

Quality Standards and Authenticity
to Foster Competitiveness of Agrifood SMEs
Partners Meeting in Bulgaria (01/06/2022 - 03/06/2022)



Geography as an added value to food production The Slow Food approach

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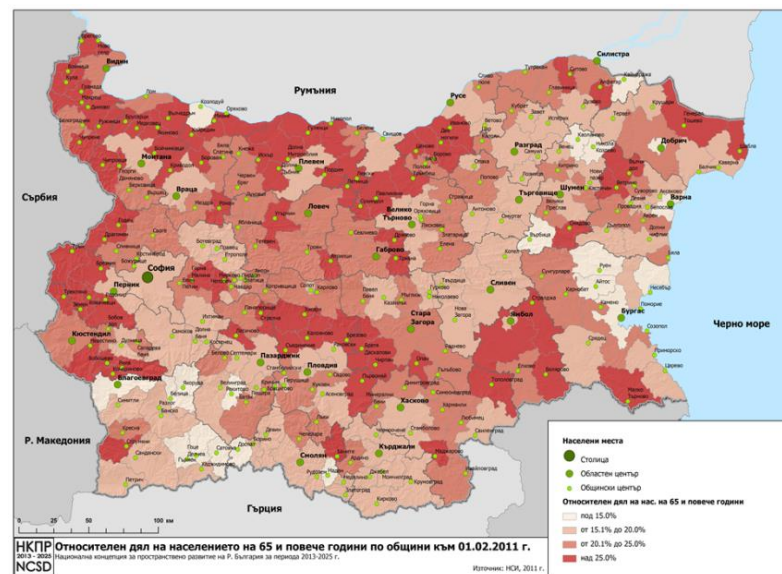


Agriculture and Food production in Bulgaria

- Before 1944** – ca. 80% of the population in rural areas, many small private farms and few privately owned collective farms. Leading role of subsistence farming;
- 1944 – 1989** – Nationalization of agricultural land (over 95%) and industrialization of agriculture; State-regulated food standards and nutrition politics – changes in local food and diet; The arable “home gardens” – the refuge of “homemade food”; Industrialized “traditional” food;
- 1989 – 2007** – Land restitution and privatization of assets – co-operatives and agro-industrial complexes destroyed; Rural areas depopulation;
- 2007 – 2020** – EU CAP in Bulgaria – heavy focus on cereals and oil crops; Lack of derogations and flexibility in support of small producers;
- 2020 and beyond** – New policies, new approach? Land consolidation? Support for traditional food?

Small farmers as a social group

- High depopulation rates in the rural areas
- A significant part of the farmers are **elderly people**;
- **Insufficient mobility** due to age, economic reasons, and necessity for everyday duties in the farm
- Small number of young farmers. Non-attractive livelihoods?
- **Lack of continuity**
- **Scattered and not cooperating**
- Low level of education/**Lack of professional education**
- Later-Life Career Change/Second job



Small food producers

Aims of Quality schemes

- To **protect the names** of specific products and to promote their unique characteristics, linked to their geographical origin as well as traditional know-how.
- To establish **intellectual property rights** for specific products, whose qualities are specifically linked to the area of production.

Since 31 March 2022

- **more sustainability** - product specifications demonstrate social, environmental and economic sustainability;
- **increased protection** for GIs, incl. in online sales;
- **empowering producers' groups** to manage, enforce and develop their GI with access to anti-counterfeiting authorities and customs in all EU countries;
- **a shortened and simplified registration procedure** - single GI registration procedure for EU and non-EU applicants.

