



# SFEntre

## **Reskilling and empowering culinary entrepreneurs towards slow food movement aligned enterprises**

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## Introduction

In an era defined by fast-paced consumption and industrialized food systems, a growing global movement is quietly reshaping the way we produce, eat, and think about food. The Slow Food movement, rooted in the principles of good, clean, and fair food, offers a powerful counter-narrative—one that champions biodiversity, traditional practices, local economies, and the cultural richness of gastronomy.

This guide serves as a comprehensive exploration of the Slow Food movement, focusing not only on its philosophical foundations but also on its evolving role in fostering sustainable entrepreneurship. We delve into how slow food principles are being translated into viable business models that prioritize ethical sourcing, ecological responsibility, and community resilience. Special attention is given to the European context, where policy frameworks, grassroots innovation, and institutional support are helping to mainstream slow food ideals across agriculture, tourism, education, and gastronomy.

From EU-funded initiatives and regional food policies to the emergence of Slow Food entrepreneurs and social enterprises, this guide outlines the dynamic interplay between tradition and innovation. It highlights successful case studies, regulatory environments, funding opportunities, and challenges that entrepreneurs and activists face as they work to transform food systems from the ground up.

Whether you're a policymaker, a food entrepreneur, a researcher, or simply a conscious consumer, this guide offers valuable insights into how the Slow Food movement is not just a cultural choice but a powerful catalyst for systemic change in Europe and beyond.

## 1. Definition of Slow Food and its Principles

The Slow Food movement emerged as a counter-response to the fast-paced, industrialized food culture that prioritizes speed and convenience over quality and sustainability. Established in Italy in 1986 by Carlo Petrini, Slow Food has since evolved into a global movement promoting local food cultures, biodiversity, and sustainable agricultural practices (Petrini, 2007). This chapter provides an academic overview of the Slow Food movement, including its definition, the concept of Slow Food entrepreneurship, and its core principles.

### Definition of the Slow Food Movement

The Slow Food movement can be defined as an initiative that seeks to preserve traditional and regional cuisine while supporting sustainable food production and fostering deeper connections between food, culture, and community. It emphasizes the value of food as a cultural and ecological heritage and challenges the industrial food system's negative externalities, such as environmental degradation and loss of food diversity (Jones et al., 2016).

A critical aspect of the Slow Food philosophy is the concept of “good, clean, and fair” food. According to Slow Food International, food should be:

- Good: High quality, flavorful, and culturally significant.
- Clean: Produced in a manner that respects the environment and promotes biodiversity.
- Fair: Accessible and produced under conditions that ensure fair compensation for producers (Slow Food International, 2021).

The movement's grassroots approach enables communities to reclaim agency over their food systems, promoting ethical consumption and localized food networks (Kummer, 2012). These values directly oppose the homogenizing effects of globalization on food production and consumption patterns.

### The Concept of Slow Food Entrepreneurship

Slow Food entrepreneurship aligns closely with the movement's foundational principles. It refers to business practices and innovations that adhere to the values of sustainability, localism, and cultural preservation while engaging in ethical food production and distribution. Entrepreneurs in this sphere often prioritize relationships over profits, emphasizing transparency and collaboration within local food networks (Stolze et al., 2021).

Unlike conventional food entrepreneurship, Slow Food entrepreneurship incorporates a multi-dimensional approach to value creation. It not only seeks economic profit but also aims to achieve environmental and social goals by supporting small-scale farmers, preserving endangered food traditions, and fostering food literacy among consumers (van Bommel & Spicer, 2011). For example, many Slow Food-aligned businesses engage in farm-to-table

practices that enhance traceability and reduce carbon footprints, reinforcing ecological balance (Fonte, 2013).

## Core Principles of Slow Food Movement & Entrepreneurship

At the heart of the Slow Food movement and its entrepreneurial ventures are several key principles:

### I. Sustainability

Sustainability forms the backbone of Slow Food's ideology. This principle involves the adoption of practices that minimize environmental harm, conserve natural resources, and promote biodiversity. Agricultural techniques such as organic farming and agroecology are often integrated into Slow Food systems to mitigate climate change impacts (Cacciolatti & Lee, 2016). Slow Food entrepreneurship, in particular, emphasizes sustainable supply chains and resource-efficient business models.

### II. Cultural Preservation

The Slow Food movement recognizes the cultural significance of food and its role in shaping identities and traditions. By advocating for the protection of endangered food products, such as heritage crops and artisanal techniques, the movement safeguards culinary diversity. Initiatives like the Ark of Taste catalog are prime examples of efforts to document and preserve at-risk food heritage (Slow Food International, 2021). Entrepreneurs in this space often celebrate regional uniqueness by incorporating traditional recipes into their offerings.

### III. Social Justice

Social equity is a critical dimension of Slow Food. The movement advocates for fair wages, ethical working conditions, and equitable food access. By supporting small-scale producers and opposing exploitative labor practices, Slow Food entrepreneurs contribute to fairer food systems. This principle extends to ensuring consumers across all socioeconomic levels can access nutritious and culturally meaningful foods (Goodman et al., 2012).

### IV. Community and Localism

Localism is central to Slow Food's mission, encouraging consumers to connect with local producers and reduce reliance on globalized supply chains. This principle not only supports local economies but also reduces environmental costs associated with long-distance transportation (Smith & MacKinnon, 2008). Community engagement fosters resilient food networks and nurtures relationships between producers and consumers.

### V. Education and Awareness

A final principle underpinning the Slow Food movement is the promotion of food literacy and awareness. The movement seeks to educate individuals about the implications of their dietary choices, including health, environmental, and social impacts. Workshops, farmer markets, and

educational campaigns are common tools used to empower individuals to make informed decisions about food consumption (Leitch, 2003).

## 2. Slow Food Related EU Priorities & Regulations

Slow Food is a global movement that promotes sustainable agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and a focus on local, traditional food systems. It aligns closely with several EU priorities, particularly those linked to environmental sustainability, climate action, and rural development. Within the framework of the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy, the EU has emphasized the importance of sustainable food production and consumption, echoing Slow Food's principles of good, clean, and fair food. These initiatives aim to reduce the environmental impact of agriculture, promote organic farming, and ensure fair livelihoods for small-scale producers (European Commission, 2020). Furthermore, EU policies prioritize the preservation of traditional agricultural practices and local food cultures, recognizing their value in fostering resilience against climate change and biodiversity loss (Pe'er et al., 2020).

Regulatory frameworks such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) further support Slow Food-related objectives through measures like agri-environmental schemes, subsidies for organic farming, and incentives for maintaining high animal welfare standards. The CAP's recent reforms for 2023–2027 emphasize climate resilience, sustainable food production, and rural community development, aligning with Slow Food's advocacy for smallholder farmers and local food economies (Nazzaro & Marotta, 2016). Additionally, the EU's Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) schemes play a crucial role in safeguarding traditional food products and their cultural heritage. These policies underscore the EU's commitment to integrating Slow Food principles into its broader agenda for sustainable development and the promotion of healthy, environmentally friendly food systems (European Commission, 2023).

### Farm to Fork Strategy

The Farm to Fork Strategy is a fundamental part of the European Green Deal, launched by the European Commission in 2020 to create a fair, healthy, and environmentally sustainable food system. This policy addresses the interconnected challenges of climate change, food security, biodiversity loss, and public health, ensuring that food production and consumption align with long-term sustainability goals. By transforming the entire food supply chain—from agriculture to consumer behavior—the Farm to Fork Strategy aims to reduce environmental impacts, promote fair economic returns for farmers, and encourage healthier food choices for consumers (European Commission, 2020).

One of the primary objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy is to minimize the environmental footprint of food production. The European Commission has set ambitious targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture, promote carbon sequestration in soils, and



reduce reliance on chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Specifically, the policy mandates a 50% reduction in pesticide use and a 20% decrease in fertilizer use by 2030 to protect ecosystems and human health. Additionally, the strategy encourages sustainable farming techniques and organic agriculture, with a goal of expanding organic farming to at least 25% of total EU agricultural land by 2030 (European Commission, 2021). These measures contribute to a more resilient and climate-friendly agricultural sector while safeguarding biodiversity.

The Farm to Fork Strategy also aims to increase food security while ensuring sustainable consumption patterns. By addressing food waste, overproduction, and distribution inefficiencies, the policy promotes a circular economy approach that prioritizes food recovery, redistribution, and responsible resource management. The European Commission has committed to halving per capita food waste at the retail and consumer levels by 2030, in line with UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 (FAO, 2021). Moreover, the policy fosters healthy dietary habits by encouraging the consumption of locally sourced, seasonal, and plant-based foods, which have a lower environmental footprint than heavily processed or industrially farmed products.

A core pillar of the Farm to Fork Strategy is ensuring that farmers and food producers receive fair compensation for their work while transitioning toward more sustainable practices. The strategy recognizes that small-scale and organic farmers often struggle to compete with industrial agricultural models and, therefore, proposes financial incentives, subsidies, and improved market access for sustainable food producers. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform is closely tied to these goals, ensuring that EU funding supports environmentally friendly agricultural practices while maintaining rural livelihoods (European Parliament, 2022). The policy also emphasizes shorter supply chains and local food networks, which enhance economic opportunities for regional farmers and reduce reliance on long-distance transportation, further lowering carbon emissions.

The Farm to Fork Strategy represents a comprehensive shift in food policy, integrating environmental sustainability, public health, and economic resilience into a unified framework. By reducing the environmental impact of food production, encouraging sustainable consumption, and supporting farmers, the policy paves the way for a more resilient and ethical food system. However, successful implementation will require coordinated action from governments, businesses, and consumers to ensure that food sustainability goals are met in a fair and practical manner. As climate change and global food challenges intensify, the Farm to Fork Strategy stands as a model for transforming food systems worldwide (European Commission, 2021).

## Food 2030 Policy Framework

The Food 2030 Policy Framework, initiated by the European Union, represents a holistic approach to addressing critical food system challenges through research, innovation, and policy alignment. “Food 2030 is the EU research and innovation policy supporting the transition

towards sustainable, healthy, and inclusive food systems that respect planetary boundaries” (European Commission, n.d.).

Launched after the 2015 Milan World Expo, the policy responds to recent international policy developments, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and COP21 commitments. By focusing on sustainability, resilience, and inclusivity, Food 2030 aims to transform food systems to meet the demands of the 21st century while aligning with the SDGs.

Food 2030 addresses four key challenges within the food system:

**Nutrition and Health:** The framework prioritizes ensuring access to safe, nutritious, and high-quality food for all, while tackling diet-related diseases such as obesity and malnutrition.

**Climate and Sustainability:** A significant focus is on reducing the environmental impact of food production and consumption, fostering sustainable agricultural practices, and adapting to climate change.

**Circular Economy:** Promoting resource-efficient practices that minimize waste and encourage recycling within food systems.

**Innovation and Inclusivity:** Driving technological advancements, fostering equitable access to resources, and supporting resilient food systems that benefit all stakeholders.

The Food 2030 Policy Framework offers several notable strengths. It integrates multiple dimensions of food systems, from production and consumption to waste management, ensuring a cohesive and holistic approach. The framework’s direct alignment with global goals such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 2 (Zero Hunger), Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and Goal 13 (Climate Action), reinforces its global relevance (European Commission, 2020). Food 2030’s support for innovation fosters sustainable solutions, including precision agriculture, alternative proteins, and digitalized food supply chains. Additionally, the framework emphasizes resilience by promoting local and adaptive food systems that reduce dependency on global supply chains and bolster food security during crises. Finally, stakeholder engagement is a key strength, as the framework prioritizes collaboration among governments, industry, academia, and civil society, ensuring diverse perspectives and inclusive policy development (Sanz & van Nuenen, 2017).

The implementation of Food 2030 faces several challenges. Encouraging technological innovation, while beneficial, may inadvertently prioritize industrial-scale solutions over artisanal and low-tech practices, potentially sidelining small-scale producers. Achieving consistent and effective policy integration across the diverse national contexts of EU member states is another significant hurdle. Furthermore, balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability and social inclusivity involves navigating competing interests among stakeholders. Resource allocation poses a challenge, as adequate funding and resources are essential for driving research and innovation, which may be difficult in regions with budgetary constraints. Lastly, promoting behavioral change to achieve sustainable

consumption patterns requires substantial education, awareness campaigns, and incentives to shift consumer habits effectively.

The Framework presents numerous opportunities to enhance food systems. Collaborating with grassroots movements, such as the Slow Food Movement, can strengthen community-based approaches to sustainability by emphasizing local, sustainable, and culturally rich food systems. Leveraging digital tools, such as data analytics and blockchain, offers the potential to enhance transparency and efficiency in food supply chains, aligning with the framework's goals (FIT4FOOD 2030, n.d.). Supporting agroecological practices and preserving biodiversity align with its sustainability objectives and enhance environmental resilience. Additionally, advancing innovations in circular economy practices, such as food waste reduction technologies and promoting "farm-to-fork" strategies, can create more resource-efficient systems and significantly reduce waste.

In conclusion, the Food 2030 Policy Framework is a forward-thinking initiative that seeks to address pressing challenges in global food systems through an integrated and collaborative approach. While it offers significant potential for positive change, its success depends on addressing implementation challenges, ensuring stakeholder alignment, and fostering partnerships with complementary initiatives. By prioritizing sustainability, health, and innovation, Food 2030 can pave the way for a resilient and equitable food future (FIT4FOOD 2030, n.d.; Healthy Diet for Healthy Life, 2023).

## Common Agricultural Policy

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) represents one of the most enduring and impactful policies of the European Union (EU), having been established in the 1960s with the goal of ensuring food security, stabilizing farmer incomes, and fostering the development of rural areas (Buckwell, 1999). Over the years, the CAP has evolved significantly, adapting to new challenges and priorities such as environmental sustainability, climate change, and fair distribution of financial support (Nazzaro & Marotta, 2016). Initially, the CAP relied heavily on market interventions and price supports, designed to shield European farmers from market volatility and to promote stable agricultural production (Buckwell, 1999). However, as societal and environmental concerns grew, the policy underwent reforms that shifted its focus to direct income support for farmers and rural development initiatives while integrating measures to address environmental and climate concerns (Pe'er et al., 2019).

Modern iterations of the CAP, particularly those implemented between 2014-2020 and 2023-2027, have sought to balance economic and environmental objectives (Nazzaro & Marotta, 2016). The emphasis on fostering sustainable agricultural practices, improving the competitiveness of the farming sector, and enhancing climate resilience reflects a broader alignment with global sustainability goals (Cuadros-Casanova et al., 2023). Central to these reforms is the incorporation of environmental measures, such as greening requirements and agri-environmental schemes, which incentivize practices like biodiversity conservation, reduced use of chemical inputs, and efforts to mitigate climate change (Pe'er et al., 2019). Despite these advancements, criticisms persist that CAP's environmental measures are

inadequately funded and unevenly applied across EU member states, leading to disparities in their effectiveness (Navarro & López-Bao, 2019).

The policy has also faced significant scrutiny for its approach to subsidies. Critics argue that the CAP disproportionately benefits large-scale industrial farms, often at the expense of smaller, family-run operations and more environmentally sustainable practices (Stępień & Czyżewski, 2019). This misalignment undermines broader sustainability goals and perpetuates inequities within the agricultural sector. Additionally, enforcement of environmental compliance has been inconsistent, and the CAP has struggled to address pressing issues such as biodiversity loss and insufficient progress toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Hodge et al., 2015). These shortcomings have led to debates about how to reconcile CAP's economic objectives with its stated commitment to sustainability (Pe'er et al., 2020).

The launch of the European Green Deal in 2019 marked a pivotal moment for aligning CAP with broader EU sustainability objectives. The Green Deal aims to transform the EU into a climate-neutral continent by 2050 and includes ambitious targets for reducing emissions, improving soil health, and promoting organic farming (Cuadros-Casanova et al., 2023). While the CAP has been restructured to support these goals, it still allows member states considerable flexibility in implementation. This autonomy raises concerns that national interests may dilute the policy's environmental ambitions and create inconsistencies in its application across the EU (Pe'er et al., 2020).

Despite its challenges, the CAP has undeniably played a crucial role in shaping European agriculture. From its early days of market stabilization to its current emphasis on income support and environmental sustainability, the policy has evolved in response to shifting priorities and emerging challenges (Buckwell, 1999; Nazzaro & Marotta, 2016). However, significant weaknesses remain, particularly in ensuring an equitable distribution of subsidies and achieving meaningful progress on sustainability targets (Pe'er et al., 2019; Navarro & López-Bao, 2019). As Europe grapples with the increasing impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, addressing these shortcomings will be essential for securing the future of European agriculture and ensuring its resilience in the face of a rapidly changing global landscape (Pe'er et al., 2020).

## Geographical Indications (GIs)

Geographical Indications (GIs) form a cornerstone of the European Union (EU) Quality Policy, designed to protect and promote agri-food products whose authenticity, quality, and reputation are closely tied to their geographical origin. This regulatory framework, outlined in Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, ensures product traceability, safeguards food cultural heritage, and promotes the sustainable development of rural regions (European Commission, n.d.). GIs also play a crucial role in preserving local agricultural practices while enhancing the economic value of regional products (Bowen & Zapata, 2009).

GIs significantly contribute to the EU's international commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, they align with SDG 12 (sustainable production and

consumption) and SDG 15 (preservation of terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity) (FAO, 2020). They also support sustainable rural development by promoting ecological and cultural resilience (Barham, 2011). This perspective resonates with the Slow Food movement, which advocates for sustainable, resilient, and culturally significant food systems (Slow Food, n.d.).

The European GI system encompasses three main categories: Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG). Each category reflects varying degrees of connection between a product and its territory:

**Protected Designation of Origin (PDO):** Products in this category, such as Parmigiano Reggiano cheese from Italy, Jamón de Teruel, and Melocotón de Calanda from Spain, must have all stages of production, transformation, and processing occur within a specific region (Melocotón de Calanda, n.d.; Jamón de Teruel, n.d.). This connection ensures that the unique characteristics of these products are derived from both natural factors and traditional knowledge (Bowen & Zapata, 2009).

**Protected Geographical Indication (PGI):** This category offers greater flexibility, requiring only one production phase to occur in the designated region. Examples include Extra Virgin Olive Oil from Tuscany, Tarta de Santiago, and Ternasco de Aragón (Ternasco de Aragón, n.d.; FAO, 2020).

**Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG):** emphasizes the protection of traditional production methods and recipes, ensuring authenticity and quality, regardless of where the product is made, and aims to preserve culinary heritage while fostering consumer trust in traditional foods. Notable examples include Jamón Serrano (FAO, 2020).

The GI system offers several strengths. For instance, it provides assurance of authenticity to consumers by protecting products from fraud (European Commission, n.d.). Furthermore, GIs foster biodiversity through sustainable practices, which contribute to the economic development of rural areas (FAO, 2020). Additionally, they safeguard local knowledge and traditions, aligning with the central tenets of the Slow Food movement (Barham, 2011).

However, challenges remain. Certification costs can be prohibitive for small producers, limiting their access to the system (Bowen & Zapata, 2009). Differences in administrative resources between EU Member States exacerbate inequalities in implementation. Moreover, balancing economic interests with sustainability goals requires focused education to promote responsible consumption habits (FAO, 2020).

The GI framework complements Slow Food principles by promoting "good, clean, and fair" food systems. Protecting local varieties, agroecological practices, and traditional methods aligns directly with the values of the movement (Slow Food, n.d.). Partnerships with community-driven initiatives, waste-reducing technologies, and farm-to-table strategies enhance the sustainability of the GI system and reinforce its cultural significance (Barham, 2011; FAO, 2020).

GIs offer a robust framework to address challenges within global agri-food systems. By combining sustainability, cultural preservation, and authenticity, they serve as powerful tools for achieving equitable and resilient food systems. The ability of GIs to link products with their cultural and environmental origins makes them invaluable in a globalized economy (Bowen & Zapata, 2009). The synergy between GIs and the principles of the Slow Food movement underlines their mutual relevance as models for sustainability, innovation, and cultural connection (Slow Food, n.d.).

## Sustainable Food Systems Law

The European Union (EU) is making significant strides toward establishing a Sustainable Food Systems Law (SFSL), which represents a pivotal development in the transition toward sustainable food systems. This legal framework addresses the complex challenges facing the European food system, including environmental degradation, climate change, social inequalities, and public health concerns. As a cornerstone of the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy, the SFSL underscores the EU's commitment to creating a food system that is environmentally sustainable, economically viable, and socially equitable (European Commission, 2020).

