where the rotation converged in 5 iterations.

**Table 4:** Rotated Component Matrix

	Components		
	1	2	3
T6	0,878		
T8	0,839		
T4	0,816		
T3	0,680		
T2		0,858	
T1		0,840	
T7		0,779	
T11		0,688	
T14_r			0,913
T15_r			0,806

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

For the factorial analysis the principal component analysis was used, since the principal aim was to determine the number of individual variables with which the total variability can still be described. To that end, the rotation method Varimax was used and the recommended value 0.4 was selected to be the minimum weight for conservation of variables (Lawlay & Maxwell, 1971). The original solution contained four components in accordance with the Kaiser scale, however some variables had weights smaller than 0.4 on all components, whereas some variables had weights larger than 0.4 on two components.

Those doubtful variables were isolated one by one, until a simple structure resulted, the final solution containing 10 variables distributed to three components.

The groups formed in the factorial analysis are helpful in further steps for the analysis of hypotheses  $H_01$ ,  $H_02$  and  $H_03$ .

The Table 5 presents the factorial analysis and our explanation of formed groups.

**Table 5:** Distribution of factors

<b>Wine as symbol – group 1</b>	
1	<b>T3:</b> Wine is an important motivator to travel and explore new destinations.
2	<b>T4:</b> Wine is one of decisive factors sending the tourist or visitor back to the destination and environment, where he tasted the wine.
3	<b>T6:</b> Wine represents an identification element of the state of Republic of Slovenia.
4	<b>T8:</b> Wine strengthens the image of the entire country of Slovenia.
<b>Wine as promotion - group 2</b>	
5	<b>T1:</b> In our municipality, wine is used for tourism promotion purposes.
6	<b>T2:</b> In our municipality, wine is one of key elements of tourism promotion.
7	<b>T7:</b> Wine enhances the image of a destination, including the municipality I lead.
8	<b>T11:</b> In our municipality, we appreciate, support and promote the work of our local producers.
<b>Negative wine - group 3</b>	
9	<b>T14:</b> Promoting wine is inappropriate, as excessive consumption of wine is harmful to health.
10	<b>T15:</b> As a representative of local government I am very disturbed by the use of wine for promotion, I prefer to avoid it.

In Table 5 it can be seen that statements T3, T4, T6 and T8 belong to the first group, named “Wine as symbol”. The contents of individual statements are related to the topic which will be analyzed by hypothesis H<sub>02</sub> in further research. Statements T1, T2, T7 and T11 form the second group named “Wine as promotion” and will be tied in with the analysis of hypothesis H<sub>01</sub>. Statements T14 and T15 belong to the third group named “Negative wine”. Those statements will be further considered in the analysis of hypothesis H<sub>03</sub>.

Before pursuing the analysis the inner consistency of the individual groups was verified. We calculated Cronbach alpha for each factor or group. For all three groups the values of Cronbach alpha are higher than 0.7, which indicates good inner consistency (Cronbach & Richard, 2004). For the group “Wine as symbol”, the result Cronbach alpha value is 0.823, for the group “Wine as promotion” 0.849 and 0.818 for the group “Negative wine”. The results are shown in the Table 6.

**Table 6:** Reliability Statistics

Group	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Wine as symbol	4	0,823
Wine as promotion	4	0,849
Negative wine	2	0,818

Prior to analyzing the individual hypotheses, also the normality of distribution of answers was verified as it helps to choose the individual tests needed in the further analysis.

**Table 7: Tests of Normality**

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
T3,T4,T6,T8 – “Wine as symbol”	0,088	67	0,200*	0,976	67	0,211
T1,T2,T7,T11 – “Wine as promotin”	0,081	67	0,200*	0,973	67	0,157
T14_r,T15_r – “Negative wine”	0,160	67	0,000	0,879	67	0,000

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The groups were formed from ordinal variables and we check their frequency distribution. The results witness that the groups “Wine as symbol” and “Wine as promotion” do not deviate from the normal distribution, while the third group has a distribution deviating from the normal one (Table 7).

## 4 Results

Within the framework of the research, we have set two research questions. Firstly, we were ascertaining what kind of attitude representatives of local self-governments have towards the use of wine for tourist promotion. Secondly, we were interested in whether there are any differences between the attitude to use wine for promotion and actual usage of wine for touristic promotion. As we learned before, regional symbolism has to be, in the first place, an expression of the consensus of those who should represent it if we wish it to fulfill the role of the including factor – e.g. in the sense of the element of the promotion of the region.