Preconditions for successful implementation of QS

Countries without communist period

Artisan food as family business and market history

PDO/PGI have easily traceable history

Knowledge about characteristics of products accumulated over time

Dedicated research and national policy; flexible hygiene rules

Recognized added value by using local plant varieties and animal breeds

Entrepreneurship over generations; PDO/PGI are established (family) business

Cooperation among producers is natural

Local food regarded in the context of local communities/businesses in rural areas

Post-communist countries (Bulgaria)

Home-made products gradually abandoned

Broken history by different system of production

Knowledge absent or scarce

Research of local products and knowledge scarce/lack of targeted national support; rigid hygiene rules

Local genetic resources ignored by farmers; easily replaced by foreign ones due to aggressive marketing

Disappearing home made products vs. quest for fast and easy success/unrecognized need for concept of the product

Cooperation is avoided

Bulgarian PDO and PGI

PGI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Bulgarian rose oil➤ Gornooryahovski sudzhuk
PDO * rejected **under evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Strandzha mildew honey➤ Fresh Meat from East Balkan Swine*➤ Strandzha Tea**
TSG	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Kayserovan vrat Trakiya➤ Role Trapezitsa➤ File Elena➤ Lukanka Panagyurska➤ Pastarma Govezhda



Slow Food® in Bulgaria

Slow Food – eco-gastronomic organization dedicated to popularization and support of producers of “good, clean and fair” food since 1986. Bulgaria joined Slow Food network in 2004

- **Ark of taste** – worldwide on-line catalog of endangered food
- **Presidia** – projects of Slow Food Foundation for preservation of biodiversity
- **Earth Markets** – markets for local producers (farmers and processors)
- **Terra Madre and Terra Madre Balkans** – forums for farmers, food producers, chefs, academia, scholars and youth
- **Slow Food Balkans Network** – started in 2018
- Working together with Academia on **research and preservation** of food related biodiversity

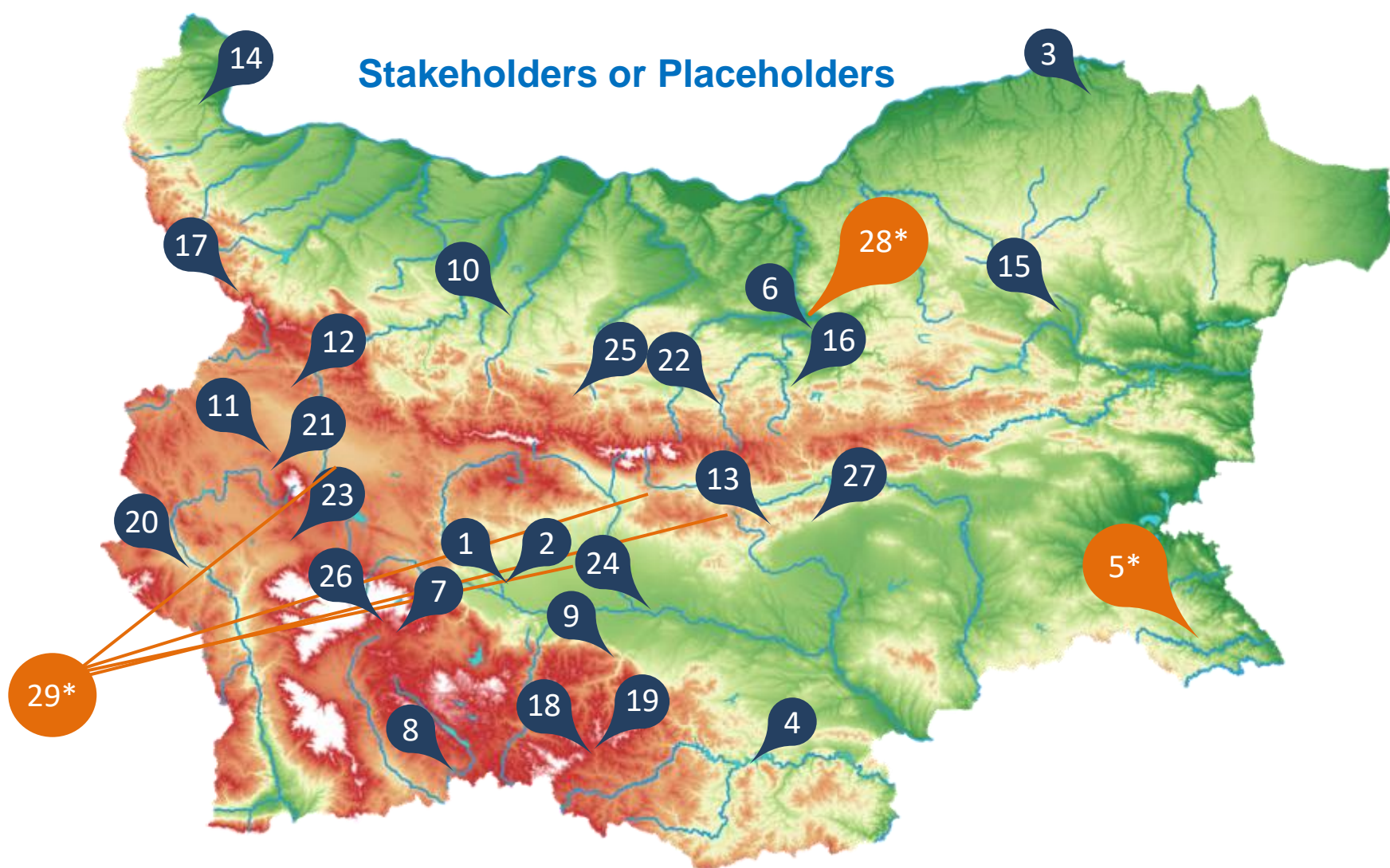
Traditional/Local/Typical Foods in Bulgaria