The SFSL is grounded in several key objectives that aim to comprehensively transform the European food system. It seeks to reduce the environmental footprint of food production and consumption by addressing greenhouse gas emissions, pollution from fertilizers and pesticides, biodiversity loss, and the unsustainable use of natural resources like water and soil (European Environment Agency, 2023). Furthermore, it aligns the food system with the EU's climate goals, contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions while enhancing resilience to climate change impacts (Stockholm Resilience Centre, 2023). Social justice is another cornerstone of the SFSL, as it promotes fair working conditions, protects human rights, and ensures decent livelihoods for all actors in the food system, from farmers to retailers (International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems, 2023). Public health is also prioritized, with the law aiming to promote healthy and sustainable diets, reduce food waste, and ensure food safety and quality (World Wildlife Fund, 2023). Additionally, the SFSL addresses economic sustainability by fostering innovation, creating jobs, and enhancing the competitiveness of European food businesses (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2023).

The proposed SFSL includes several essential elements to achieve its transformative goals. It establishes ambitious targets for reducing environmental and climate impacts, such as cutting greenhouse gas emissions, pesticide use, nutrient pollution, and food waste. To ensure effective implementation, the law introduces a robust governance framework that includes monitoring progress, coordinating actions, and holding stakeholders accountable. Member States are required to develop national food policies aligned with the SFSL's objectives, promoting sustainable practices throughout the food production and consumption chain. Recognizing the critical role of consumers, the law aims to empower them to make informed choices through clear labeling, awareness campaigns, and education initiatives. Furthermore,

the framework emphasizes the importance of research and innovation in advancing sustainable agricultural and food systems, supporting studies on sustainable agriculture, food processing, and consumption patterns.

The SFSL is closely aligned with the EU's broader policy framework and complements existing initiatives. It is an integral part of the European Green Deal, contributing to its objectives of achieving climate neutrality by 2050, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting biodiversity, and enhancing resource efficiency. The SFSL also operationalizes the goals of the Farm to Fork Strategy by translating its ambitions into concrete actions, such as setting measurable targets and establishing governance mechanisms to drive the transition toward sustainable food systems (European Commission, 2020). Additionally, the law reinforces the objectives of the reformed Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which supports sustainable farming practices and environmental protection. By integrating CAP measures into the broader framework of the SFSL, the law ensures that agricultural policies align with sustainability goals (European Commission, 2017). Finally, the SFSL contributes to the EU's Biodiversity Strategy by promoting sustainable agricultural practices that conserve natural resources, protect biodiversity, and enhance ecosystem resilience. As a comprehensive legal framework, the SFSL represents a significant step forward in addressing the challenges of the European food system and transitioning toward a more sustainable and equitable future

### 3. Slow Food Related National Priorities & Regulations

As the global food system continues to face challenges such as environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, and cultural homogenization, many countries have turned to the principles of the Slow Food movement to guide their national priorities and regulations. The Slow Food philosophy, centered on the values of “good, clean, and fair” food, emphasizes sustainable practices, the preservation of cultural heritage, and equitable access to high-quality food (Petrini, 2007). Countries across Europe, including Spain, Sweden, Italy, Greece, and Cyprus, have adopted strategies and policies that align with these principles, integrating traditional foodways with modern sustainability goals.

This chapter explores the national food priorities and regulations of these countries, highlighting their efforts to protect local biodiversity, promote organic and small-scale farming, and safeguard traditional recipes through frameworks such as Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) (FAO, 2020). For instance, Italy, the birthplace of the Slow Food movement, has robust systems in place to protect its culinary heritage, while Spain's policies emphasize the preservation of regional traditions and sustainable agriculture. Similarly, Sweden's focus on Sámi food culture and food waste reduction reflects a deep commitment to both cultural and environmental sustainability. Greece and Cyprus also play significant roles in maintaining Mediterranean culinary traditions, integrating them into public policies and international frameworks.

By examining these national priorities and regulations, this chapter will provide a comprehensive understanding of how these countries apply the principles of Slow Food to address contemporary food system challenges. The analysis will demonstrate how the integration of traditional knowledge, sustainable practices, and regulatory measures can create resilient and equitable food systems that align with global sustainability goals (Slow Food International, 2021).

## Slow Food Related National Priorities & Regulations: Spain

Spain's food system policies and regulations demonstrate a robust commitment to sustainability, biodiversity, and the promotion of local and traditional food systems, aligning closely with the principles of the Slow Food movement. This section explores Spain's most significant policies and regulations, focusing on their contributions to sustainable agriculture, support for local producers, food labelling and safety standards, and the protection of cultural and culinary heritage.

### I. Sustainability policies

In Spain, sustainability policies in relation to the Slow Movement Food focus on several key aspects that promote sustainable food, biodiversity and support for local producers. Below are some of the main policies and approaches with their respective bibliographies (Spanish Sustainable Development Strategy, 2007):

#### Promoting Biodiversity and Sustainability

Slow Food Spain works to strengthen people's ties with traditional foods, ensuring sustainability and biodiversity. This includes protecting foods that do not meet all the technical requirements for inclusion in official programs, but which are unique and in danger of extinction.

#### Support for Local Producers and Sustainable Rural Development

The movement focuses on supporting local producers and promoting sustainable rural development. This involves recognizing the importance of the diversity of recipes and flavors, as well as respecting the rhythms of the seasons and places of production. The philosophy of Slow Food reminds us of the importance of enjoying, respecting and protecting what we eat and the environment that produces it.

#### Eco-gastronomy and Environmental Responsibility

Slow Food promotes eco-gastronomy, which combines gastronomic pleasure with responsibility towards biodiversity and sustainability. This includes reducing the use of pesticides and promoting low-environmental-impact farming practices. In addition, Slow Food promotes eco-gastronomy, which combines gastronomic pleasure with responsibility towards biodiversity and sustainability. Food supports the principles of organic farming,



although it recognizes that organic certification can be expensive and not always accessible to all producers.

#### Influence on Food Policies

Slow Food has lobbied national and EU legislators to maintain current EU regulations, especially with regard to new genetic modification techniques, which can jeopardize food and environmental safety. It also participates in dialogue groups to influence the Sustainable Food Systems Act and the Farm to Fork Strategy.

#### Local and Community Initiatives

In Spain, Slow Food has promoted initiatives such as the Slow Cities Movement, which seeks to improve the quality of life of citizens, especially in terms of food. In addition, the organisation works to guarantee the traditional, natural, safe and high quality taste of its products.

Slow Food is committed to promoting sustainable, fair and quality food in Spain, supporting local producers and protecting biodiversity and the environment. In the context of sustainability, it highlights the need to ensure that 'future generations can meet their own needs' (Saavedra, 2010).

The emergence of zero-kilometre products can be attributed to the Slow Food movement, which proposes a renewed approach to food, based on ecology, sustainable development, the defence of biodiversity, fair trade and ethical commitment to producers (López Iván et al., 2018).

The Spanish Sustainable Development Strategy (SSDS) has an approach in line with the EU's strategic vision, promoting an integrated approach to the economic, social, environmental and global dimensions of sustainable development with the objectives of: guaranteeing economic prosperity, ensuring environmental protection, avoiding the degradation of natural capital, promoting greater social cohesion taking into account current demographic trends and contributing in solidarity to the development of the least favoured countries in the interests of global sustainability.

## II. Organic farming standards

In Spain, organic farming, also called ecological or biological farming, is a management and production system that combines sustainable environmental practices with a high level of biodiversity and protection of natural resources. This approach is aligned with the principles advocated by Slow Food, which promotes low-impact agriculture and the reduction of pesticide use.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA) is the entity responsible for developing the guidelines on organic production in Spain, within the framework of national and European legislation. The National Programme for the Official Control of Organic Production, integrated

in the National Plan for the Control of the Food Chain (PNCOCA 2021-2025), is essential to guarantee compliance with these regulations. The Autonomous Communities are the competent authorities for organic production and are responsible for the organisation and supervision of official control in their territories.

Royal Decree 1051/2022 establishes the rules for the sustainable nutrition of agricultural soils, including the creation of a fertiliser section in the farm logbook and the minimum information that farmers must incorporate on nutrient inputs to soils. This decree also establishes the minimum requirements for a fertilisation plan and good agricultural practices for applying nutrients to soils, regardless of their origin.

In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment has extended its food quality programme to include unprocessed products at source, thus improving transparency and coordination of commercial quality control in Spain Sustainable agriculture, which includes economic, social and environmental aspects, has become a global priority. In Spain, several initiatives have been launched to promote sustainability in the agricultural sector, such as the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture and the 4 per mille initiative to increase the organic carbon content of soil.

### III. Food labelling regulations and food safety and quality standards

In Spain, food labelling regulations are essential to guarantee safety and adequate information to consumers. The current regulations are mainly framed within Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011, which establishes the general requirements for food information provided to the consumer.

Royal Decree 1334/1999, of 31 July, approved the General Regulation on the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, incorporating various Community directives and establishing the basis for the labelling of foodstuffs in Spain. This regulation applies to the labelling of foodstuffs intended for the final consumer, as well as to aspects relating to their presentation and advertising.

In addition, Royal Decree 126/2015 regulates food information on foodstuffs presented unpackaged for sale to the final consumer and to mass caterers, those packaged at points of sale at the request of the purchaser and those packaged by retail trade operators, as well as distance sales.

Law 28/2015, of 30 July, for the protection of food quality, also includes voluntary labelling rules, which, although not mandatory, must be complied with if operators decide to use them. This law establishes self-control systems, official administrative control and a sanctioning regime to guarantee quality and prevent food fraud.

Labelling must include clear and accurate information on ingredients, allergens and any other information relevant to the consumer. Failure to comply with these regulations can result in serious penalties, including fines and product recall.

## Slow Food Related National Priorities & Regulations: Sweden

Sweden's food system policies and regulations reflect a strong commitment to sustainability, cultural heritage preservation, and equitable food systems, aligning with the core principles of the Slow Food movement. This section examines Sweden's most significant policies and regulations in detail, focusing on their contributions to sustainability, the inclusion of Sámi food traditions, and cultural heritage preservation.

### I. National Food Strategy for Sweden (2017–2030)

The National Food Strategy for Sweden is the cornerstone of the country's food policy, providing a framework to increase sustainable food production and create jobs while protecting the environment and promoting healthy diets. With a budget of SEK 1.2 billion, the strategy sets ambitious targets, including reducing food waste, promoting locally sourced and organic foods, and fostering innovation within the food sector (Swedish Government, 2017).

Key aspects relevant to the Slow Food movement include the expansion of organic farming, with the strategy aiming to increase organic production by encouraging environmentally friendly farming practices that reduce chemical inputs and support biodiversity. Additionally, the strategy recognizes traditional food practices, including Sámi cuisine, as critical to a sustainable and diverse food system. It also supports consumer awareness initiatives through education to encourage informed food choices, emphasizing local and seasonal foods. By fostering a sustainable and resilient food system, the National Food Strategy aligns with the principles of "good, clean, and fair" food that underpin the Slow Food movement (Government Offices of Sweden, 2017).

### II. Pathway for Sustainable Food Systems

The Pathway for Sustainable Food Systems, published in 2021, provides a shared vision for achieving sustainable food systems in Sweden by 2030. This document integrates social, economic, and environmental dimensions, addressing key challenges such as dietary shifts, food waste reduction, and biodiversity preservation.

Significant elements include incorporating indigenous food systems, with the pathway highlighting the importance of Sámi traditional food practices, such as reindeer herding, which exemplify resilience and sustainability in food systems. It also promotes plant-based diets, advocating for dietary shifts that reduce meat consumption, aligning with Sweden's environmental and public health goals. Furthermore, it strengthens local food networks by encouraging the development of shorter supply chains to enhance food traceability and support local economies. By emphasizing the value of Sámi food culture and localism, the Pathway for Sustainable Food Systems reflects Slow Food's principles of preserving traditional foodways (Swedish Food Agency, 2021).

### III. Sámi Food Culture and Legal Protections

Sweden's policies explicitly recognize and protect the food practices of the Sámi people, acknowledging their critical role in the country's cultural and culinary heritage. The Sámi Parliament Act (Sametingslag 1992:1433) established the Sámi Parliament (Sametinget), which oversees the preservation and promotion of Sámi culture, including their traditional food systems. The Parliament advocates for sustainable reindeer herding and the use of Sámi ingredients in public procurement, ensuring the integration of indigenous practices into broader food policies (Sametinget, n.d.). The Reindeer Husbandry Act (Rennäringslag 1971:437) protects reindeer herding, a cornerstone of Sámi cuisine, granting Sámi communities exclusive rights to herd reindeer in designated areas. This law safeguards Sámi food practices while ensuring sustainable land use and biodiversity preservation. Reindeer herding exemplifies a "clean and fair" food system, integrating cultural heritage with ecological stewardship (Academia.edu).

### IV. Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) 2023–2027 in Sweden

Sweden's implementation of the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reflects a strong focus on sustainability, climate adaptation, and animal welfare. Notable aspects include support for small-scale and organic farming, with CAP funds incentivizing environmentally friendly farming practices and promoting organic agriculture. The CAP strategy also acknowledges Sámi reindeer herding as a sustainable practice, providing financial and technical support for its continuation. Additionally, CAP policies encourage biodiversity protection by preserving natural habitats and promoting sustainable land use on agricultural land. These priorities ensure that Sweden's agricultural sector aligns with Slow Food's focus on ethical production and environmental sustainability (Swedish Board of Agriculture, 2023).

### V. Food Waste Reduction and Recycling

Sweden is a global leader in food waste reduction, implementing comprehensive policies to tackle food loss across the supply chain. The National Waste Management Plan (Nationella avfallsplanen) mandates food waste recycling for all municipalities, transforming organic waste into biogas and compost. Additional initiatives include redistribution programs, where public canteens and food banks redistribute surplus food to address both waste reduction and food insecurity. Consumer education campaigns further complement these efforts by promoting awareness about food waste prevention at the household level. These measures align with Slow Food's principles by addressing both environmental and social sustainability (Jansson, 2019).

### VI. Public Procurement Policies and Cultural Heritage Protection

Sweden has integrated cultural and sustainability goals into public food procurement. Under the Cultural Heritage Act (Kulturmiljölag 1988:950), traditional food practices, including Sámi

cuisine, are recognized as part of the national heritage. Public institutions, such as schools and hospitals, are required to incorporate organic, locally produced, and culturally significant foods into their menus. This initiative ensures that traditional food systems are preserved while promoting equitable access to high-quality food (EU-CAP Network).

## Slow Food Related National Priorities & Regulations: Italy

Italy has a long-standing tradition of protecting and promoting sustainable food systems, making it a key player in the Slow Food movement. The country's national agricultural policies, closely aligned with the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), focus on supporting small-scale farmers, preserving biodiversity, and promoting short supply chains. Various national and regional policies prioritize organic agriculture, local food networks, and agritourism, ensuring that food production remains sustainable, ethical, and economically viable. These policies also emphasize education and awareness, integrating food sustainability initiatives into schools and communities. By reinforcing traditional food cultures and sustainable farming practices, Italy continues to be a leader in Slow Food-aligned policies, fostering a food system that is good, clean, and fair for all.

### I. Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Strategic Plan 2023–2027

The CAP Strategic Plan 2023–2027 is the primary framework governing Italy's agricultural policies, integrating economic, environmental, and social sustainability. Developed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry (MASAF), the plan aligns with the European Union's objectives of biodiversity protection, rural development, and sustainable farming practices. The CAP allocates €36.7 billion to Italy's agri-food and forestry sector over five years, supporting organic farming, short supply chains, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable water management. It also introduces direct payments for small and medium-sized farms, reinforcing the principles of fair trade and food sovereignty, which closely align with the Slow Food movement (MASAF, 2023).

### II. Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Promotion

Italy has prioritized organic farming as a key strategy to reduce environmental impact and enhance food quality. The CAP Strategic Plan aims for 25% of Italy's agricultural land to be converted to organic farming by 2030, in line with EU sustainability goals. Additionally, incentives for integrated farming and biodiversity preservation programs are provided to encourage farmers to adopt agroecological practices. These initiatives are crucial in maintaining local food traditions, reducing reliance on chemical inputs, and strengthening food sovereignty, all of which are central to Slow Food values (European Commission, 2022).

### III. National Law on Short Supply Chains and Local Food Systems

Italy has actively promoted short food supply chains (*filiera corta*) to enhance direct producer-to-consumer connections and reduce food miles. The National Law on Short Supply Chains, enacted in 2017, provides financial incentives to small-scale farmers, cooperatives, and agritourism enterprises that participate in local markets. This policy supports the economic viability of small farmers, reduces food waste, and preserves regional gastronomic heritage, thus reinforcing Slow Food's principles of good, clean, and fair food (Italian Parliament, 2017).

#### IV. Geographical Indications (PDO and PGI Designations)

Italy has one of the most extensive Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) systems in Europe, ensuring the authenticity of traditional Italian food products. Key examples include Parmigiano Reggiano, Balsamic Vinegar of Modena, and San Marzano Tomatoes. These quality labels protect traditional production methods, safeguard rural economies, and promote cultural biodiversity. The PDO and PGI frameworks are integral to the Slow Food movement, ensuring that small producers are fairly compensated and that consumers receive authentic, high-quality food (European Commission, n.d.).

#### V. National Strategy for Agritourism and Rural Development

The Italian government has recognized agritourism as a means to support small-scale farmers, preserve traditional food culture, and promote sustainable tourism. The National Strategy for Agritourism provides grants and tax incentives for farmers who diversify their income through farm-to-table experiences, organic farming workshops, and culinary tourism. These initiatives contribute to the preservation of Italy's regional food heritage and ensure the transmission of traditional knowledge, aligning with Slow Food's commitment to food education and cultural preservation (MASAF, 2022).

#### VI. Sustainability and Climate Change Mitigation in Agriculture

Italy has implemented climate adaptation measures to address the environmental impact of agriculture. Policies focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting water conservation, and protecting soil biodiversity. The National Sustainability Plan for Agriculture (2021–2027) includes funding for carbon-neutral farming techniques, regenerative agriculture, and renewable energy in food production. These efforts ensure that Italy's food system remains resilient to climate change while adhering to the principles of sustainable and ethical food production (Italian Ministry of Ecological Transition, 2021).

#### VII. Slow Food in Italian Education Policies

The Italian Ministry of Education, in collaboration with Slow Food Italia, has integrated food education into school curricula. Programs such as "Orti in Condotta" (School Gardens

Initiative) teach children about seasonality, biodiversity, and traditional food systems. These efforts aim to instill an appreciation for healthy, locally sourced food from a young age, ensuring that the next generation upholds Slow Food's principles of sustainability and gastronomic heritage (Slow Food Italia, 2023).

### VIII. Terra Madre and Slow Food Legislation

The Italian government has recognized Terra Madre, the global network of food communities founded by Slow Food International, as an essential platform for promoting sustainable agriculture, local economies, and traditional food systems. National policies now support small farmers and artisans participating in Terra Madre, ensuring they receive financial aid, marketing assistance, and training in sustainable practices. This institutional backing strengthens Slow Food's advocacy for fair food policies and biodiversity protection (Slow Food, 2023).

## Slow Food Related National Priorities & Regulations: Greece

Greece has a rich culinary and agricultural heritage deeply rooted in local traditions, biodiversity, and sustainable food practices, making it highly compatible with the Slow Food movement. The country's national policies focus on preserving traditional food systems, promoting organic agriculture, and supporting small-scale farmers through financial incentives and innovation programs. Greece aligns its agricultural and rural development strategies with the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) while also implementing local initiatives that encourage short supply chains, agritourism, and community-supported agriculture. Additionally, protected food designations (PDO and PGI), financial support for sustainable farming, and food education initiatives reinforce Greece's commitment to Slow Food principles, ensuring a fair, clean, and sustainable food system for future generations.

### I. Elevate Greece Initiative

The "Elevate Greece" platform was established to support startup ecosystems, including those in the agri-food sector. As of 2021, the initiative had registered 39 agri-food startups, employing over 227 individuals and receiving funding exceeding €15.45 million. This program links agricultural production with research and entrepreneurship, promoting innovation and sustainability in the food sector (OT.gr, 2021).

### II. National Committee of Slow Food in Greece

In October 2021, representatives from Slow Food communities across Greece, such as Patmos, Ikaria, and Lesvos, formed the National Committee of Slow Food in Greece. This committee

aims to foster traditional and sustainable food practices, coordinate slow food activities, and promote local culinary heritage (Cibum.gr, 2021).