### Hypothesis H<sub>01</sub>

Several statements helped to verify the hypothesis H<sub>01</sub>, related to the first research question (the statements grouped into the group “Wine as promotion”). As this group is distributed normally (Table 7), the t-test was used for one sample to verify this hypothesis and the neutral answer was taken for the test value, i. e., the value 3 (the value 3 on the Likert's scale represents neutrality). The test result is

statistically significant, so it can be claimed that mayors have a different attitude than neutral. It is more positive. The data show that hypothesis H<sub>01</sub> (mayors have neutral attitude towards wine) need to be rejected.

**Table 8:** One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
“Wine as promotion”	67	<b>3,2512</b>	1,02653	0,12541
“Wine as symbol”	67	<b>3,4179</b>	0,79937	0,09766

**Table 9:** One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3		
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
“Wine as promotion”	2,003	66	<b>0,049</b>
“Wine as symbol”	4,279	66	<b>0,000</b>

In addition, we were interested to know whether the mayors' attitudes differ with respect to the area from which the mayors come. Therefore, in addition to hypothesis H<sub>01</sub> the hypothesis H<sub>01.1</sub> was set.

**Hypothesis H<sub>01.1</sub>: There is no difference between attitudes towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes among mayors coming from wine-growing area and those not coming from wine-growing area.**

Statements grouped into the group “Wine as promotion” during the factorial analysis verified the hypothesis.

**Table 10:** Group Statistics

	area	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
“Wine as promotion”	wine-growing	38	<b>3,7785</b>	0,83520	0,13549
	Not wine-growing	29	<b>2,5603</b>	0,83092	0,15430
“Wine as symbol”	wine-growing	38	<b>3,4276</b>	0,81975	0,13298
	Not wine-growing	29	<b>3,4052</b>	0,78608	0,14597

**Table 11:** Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
"Wine as promotion"	Equal variances assumed	0,043	0,837	5,928	65	<b>0,000</b>
	Equal variances not assumed			5,932	60,573	0,000
"Wine as symbol"	Equal variances assumed	0,470	0,496	0,113	65	<b>0,910</b>
	Equal variances not assumed			0,114	61,635	0,910

T-test was used for the independent sample to verify hypothesis H<sub>01.1</sub>. The test result is statistically significant (Table 11), so it can be claimed that the mayors from wine-growing area have a different attitude towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes than the mayors not coming from wine-growing areas. The data show that the hypothesis H<sub>01.1</sub> needs to be rejected.

### Hypothesis H<sub>02</sub>

This hypothesis was verified by several statements (the statements grouped into the group "Wine as symbol" during the factorial analysis (data are indicated in Tables 10 and 11). The group is distributed normally (Table 7). The t-test was taken for one sample to verify the hypothesis, while the neutral answer was taken for the test value, i. e., the value 3 (the value 3 on Likert's scale stands for neutrality). The test result is statistically significant, so it can be claimed that the mayors have a different attitude than neutral. Data show that hypothesis H<sub>02</sub> need to be rejected (Tables 10 and 11).

In addition to hypothesis H<sub>02</sub>, we were interested also in the question whether in this position, supported by the local self-government representatives' differences occur with respect to the area from which the mayors come. Additional hypothesis H<sub>02.1</sub> was set, accordingly.

### Hypothesis H<sub>02.1</sub>: There is no difference between positions on the wine as a nationally important identification element on the side of mayors coming from wine-growing and not coming from wine-growing areas.

The hypothesis was verified by statements grouped into the group – "Wine as symbol".

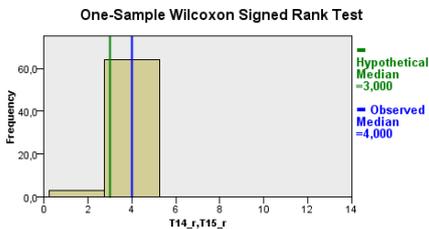
Data allocated by factorial analysis into the group “Wine as symbol” are distributed normally, the t-test was used for the two independent samples to verify hypothesis  $H_{02.1}$  (Table 11). The test result is not statistically significant, so it cannot be claimed that mayors from wine-growing areas have a different attitude towards wine as a nationally important identification elements than the mayors not coming from wine-growing areas. Data show that the hypothesis  $H_{02.1}$  cannot be rejected.

Similarly, as the attitudes of local self-government representatives towards wine as a nationally important element in case of hypothesis  $H_{02}$  also the positions of mayors on the wine as a locally important identification element are verified.