...and where to find them

Bulgarian/
Balkan???

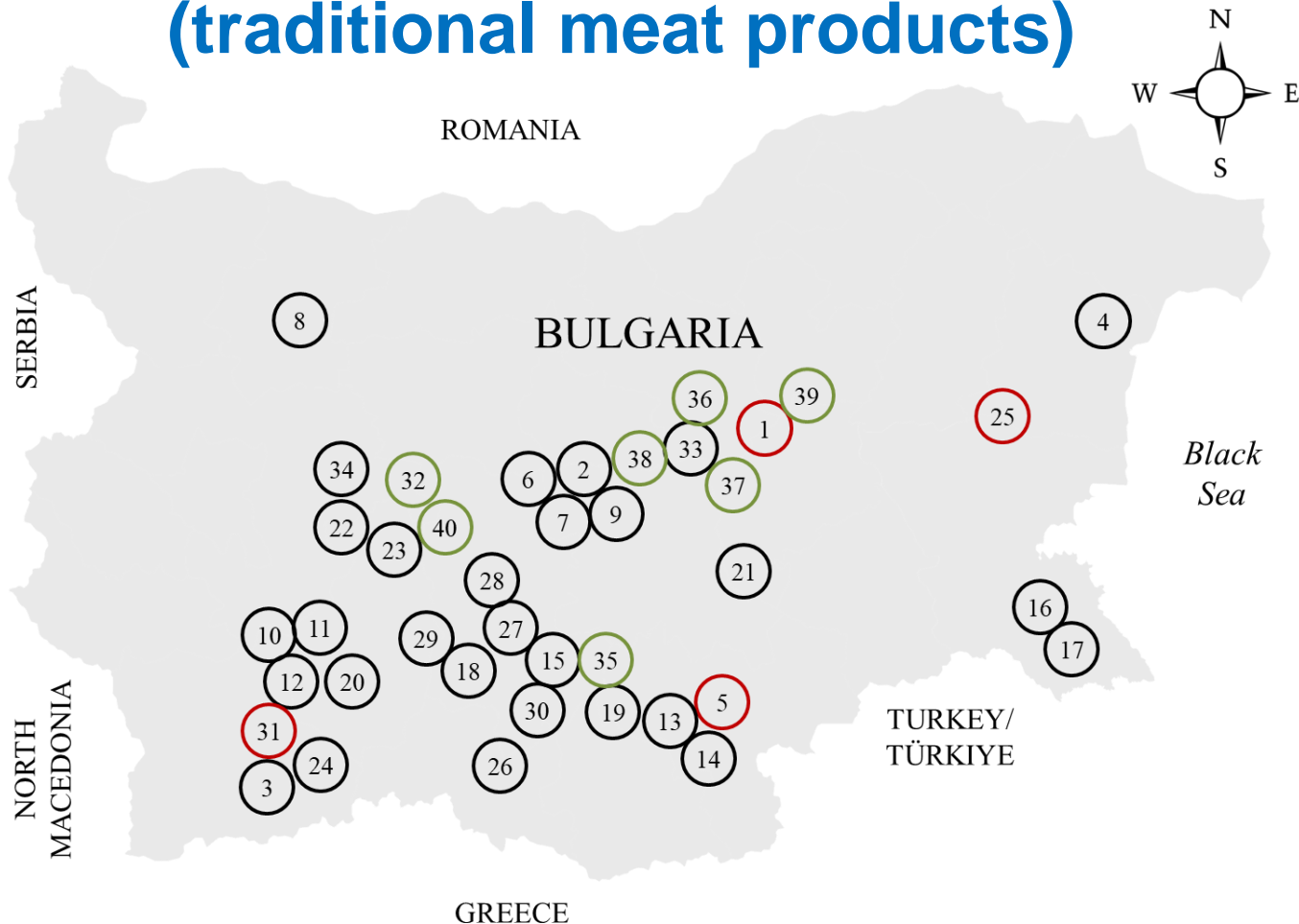


Stakeholders or Placeholders



1 Pink tomato from Kurtovo Konare – 2 Kurtovska kapiya (pepper variety) – 3 Silistrenski kajsii (Apricot varieties) - 4 Meat from Rhodope shorthorn cattle – **5 Strandzhanski chai*** - 6 Lyaskovski luk (onion variety) - 7 Belishki luk - 8 Banichanski luk - 9 Asenovgradska kaba (onion variety) - 10 Reseshki voden luk- 11 Meat from Sofia sheep – 12 Meat from Zapadnostonoplaninska sheep – 13 Starozagorski kamush (leek variety) - 14 Vidinski koravci (melon variety) - 15 Meat from East Balkan swine - 16 Elenski but (cured pork leg) – 17 Chiprovski obge (filo pastry sheets) - 18 Smilyanski fasul (bean variety) - 19 Smoljanski kartofi (potato varieties) – 20 Kyustendilski chereshy (cherry varieties) - 21 Radomirski chesan (garlic variety) - 22 Gabrovski pestil - 23 Samokovski kartofi – 24 Sadovski fastaci (peanut varieties) 25 Zeleno sirene (cheese) - 26 Napravok (cured sausage) - 27 Samardala (spice) – **28* Gornooryahovski sudzhuk (cured sausage) – 29* Bulgarsko rozovo maslo (Bulgarian rose oil)**

Family-owned recipes – local fame (traditional meat products)