### III. PDO and PGI Designations

Greece is recognized for its rich culinary tradition and protects numerous traditional food products under EU schemes for Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI). Products such as Feta cheese, Kalamata olives, and Santorini tomatoes have PDO/PGI status, ensuring their authenticity, traditional production methods, and geographical origin. These designations boost the marketability of local products and align with slow food values by promoting local and sustainable food systems (European Commission, n.d.).

### IV. Competitiveness 2021–2027 Programme

The “Competitiveness 2021–2027” Programme integrates the National Smart Specialisation Strategy (NSSS), which focuses on connecting research and innovation with entrepreneurship. It supports the agri-food sector by funding projects that promote digital and green transformation, aligning with EU priorities for sustainability (21-27.Antagonistikitita.gr, n.d.).

### V. Micro-Loan Fund for Agricultural Entrepreneurship

Launched in 2022, the Micro-Loan Fund provides financial support to small agribusinesses and farmers. This initiative, funded through Greece’s Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014–2022 and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), allocates €61.5 million to encourage sustainable agricultural practices (Fi-compass.eu, n.d.).

### VI. Economic Transformation in the Agricultural Sector

Under the Greek Recovery and Resilience Plan, substantial investments target the modernization of the agricultural sector. Key focus areas include infrastructure development, digital transformation, and green initiatives that enhance productivity and promote sustainable practices (European Commission, n.d.).

### VII. Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) Framework

The Greek government has established a legal framework to promote the social economy, which includes social cooperative enterprises (SCEs) operating in sectors like education, leisure, and food services. This framework facilitates the development of enterprises that align with slow food principles by emphasizing local production and community engagement (European Commission, n.d.).

### VIII. Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) and Markets Without Middlemen (MWM)



Grassroots initiatives such as CSA and MWM have emerged in Greece, fostering direct connections between producers and consumers. These models support sustainable and just food systems by promoting local, seasonal produce and reducing reliance on intermediaries, thereby aligning with the slow food movement's objectives (Karanikolas & Martinos, 2020).

#### IX. Agritourism Development Policies

The Greek government has recognized agritourism as a means to promote sustainable tourism and support rural economies. Policies have been implemented to encourage agritourism entrepreneurship, providing opportunities for small-scale farmers to diversify their income while preserving traditional agricultural practices (Kizos & Iosifides, 2007).

### Slow Food Related National Priorities & Regulations: Cyprus

The Cypriot government has made attempts to embrace slow food principles, emphasizing good, clean, and fair food. Through national regulations, EU policies, and local initiatives, Cyprus has made significant strides toward ensuring sustainable agriculture, preserving biodiversity, and fostering local food culture. These efforts reflect a broader commitment to sustainability, fairness in food production, and the promotion of local food systems.

#### I. Sustainability Policies in Cyprus

Cyprus' sustainability policies are shaped by both national legislation and EU directives, particularly in alignment with the European Green Deal and the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP). Cyprus is committed to achieving a 24% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 2005 levels (European Commission, 2020), which emphasises on environmental sustainability. The government has actively invested in renewable energy, such as solar and wind power, while encouraging the agricultural sector to adopt environmentally friendly practices.

Cyprus' "National Strategy for Sustainable Development" (2016–2030) (United Nations, n.d.) promotes sustainable agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and waste management. The strategy includes initiatives for sustainable food systems, focusing on local, seasonal foods to reduce carbon footprints, and advocating for sustainable production methods, including organic farming practices.

#### II. Tax Policies Supporting Local and Sustainable Food Systems

Cyprus' tax policies provide incentives for businesses and farmers who adopt sustainable and eco-friendly practices. The "National Tax Policy" includes tax credits for farmers who practice organic farming and environmental conservation, helping to ensure that production remains both environmentally and economically viable (European Commission, n.d.). The government also provides subsidies through the Rural Development Program (RDP), which supports

small-scale farmers by subsidizing organic farming and traditional agricultural practices (Cyprus Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, 2020).

### III. Labor Legislation and Fair Food Practices

Cyprus' labour laws are aligned with EU standards, particularly about worker protection and rights in the food production sector. The "Employment Law" ensures fair working conditions for workers in agriculture and food production, safeguarding their rights and wages. The Cypriot government's support for fair labour practices embracing fair and equitable food systems (European Commission, 2024).

### IV. Agricultural Policies Supporting Traditional and Sustainable Farming

Cyprus' agricultural policies are heavily influenced by the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which aims to support sustainable farming practices and rural development. Through CAP, Cyprus offers support for local and small-scale farmers, including grants for organic farming, agro-ecological farming practices, and the preservation of biodiversity. The "Rural Development Program of Cyprus" (2014-2020) allocated funding for measures that promote organic farming and sustainable land use practices (Cyprus Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, n.d.).

### V. Food Production and Supply Chain Regulations

These policies preserve biodiversity through the protection of indigenous food varieties and traditional farming methods. The government's support for organic farming practices also contributes promoting sustainable and clean food production, while Cyprus' "Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan" (Ministry of Agriculture Rural Development and Environment of Cyprus, 2020) works to safeguard endangered plant and animal species.

Food safety and traceability in Cyprus are governed by national laws and EU regulations, which ensure that food products are safe, of high quality, and ethically produced. The Food Safety Legislation in Cyprus incorporates EU food safety standards, mandating regular inspections, traceability systems, and product labelling. These regulations aim to ensure that food is not only safe but also produced in a clean and sustainable manner, which adds emphasis on clean food (Cyprus Public Health Service, 2021).

### VI. Biodiversity Conservation

The country also participates in the EU's "Natura 2000" program, which protects biodiversity, particularly in areas where food species are cultivated (Department of Forests, 2024).

### VII. Food Labelling Regulations Supporting Local and Sustainable Food

In Cyprus, food labelling follows EU regulations as outlined in Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers. Labels must provide consumers with information on the origin of the product, nutritional content, and the presence of allergens. These regulations ensure transparency and empower consumers to make informed choices about the food they purchase, raising awareness about food origins and production methods.

The "Cyprus Council for Organic Products" also regulate organic certification through the Organic Production Law of 2004, ensuring that foods labelled as organic meet the necessary standards. This regulation promotes the slow food principle of clean food, allowing consumers to identify food that is produced sustainably and without harmful chemicals.

#### VIII. Waste Management and Reduction Policies for a Sustainable Food System

Cyprus is committed to reducing food waste and improving waste management through national policies such as the "Waste Management Law" (Cap. 185) and the EU's Circular Economy Action Plan. These policies encourage the reduction of waste through recycling and composting, promoting sustainable consumption practices that align with the circular food economy. Public campaigns, such as the "Food Waste Prevention Campaign," encourage individuals and businesses to minimize food waste, supporting the SDGs (Department of Environment, 2025).

Furthermore, Cyprus' "Packaging Waste Management Regulation" encourages the use of eco-friendly packaging for food products, reducing plastic waste and reducing the environmental impact of food systems.

## 4. Slow Food Entrepreneurship

Slow Food Entrepreneurship is a business approach inspired by the Slow Food movement, which emphasizes sustainability, tradition, quality, and locality over mass production and fast consumption. It prioritizes ethical values such as preserving biodiversity, supporting local farmers and artisans, promoting cultural heritage, and encouraging mindful, conscious consumption.

Specifically, it is about building food-related ventures that value quality over quantity, sustainability over speed, and community and tradition over industrialization.

Some common elements are:

- It involves creating businesses that align with the principles of the Slow Food movement.

- These businesses focus on producing, distributing, or promoting food and related products that are natural, organic, locally sourced, and often artisanal or handcrafted.
- The model values environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and cultural preservation.
- Slow Food Entrepreneurship tends to resist industrialized food production and aims to connect consumers directly with producers.
- It often includes education about food origins, healthy eating, and sustainable practices.

The startups range from organic farms and artisanal food makers to slow food restaurants and educational initiatives, all sharing a commitment to preserving food culture and ecological balance.

Below we showcase some types of business ventures that can be classified as Slow Food Entrepreneurship.

## Types of Startups or Businesses that Can Be Classified as Slow Food Entrepreneurship

### 1. Local and Organic Farms

- o Small-scale farms using organic methods.
- o Growing heirloom or indigenous varieties of fruits and vegetables.
- o Promoting biodiversity and soil health.

### 2. Artisanal Food Producers

- o Makers of traditional cheeses, breads, preserves, cured meats, and other handcrafted food items.
- o Businesses that use traditional recipes and techniques.

### 3. Farm-to-Table Restaurants and Cafes

- o Establishments sourcing ingredients directly from local producers.
- o Emphasizing seasonal menus and reducing food miles.

### 4. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

- o Models where consumers subscribe and support a farm by receiving regular shares of produce.
- o Fostering direct relationships between growers and consumers.

### 5. Food Cooperatives and Markets

- Businesses owned and operated by community members.
- Focused on offering local, sustainable, and slow food products.

## 6. Sustainable Fisheries or Aquaculture

- Practices that ensure long-term health of aquatic ecosystems.
- Avoiding overfishing and promoting regenerative methods.

## 7. Food Education and Workshops

- Businesses offering classes on cooking, preserving, and sustainable farming.
- Promoting awareness of slow food values.

## 8. Seed Saving and Heritage Plant Nurseries

- Enterprises preserving and selling rare, local, or heirloom seed varieties.
- Supporting agricultural biodiversity.

## Best Practices – Projects and Initiatives

This section highlights successful projects and initiatives from Spain, Sweden, Italy, Greece, and Cyprus that embody the principles of the Slow Food movement. These examples showcase innovative approaches to sustainability, cultural heritage preservation, and ethical food practices, providing valuable insights into the application of Slow Food ideals. Each initiative illustrates how countries leverage local traditions, community engagement, and modern strategies to address global food system challenges, offering replicable models for other regions.

Each case study includes the name of the project or initiative, the organizations leading the effort, and a description of its objectives, activities, and outcomes. The connection to Slow Food principles—emphasizing sustainability, biodiversity, and equitable food systems—will be explored, demonstrating how these efforts align with the values of “good, clean, and fair” food. Additionally, the chapter will analyze the lessons learned and key successes of these initiatives, focusing on their innovative approaches and achievements in fostering resilience and sustainability in food systems.

By examining these best practices, this chapter provides a comprehensive overview of how Slow Food principles are applied in real-world contexts. From Italy’s Terra Madre network and Spain’s Alimentos Kilómetro Cero campaign to Sweden’s Sámi Food Heritage initiatives and Greece’s Mediterranean Diet projects, these examples underscore the transformative potential of community-driven, ethical food practices. Cyprus also contributes to this dialogue with initiatives aimed at preserving traditional agricultural methods and promoting local food production. These case studies illustrate the impact of collective action in building sustainable, equitable, and culturally rich food systems.

## Best Practices – Projects and Initiatives: Spain

### I. Calanda Peach

Organization leading the effort: Regulatory Council of the Protected Designation of Origin Calanda Peach.

Description: The Calanda Peach is an emblematic product of the Aragon region, known for its large size, sweet flavor, and juicy texture. Its cultivation follows strict traditional methods, such as manual bagging of the fruit, which protects the peach and ensures its high quality. This approach maintains respect for local agricultural practices while minimizing the use of chemicals (Regulatory Council of the Protected Designation of Origin Calanda Peach, n.d.).

In addition to contributing to rural development, the initiative encourages sustainability by prioritizing cultivation techniques that respect the environment. The result is a high-quality product that has gained recognition both nationally and internationally (Compartiendo el Secreto, n.d.).

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: This peach aligns with the principles of Slow Food by promoting sustainable practices, protecting biodiversity, and valuing the traditional knowledge of the region.

Lessons Learned / Key Successes: DOP certification has improved the visibility of the product in global markets, generating economic benefits for local farmers and promoting sustainable agriculture (Origen España, n.d.).

### II. Ham from Teruel

Organization(s) leading the effort: Regulatory Council of the Protected Designation of Origin Jamón de Teruel.

Description: This ham, produced in the province of Teruel, is made exclusively from pigs raised under controlled conditions and fed with local resources. The climate of the region, combined with traditional curing techniques, gives the product its characteristic flavor and quality. The carefully regulated production process includes full traceability from breeding to final labeling.

The initiative protects the authenticity of Teruel Ham while promoting employment in rural areas and supporting the local economy, making it a benchmark for quality in the agri-food sector (Gobierno de Aragón, n.d.).

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: Ham from Teruel reflects the values of Slow Food by prioritizing sustainability, connection with the territory, and respect for traditions.

Lessons Learned / Key Successes: Certification has allowed the product to differentiate itself in international markets, strengthening the local economy and guaranteeing high-quality standards (Origen España, n.d.).

### III. Aragon Lamb

Organization(s) leading the effort: Regulatory Council of the Protected Geographical Indication Ternasco de Aragón.

Description: Ternasco de Aragón is a young lamb raised in the regions of Aragón, fed mainly with local cereals and pastures. At harvest, carcasses weigh between 8.0 and 13.0 kg, featuring firm white fat covering at least half of the kidney, but never entirely. The initiative focuses on promoting sustainable livestock practices, respecting animal welfare, and using traditional breeding methods. This approach ensures high-quality meat while encouraging the circular economy by maximizing the use of local resources (Ternasco de Aragón, n.d.). Ternasco meat is known for its tenderness and distinctive flavor, attributes that have become a symbol of Aragonese gastronomy.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: The production of Ternasco de Aragón aligns with the values of Slow Food by protecting biodiversity, promoting sustainable practices, and maintaining a strong cultural connection with the region (Compartiendo el Secreto, n.d.).

Lessons Learned / Key Successes: The IGP certification has strengthened the cultural identity of the product, increased its demand in national and international markets, and promoted responsible livestock practices (Origen España, n.d.).

## Best Practices – Projects and Initiatives: Sweden

### I. Ekolådan (The Organic Box)

Organization(s) leading the effort: Organic Farmers of Sweden (Ekologiska Lantbrukarna).

Description: Ekolådan is a subscription-based service in Sweden that delivers organic and seasonal produce directly to consumers' doorsteps. The initiative collaborates with Swedish organic farmers to ensure all products meet high organic standards with minimal environmental impact. Its objectives include promoting local organic farming, supporting small-scale farmers, and raising awareness of seasonal eating. Key activities involve partnering with organic farms, coordinating a low-emissions delivery system, and providing subscribers with seasonal recipes to encourage sustainable cooking practices. As a result, Ekolådan has built a strong customer base of over 20,000 regular subscribers and significantly increased demand for Swedish organic produce (Ekologiska Lantbrukarna, 2023)

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: Ekolådan embodies the principles of "good, clean, and fair" food by fostering sustainable agricultural practices, reducing food miles, and ensuring fair compensation for farmers.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: Ekolådan demonstrates that sustainable food systems can thrive with convenient access to fresh, organic produce. It highlights the importance of building direct relationships between farmers and consumers to strengthen local food

systems.

## II. Too Good To Go

Organization(s) leading the effort: Too Good To Go Sweden.

Description: Too Good To Go is a mobile app that allows consumers to purchase surplus food from restaurants, bakeries, and grocery stores at discounted prices, helping businesses reduce food waste while providing affordable food options to consumers. Its objectives include combating food waste, promoting ethical consumption, and reducing the environmental impact of discarded food. The app achieves these goals by partnering with food businesses, maintaining a user-friendly platform, and educating users about the importance of food waste reduction. As a result, Too Good To Go has successfully saved millions of meals from being wasted in Sweden and has become a key tool in reducing food waste in urban areas (Too Good To Go, 2023).

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: By addressing food system inefficiencies, Too Good To Go aligns with Slow Food's commitment to sustainability and ethical practices. It reduces waste and maximizes the value of surplus food.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: Too Good To Go demonstrates how digital innovation can address systemic issues like food waste. It underscores the importance of engaging both businesses and consumers in creating a more sustainable food system.

## III. REKO-rings (REKO-ringar)

Organization(s) leading the effort: Informal grassroots network supported by local farmers and consumers.

Description: REKO-rings are direct-to-consumer networks in Sweden that connect small-scale farmers with nearby consumers, often coordinated through Facebook groups. Farmers post their available products online, and consumers pre-order, ensuring that produce is sold without surplus or waste. Pick-ups take place in centralized locations without intermediaries. The objectives of REKO-rings include strengthening local food systems, promoting transparency, and reducing food miles. Their activities focus on providing digital platforms for product listings and orders, organizing community-driven pick-ups, and fostering direct relationships between farmers and consumers. As a result, over 200 REKO-rings have been established across Sweden, offering local farmers reliable income streams and fostering local food sovereignty (REKO Sweden, 2023).

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: REKO-rings promote localism, fair trade, and transparency, aligning perfectly with Slow Food's focus on community-supported agriculture and reducing environmental footprints.



Lessons Learned/Key Successes: The simplicity of the REKO-ring model has made it a scalable and replicable initiative. It demonstrates the power of grassroots organizing in creating resilient and sustainable food networks.

#### IV. Nordisk Mat (Nordic Food Project)

Organization(s) leading the effort: Nordic Council of Ministers.

Description: Nordisk Mat is an initiative that celebrates the Nordic region's culinary heritage while promoting biodiversity and sustainable food practices. The initiative fosters collaboration across Nordic countries to encourage regional food production and the consumption of traditional dishes. Its objectives include preserving Nordic culinary traditions, supporting sustainable farming, and raising awareness of regional biodiversity. Key activities involve hosting educational workshops, collaborating with farmers and chefs, and promoting Nordic cuisine through festivals and media campaigns. As a result, Nordisk Mat has revitalized interest in Nordic cuisine and enhanced public awareness of biodiversity and sustainable food practices (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2023).

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: The project aligns with Slow Food's goals of cultural preservation and biodiversity by promoting traditional foods and local agricultural practices.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: The project highlights the potential of international cooperation in promoting sustainability and cultural heritage. Its focus on regional identity strengthens public interest in traditional food systems.

#### V. Föreningen Sesam (Sesame Association)

Organization(s) leading the effort: Non-profit association focused on seed preservation.

Description: Föreningen Sesam is an organization dedicated to preserving traditional plant varieties in Sweden, particularly heirloom seeds used in small-scale and organic farming. The organization manages seed banks, provides training on seed-saving techniques, and collaborates with farmers to reintroduce rare varieties into cultivation. Its objectives include protecting genetic diversity, promoting sustainable agriculture, and preserving Sweden's agricultural heritage. Key activities involve seed conservation, educational programs, and advocacy for biodiversity-friendly policies. As a result, Föreningen Sesam has increased the availability of rare plant varieties and facilitated the widespread adoption of sustainable farming practices (Föreningen Sesam, 2023).

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: The association's work directly supports biodiversity and cultural preservation, essential elements of Slow Food's mission.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: Föreningen Sesam emphasizes the role of grassroots efforts in safeguarding biodiversity and fostering sustainable food systems. Its work demonstrates the importance of protecting traditional agricultural knowledge.

## VI. Från Sverige (From Sweden Label)

Organization(s) leading the effort: Svenskmärkning AB, in collaboration with the Swedish government.

Description: Från Sverige is a certification and labeling initiative designed to highlight Swedish-grown and processed products. The label ensures that products meet strict criteria, such as containing at least 75% Swedish raw materials, offering consumers transparency while promoting local production. The initiative's objectives are to support local economies, enhance consumer awareness, and promote sustainable food systems. Its activities include certifying eligible products, running educational campaigns, and collaborating with food producers. As a result, thousands of products now carry the Från Sverige label, boosting consumer trust and increasing demand for Swedish goods (Från Sverige, 2023).

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: Från Sverige promotes localism and sustainability by encouraging consumers to choose Swedish-grown foods, supporting ethical production and food sovereignty.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: The initiative demonstrates the effectiveness of clear labeling in influencing consumer behavior. It also highlights the role of public-private partnerships in achieving sustainable food system goals.

## VII. Kravgodkänd Mat (KRAV-Certified Food)

Organization(s) leading the effort: KRAV, Sweden's leading certification body for organic and sustainable farming.

Description: KRAV certification is a widely recognized label in Sweden that ensures food products meet stringent standards for sustainability, animal welfare, and environmental protection. The certification helps consumers identify products that align with ethical and ecological values. Its objectives include promoting organic farming, improving food quality, and supporting sustainable food systems. Key activities involve certifying farms and products, conducting audits, and raising consumer awareness. As a result, over 4,000 Swedish farms and businesses are KRAV-certified, representing a significant share of the country's organic production (KRAV, 2023).

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: KRAV certification supports "clean and fair" food systems by ensuring high standards for sustainability and animal welfare.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: KRAV illustrates the value of rigorous certification systems in driving sustainable agricultural practices and fostering consumer trust in organic products.

## VIII. MatLust (FoodLust)

Organization(s) leading the effort: Södertälje Municipality and Stockholm Business Region.