### Hypothesis $H_{03}$

As the data in this part of research are not distributed normally, the non-parametrical test was used to verify hypothesis  $H_{03}$ , namely the Wilcoxon test of signed ranks for one sample (Table 12), while neutral answer was taken for the test value, i. e., the value 3. The test result is statistically significant, so it can be claimed that the mayors have a different attitude than neutral. The data indicate that the hypothesis need to be rejected.

**Table 12:** Non-parametric Wilcoxon test of pre-designated ranges for one sample



<b>Total N</b>	67
<b>Test Statistic</b>	1.464,000
<b>Standard Error</b>	118,077
<b>Standardized Test Statistic</b>	5,878
<b>Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)</b>	,000

We were also interested still in the question whether in this position, supported by the local self- government representatives, differences occur with respect to the area from which the mayors come. In addition to hypothesis  $H_{03}$  we set the additional hypothesis  $H_{03.1}$ , accordingly.

**Hypothesis  $H_{03.1}$ : There is no difference in the position on wine as a locally important identification element between mayors from wine-growing areas and those not coming from wine-growing areas.**

Statements grouped into the group (“Negative wine”) in the factorial analysis verified the hypothesis. The data in this group are normally distributed, therefore,

the non-parametric test, namely the Mann-Whitney U test was used for verification of hypothesis.

**Table 13:** Ranks

	area	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
"Negative wine"	Wine-growing	38	<b>37,26</b>	1416,00
	Not wine-growing	29	<b>29,72</b>	862,00
	Total	67		

**Table 14:** Test Statistics (a)

	T14_r,T15_r
Mann-Whitney U	427,000
Wilcoxon W	862,000
Z	-1,609
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>0,108</b>

(a). Grouping Variable: area

The test result is not statistically significant, so it cannot be claimed that mayors from wine-growing areas have different attitudes towards wine as a locally important identification element than the mayors not coming from wine-growing areas. The results show that the hypothesis need to be reject.

### Hypothesis H<sub>04</sub>

The second research question asks whether there is a difference between the mayors' attitude towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes and the actual situation as to how the mayors in local environment understand the function and use of wine in combination with tourist promotion. For the purpose of this question the hypothesis H<sub>04</sub> was set.

To verify this hypothesis, first of all the result of the first hypothesis of the first research question is needed. Hypothesis H<sub>01</sub> needed to be reject. Detailed analysis of hypothesis H<sub>01.1</sub> showed that in wine-growing areas the mayors' attitude towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purpose was mostly neutral, while the mayors representing municipalities located in wine-growing areas agreed more that the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes was important. Those data will be compared with actual situation with respect to use of wine for tourist promotion purposes among mayors, that is, if mayors' attitudes are also implemented in reality.

Four statements answered by mayors with "true or not true" verified actual use of wine for tourist promotion purposes. Those statements were as follows, see table 15.

**Table 15:** Statements for verification of actual use of wine for tourist promotion purpose

<b>Statement A1:</b> As a mayor, for formal presents I use wine produced in one of Slovenian wine-growing regions.
<b>Statement A2:</b> In the municipality, there is a special shop, where the locals and visitors can buy souvenirs and products of local produces, including wine of domestic producers.
<b>Statement A3:</b> In the municipality, the contest for the “mayor’s wine” is organized.
<b>Statement A4:</b> In my opinion, the contest for the “mayor’s wine” produced in one of Slovenian wine-growing regions, is a good promotion activity.

The results of hypothesis H<sub>0</sub>1 and H<sub>0</sub>1.1 are analyzed and compared with all 4 statements verifying the actual use of wine for tourist promotion purposed. Each statement is verified individually.

**Statement A1 and hypothesis H<sub>0</sub>1: Mayors’ attitudes towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes differ depending on whether mayors use wine produced in one of the three wine-growing regions of Slovenia as formal presents.**

To verify this part of hypothesis the t-test was used for the two independent samples (data distributed normally).

**Table 16:** Group Statistics

	A1	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
“Wine as promotion”	True	47	<b>3,5922</b>	0,88213	0,12867
	Not true	20	<b>2,4500</b>	0,90175	0,20164

**Table 17:** Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for t-test for Equality of Means				
		Equality of Variances		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		F	Sig.			
“Wine as promotion”	Equal variances assumed	0,010	0,919	4,818	65	<b>0,000</b>
	Equal variances not assumed			4,775	35,213	0,000

The test result is statistically significant, hence the mayors using wine as formal presents have different attitude towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes than the mayors not using wine as formal presents. Thus, the data show that the hypothesis cannot be rejected.