*Bulgarian artisanal meat product industrially manufactured in the past (circled in red); ** Industrialized version of Bulgarian traditional dry meat products registered as Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) or Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) (circled in green). 1-Elenski but*; 2-Etarska kaltsanitsa; 3-Ovcha pastarma; 4-Babichka; 5-Filevska puska*; 6-Gabrovsko file; 7-Gabrovska lukanka; 8-Kalbasa; 9-Konski sudzhuk; 10-Meurche; 11-Babichka; 12-Dedets; 13-Sarnachka puska; 14-Selska lukanka; 15-Starodzhelezarki starets; 16-Strandzhenska baba; 17-Strandzhensko dyado/parduhchalche; 18-Tsalapishki babek; 19-Yabylkovska puska; 20-Tranenik; 21-Nozagorska lukanka; 22-Banska lukanka; 23-Banska karvavitsa; 24-Ovchi nogi; 25-Lukanka smyadovska*; 26-Kemik pastarma/Kakach; 27-Karlovska nadenitsa; 28-Karlovski babek; 29-Malokonarski babek; 30-Plovdivski starets; 31-Banski starets*; 32-Koprivshtenska lukanka**; 33-Velikotarnovska pushena lukanka; 34-Pirdopska lukanka; 35-Kayserovan vrat Trakiya**; 36-Role Trapezitsa**; 37-File Elena**; 38-Pastarma Govezhda**; 39-Gornooryahovski sudzhuk**; 40-Lukanka Panagyurska**. Smaller image in the bottom right shows Bulgaria in the Balkan Peninsula.