Description: MatLust is a development platform dedicated to sustainable food innovation, supporting small and medium-sized food enterprises (SMEs) in Stockholm County. The initiative fosters collaboration between businesses, researchers, and policymakers to promote sustainable food production, reduce environmental impacts, and create innovative solutions within the food industry. Its objectives include supporting food SMEs in transitioning to sustainable practices, developing innovative food products, and strengthening regional food ecosystems. Key activities involve organizing workshops, providing grants for research and innovation, and creating networking opportunities between food producers and other stakeholders. As a result, over 120 SMEs have participated in the program, with many adopting more sustainable practices and launching eco-friendly food products (MatLust, 2023).

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: MatLust reflects the Slow Food emphasis on sustainability and innovation by supporting ethical food entrepreneurship and reducing environmental impacts across the food production chain.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: MatLust illustrates how public-private partnerships can foster innovation in sustainable food systems. By focusing on SMEs, it demonstrates how smaller actors can play a significant role in driving regional sustainability efforts and contributing to a resilient food ecosystem.

## Best Practices – Projects and Initiatives: Italy

### I. The Pollenzo Agency

Organization(s) leading the effort: Slow Food Association, University of Gastronomic Sciences, Banca del Vino, Albergo dell’Agenzia

Description: The Pollenzo Agency is a pioneering initiative by Slow Food, aimed at preserving food culture, promoting sustainability, and advancing education in gastronomy. Launched in the late 1990s, the initiative was inspired by Carlo Petrini’s vision of repurposing the historic site of Pollenzo into a global center for food and wine culture. It was developed in collaboration with the University of Gastronomic Sciences, Banca del Vino, and Albergo dell’Agenzia, making it a comprehensive hub for food education and sustainable gastronomy.

The agency’s objectives include educating future leaders in the food industry, preserving Italy’s wine and gastronomic heritage, and promoting sustainable food practices. The initiative has successfully established the University of Gastronomic Sciences, offering an interdisciplinary curriculum in agriculture, gastronomy, and food sustainability. Additionally, the Banca del Vino serves as a repository for Italy’s rich wine heritage, supporting small-scale producers. The sustainable hotel and restaurant at Pollenzo showcases local, seasonal, and ethically sourced ingredients in fine dining experiences.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: The Pollenzo Agency aligns with Slow Food’s principles of sustainability, biodiversity, and food justice. It preserves traditional knowledge and artisanal techniques, supports small-scale farmers, and fosters a sustainable food economy.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: A key takeaway from this initiative is the importance of interdisciplinary education in shaping future leaders for a sustainable food system. Additionally, it demonstrates how historical preservation can complement modern sustainability efforts. Lastly, the initiative highlights the value of collaboration between academia, industry, and advocacy organizations in driving ethical food systems (University of Gastronomic Sciences, 2023; Slow Food, 2023).

## II. Ark of Taste

Organization(s) leading the effort: Slow Food International

Description: The Ark of Taste is a global initiative launched by Slow Food International in 1996 with the goal of preserving food biodiversity by cataloging traditional food products at risk of extinction. The project responds to the growing threats posed by industrial agriculture, monocultures, and the homogenization of food systems.

The initiative operates as an online catalog, continuously updated with contributions from farmers, food experts, and researchers. Products included in the Ark must meet specific criteria: they must be high quality, have cultural and historical significance, and be at risk of disappearing. Slow Food actively promotes these products through educational initiatives, collaborations with chefs, and awareness campaigns to reintegrate them into contemporary food culture.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: The Ark of Taste is central to Slow Food's mission of preserving biodiversity and food culture. By protecting traditional food varieties, the initiative supports local food systems, sustainable agricultural practices, and small-scale producers who maintain these unique food traditions.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: One of the most significant outcomes of this initiative has been raising global awareness of food extinction, inspiring consumers, chefs, and policymakers to prioritize biodiversity. Additionally, the Ark has played a key role in revitalizing heirloom grains, heritage livestock breeds, and traditional processing techniques. Another major lesson learned is the power of storytelling and public engagement in food preservation efforts (Slow Food, 2022; Petrini, 2021).

## III. Slow Food Presidia

Organization(s) leading the effort: Slow Food International

Description: Slow Food Presidia was launched in 2000 as an extension of the Ark of Taste, with a focus not just on identifying endangered foods but also on actively supporting the communities that produce them. The project seeks to protect native plant and animal varieties, traditional processing techniques, and small-scale food production systems that are at risk due to industrialized food markets.

This initiative works by establishing direct links between producers, markets, and consumers, providing training, technical support, and marketing assistance to small producers. Slow Food also organizes international fairs and awareness campaigns to promote Presidia products and raise awareness of their importance in preserving local food heritage.

**Relevance to Slow Food Principles:** This initiative embodies Slow Food's commitment to sustainability and social justice, ensuring that traditional food systems remain economically viable. It promotes clean food production, fair pricing for producers, and the protection of food biodiversity.

**Lessons Learned/Key Successes:** A key achievement of Slow Food Presidia has been its impact on local economies, helping small producers gain visibility and sustainable markets. It also showcases the power of networking and knowledge-sharing, as producer communities collaborate to improve quality and sustainability. Furthermore, the initiative has demonstrated that policy engagement is crucial in safeguarding traditional food systems (Slow Food, 2023; Montanari, 2020).

#### IV. Terra Madre

Organization(s) leading the effort: Slow Food International

**Description:** Terra Madre is a global event and network initiated by Slow Food International in 2004, aiming to connect food producers, farmers, fishers, ranchers, artisans, chefs, and scholars to discuss and promote sustainable agriculture and ethical food systems. First conceptualized by Carlo Petrini, the founder of Slow Food, Terra Madre was established as a platform for fostering discussions on food sustainability, biodiversity, and fair trade, while strengthening collaborations between small-scale producers and food communities worldwide.

The initiative's primary objectives include promoting sustainable agricultural practices, enhancing local food traditions, supporting small-scale food producers, and educating consumers on conscious food choices. Held in Turin, Italy, Terra Madre brings together thousands of participants from over 150 countries for debates, workshops, tastings, and farm visits, facilitating knowledge exchange on traditional food production and food sovereignty. A major outcome of the event is the Terra Madre Declaration, a document outlining the commitments and strategies for creating a more sustainable and equitable global food system.

**Relevance to Slow Food Principles:** Terra Madre is deeply aligned with Slow Food's core values, emphasizing the importance of biodiversity, sustainability, and food justice. By creating a space for dialogue among food communities, the initiative supports clean food production methods, promotes fairer trade for small producers, and highlights the cultural significance of traditional food knowledge. Furthermore, Terra Madre strengthens global networks that work toward a more ethical and environmentally friendly food system.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: One of the most significant achievements of Terra Madre is its role in raising international awareness of food sustainability and biodiversity issues. The event has facilitated stronger connections between producers and policymakers, resulting in policy changes that protect small farmers and artisanal food producers. Additionally, Terra Madre has demonstrated the power of grassroots movements, showcasing how local food traditions and sustainable agriculture can thrive through global collaboration and knowledge-sharing. The initiative has also been instrumental in influencing consumer behavior, encouraging more people to adopt ethical and sustainable eating habits (Slow Food, 2023; Petrini, 2021).

## Best Practices – Projects and Initiatives: Greece

### I. Peliti

Organization(s) leading the effort: Peliti (Greek for "oak tree") is a non-profit organization based in Metsovo, Epirus, that promotes sustainable food systems and local food cultures.

Description: Peliti's initiatives include establishing a seed bank to preserve traditional varieties, organizing workshops on organic farming and traditional food processing techniques, and creating a network of local producers committed to sustainable practices. Peliti also hosts an annual food festival celebrating the region's culinary heritage and promoting sustainable food production and consumption.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: Peliti's work embodies the Slow Food principles of promoting good, clean, and fair food by supporting local producers, preserving biodiversity, and educating consumers about sustainable food choices.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: Peliti has successfully engaged the local community in its initiatives, fostering a sense of ownership and pride in the region's culinary heritage. The organization has also demonstrated the economic viability of sustainable food systems, creating income-generating opportunities for local producers and promoting rural development.

### II. Genteki

Organization(s) leading the effort: Family run.

Description: Genteki focuses on reviving and promoting traditional food products and recipes from the Florina region, such as Florina peppers, mountain tea, and local varieties of beans, potatoes, meat and dairy produce and more. They organize workshops, cooking classes, and food festivals to educate consumers about the region's culinary heritage and the importance of preserving biodiversity and traditional knowledge.

Relevance to Slow Food principles: Genteki's work aligns with the Slow Food principles by emphasizing the value of local, traditional, and sustainably produced food. They are committed to protecting local food cultures, supporting small-scale producers, and promoting a more sustainable and equitable food system.

Lessons learned/key successes: Genteki has successfully created a network of producers and consumers who are passionate about preserving the unique culinary heritage of the Florina region. They have demonstrated the power of collective action and community engagement in promoting sustainable food practices and revitalizing local economies.

### III. Milia Mountain Retreat

Organization(s) leading the effort: Milia Mountain Retreat is an eco-tourism destination in the mountains of Crete that offers visitors an immersive experience in sustainable living and traditional Cretan food culture.

Description: Milia is a restored mountain village powered by renewable energy, where guests can participate in organic farming, cooking classes, and nature walks. The retreat's restaurant serves traditional Cretan dishes made with locally sourced ingredients, showcasing the region's rich culinary heritage and promoting sustainable food production and consumption.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: Milia's approach aligns with the Slow Food principles of promoting good, clean, and fair food by supporting local producers, preserving biodiversity, and educating consumers about sustainable food choices.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: Milia has successfully integrated sustainable practices into its operations, demonstrating that eco-tourism can be a viable economic model while preserving cultural heritage and protecting the environment. The retreat has also created a space for cultural exchange and learning, connecting visitors with the local community and promoting a deeper understanding of sustainable living.

### IV. Greece: Dalabelos Estate

Organization(s) leading the effort: The Dalabelos Estate is a family-run winery and farm located in Crete, Greece.

Description: The estate focuses on organic and biodynamic farming practices to produce high-quality wines and olive oil while respecting the environment and preserving local biodiversity. They offer tours and tastings, allowing visitors to experience the beauty of the Cretan landscape and learn about sustainable agriculture. They also organize workshops and events related to winemaking, olive oil production, and Cretan cuisine, promoting knowledge sharing and cultural exchange.

Relevance to Slow Food principles: Dalabelos Estate embodies the Slow Food principles by prioritizing the use of local resources, traditional methods, and sustainable practices. They are

committed to producing food that is good for both people and the planet, contributing to the preservation of local ecosystems and promoting a more responsible approach to agriculture.

Lessons learned/key successes: Dalabelos Estate has successfully combined traditional knowledge with modern innovation to create a thriving business that respects the environment and celebrates local culture. They have demonstrated that sustainable agriculture can be economically viable while contributing to the preservation of biodiversity and promoting a deeper connection between people and their food.

#### V. Ktima Perek

Organization(s) leading the effort: Ktima Perek is a family-run business established in 1998 by Mary Mouratidou.

Description: Ktima Perek is an estate located in Monopigado, Thessaloniki, offering a multi-faceted experience combining nature, traditional food, and activities for the whole family. They feature a restaurant serving authentic Pontic and Greek cuisine made with natural, local ingredients and traditional cooking methods. A bakery unit produces homemade bread and pastries. A women's workshop creates traditional products using local ingredients and handmade techniques. Event spaces are available for weddings and other social/professional gatherings. The estate also includes a farm, vegetable garden, playgrounds, and an art workshop for children.

Relevance to Slow Food principles: Ktima Perek aligns with Slow Food principles through its emphasis on good food using fresh, local ingredients and time-honored recipes to create delicious and authentic dishes, clean food employing sustainable practices in their farming and production processes, and Fair food supporting local producers and preserving traditional knowledge and techniques.

Lessons learned/key successes: Ktima Perek demonstrates the successful integration of tradition and innovation in creating a thriving business that celebrates local food culture, provides a welcoming space for families, and contributes to the local economy. They have created a destination that offers a holistic experience, connecting visitors with nature, food, and cultural heritage.

#### VI. Chef's Brigade Greece

Organization(s) leading the effort: Chef's Brigade Greece is a community of chefs dedicated to promoting sustainable food practices and preserving Greek culinary heritage. It operates under the umbrella of the Slow Food movement.

Description: Chef's Brigade Greece brings together chefs, food producers, and consumers to advocate for good, clean, and fair food. They organize events, workshops, and educational programs to raise awareness about sustainable food systems, support local producers, and



promote healthy eating habits. They also collaborate with other Slow Food communities and organizations to strengthen the network of sustainable food advocates in Greece.

Relevance to Slow Food principles: Chef's Brigade Greece directly embodies the Slow Food principles by promoting good food through their emphasis on high-quality, locally sourced ingredients and traditional cooking techniques to create delicious and healthy meals. They support clean food by advocating for sustainable agricultural practices that protect the environment and preserve biodiversity. Additionally, they ensure fair food by promoting fair trade practices and supporting small-scale producers committed to ethical and sustainable food production.

Lessons learned/key successes: Chef's Brigade Greece has successfully created a platform for chefs to collaborate and share their knowledge and passion for sustainable food. They have raised awareness about the importance of preserving Greek culinary traditions and promoting sustainable food practices among both professionals and the general public. By connecting chefs, producers, and consumers, they are contributing to the development of a more sustainable and resilient food system in Greece.

#### VII. Eumelia Organic Agrotourism Farm & Guesthouse

Organization(s) leading the effort: Located in Gouves, Laconia, Eumelia offers a holistic agrotourism experience deeply rooted in organic farming and sustainability principles.

Description: Guests participate in farm activities, learn about organic agriculture and traditional practices, and enjoy farm-to-table meals with ingredients sourced directly from their gardens and local producers. They offer educational programs on self-sufficiency, renewable energy, and ecological building techniques.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: Eumelia embodies Slow Food's values by promoting good, clean, and fair food through its organic farming practices and close connection to the land. It provides an educational experience that fosters appreciation for local food systems and sustainable living.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: Eumelia demonstrates how agrotourism can revitalize rural communities while promoting environmental awareness and sustainable practices. Their focus on education and hands-on experiences creates a lasting impact on visitors, fostering a deeper understanding of Slow Food principles.

#### VIII. AMANITA Guesthouse

Organization(s) leading the effort: The Amanita Experience is a guesthouse in Tsagarada, Pelion, Greece.

Description: The Amanita Experience offers a unique experience for its guests, combining the tranquility of nature with the richness of Greek hospitality and culinary traditions. They provide

a "farm-to-table" breakfast featuring local specialties, organize cooking classes, and encourage guests to engage with the local environment and culture through activities like nature walks and visits to nearby villages.

Relevance to Slow Food principles: The Amanita Experience aligns with Slow Food principles by promoting good food through the use of fresh, local, and organic ingredients in their breakfast and cooking classes, showcasing the authentic flavors of the Pelion region. They support clean food by committing to sustainable practices, using natural materials in their buildings, and minimizing their environmental impact. Additionally, they ensure fair food by supporting local producers and sourcing ingredients from nearby farms and businesses, thereby contributing to the local economy.

Lessons learned/key successes: The Amanita Experience demonstrates how tourism can be a vehicle for promoting sustainable practices and preserving local traditions. By offering an immersive experience in nature and culture, they encourage guests to appreciate the value of Slow Food principles and connect with the local community.

#### IX. Athens Street Food Festival

Organization(s) leading the effort: The Athens Street Food Festival is an annual event that celebrates the city's vibrant street food scene and showcases a diverse range of culinary offerings.

Description: The festival brings together food vendors, chefs, and entrepreneurs offering delicious and innovative street food from Greece and around the world. It provides a platform for culinary creativity, cultural exchange, and community engagement. Attendees can enjoy a wide variety of dishes, from traditional Greek souvlaki to international flavors, while also experiencing live music and entertainment.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: While the festival embraces diverse culinary traditions, it aligns with Slow Food values by promoting small-scale food entrepreneurs, celebrating cultural diversity through food, and fostering a sense of community. It encourages attendees to explore new flavors and appreciate the creativity and passion of food producers.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: The Athens Street Food Festival has become a hugely popular event, attracting locals and tourists alike. It demonstrates the growing interest in diverse and accessible food experiences while providing a platform for small food businesses to thrive and connect with a wider audience.

#### X. Thessaloniki Street Food Festival

Organization(s) leading the effort: SoulFood Thessaloniki

Description: The Thessaloniki Street Food Festival is an annual event that celebrates street food culture and culinary diversity. It brings together food vendors, chefs, and food enthusiasts to

showcase a wide variety of street food from Greece and around the world. The festival features live music, cooking demonstrations, and workshops, creating a vibrant atmosphere for visitors to enjoy.

Relevance to Slow Food principles: The Thessaloniki Street Food Festival, while not explicitly focused on all Slow Food principles, aligns with them in several ways. It promotes good food by showcasing diverse and delicious offerings, often highlighting local specialties and traditional recipes. It supports clean food as many vendors prioritize the use of fresh and local ingredients, with some even embracing sustainable practices in their food preparation. Additionally, the festival encourages community by creating a space for people to connect and share their love for food, fostering a sense of togetherness and cultural exchange.

Lessons learned/key successes: The Thessaloniki Street Food Festival has become a popular event in the city, attracting a large number of visitors and contributing to the local economy. It has successfully promoted street food culture and provided a platform for food entrepreneurs to showcase their creativity and culinary skills. The festival also highlights the diversity of culinary traditions in Thessaloniki and encourages people to explore new flavors and cuisines.

#### XI. Cooking Classes with Local Chefs

Organization(s) leading the effort: Various independent chefs and culinary schools across Greece offer cooking classes focused on traditional recipes and regional specialties.

Description: These classes provide hands-on learning experiences, teaching participants how to prepare authentic Greek dishes using fresh, local ingredients. They often include visits to local markets or farms, providing a deeper understanding of the origins of food and the importance of seasonality.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: These initiatives connect people with the cultural heritage embedded in traditional cuisine, promoting the use of local and seasonal ingredients, and fostering an appreciation for the time and care involved in preparing good food.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: Cooking classes provide a fun and engaging way to learn about Slow Food principles and connect with local food cultures. They empower individuals to make more informed food choices and support sustainable practices in their own kitchens.

#### XII. Open Farm Days

Organization(s) leading the effort: Organized by OpenFarm Initiative are held annually throughout Greece.

Description: During these events, farms open their doors to the public, offering tours, tastings, and educational activities. Visitors can learn about different farming practices, interact with farmers, and gain a deeper understanding of where their food comes from.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: Open Farm Days promote transparency and connection within the food system, allowing consumers to meet the people who produce their food and learn about sustainable agriculture. This fosters appreciation for the hard work and dedication involved in producing good, clean, and fair food.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: Open Farm Days have been successful in connecting urban populations with rural communities and promoting awareness about sustainable agriculture. They provide a valuable opportunity for farmers to share their knowledge and passion for their work.

### XIII. Boroume

Organization(s) leading the effort: Boroume is a non-profit organization tackling food waste and food insecurity in Greece.

Description: They connect food donors (restaurants, hotels, supermarkets) with charities and individuals in need, ensuring surplus food is redistributed instead of wasted. Boroume also runs awareness campaigns to educate the public about food waste reduction and responsible consumption.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: Boroume's work directly addresses Slow Food's focus on reducing waste and promoting access to good food for all. By rescuing food and minimizing environmental impact, they champion responsible resource use within the food system.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: Boroume has demonstrated the significant impact of collaborative efforts in addressing food waste. They've built a strong network of partners and volunteers, effectively redistributing vast amounts of food while raising awareness about this critical issue.

## Best Practices – Projects and Initiatives: Cyprus

### I. Zero Food Waste Cyprus

Organization(s) leading the effort: Zero Food Waste Cyprus (ZFWC)

Description: ZFWC is a grassroots initiative aimed at reducing food waste through the collection of surplus food from local markets, restaurants, and supermarkets. This food is then redistributed to vulnerable communities, addressing both environmental and social issues. The initiative also raises awareness about the impacts of food waste, encouraging consumers and businesses to adopt more sustainable practices. ZFWC operates under the principles of the circular economy, ensuring that food is used efficiently and not wasted.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: The initiative ties closely with Slow Food principles, particularly in terms of sustainability, ethical food consumption, and social responsibility. By reducing food waste and promoting the redistribution of surplus food, ZFWC helps decrease

the environmental impact of food production and consumption. The project advocates for mindful eating and responsible food handling, aligning with Slow Food's values of protecting food biodiversity, supporting local food systems, and minimizing waste.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: One of ZFWC's key successes has been its ability to foster community involvement, with local businesses, volunteers, and non-profit organizations collaborating to reduce waste. Through innovative partnerships and food recovery methods, the initiative has created a sustainable model for redistribution. The project has also achieved notable successes in raising public awareness about the urgency of addressing food waste and the need for more responsible consumption practices. These efforts have led to significant reductions in food waste and have supported the local community in meaningful ways.