**Statement A2 and hypothesis H<sub>0</sub>1: Mayors' attitudes towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes differ depending on whether there is a special shop in their municipality, where the locals and visitors can buy souvenirs of local producers, including wine of domestic producers.**

To verify this part of the hypothesis the t-test was used for the two independent samples (data distributed normally).

**Table 18: Group Statistics**

	A2	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
"Wine as promotion"	True	54	<b>3,1543</b>	1,05165	0,14311
	Not true	13	<b>3,6538</b>	0,83253	0,23090

**Table 19: Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
"Wine as promotion"	Equal variances assumed	1,649	0,204	-1,593	65	<b>0,116</b>
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,839	22,247	0,079

The test result is not statistically significant, so it cannot be claimed that mayors from municipalities with special shops, where the locals and visitors can buy souvenirs and products of local producers including wine of domestic producers, have different attitudes towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes than the mayors from municipalities without such shops. Data show that the hypothesis needs to be rejected.

**Statement A3 and hypothesis H<sub>0</sub>1: The mayors' attitudes towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes differ depending on whether in their municipality the contest for the "mayor's wine" is organized.**

To verify is part of hypothesis, the t-test was used for the two independent samples (data distributed normally).

**Table 20:** Group Statistics

	A3	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
"Wine as promotion"	True	24	<b>3,9618</b>	0,74129	0,15131
	Not true	43	<b>2,8547</b>	0,95155	0,14511

**Table 21:** Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
"Wine as promotion"	Equal variances assumed	2,712	0,104	4,922	65	<b>,000</b>
	Equal variances not assumed			5,281	57,928	,000

The test result is statistically significant, so it can be claimed that mayors from municipalities organizing the contest for "mayor's wine", have a different attitude towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes than the mayors from municipalities not organizing the contest for the "mayor's wine". The data shown that the hypothesis cannot be rejected.

**Statement A4 and hypothesis H<sub>01</sub>: Mayors' attitudes towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes differ depending on whether the mayors believe that the contest for the "mayor's wine" produced in one of three Slovenian wine-growing regions is a good promotion activity.**

To verify this part of hypothesis, the t-test was used for the two independent samples (data distributed normally).

**Table 22:** Group Statistics

	A4	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
"Wine as promotion"	True	34	<b>3,0907</b>	1,08796	0,18658
	Not true	33	<b>3,4167</b>	0,94717	0,16488

**Table 23:** Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
"Wine promotion"	Equal variances assumed	0,393	0,533	-1,306	65	<b>0,196</b>
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,309	64,255	0,195

The test result is not statistically significant, so it cannot be claimed that the mayors, believing that the contest for the "mayor's wine" is a good promotion activity, have a different attitude towards the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes than those believing that the contest for the "mayor's wine" is not a good promotion activity. Data show that the hypothesis need to be rejected.

The above analyses and data indicate that the two values, i.e. "attitudes towards the use of wine" and "actual use of wine" are interrelated. Some mayors disagree strongly with the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes. Other mayors do not use wine for tourist promotion purposes. This is contrary to mayors showing strong agreement with the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes. In such cases, many more mayors use wine for tourist promotion purposes. In this way, the data indicate that the hypothesis  $H_04$  cannot be rejected. Mayors' attitudes and the actual situation concerning the use of wine for tourist promotion purposes do not differ.

Within the frame of the first research question, it was found out that the attitudes of the local self-government representatives towards the use of wine for tourism promotion purposes were positive. The majority of mayors in Slovenia have positive attitudes towards wine as a tourism promotion element.

The second research question referred to the connection between attitudes towards the use of wine for tourism promotion purposes and the actual use of wine for that purpose. The following was found out: the mayors who strongly disagree with the use of wine for tourism promotion are more likely not to use wine for that purpose. Contrarily, where mayors strongly support the use of wine for tourism promotion purposes they prefer to use the wine for tourism promotion.

## 5 Conclusions

In this paper, we research two complex research questions that analyzed the attitude of the representatives of the local self-government (mayors) to the use of wine for tourism promotion and the difference between the views of mayors and the actual situation regarding the use of wine for tourism promotion.

We have prepared a questionnaire on the attitudes of mayors towards wine as an element of tourism promotion. 212 questionnaires were distributed among all mayors of the Republic of Slovenia out of which 67 surveys were returned. The sample was representative. The answers helped us estimate the significance of wine for the tourist promotion and strengthening of the national and local identity through mayors via wine.