Local Breeds as a sources for PDO/PGI

- Preservation of local breeds is subsidized - registered farmers and breeding associations;
- Low prices of primary products and no stimulus for their processing with reference to the breed or the region;
- No geographical reference for products from local breeds when selling fresh meat and/or sub-products on the market.
- Subsidy only per capita of animal;



Local plant varieties as PDO/PGI

- Local plant varieties and landraces preserved by the local communities and research institutions
- “Collective” names - genetic erosion of old varieties and loss of traditional knowledge – partnership with research centers to guarantee the genetic identity
- Varieties with geographical reference in their name cultivated all over the country and also abroad; Plant variety protection (plant breeder's rights) issues;
- Support from RDP; Support for conservation varieties;
- Promotion of Bulgarian plant varieties and land races among farmers and chefs.



Vegetable and Fruit Preserves: Homemade vs. Industry

- Costly registration and production for small producers – high prices for consumers who reject cheaper industrial versions;
- Transformation of recipes and use food additives and preserves;
- Take the name – change the rest: “upgrading” of the traditional recipes and inclusion of foreign/imported ingredients;
- Farmers markets – still rather support the survival of “producers” of small quantities of home-made products than stimulate entrepreneurial approach.



Traditional Knowledge – GIs – Innovations

- ✓ Health benefits from artisanal products;
- ✓ Preservation of (bio)cultural heritage and resources - plant genetic resources, traditional animal breeds, pastoralism and conservation of habitats (e.g. grasslands);
- ✓ Cultural importance (local diets and cuisine);
- ✓ Changing landscapes: transformations and perceptions of Bulgarian village;
- ✓ Environmental perspective – sustainability, climate change, bioeconomy.

Recent Bulgarian GI submissions?

Bulgarian White Cheese in Brine (PDO)

Description	Questions
Association “Bulgarian traditional milk products“	How many dairies/producers are not members?
Raw milk of Bulgarian origin	Is milk production sufficient to sustain the quality of this PDO and what milk will be used for the remaining milk products?
Pasteurization of milk	What happens to producers who use raw milk which is the tradition?
Adding of CaCl ₂ and industrial rennet	What happens to producers who do not add CaCl ₂ and use natural rennet?

Role of Bulgarian State?

East-Balkan Swine



Meat from East Balkan Swine
№ AO-2549/ 30.12.2016



Program for Traditional Local and Traditional regional Products

Program Goal: study and mapping of local products and drinks and the subjects related to them; understanding their connection with the ecological, cultural and social aspects of their territory of origin and promotion of their production and trade.

Key Partners:

- Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Ministry of Culture (chitalishte), Ministry of Health
- Administrative regions, municipalities and local communities
- Research centers: BAS, AA, Universities
- NGOs in the field of agriculture, food, culture and tourism

Program for Traditional Local and Traditional regional Products

- Agricultural products and foods, including fish and sea food;
- Low alcoholic drinks, beverages and water (spring and mineral water);
- Wines
- Aromatized wines, fruit wines and vinegars;
- Spirits;
- Honey and bee products;
- Agricultural products of animal and plant origin, used for handicrafts (e.g. wool, horns, fibers, wood, dyes, flowers, etc.).

Strengthening capacities

- To launch a **stakeholders network** – municipalities, universities, BAS, AA, chitalishta, museums, agricultural schools, hotels and restaurants, NGOs, tourist information centers, business incubators, etc. in support of production and promotion of traditional food.
- To **adopt rules** how operators that promote local food culture and are outside the food chain can offer local traditional food – chitalishta, NGOs, tourist information centers, etc.
- To **organize trainings** for the competent authorities about the specificities of traditional food and introduction of flexibility provisions related to food hygiene
- To **create interactive digital tools** for promotion of products, producers, farmers' markets, tourist facilities, shops that offer traditional food products
- To include the **topic of traditional food in the curriculum** of professional schools in agriculture, gastronomy and tourism and agricultural universities.
- Support for local communities and chitalishte to nominate **traditional food as intangible heritage**.

Promotion of EU Quality Schemes

- Promotion campaign about EU Quality schemes among producers and consumers.
- Workshops with producers that are considering registration or have already started the application to support them in the process.
- Specific support for laboratory analyses and preparation of physico-chemical and organoleptic descriptions of products with potential GI protected status.



Thank You for Your Attention!

<https://slowfood-bg.com/>

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