## II. Colive – Olive Oil for Peace

Organization(s) leading the effort: Colive

Description: Colive is an olive oil brand founded on the idea of peace and cooperation, bringing together Greek and Turkish Cypriots. They source olives from farms across the divided island of Cyprus, creating high-quality extra virgin olive oil (EVOO). Their work promotes unity and supports local, sustainable agriculture. Their efforts extend beyond olive oil production by promoting the peace-building potential of collaboration across borders.

Relevance to Slow Food Principles: Colive exemplifies Slow Food principles through its commitment to sustainable agriculture, ethical production, and supporting local food systems. The company emphasizes quality and tradition, fostering cultural connections, and advancing the Slow Food philosophy of fostering relationships and sustainability in food production.

Lessons Learned/Key Successes: Colive's success lies in its ability to merge agricultural sustainability with a powerful peace-building message. The innovative approach of creating olive oil from both sides of the divided island has garnered international attention, symbolizing cooperation and sustainable practices in the face of conflict. Their impact extends beyond food, demonstrating how food production can drive social change.

## III. Cyprus Breakfast Programme

Organization(s) leading the effort: Cyprus Tourism Organization (CTO)

Description: The Cyprus Breakfast Programme promotes Cyprus' rich culinary heritage by encouraging hotels and tourism establishments to offer traditional Cypriot breakfasts. The initiative aims to create an authentic experience for visitors while boosting local agriculture and food production. Participating businesses showcase local, seasonal ingredients, and the programme helps in promoting sustainability by encouraging the use of products grown and

produced locally. The programme includes educational activities for both consumers and local producers to understand the value of local food systems.

**Relevance to Slow Food Principles:** The programme aligns with Slow Food principles by supporting local food economies, encouraging ethical sourcing, and prioritizing sustainability. It fosters a deeper connection between visitors and the food culture of Cyprus, promoting traditional agricultural practices and the use of seasonal produce. By supporting small-scale local farmers and encouraging regional food production, it strengthens local food systems while minimizing environmental impact.

**Lessons Learned/Key Successes:** The program has seen significant uptake across hotels and guesthouses, leading to a greater appreciation of Cyprus' local agricultural products. Its success lies in its ability to integrate sustainable tourism practices with the local food culture. The programme also empowers small farmers, highlights the value of authentic Cypriot dishes, and has become a significant part of Cyprus' tourism offering. The programme is also contributing to the preservation of local food traditions and increasing the visibility of regional specialties.

## 5. Training Needs of Aspiring & Practicing Entrepreneurs & Professionals

This chapter outlines the training needs of aspiring and practicing entrepreneurs and professionals within the Slow Food industry, with the goal of developing the skills, competencies, and knowledge essential for success in their business endeavors.

These needs were identified through an analysis of qualitative findings from field consultations conducted across each of the consortium countries. The consultations were designed to assess the training and support requirements of culinary entrepreneurs and professionals working in sustainable gastronomy, in alignment with the principles of the Slow Food movement. Participants in these consultations represented a diverse range of profiles, including food business owners, educators, agro-food experts, and sustainability advocate

The results of these consultations aim to set the foundations for the development of an integrated and relevant educational curriculum and program in the next part of the project (i.e. WP3).

### Methodology

A qualitative method was followed through online Google Forms survey that was sent during the period of March and April 2025 to a specific target group that consisted solely of culinary entrepreneurs and professionals, Slow Food or Agro-Food experts as well as to environmental and sustainability trainers and educators.

A total number of 59 responses have been gathered (Spain: 14, Sweden, Italy and Cyprus: 10, Greece: 15) the analysis of which results are outlined in the sections below.

## Demographics

In all countries most of the respondents have been culinary or slow food entrepreneurs and professionals with more than 7 years of experience. Slow Food experts as well as educators have been also fairly represented albeit to a much lesser extent.

In Spain, Sweden and Italy, most of the respondents were located and operating from rural areas, whereas in Greece and Cyprus it was somewhat the contrary, i.e. the vast majority coming from some of the biggest cities.

In all countries, the respondents' activities have been largely supporting underrepresented communities such as immigrants, people with disabilities, LGBTIQ persons and minorities. Gender equality and anti-racism efforts were also highlighted in some responses.

## Current Picture

The first part of the questionnaire aimed to shed some light into the current business and environmental practices of the respondents, touching upon topics such as their start up history, business aspirations, sustainability awareness as well as their capacity or extent to which they can apply sustainable practices innate to the slow food movement.

These are exposed with more detail below:

### a. Current Sustainability Practices and Business Status

Across Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Sweden, and Italy, most businesses were initiated independently, often without significant financial backing. While Greece showed some variation with a few inherited ventures and support through family aid or loans, the predominant model was grassroots entrepreneurship.

Over the next two to three years, shared goals include business growth, expansion, achieving financial sustainability, and, in some cases, enhancing training curricula or integrating sustainable practices more fully. Italy uniquely incorporates social innovation into its future objectives, such as projects aimed at community engagement like the "market with kitchen" initiative.

Promotion strategies are notably similar across all regions, with social media and word-of-mouth serving as the primary tools. These are frequently supported by event participation, local collaborations, and, to a lesser extent, online advertising or print media.

### b. Sustainability Awareness & Implementation

There is a strong and consistent commitment to sustainability across all five countries. Participants commonly implement practices such as sourcing local and seasonal ingredients, reducing food waste, collaborating with local producers, and using eco-friendly packaging. Educational efforts around sustainability are also a key component of many business models. Cyprus stands out for its broader scope of sustainable actions, which include composting, product reuse, use of green energy, and increased energy efficiency measures. Despite this commitment, financial or institutional support is minimal. Only a handful of respondents in Sweden and Cyprus reported receiving any form of targeted funding, while most others rely solely on personal initiative and informal networks to pursue sustainability goals.

### c. Barriers to Sustainability

The most frequently cited barrier to sustainability across all regions is the high cost associated with implementing environmentally responsible practices. Limited access to truly sustainable suppliers further exacerbates this issue. A common concern is the difficulty in transferring increased costs to consumers without risking competitiveness, particularly in Cyprus. Many respondents also noted a lack of training and specific knowledge, paired with the time-intensive nature of sourcing sustainable solutions. In Greece, Italy, and Sweden, unclear or penalizing regulations were highlighted as additional challenges. Consumer awareness remains relatively low in several countries, contributing to limited demand for sustainable products and making it harder for businesses to justify or sustain environmentally focused changes.

## Main challenges to entrepreneurship and business development of Slow Food initiatives

This section presents the key findings from the survey regarding the primary challenges faced by slow food and agro-food professionals in launching and growing their businesses. By capturing the perspectives of entrepreneurs across different countries, the results shed light on the obstacles that hinder the establishment and sustainable development of slow food initiatives. Understanding these challenges is essential to tailoring capacity building efforts that empower and equip entrepreneurs to successfully navigate the complexities of the slow food sector, create flourishing businesses as well as fostering innovation, sustainability, and community engagement.

The following analysis highlights the critical skills gaps and operational hurdles identified by the participants, offering valuable insights into the evolving landscape of slow food entrepreneurship.

### a. Analysis of Main Challenges

Entrepreneurs across Spain, Sweden, Cyprus, Italy, and Greece face a consistent set of challenges that hinder their ability to develop and sustain their businesses effectively. A key recurring theme is the **lack of access to funding**, often compounded by complex, opaque, or time-consuming application processes and limited understanding of what financial



opportunities are available. This is especially prominent in Spain and Cyprus, where many participants expressed frustration over navigating public funding systems. **Mentorship and expert guidance** emerged as another crucial gap, particularly in Spain and Cyprus, where entrepreneurs seek experienced advisors to support both their business development and sustainability transitions. Across the board, there is also a **need for clearer understanding and practical knowledge of sustainable practices**, suggesting a disconnect between sustainability ideals and actionable implementation.

In terms of **operational challenges**, issues such as **customer acquisition and retention** (Sweden, Greece), **cost management**—particularly related to raw materials and energy (Greece, Italy)—and **regulatory and bureaucratic complexity** (Italy, Greece, Sweden) were frequently cited. **Institutional support remains weak**, with entrepreneurs in Italy and Greece also noting unclear or burdensome regulations as key constraints.

When it comes to **skills development**, there is widespread demand for training in **digital marketing, financial management, customer communication, and food innovation**. In both Spain and Greece, there is a notable interest in learning about **sustainability certifications and storytelling/branding** to better articulate their mission and value to customers. Entrepreneurs across all five countries expressed a strong interest in **mentoring**, as well as **in-person workshops, online training formats, and peer networking events** as preferred forms of support. This reflects a clear need not only for knowledge transfer but also for community-building and collaborative learning opportunities.

## Emerging Skills Needs

This section of the questionnaire specifically asked respondents to identify the skills and competencies they consider essential for establishing successful slow food start-ups that actively promote and implement sustainable practices.

### b. Emerging Skills Needs Analysis

The emerging skills needs among slow food entrepreneurs across Spain, Sweden, Italy, Greece, and Cyprus show a consistent emphasis on **digital marketing, financial management, customer retention and communication, food innovation, and sustainability certification**. Digital marketing stands out as the most cited skill, highlighting the critical importance for slow food entrepreneurs to effectively promote their products online, reach broader and more diverse audiences, and compete in an increasingly digital marketplace. This need likely stems from the shift in consumer behavior towards online discovery and purchasing, which requires entrepreneurs to master tools such as social media, SEO, and content creation.

Financial management is another fundamental skill across all countries, emphasizing the necessity for entrepreneurs to manage cash flows, budgeting, and long-term sustainability of their businesses. This skill ensures that slow food ventures can remain viable, plan for growth, and withstand market fluctuations. The emphasis on customer retention and communication, including storytelling and branding, reflects the unique nature of slow food products, which rely heavily on building emotional connections and loyalty with customers who value

authenticity, provenance, and quality. Storytelling serves as a powerful tool to differentiate their offerings and reinforce their values-driven missions.

Food innovation and product development also emerge as important, as entrepreneurs seek creative ways to stand out in a competitive market by developing new products or improving traditional ones to meet evolving tastes or dietary trends. Lastly, sustainability certification is highlighted due to the growing consumer demand for ethically produced, environmentally friendly, and socially responsible food products. Obtaining such certifications not only builds trust with consumers but also aligns with the core values of the slow food movement. Together, these skills form a comprehensive toolkit that enables slow food entrepreneurs to adapt, thrive, and maintain their mission in a fast-changing food landscape.

## 6. Training Curriculum Development Recommendations

The surveys reveal a clear need for targeted, practical, and context-specific training among culinary entrepreneurs and slow food advocates across all five participant countries. While many are already engaged in sustainability practices, they face persistent challenges related to financial stability, market competitiveness, and access to training and resources.

Respondents expressed strong interest in in-person workshops, mentorship, and funding support, alongside training in areas such as digital marketing, sustainable sourcing, financial management, and customer engagement. These preferences underscore a desire not just for theoretical knowledge, but for hands-on, experiential learning embedded in local realities.

To meet these needs, the recommended curriculum should combine modular learning with experiential components, mentorship, and community building, supporting these professionals to grow resilient, sustainable, and culturally rooted food businesses.

### Training Curriculum Goals

- Equip culinary entrepreneurs with the business, sustainability, and innovation skills needed to thrive.
- Promote slow food values: local sourcing, cultural preservation, and sustainable practices.
- Create a learning ecosystem with mentors, peer support, and real-world application.

### Suggested **key Curriculum Modules**

1. Introduction to Sustainable Food

This topic will give participants a general introduction into the wider topic of Slow and Sustainable Food as well as a description of its philosophy, principles and values.

## **2. Sustainable sourcing and production**

This module will investigate and expose various elements of a sustainable sourcing and production process including but not limited to: local and seasonal sourcing, sustainable supplier networks, sustainable food practices and systems, sustainable productions as well as sustainability certification and labelling.

## **3. Food Innovation and Product Development (incl. innovative business case studies)**

This module will engage participants in exploring innovative business concepts relevant to the field, incorporating hands-on activities that utilize various design thinking tools and inspiring case studies to develop practical and viable business ideas for new products and services they can offer.

## **4. Entrepreneurship and Financial Literacy Skills**

This module will provide participants with a comprehensive overview of the essential business and entrepreneurial skills required to successfully launch new ventures or grow existing businesses. Covering a wide range of topics, it will address people management, business modeling, market analysis—including understanding target audiences and industry trends—and strategic tools such as SWOT analysis. Additionally, the module will delve into financial planning fundamentals, including accurate costing and pricing strategies for products and services, cost reduction techniques, efficient financial sustainability practices.

A key focus of this module is to address participants' specific funding needs by exploring diverse financing options and funding opportunities available within their sectors. Participants will gain practical knowledge on how to identify suitable funding sources, navigate application processes, and craft compelling funding proposals that increase their chances of securing financial support. By the end of the module, participants will be better equipped not only with the skills to develop sound business strategies but also with the confidence and tools to access the resources necessary to bring their entrepreneurial visions to life.

## **5. Communication and Marketing**

This module will cover different needs identified in the surveys that surround the successful exposure, marketing, communication, presentation, and story of slow food start-ups and businesses. Topics include Digital Marketing Essentials, Online Presence, Experiential Marketing, Branding and Identity building, Storytelling.

## **6. Customer Engagement**

During this module the participants will be exploring the topic of how to best engage with their customers and their stakeholders at large. For this, they will explore the concepts of understanding their customer personas in depth, offering high quality customer experience and service, actively and creatively engaging them into their business and story.

During this module various inclusivity principles and practices will also be exposed and explored together with the participants.

## 7. Navigating Laws and Regulations

The laws and regulations related to the Slow Food movement vary across countries. In this guide, we have outlined the relevant laws and regulations for each of the five countries involved, as well as applicable EU policies.

Participants in this module will receive a brief overview of the main laws and regulations they need to be aware of, guidance on where to find these legal texts, how to monitor key updates or changes, and advice on involving their legal consultants and advisors throughout the process.

## Suggested Program Structure & Mode of Delivery

<u>Format</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Suggested Approach</u>
Modular Courses	Online Flexibility & foundational learning	Self-paced courses with videos, readings, quizzes
In-Person Workshops	Hands-on skills & local connection	Held in rural hubs or local food labs; include cooking demos, food labs
Experiential Learning	Real-world problem-solving	Learners work on their own business cases or community food projects
Mentorship Circles	Peer learning & expert support	Pairing early-stage entrepreneurs with experienced chefs or trainers
Field Visits & Residencies	Inspiration & network-building	Visits to local producers, regenerative farms, slow food hubs
Capstone Project or Pitch Day	Showcase & real-world testing	Learners develop a sustainable food concept or prototype business plan

## Conclusion

As we close this comprehensive journey through the landscape of slow food entrepreneurship, it becomes clear that the slow food movement is much more than a trend—it is a vibrant,

values-driven approach to food production, business, and culture. Rooted in principles of sustainability, community, and respect for tradition, slow food entrepreneurship offers a promising pathway for those passionate about creating meaningful, ethical, and impactful food ventures.

This Guide has illuminated the critical policies shaping the industry at both European and national levels, highlighting how legislation can both challenge and empower entrepreneurs. Through detailed case studies, we have witnessed inspiring examples of innovation and resilience that serve as beacons for aspiring slow food professionals.

However, the journey is not without hurdles. Entrepreneurs today face a complex web of challenges, from regulatory intricacies to market pressures and evolving consumer demands. Addressing these obstacles requires not only passion but a robust set of skills—strategic thinking, adaptability, and a deep understanding of the slow food ethos.

Most importantly, this Guide serves as a foundation for developing tailored educational curricula designed to equip slow food entrepreneurs with the knowledge and tools they need to thrive. By fostering an environment of continuous learning and collaboration, we can nurture a new generation of professionals ready to lead this movement forward.

In embracing the slow food philosophy through informed entrepreneurship, we contribute not only to the revitalization of local food cultures but also to a more sustainable and equitable food system worldwide. The future of slow food entrepreneurship depends on education, innovation, and unwavering commitment—qualities this Guide aims to inspire and support every step of the way.

Let this be a call to action for educators, policymakers, and entrepreneurs alike: together, we can cultivate a richer, more sustainable food future, one thoughtful venture at a time.

## Annexes (National Survey Reports – WP2 Skills Needs Assessment)

### 1. National Survey Analysis – Spain

This report presents the analysis of fourteen survey responses collected in Spain as part of the WP2.2 activity of the SFEntre project.

The survey aimed to assess the training and support needs of culinary entrepreneurs and professionals in sustainable gastronomy, aligned with the Slow Food movement. Respondents include a variety of profiles such as food business owners, educators, agro-food experts, and sustainability advocates.

### Methodology

- **Target group:** Culinary entrepreneurs, Slow Food/agro-food experts, VET professionals
- **Number of valid responses:** 14 (from Spain, collected via Google Forms)
- **Collection method:** Google Forms survey
- **Period:** March – April 2025

### Participant Profiles

- **Areas of expertise:** Majority identified as culinary entrepreneurs, followed by educators, Slow Food and agro-food experts.
- **Social/Operational Focus:** Many work in rural areas or with underrepresented groups such as migrants, women, or minorities.

*Chart 1. Years of Experience of Respondents*

### Years of Experience of Respondents

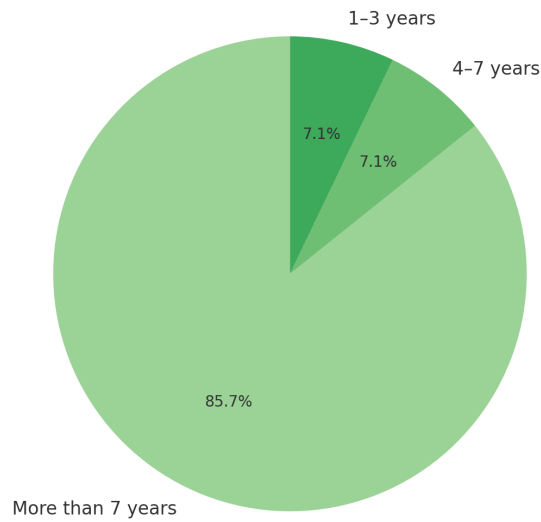
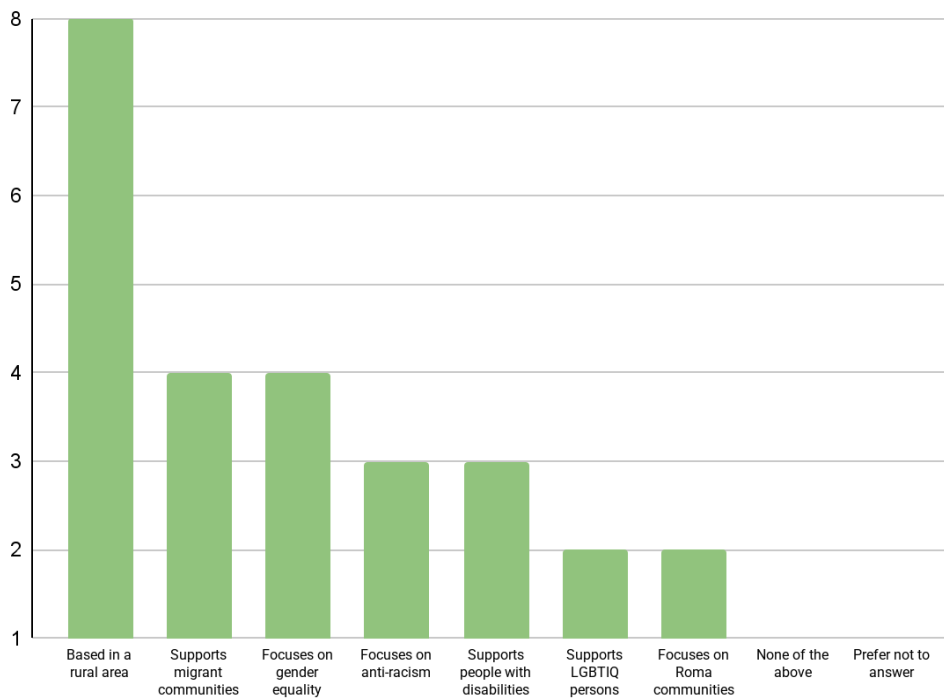


Chart 2. Respondents' Demographics and Areas of Support

### Demographic and Support Purposes



## Key Findings

### 1. Current Practices & Business Status

- Most respondents started their activity from scratch, often without external financial support.
- Their main objectives for the next 2–3 years include brand development, business expansion, curriculum enhancement, and achieving financial sustainability.
- Promotion strategies include word-of-mouth, social media, local networks, and event participation.