The fact of whether mayors in the Republic of Slovenia use wine for tourism promotion is related by the positions on the use of wine and not by the demographic aspect. Many factors influence the shaping of views. One of them is the environment or geographical location (whether they live and work in wine-growing or non-wine-growing areas). These important conclusions should be considered in further development. The mayors of the Republic of Slovenia have positive views on the use of wine for tourism promotion. They see wine as an identification element of national importance.

According to the results of the survey, wine is one of the key elements of tourism promotion when talking about an element of consolidating the complete destination image.

Within the research, the attitudes towards the use of wine for tourism promotion purposes were verified. The mayors of the Republic of Slovenia emphasized that they supported and appreciated the work of local producers implying that in municipalities, coinciding geographically with the wine-growing region of Slovenia, wine of their producers was used for tourism promotion purposes. A couple of groups have differentiated having slightly different attitudes. Though all mayors in Slovenia have a positive attitude towards the use of wine for tourism promotion purposes, two groups differ: as expected, it differed depending on their region (wine-growing/non-wine-growing). Furthermore, we analyzed what the position of mayors on the wine as a nationally important identification element was.

In the opinion of most mayors, wine is an identification element important nationally. The mayors agreed to the statement that wine was (1) an important motivator for travelers and exploration of new destinations, (2) one of the decisive factors sending a tourist or a visitor back to the destinations and environment where he had tasted the wine, (3) an identification element of Slovenia and that it helped to consolidate the complete image of the country. In contrast to the previous analysis, there were no important differences between mayors from wine-growing and non-growing regions. All mayors view wine as an element of tourism promotion and as an important identification element on the national level. Within the covered sample of respondents, it was also found out that wine was viewed as an important tourism promotion element for the mayors from wine-

growing, whereas not important for the mayors from non-wine-growing areas of Slovenia.

Those mayors having positive attitudes towards the use of wine for tourism promotion purposes also use wine produced in one of the three wine-growing regions of Slovenia as formal presents more frequently. Furthermore, the mayors practicing in the contest for the “mayor’s wine” have a more positive attitude towards the use of wine for tourism promotion purposes than those not participating. The fact of whether there are special shops offering souvenirs and products of local products in the municipalities, including domestic wine, affects the mayors’ attitudes towards the use of wine for tourism promotion purposes. In such municipalities, mayors have a more positive attitude towards the use of wine for tourism promotion.

It is surprising to see wine as a symbol on different levels in the perception of mayors. It is particularly curious that the same product, showing different importance, is concerned. Wine as an element of tourism promotion has a more important identification role on the national than on the local scale. Widely, wine is considered important as a promotion element on the national level. Narrowly, on the local level, its importance does not have such a large role.

The results indicate that the mayors do not appreciate the wine coming from the domestic, local environment enough and that it becomes important only when they consider it nationally – as a product of national importance. This is confirmed by and tied in with the analysis in the first part of the research where it was ascertained that wine is an important national symbol as it is a part of the national anthem while, locally, in the “symbols of local importance” – in the municipal coats-of-arms, it appears only in 10,85 % of municipalities.

Attitudes of the local self-government representatives towards the use of wine for tourism promotion purposes are only one of the possible positions of the tourist destination stakeholders. Those are the attitudes of the public sector. Generally, it is important to consider also the attitudes of the private and civil sectors and other stakeholders. The results of this research pose a challenge to professionals, stakeholders of the public, civil, and private sectors: the importance of wine is shown on the national scale by promotion activities, action plans, and strategies, and not so much on the narrower, local level – particularly in the areas of Slovenia not coinciding geographically with wine-growing regions of Slovenia.

The conclusions of our research could serve as a means for broader consideration and further starting point about that how important the relationship of representatives of local self-governments towards the use of not only wine but also other products of the local significance is. The results of the research can be understood more broadly. At that point, mayors’ attitudes are important to

influence the implementation of top-down enforced policies on tourism development, agriculture development, entrepreneurship development, cultural heritage preservation, etc. Furthermore, to transfer a superb image of the destination, the involvement of key local stakeholders in the destinations is important. Among them, mayors represent one of the most important tasks. That is how municipalities (with the basis of mayors' attitudes) become initiators or inhibitors in developing different ideas on the local level.

We ascertained that with their use and active promotion, we influence the local and national identity positively. At the same time, we influence further development of tourism importantly – mostly in the sense of promotion.

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