### 2. Sustainability Awareness & Implementation

- All participants apply sustainable practices: local/seasonal ingredients, food waste reduction, collaboration with producers, sustainable packaging, and education on sustainability.
- However, only a few received financial or institutional support.
- The most cited barriers to sustainability adoption include:
  - High implementation costs
  - Limited supplier availability
  - Consumer unawareness
  - Regulatory complexity

### 3. Main Challenges & Training Needs

- The most common challenges were:
  - Funding access and regulatory burden
  - Customer acquisition and retention
  - Student recruitment and content development
  - Awareness-building in local communities

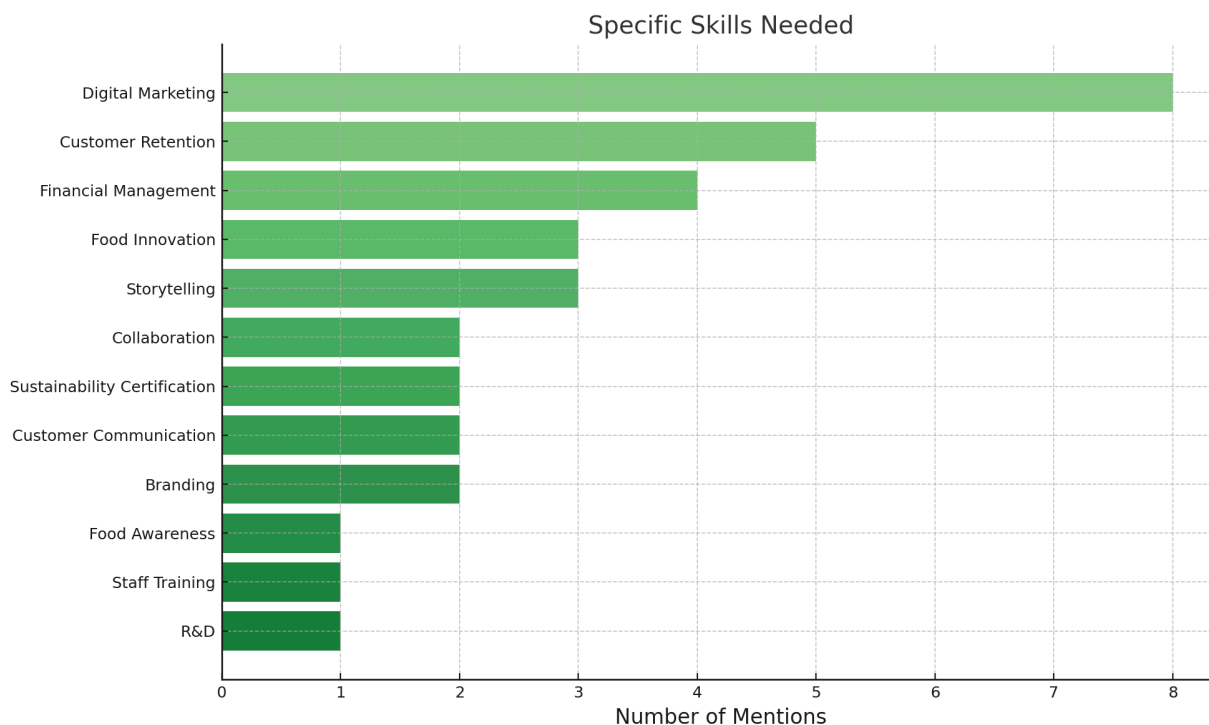
### Skills Needed:

Participants expressed the need to strengthen their capacities in:

- **Digital Marketing** – the most cited skill across all respondents.
- **Customer Retention and Communication** – including storytelling and loyalty-building.
- **Financial Management** – essential for long-term planning and sustainability.
- **Food Innovation and Product Development** – creative approaches for differentiation.
- **Sustainability Certification and Sensitization** – to connect with values-driven customers



Chart 3. Specific Skills Needed



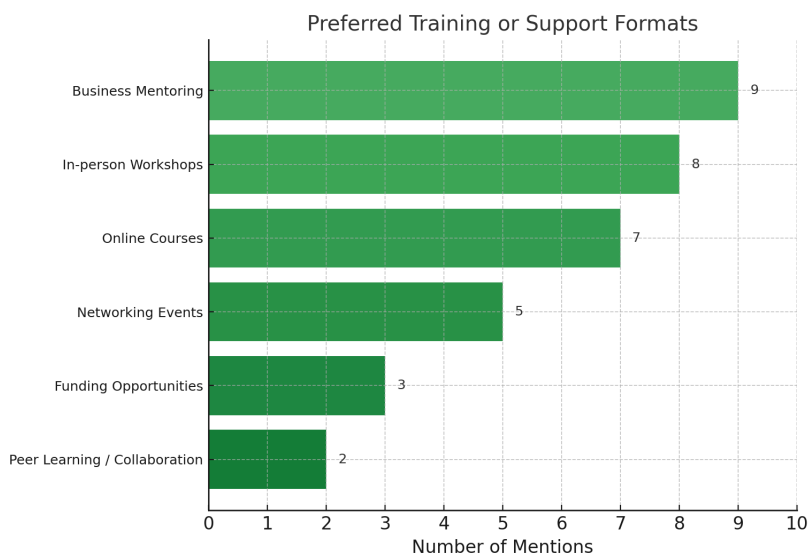
### Preferred Support Formats:

- The most valued formats were:
  - **Business Mentoring** – for personalized advice
  - **In-person Practical Workshops** – for hands-on learning
  - **Online Courses** – for accessibility and flexibility
  - **Networking Events** – to foster collaboration

\*Notes: Some participants selected more than one format, which is why the total number of mentions exceeds 14.

“Peer Learning / Collaboration” was not a predefined option in the survey but was grouped from open-ended responses expressing the desire for shared learning environments.

Chart 4. Preferred Training or Support Formats



## Conclusions & Recommendations

The survey confirms a **strong alignment** between the practices of the respondents and the values of the **Slow Food movement**, even if many participants do not identify explicitly with the label. Most of them are already incorporating sustainable practices into their business or educational models: using local and seasonal ingredients, reducing waste, and working closely with local suppliers. This is a powerful starting point.

However, the analysis also reveals a **clear gap in professionalization** and business strategy. Most participants work **in isolation**, in small rural contexts, or without access to formal training and resources. This aligns with the project’s goal to **empower culinary entrepreneurs** through capacity building, digital tools, and network creation.

Key insights:

- **There is high demand for upskilling**, especially in **digital marketing, financial planning, customer engagement**, and **storytelling** — essential for visibility and competitiveness.

- Participants face **regulatory and structural barriers**: lack of funding, unclear norms around sustainability, and weak access to suppliers and support networks.
- Respondents are eager to engage in **hands-on and flexible learning formats**, prioritizing business mentoring, local peer support, and online modules.

These findings reinforce the strategic direction of SFEntre.

## Recommendations for WP3 (Training Development):

Module Title	Key Competencies	Target Audience	Why include it?
<b>1. Practical Training</b>	Needs Assessment, Customized Itinerary Design, Self-Managed Learning	All Participants	It allows training to be tailored to different experience levels and needs, ensuring that each participant focuses on the areas they need most (marketing, finance, sustainability, etc.). It improves motivation and learning effectiveness.
<b>2. Business Mentoring &amp; Coaching</b>	Peer Mentoring, Empathic Leadership, Interpersonal Communication, Knowledge Transfer	Experienced and novice entrepreneurs	Promotes long-term, sustainable support networks. Leverages the experience gained in the Slow Food movement and strengthens a sense of community and belonging.
<b>3. Identidad Local y Storytelling</b>	Storytelling, Brand Communication, Narrative Building, Values-Based Promotion	Culinary and agri-food entrepreneurs and trainers	Helps businesses differentiate themselves by communicating their identity, values, and cultural roots. Strengthens connections with conscious customers and local markets.

<p><b>4. Digital Marketing &amp; Online Presence</b></p>	<p>Social media, e-commerce, crowdfunding platforms, digital tools for training and management</p>	<p>All participants</p>	<p>Digital skills are essential for promotion, financing, and ongoing training. It bridges the digital divide, especially in rural settings.</p>
<p><b>5. Customer Engagement &amp; Experience</b></p>	<p>Group facilitation, Collective problem-solving, Sharing good practices, Building local networks</p>	<p>Rural entrepreneurs, local communities</p>	<p>Strengthens cohesion among participants, facilitates collaboration and mutual learning, and strengthens regional entrepreneurship networks.</p>
<p><b>6. Sustainable Practices Implementation</b></p>	<p>Universal Design, Cultural and Linguistic Inclusion, Intersectional Approach, Accessible Resources</p>	<p>Underrepresented groups (women, migrants, minorities) and trainers</p>	<p>Ensures that all people, regardless of their background, can access, understand, and benefit from training. Promotes equity and diversity in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.</p>

## 2. National Survey Analysis – Sweden

This report presents the analysis of survey responses collected in Sweden as part of the WP2.2 activity of the SFEntre project. The aim was to assess the training and support needs of culinary entrepreneurs and sustainability professionals working in line with the Slow Food philosophy. Participants included business owners, educators, agro-food experts, and advocates.

### Methodology

**-Target group:** Culinary entrepreneurs, Slow Food/agro-food experts, educators, and sustainability trainers

**-Number of valid responses:** 10 (from Sweden, collected via Google Forms)

**-Collection method:** Online Google Forms survey

**-Period:** March–April 2025

### Participant Profiles

**-Areas of Expertise:** Most identified as educational professionals or culinary entrepreneurs, followed by agro-food and Slow Food experts.

**-Location & Inclusion Focus:** Majority operate in rural areas. Many activities support migrant communities, promote gender equality, and support underrepresented communities such as people with disabilities, LGBTIQ persons, and minorities.

### Key Findings

#### 1. Current Practices & Business Status

-Most participants launched their initiatives from scratch, with limited or no financial support.

-Goals include: Expansion, Financial sustainability, Brand development, and Training curriculum enhancement.

-Promotion strategies: Social media, Networking, Word-of-mouth, Local events & partnerships.

#### 2. Sustainability Awareness & Implementation

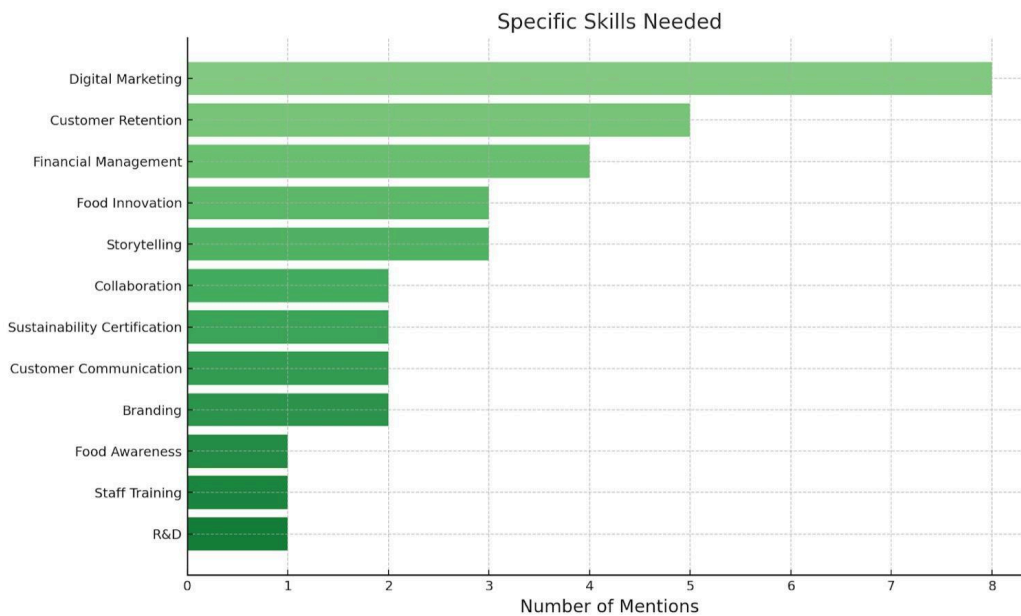
-All respondents apply sustainability principles such as use of local/seasonal ingredients, waste reduction, eco-packaging, producer collaboration, and sustainability education.

- Few have received institutional/financial support.
- Barriers include: High costs, Lack of training, Limited supplier access, Public unawareness, and Policy ambiguity.

### 3. Main Challenges & Training Needs

- Challenges include: Access to funding, Customer acquisition/retention, Regulatory compliance, Student recruitment.
- Skills needed: Digital Marketing, Customer Retention & Communication, Financial Management, Food Innovation, Sustainability Certification, Storytelling & Branding.

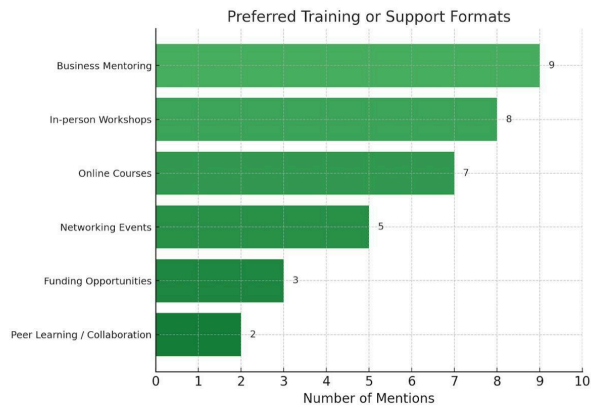
*Chart 1. Specific Skills Needed*



### Preferred Support Formats

- Most valued formats: Business Mentoring, In-person Workshops, Online Courses, Networking Events.
- Peer learning & collaboration also emphasized.

*Chart 2: Preferred Training or Support Formats*



Note:  
 - Some participants selected more than one format, which is why the total number of mentions exceeds 14.  
 - 'Peer Learning / Collaboration' was not a predefined option in the survey but was grouped from open-ended responses.

### Demographic and Inclusion Focus

Respondents indicate active involvement in supporting rural areas and underrepresented groups.

Chart 3. Respondents' Demographics and Areas of Support

Demographic and Support Purposes

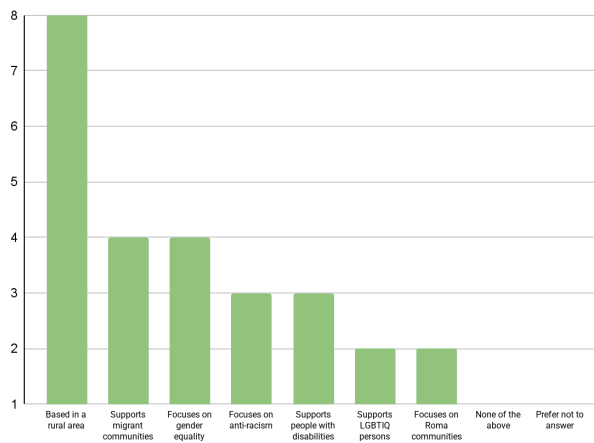
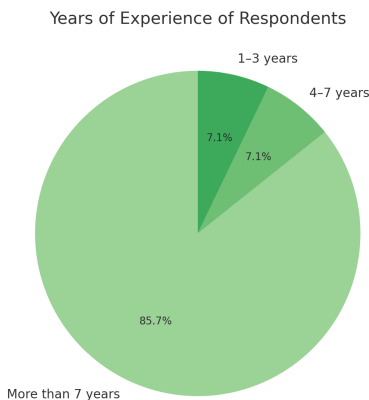


Chart 4. Years of Experience of Respondents



## Conclusions & Recommendations

The Swedish survey results show strong alignment with Slow Food values, with widespread commitment to sustainability practices. However, there’s an urgent need for capacity building to overcome regulatory, financial, and visibility barriers.

### Key insights:

- High demand for upskilling in digital marketing, financial management, and storytelling.
- Structural and financial barriers limit sustainability efforts.
- Strong interest in hands-on, flexible, and community-oriented learning models.

## Recommendations for WP3 (Training Development)

### Suggested WP3 Training Curriculum

Module Title	Key Competencies	Target Audience	Why Include It?
1. <b>Digital Marketing for Food Ventures</b>	Social media strategy, branding, content creation	All participants, especially new businesses	The most requested skill; improves visibility, customer retention, and outreach,



			especially for rural and niche initiatives
<b>2. Storytelling &amp; Identity Building</b>	Narrative design, mission crafting, visual identity	Entrepreneurs, educators, mentors	Helps convey the unique story and values behind the food activity; essential for connecting with values-driven customers and funders
<b>3. Financial Management Basics</b>	Budgeting, forecasting, cash flow, cost tracking	Early-stage entrepreneurs, VET trainers	Critical for long-term viability; addresses a major challenge (financial sustainability and funding navigation) identified by survey respondents
<b>4. Sustainable Food Systems</b>	Seasonality, food waste reduction, circular practices	All participants	Builds deep understanding of sustainability principles within food systems; supports environmental impact goals
<b>5. Food Innovation &amp; Product Development</b>	Menu innovation, product testing, regional recipe development	Culinary professionals, VET schools	Enhances competitiveness and relevance; connects tradition with innovation, aligned with Slow Food's goals
<b>6. Sustainability Certification &amp; Labeling</b>	Eco-labels, certification processes, compliance standards	Experienced practitioners, exporters	Empowers professionals to reach new markets, ensure transparency, and build consumer trust
<b>7. Local Sourcing &amp; Supplier Networks</b>	Mapping local producers, supplier engagement, community economies	Rural entrepreneurs, trainers	Encourages resilient supply chains and supports local economic development; a core pillar of Slow Food

<b>8. Digital Tools for Remote Learning &amp; Work</b>	Tools like Canva, Zoom, online forms, collaborative platforms	Trainers, mentors, youth	Facilitates hybrid learning and operations, crucial for accessibility and futureproofing small businesses
<b>9. Funding Opportunities &amp; Proposal Writing</b>	Crowdfunding, Erasmus+, national grants, business models	All, especially grassroots initiatives	Directly responds to a top need from the survey: better access to financial resources and capacity to apply for funding
<b>10. Customer Engagement &amp; Experience Design</b>	User journey, loyalty programs, feedback systems	Businesses open to the public	Increases retention and revenue; connects customer experience to sustainability and value creation
<b>11. Peer Collaboration &amp; Community Building</b>	Collective marketing, local clusters, co-branding strategies	Rural and underrepresented groups	Encourages resilience through solidarity and shared resources; useful in regions with limited individual market power
<b>12. Legal and Regulatory Literacy</b>	Food safety, local laws, sustainability regulations	All participants	Clarifies confusion around sustainability regulations and enables legal compliance; reduces one of the key barriers noted in the survey

### 3. National Survey Analysis – Italy

This report presents the analysis of survey responses collected in Italy as part of the WP2.2 activity of the SFEntre project. The aim was to assess the training and support needs of culinary entrepreneurs and sustainability professionals working in line with the Slow Food philosophy. Participants included business owners, educators, agro-food experts, and advocates.

## Methodology

**-Target group:** Culinary entrepreneurs, Slow Food/agro-food experts, educators, and sustainability trainers

**-Number of valid responses:** 10 (from Italy, collected via Google Forms)

**-Collection method:** Online Google Forms survey

**-Period:** March–April 2025

## Participant Profiles

**-Areas of Expertise:** The group is extremely heterogeneous. However, there is a prevalence of Agro-Food Expert and Culinary Entrepreneurship. Slow Food Expert and Educational Professional are also represented to a lesser extent..

**-Location & Inclusion Focus:** Majority operate in rural areas. Many activities support migrant communities, promote gender equality, and support underrepresented communities such as people with disabilities, LGBTIQ persons, and minorities.

## Key Findings

### 1. Current Practices & Business Status

- Most of the participants launched their initiatives from scratch, without any financial support..
- Goals include: centered around business growth through economic stability, expansion (including new products and increased revenue), broadening the customer base by appealing to both older and younger demographics, strategic marketing, and initiatives aimed at social impact and innovation like the "market with kitchen" project
- Promotion strategies: the predominant strategies currently employed for business or training program promotion include social media engagement, word-of-mouth referrals, and participation in events, often complemented by online advertising, local collaborations, and the occasional print media presence..

### 2. Sustainability Awareness & Implementation

- The prevalent sustainability practices include a strong emphasis on locally sourced and seasonal ingredients, waste reduction, collaboration with local producers, and the adoption of sustainable packaging solutions.
- The overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that they did not receive any financial support, incentives, or partnerships related to sustainability or local production.

- The primary barriers hindering the adoption of more sustainable practices are predominantly high costs, followed by a lack of readily available knowledge and penalizing regulations, with some respondents also citing insufficient customer demand and supplier availability..

### 3. Main Challenges & Training Needs

- Key challenges reported include cost reduction, navigating a competitive (and sometimes unfair) market, securing funding, managing bureaucratic hurdles (especially regarding hiring), ensuring quality and training, attracting a wider customer base, and addressing a lack of institutional support and unclear regulations.

- The survey results indicate a strong need for digital marketing expertise to enhance business reach and customer engagement, alongside financial management skills and a desire for innovation, particularly in food and farm-related areas.

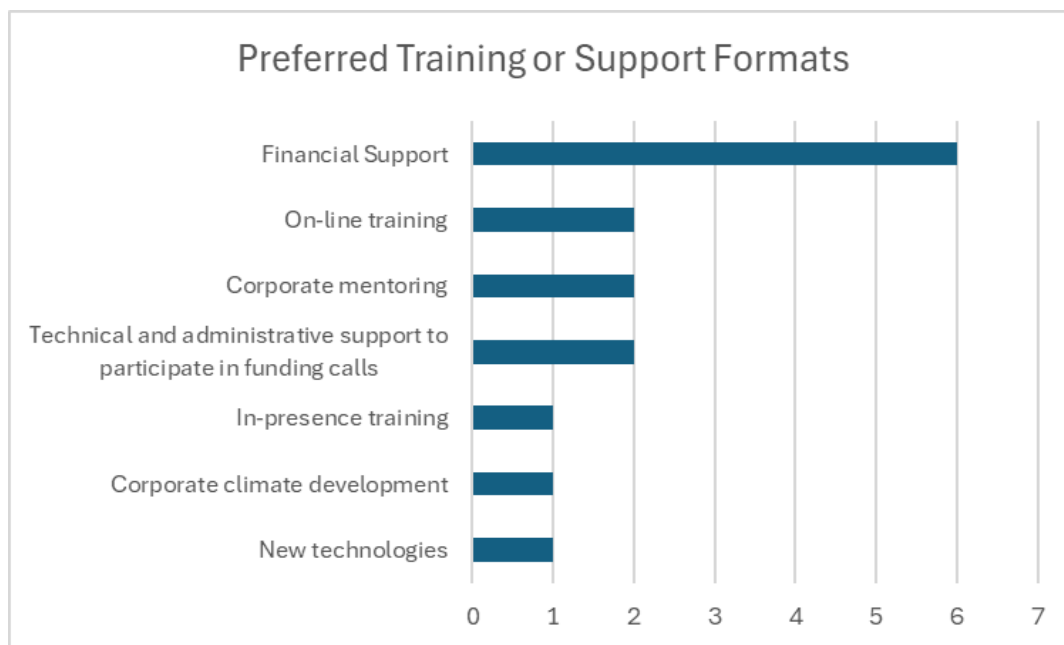
*Chart 1. Specific Skills Needed*



### Preferred Support Formats

Based on the survey responses, the most desired forms of support are financial opportunities, including more accessible and human-centered credit, alongside practical training such as online courses, in-person workshops, and business mentoring, as well as networking events.

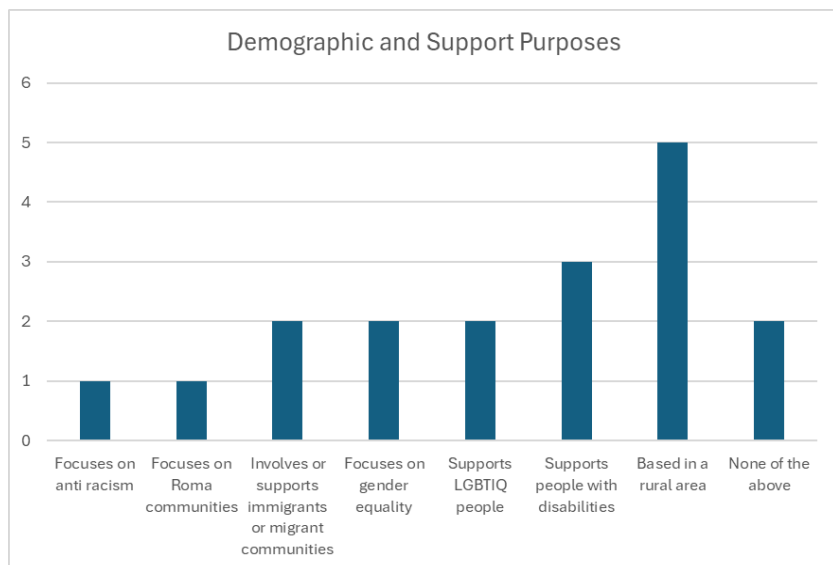
*Chart 2: Preferred Training or Support Formats*



### **Demographic and Inclusion Focus**

The survey indicates that the business operates in a rural area and demonstrates a strong focus on inclusivity by involving or supporting immigrants/migrant communities, people with disabilities, promoting gender equality, actively working against racism, supporting the LGBTIQ community, and focusing on Roma communities.

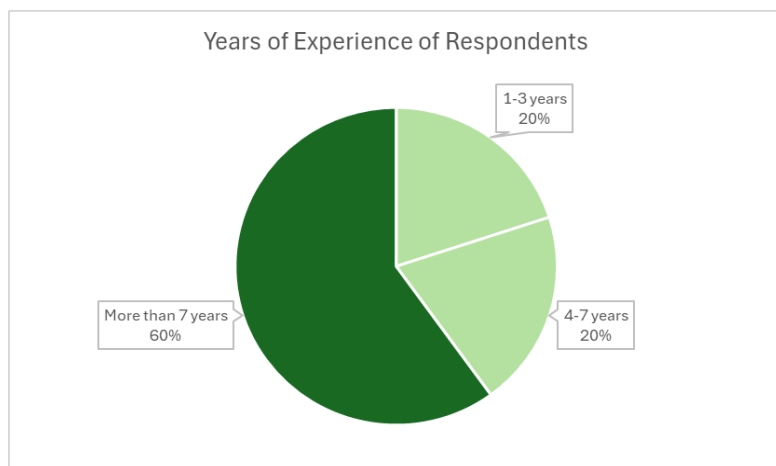
*Chart 3. Respondents' Demographics and Areas of Support*



### Years of Experience of Respondents

The majority having worked for over seven years and the remaining members possessing four to seven years of experience.

*Chart 4. Years of Experience of Respondents*



### Conclusions & Recommendations

The Italian survey highlights a vibrant landscape of small-scale food initiatives deeply rooted in local contexts and driven by a strong ethos of social inclusion. While these participants

demonstrate a clear commitment to sustainable practices and a desire for growth, significant challenges related to financial constraints, market competition, and access to knowledge impede their progress.

### Key insights

- **Strong Social Mission, Limited Resources:** Participants exhibit a notable dedication to supporting marginalized communities and promoting inclusivity within their operations, often launched without initial financial backing. However, this admirable commitment is often hampered by a lack of financial resources for expansion and innovation.
- **Sustainability is a Core Value, Implementation Faces Obstacles:** A widespread understanding and implementation of core sustainability principles, such as local sourcing and waste reduction, exists. However, the adoption of more advanced sustainable practices is significantly hindered by high costs and a lack of financial support or incentives.
- **Urgent Need for Business and Digital Skills:** Participants recognize critical gaps in their knowledge, particularly in digital marketing to broaden their reach and financial management for stability and growth. There is also a demand for skills related to innovation in their specific sectors.
- **Preference for Practical and Accessible Support:** The preferred forms of support lean towards tangible assistance, including financial opportunities with accessible terms, practical training formats like online courses and in-person workshops, business mentoring for tailored guidance, and networking events for collaboration and knowledge sharing.

### Recommendations for WP3 (Training Development)

#### Suggested WP3 Training Curriculum

These modules are designed to address the key challenges and needs identified in the survey, offering a comprehensive training curriculum that combines practical skills with strategic knowledge. The preferred support formats of online courses, in-person workshops, business mentoring, and networking events should be considered when delivering this curriculum.

Module Title	Key Competencies	Target Audience	Why Include It?
<b>1. Digital Marketing Essentials for Growth</b>	Social Media Marketing, Online Advertising, SEO Basics, Content Creation, Analytics	All Participants	Addresses the strong need for digital marketing expertise to enhance business reach, customer engagement, and overall growth.
<b>2. Financial Management &amp; Planning</b>	Budgeting, Cost Control, Cash Flow Management, Financial Reporting, Funding Application	All Participants	Directly addresses the key challenges of cost reduction and securing funding, providing essential skills for sustainable business operations. These competencies are crucial for achieving economic stability and managing business growth, especially for initiatives launched without initial financial support
<b>3. Innovation in Agro-Food &amp; Culinary Practices</b>	New Product Development, Sustainable Food Technologies, Creative Menu Design, Value-Added Processing Market innovation, Strategic marketing	Agro-Food Experts, Culinary Entrepreneurs	Responds to the desire for innovation in food and farm-related areas, potentially leading to new market opportunities.
<b>4. Navigating Regulations &amp; Bureaucracy</b>	Understanding Permits & Licenses, Hiring Procedures, Food Safety Standards, Local Regulations	All Participants	Directly tackles the key challenges of cost reduction, securing funding, and managing bureaucratic hurdles, especially regarding hiring and ensuring compliance. These competencies provide essential skills for sustainable business operations.
<b>5. Sustainable Business Practices</b>	Advanced Waste Reduction Strategies, Circular Economy Principles, Sustainable Sourcing & Supply Chain Management, Eco-Labeling	All Participants (with emphasis on Agro-Food)	Promotes sustainability by addressing high costs and regulatory barriers, meeting increasing customer demand for sustainable products. Builds upon existing sustainability awareness and helps overcome barriers through advanced waste reduction strategies, circular economy principles, sustainable sourcing and supply chain management, and eco-labeling.
<b>6. Building Inclusive Businesses &amp;</b>	Intercultural Communication,	All Participants with a focus on inclusion	Supports and enhances the existing focus on inclusivity by



<b>Community Engagement</b>	Inclusive Hiring Practices, Community Partnership Development, Understanding Diverse Needs		providing practical skills for working with diverse communities.
<b>7. Strategic Business Planning &amp; Expansion</b>	Market Analysis, Competitive Strategy, Scaling Operations, New Product Launch Strategy, Customer Relationship Management	Culinary Entrepreneurs, Business Owners	Supports the goal of business growth and expansion by providing frameworks for strategic decision-making and market penetration.
<b>8. Practical Training and Networking</b>	Hands-on skills, business mentoring, networking	All participants	Provides practical knowledge, enhances business skills, and offers opportunities for collaboration and support.

#### 4. National Survey Analysis – Greece

This report presents the analysis of survey responses collected in Greece as part of the WP2.2 activity of the SFEntre project. The objective was to evaluate the training and support requirements of culinary entrepreneurs and sustainability professionals whose work aligns with the Slow Food principles. The participant group included business proprietors, culinary experts, educators, and specialists in agri-food.

#### Methodology

- **Target group:** Culinary entrepreneurs, Slow Food/agri-food experts, and education/training professionals.
- **Number of valid responses:** 15 (collected via Google Forms)
- **Collection method:** Online Google Forms survey
- **Period:** March–April 2025

#### Participant Profiles

- **Areas of Expertise:** The majority identified as Culinary Entrepreneurs (covering roles like business owners, chefs, or food innovators), followed by professionals in Education/Training. A smaller number were identified as Slow Food or Agri-food Experts, and one mentioned Tasting Services.
- **Location & Inclusion Focus:** Responses primarily came from Thessaloniki and Athens, with some participants located in Chalkidiki and Rhodes. Several activities indicated support for underrepresented communities, including individuals with disabilities,

LGBTIQ+ persons, and migrant groups. Gender equality and anti-racism efforts were also highlighted. Some activities are situated in rural settings.

- **Experience:** Experience levels varied, with the largest group having over 7 years in their field, followed by those with 4-7 years and 1-3 years of experience.

## Key Findings

### 1. Current Practices & Business Status

- Most participants initiated their ventures independently or with partners; some inherited businesses. Initial financial support varied, including family aid, loans, or personal savings.
- Key goals for the coming 2-3 years include: Achieving financial stability, strengthening brand presence, expanding operations, refreshing offerings (menus/products), and integrating sustainable practices.
- Primary promotion strategies involve: Social media engagement and word-of-mouth referrals. Online advertising, local network collaborations, and event participation are also utilized.

### 2. Sustainability Awareness & Implementation

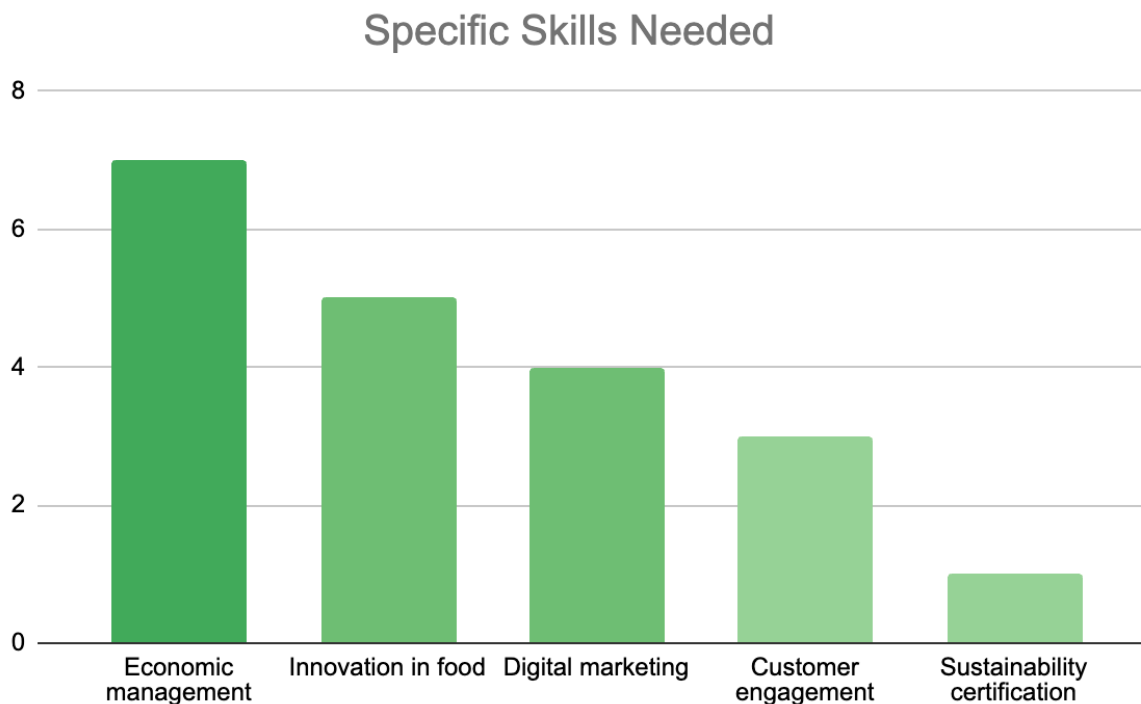
- A strong commitment to sustainability is evident: All respondents implement practices such as using seasonal/local ingredients, reducing food waste, collaborating with local producers, and educating on sustainability. Sustainable packaging is also a practice for some.
- Limited specific financial support or incentives related to sustainability or local production were reported, though some mentioned general subsidies or existing local producer relationships.
- Barriers include: High costs, limited availability of sustainable suppliers, perceived low customer demand for sustainable options, unclear regulations, and insufficient specific training.

### 3. Main Challenges & Training Needs

- Major challenges in managing and developing activities are: Reducing operating costs (especially raw materials and energy), attracting and retaining customers, and navigating regulatory and bureaucratic complexities. Lack of funding and difficulty finding specialized staff are also significant.
- Skills needed: Participants highlighted the need for enhanced skills in financial management (including costing), digital marketing, and food innovation. Knowledge of sustainability certification and customer engagement was also highlighted.
- Preferred support formats: Business mentoring was the most requested. Funding opportunities, in-person workshops, and online courses were also frequently mentioned as beneficial. Networking events and peer learning were also valued.

## Specific Skills Needed

Chart 1. Specific Skills Needed



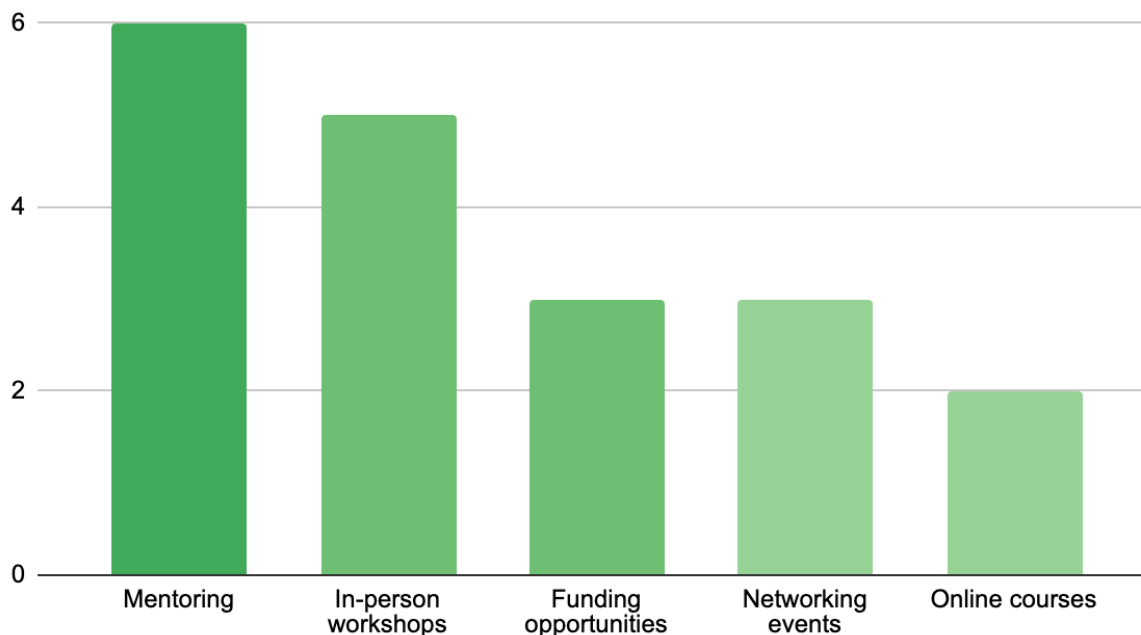
### Preferred Training or Support Formats

The preferred formats for receiving training and support are:

- Mentoring: 5 mentions
- Funding Opportunities: 4 mentions
- In-person Workshops: 3 mentions
- Online Courses: 2 mentions
- Networking Events: 2 mentions
- Workshops (general): 1 mention
- Training/Support (general): 1 mention

Chart 2: Preferred Training or Support Formats

## Preferred Training of Support Formats

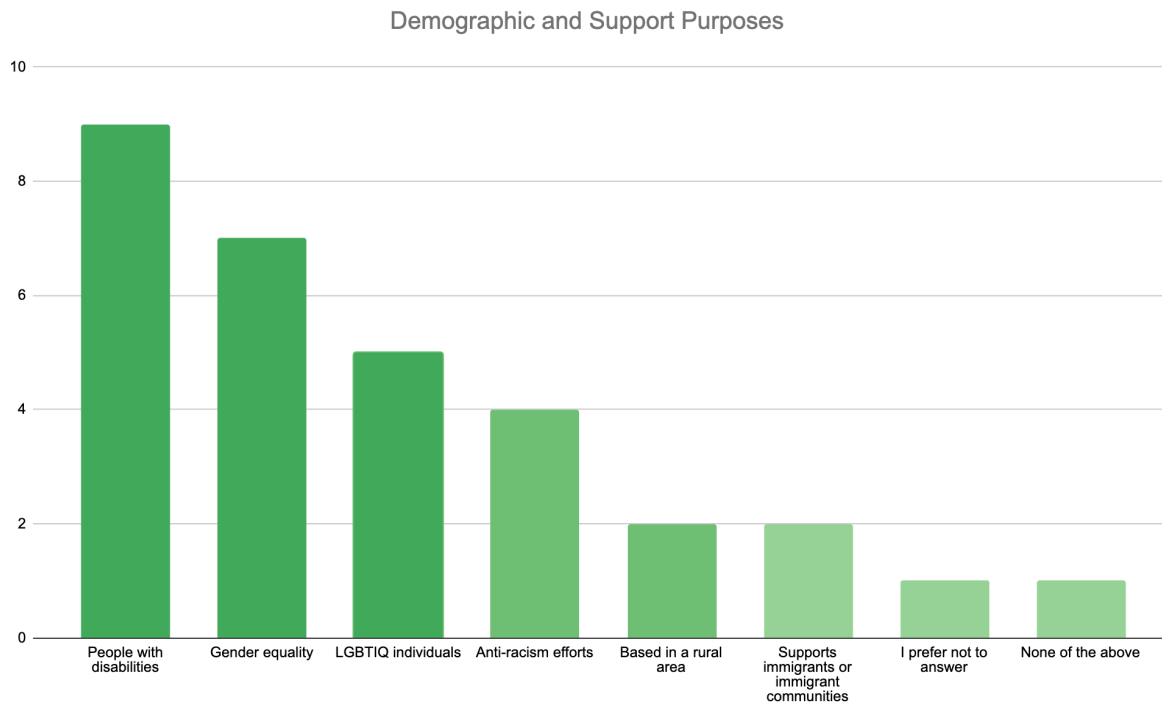


### Demographic and Inclusion Focus

The survey indicates that participants' activities often have a social and geographic focus:

- Includes/supports people with disabilities: 5 mentions
- Focuses on gender equality: 4 mentions
- Supports LGBTIQ+ persons: 4 mentions
- Focuses on anti-racism efforts: 3 mentions
- Based in a rural area: 2 mentions
- Supports migrant communities: 2 mentions

Chart 3. Respondents' Demographics and Areas of Support



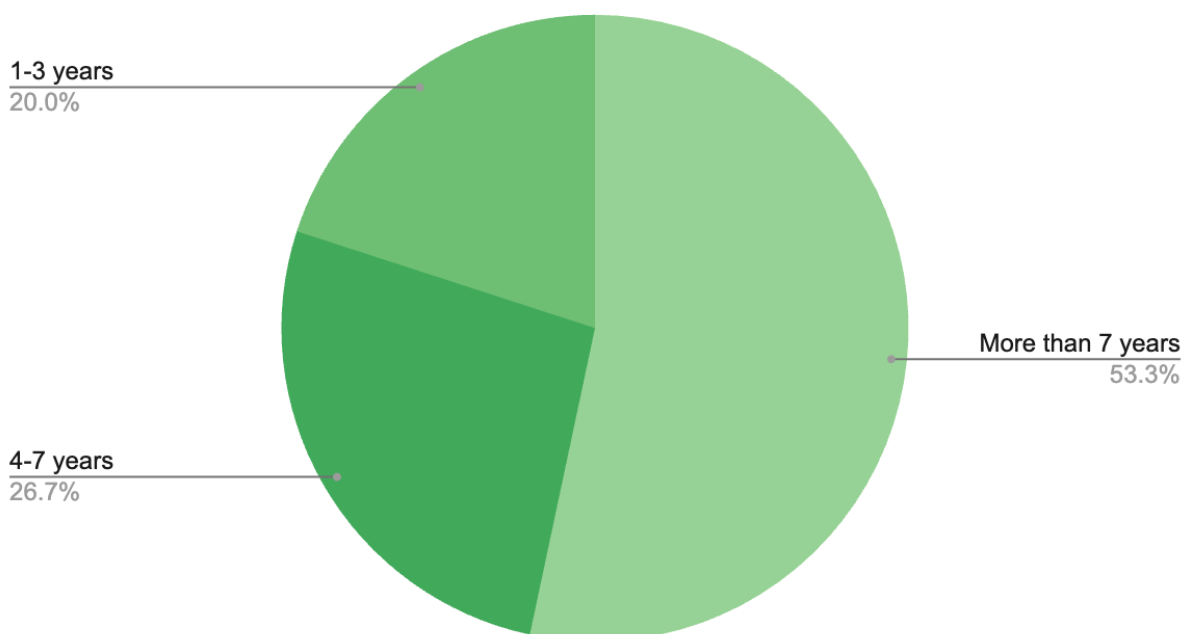
### Years of Experience of Respondents

The distribution of years of experience among the respondents is as follows:

- More than 7 years: 8 mentions
- 4-7 years: 4 mentions
- 1-3 years: 3 mentions

Chart 4. Years of Experience of Respondents

### Years of Experience of Respondents



## Conclusions & Recommendations

The survey findings from Greece reveal a strong foundation in culinary expertise and a clear dedication to incorporating sustainable practices, particularly through the use of local ingredients and waste reduction. However, participants encounter significant practical challenges, primarily concerning financial viability, market reach, and navigating operational complexities.

Key insights include:

- A high demand for practical skills development, especially in financial management, digital marketing, and creating innovative food products/services.
- Significant obstacles, notably high costs and supplier issues, impeding the broader adoption of sustainable practices, despite evident willingness.
- A strong preference for personalized support such as mentoring and concrete opportunities like funding, alongside interactive learning formats like workshops.

These conclusions suggest that future training and support initiatives should prioritize enhancing core business management capabilities, strengthening digital presence, fostering innovation, and providing practical guidance and resources to address cost and supply chain challenges

related to sustainability. Support should be delivered through flexible formats that facilitate personalized guidance and practical application.

## Recommendations for WP3 (Training Development)

### Suggested WP3 Training Curriculum

Module Title	Key Competencies	Target Audience	Why Include It?
<b>Financial Management for Food Businesses</b>	Budgeting, costing, profitability analysis, cash flow management, pricing strategies	All participants, especially business owners	Directly addresses a top challenge (cost reduction, financial stability) and needed skill (financial management). Essential for long-term viability.
<b>Digital Marketing &amp; Online Presence</b>	Social media strategy, content creation, online advertising, website optimization	All participants, especially new businesses	Addresses a key needed skill and promotion strategy. Crucial for customer acquisition and brand building in the modern market.
<b>Food Innovation &amp; Product Development</b>	Menu innovation, product testing, recipe development, incorporating local ingredients	Culinary professionals, business owners	Addresses a key needed skill and goal (new products/offers). Enhances competitiveness and relevance.
<b>Sustainable Practices Implementation</b>	Waste reduction techniques, seasonal/local sourcing, sustainable packaging, circular economy in food	All participants	Builds deeper understanding and practical skills to overcome barriers (supplier issues, cost) and enhance sustainability efforts.

<p><b>Business Mentoring &amp; Coaching</b></p>	<p>Goal setting, problem-solving, strategic planning, personalized guidance</p>	<p>All participants, especially early-stage ventures</p>	<p>The most requested support format. Provides tailored guidance to navigate specific challenges and accelerate growth.</p>
<p><b>Accessing Funding Opportunities</b></p>	<p>Identifying relevant grants/loans, proposal writing, financial planning for funding</p>	<p>All participants</p>	<p>Directly responds to a major challenge (lack of funding) and a preferred support format (funding opportunities).</p>
<p><b>Customer Engagement &amp; Experience</b></p>	<p>Building customer loyalty, gathering feedback, creating unique experiences</p>	<p>Businesses open to the public</p>	<p>Addresses a needed skill and challenge (customer acquisition/retention). Links customer experience to business success.</p>
<p><b>Navigating Regulations &amp; Bureaucracy</b></p>	<p>Food safety standards, licensing procedures, understanding local regulations</p>	<p>All participants</p>	<p>Addresses a significant challenge (regulatory compliance, bureaucracy) and barrier (unclear regulations). Reduces complexity.</p>



## 5. National Survey Analysis – Cyprus

This report presents the analysis of survey responses collected in Cyprus as part of the WP2.2 activity of the SFEntre project.

The aim was to assess the training and support needs of culinary entrepreneurs and sustainability professionals working in line with the Slow Food philosophy. Participants included culinary entrepreneurs, educators and slow food experts.

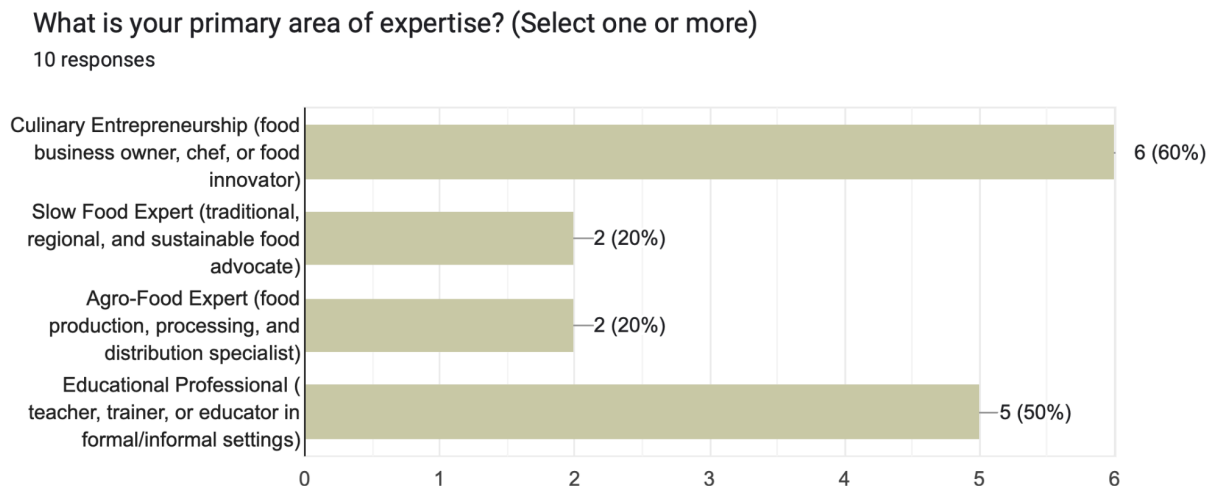
### 1. Methodology

- **Target group:** Culinary entrepreneurs, Slow Food/agro-food experts, educators, and sustainability trainers
- **Number of valid responses:** 10 (from Cyprus, collected via Google Forms)
- **Collection method:** Online Google Forms survey
- **Period:** March–April 2025

### 2. Participant Profiles

- **Areas of Expertise:** Most identified as culinary entrepreneurs (6) followed by educators (4) and (2) slow food experts.

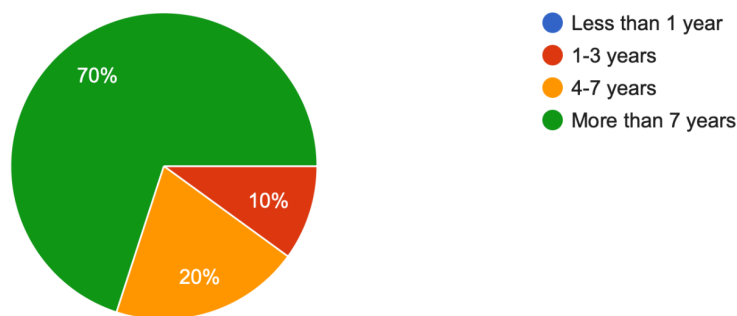
**Chart 1: Primary areas of expertise**



**- Years of operating in the field:**

*Chart 2. Years of Experience of Respondents*

How long have you been working in your field?  
10 responses

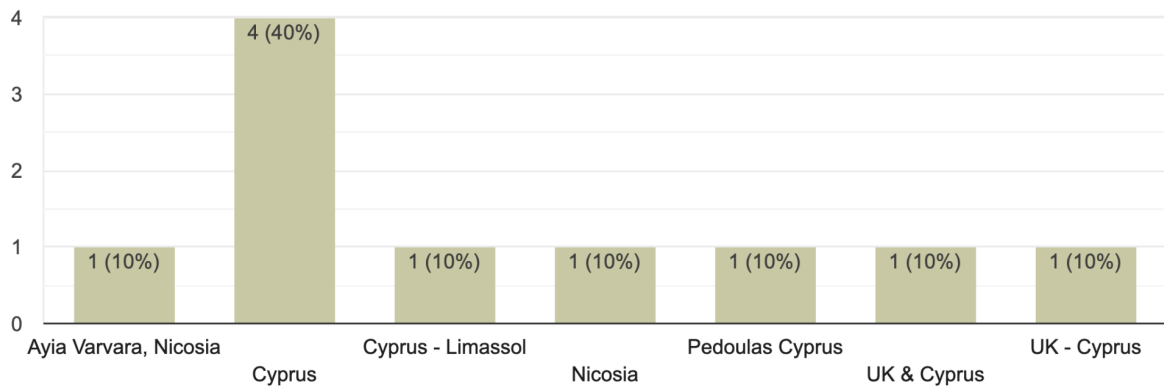


**- Location & Inclusion Focus:** Majority operate in urban areas with three of them operating in rural areas. Others focused that their activities had a strong inclusion and gender equality focus.

Chart 3. Respondents' Demographics and Areas of Support

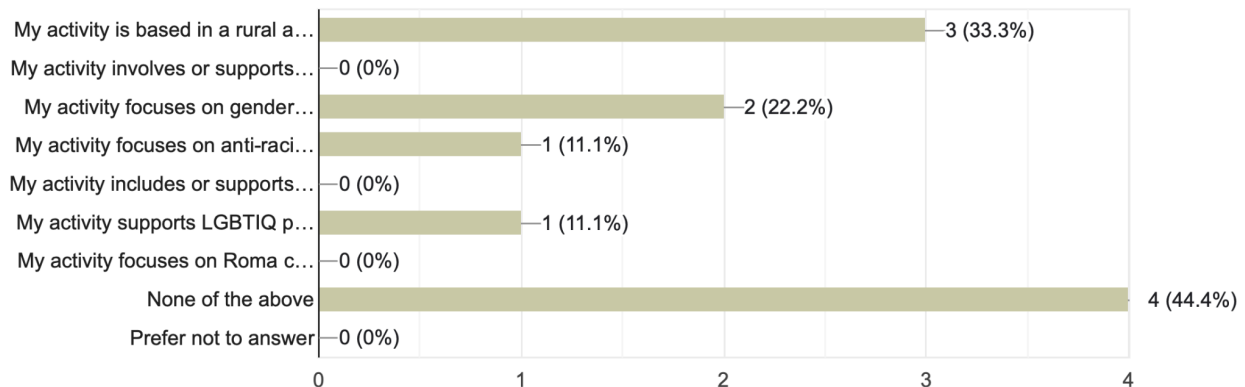
State / Region where your activity is located:

10 responses



For demographic and support purposes, we would like to know if you or your activity are part of any of the following groups. Please feel free to skip this ...if you prefer not to answer. (Select all that apply)

9 responses



### 3. Key Findings

#### a. Current Practices & Business Status

- Most participants launched their initiatives from scratch (8 out of 10), with limited or no financial support (9 out of 10).

-Goals include: The majority (9 out of 10) wish to expand their operations and grow their businesses, as well as engage into more sustainable practices (both socially, environmentally and financially), implement better business systems and processes as well as continue to improve the quality of their services and training curriculum designs.

-Promotion strategies: Social media (6 out of 10), Networking (1), Word-of-mouth (4 out of 10 relied exclusively on this), participation in local events & partnerships/collaborations (5 out of 10) and only one expressed that it had no particular strategy as they did not wish to expand more their business so not to lose quality.

## **b. Sustainability Awareness & Implementation**

-All respondents apply **sustainability principles** such as use of local/seasonal ingredients, waste reduction, compost making, implementing methods to enhance product re-use and energy efficiencies using green energy sources, eco-packaging, local producer collaboration, and sustainability education and training.

-Only one has received partial **funding** to implement sustainability practices.

- **Main barriers to becoming sustainable include:** High costs of raw materials which makes it financially straining for their businesses and which by consequence they need to charge higher prices which they feel that not always they can pass on to customers as they customers may not accept it and because they will become very anti-competitive, Other barriers included lack of training and knowledge - they have little time and it is very time consuming to search, find and implement sustainability practices, limited supplier access and in general it is very difficult to find truly sustainable suppliers.

## **c. Main Challenges & Training Needs**

The main challenges that they face into becoming sustainable can be grouped into three general categories i.e.

- a. Lack of access funding due to various reasons, some of them expressed as inability to understand what funds are available and complicated and time-consuming procedures.

- b. Access to expert mentors, advisors and guides i.e. people that are experienced in their industry and that they have the ability to guide them through their entrepreneurial and sustainability journeys.
- c. Lack of understanding of sustainable practises due to lack of sufficient practises, information, guidance around it.

They would like to develop specific skills such as Digital Marketing, Customer Retention & Communication, Financial Management, Food Innovation, Sustainability Certification, Storytelling & Branding.

## 5. Conclusion

The survey reveals a clear need for targeted, practical, and context-specific training among culinary entrepreneurs and slow food advocates in Cyprus. While many are already engaged in sustainability practices, they face persistent challenges related to financial stability, market competitiveness, and access to training and resources.

Respondents expressed strong interest in in-person workshops, mentorship, and funding support, alongside training in areas such as digital marketing, sustainable sourcing, financial management, and customer engagement. These preferences underscore a desire not just for theoretical knowledge, but for hands-on, experiential learning embedded in local realities.

To meet these needs, the recommended curriculum should combine modular learning with experiential components, mentorship, and community building, supporting these professionals to grow resilient, sustainable, and culturally rooted food businesses.

## 6. Recommendations for WP3 (Training Development)

### Program Goals

- Equip culinary entrepreneurs with the **business, sustainability, and innovation skills** needed to thrive.
- Promote **slow food values**: local sourcing, cultural preservation, and sustainable practices.
- Create a learning ecosystem with **mentors, peer support, and real-world application**.

## Key Curriculum Topics

Theme	Topics to include	Why it matters
<b>Sustainable Gastronomy</b>	Farm-to-table operations Seasonality & local sourcing Zero-waste kitchen practices Sustainable packaging Circular economy models	Respondents are applying some sustainability practices but face cost and knowledge barriers
<b>Food Innovation &amp; Product Development</b>	Fermentation, preservation Plant-forward cuisine Cultural recipe revival Menu design for sustainability	Encourages differentiation and deeper connection with local identity.
<b>Entrepreneurship &amp; Financial Skills</b>	Business planning Cost control Profitability in sustainable food Funding/grant writing	Many cited financial instability and lack of funding as major challenges.
<b>Digital &amp; Experiential Marketing</b>	Storytelling & branding Social media campaigns Experience-based marketing (e.g., farm visits)	Promotion was mostly informal; structured digital skills are in demand

	Building loyal communities online	
<b>Customer Engagement &amp; Service Design</b>	<p>Creating immersive food experiences</p> <p>Co-creation with customers</p> <p>Inclusive service design</p>	Boosts customer attraction and engagement, a cited challenge.
<b>Leadership &amp; Mentorship</b>	<p>Leading sustainable change</p> <p>Building &amp; mentoring small teams</p> <p>Knowledge transfer</p>	Promotes peer learning and ecosystem thinking.

### Program Structure & Mode of Delivery

Format	Purpose	Suggested Approach
<b>Modular Online Courses</b>	Flexibility & foundational learning	Self-paced courses with videos, readings, quizzes
<b>In-Person Workshops</b>	Hands-on skills & local connection	Held in rural hubs or local food labs; include cooking demos, food labs
<b>Experiential Learning</b>	Real-world problem-solving	Learners work on their own business cases or community food projects

<b>Mentorship Circles</b>	Peer learning & expert support	Pairing early-stage entrepreneurs with experienced chefs or trainers
<b>Field Visits &amp; Residencies</b>	Inspiration & network-building	Visits to local producers, regenerative farms, slow food hubs
<b>Capstone Project or Pitch Day</b>	Showcase & real-world testing	Learners develop a sustainable food concept or prototype business plan

## Mentorship Integration Plan

1. **Mentor Roles:**
  - Local food leaders
  - Business advisors (marketing, finance, operations)
  - Sustainability experts (waste, packaging, sourcing)
2. **Matching Criteria:**
  - Expertise alignment (e.g., restaurateur with chef-entrepreneur)
  - Values and goals (e.g., sustainability, innovation, tradition)
3. **Mentorship Activities:**
  - Monthly check-ins
  - Shadowing opportunities
  - Co-hosted workshops or community events
4. **Recognition:**
  - Feature mentors in program materials
  - Certificate of recognition and invitations to events

## Community & Ecosystem Building



- **Online Forum or WhatsApp/Telegram Group** for alumni & participants to exchange ideas and opportunities.
- **Annual Gathering or Summit:** Celebrate achievements, share best practices, and connect new cohorts.
- Collaborate with **local tourism boards, universities, and sustainability agencies** to embed the training into broader local development goals.

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# Reskilling and empowering culinary entrepreneurs towards slow food movement aligned enterprises



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