




# Sustainable Tourism Development in Small Urban Centres: a Case Study of the Historic Town Centre of Krško

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## Abstract

**Research Question (RQ):** How do residents and visitors perceive the historic town centre of Krško as a tourism destination, and which key factors—including cultural heritage—shape the development of sustainable tourism?

**Purpose:** The aim of the research is to analyse the current state of the old town centre of Krško and to identify key opportunities and barriers for the development of sustainable tourism, with a particular emphasis on heritage interpretation, community involvement, and the creation of authentic tourism experiences.

**Methodology:** The research uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods (triangulation). Data were collected through an online survey (N = 168), semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, field observation, and analysis of interpretative routes.

**Results:** Respondents perceive the old town centre of Krško as an area with significant tourism potential, particularly due to its cultural heritage and historical atmosphere. Key barriers include a lack of stakeholder coordination, insufficient events, and weak promotion. Proposed solutions include developing tourism content, improving promotion, and increasing the local community's involvement.

**Organisation:** The study contributes to a better understanding of sustainable tourism management and provides a professional basis for planning and coordinating activities among local organisations, public institutions, and other stakeholders.

**Society:** The findings emphasise the importance of sustainable tourism development for strengthening local identity, social cohesion, and community participation, while accounting for environmental and social impacts.

**Originality:** The contribution includes the development of an original tourism product grounded in cultural heritage interpretation and the integration of the space's natural, cultural, and symbolic elements, representing an innovative approach to sustainable tourism development.

**Limitations and future research:** The study focuses only on the selected area and sample. Further studies, evaluation of solutions, and new approaches to heritage interpretation are recommended.

**Keywords:** old town centre, Krško, sustainable tourism, cultural heritage, local community, heritage interpretation, tourism development..

## 1 Introduction

Sustainable tourism is increasingly becoming an important development approach in smaller urban centres, where it is necessary to balance economic benefits, environmental protection, the quality of life of local residents, and the preservation of cultural heritage. Historic town centres play a particularly significant role in this context, as they represent carriers of historical memory, spatial identity, and local authenticity, while at the same time often remaining insufficiently integrated into contemporary tourism flows.

One such example is the historic town centre of Krško, characterised by its rich history, cultural and architectural heritage, and its distinctive location along the Sava River. Despite its development potential, the area remains underexposed in tourism, and its tourism offer is fragmented and, in some areas, insufficiently interpreted. Among the key challenges are inadequate promotion, limited interpretative infrastructure, weak connectivity among local stakeholders, and an insufficiently developed range of experiential tourism content.

The central research problem of this paper, therefore, is how the historic town centre of Krško, based on its cultural heritage, spatial characteristics, and the involvement of local stakeholders, can become a more recognisable sustainable tourism destination.

The purpose of this research is to examine the possibilities for sustainable tourism development in the historic town centre of Krško and to identify how visitors and residents perceive the area as a tourism space. Special emphasis is placed on the role of cultural heritage, stakeholders' willingness to cooperate, and the identification of key barriers and development opportunities. The objectives of the research are to determine the level of tourism recognition of the historic town centre of Krško, to analyse infrastructural, content-related, and promotional limitations, to explore the perceptions of visitors and local residents, to assess stakeholders' willingness to cooperate, and to formulate proposals for improving the tourism offer in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

The research questions are as follows:

- How do visitors and residents perceive the historic town centre of Krško as a tourism destination?
- What role do cultural heritage and place identity play in the development of tourism content?
- Is the existing infrastructure suitable for sustainable tourism development?
- To what extent are local stakeholders willing to cooperate in the co-creation of the tourism offer?
- Which measures could improve the area's visibility and sustainability orientation?

This research is important because it addresses the development potential of a smaller urban centre with a rich cultural heritage that has not yet been fully integrated into the sustainable tourism offer. The findings may serve as a professional basis for planning coordinated development measures, improving heritage interpretation, and increasing local community involvement.

## 2 Teoretical Framework

Sustainable tourism represents a development concept that goes beyond understanding tourism solely as an economic activity. Its essence lies in balancing economic benefits with environmental protection and respect for local communities' cultural and social identity. It involves establishing a long-term balance between the needs of visitors, the local population, and the preservation of natural and cultural heritage (Epler Wood, 2017, pp. 23–45).

Tanja Mihalič (2006, pp. 55–60) emphasises that sustainable tourism must be strategically integrated into local and national development policies; otherwise, it remains merely a declarative orientation without real impact. This is particularly important in heritage-rich urban areas, where passive preservation alone is insufficient. Cultural heritage must be incorporated into modern tourism products, with respect for space, the interpretation of local community values, and the sustainable use of resources.

At the national level, Slovenian tourism strategies emphasise the transition toward a green, boutique, and personalised tourism offer. The Strategy for the Sustainable Growth of Slovenian Tourism 2017–2021 highlighted the importance of restructuring tourism infrastructure, while the Slovenian Tourism Strategy 2022–2028 emphasises the vision of a green, active, and healthy destination, a smaller environmental and social footprint, and a balance between community life and tourism visitation. Jernej Mlekuž (2012, pp. 75–85) warns that tourism development without the involvement of local residents often leads to conflicts and the loss of a place's authentic identity.

Cultural heritage is one of the key foundations of sustainable destination development. It enhances cultural uniqueness, creates opportunities for local economic development, and strengthens a place's identity. When integrating heritage into tourism, authenticity must be respected, and intangible heritage, such as stories, customs, and symbolic meanings of space, must also be preserved (Nataša Poljak Istenič, 2013, pp. 103–107). Lea Marija Colarič-Jakše (2018, pp. 52–53) highlights that the development of high-quality tourism products requires collaborative networking and the involvement of local stakeholders, while Miloš Veljković and Lea Marija Colarič-Jakše (2014b, pp. 33–36) emphasise the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in evaluating cultural heritage within tourism.

The development of urban tourism centres is based on understanding the city as a space where historical layers, cultural heritage, residents' contemporary needs, and visitors' interests intersect. Historic town centres, as carriers of identity, require thoughtful revitalisation grounded in authenticity, high-quality interpretation, and community involvement. Urban revitalisation involves coordinating spatial planning, heritage protection, sustainable mobility, and cultural content. The importance of carrying capacity and sustainable visitor management models is also increasingly emphasised.

Examples of good practices demonstrate that successful revitalisation is based on comprehensive spatial renewal, active involvement of local stakeholders, quality heritage interpretation, sustainable mobility, and the development of tourism products with higher added value. Kranj has established itself through the integration of sustainable mobility, cultural events, and community engagement; Koper through the revitalisation of cultural and commercial life; and Bled through the development of sustainable infrastructure and inclusion in the Slovenian Green Tourism Scheme. Similarly, Ljubljana, Ptuj, Brežice, Kostanjevica na Krki, and Kozjansko demonstrate that connecting cultural heritage, natural resources, events, and local products enhances recognition of sustainable destinations.

In Krško, the integration of cultural heritage—including its historic urban layout—into tourism exemplifies the main argument: genuine sustainable tourism arises from balancing history, spatial identity, and community interests.

Key heritage elements in Krško—the Church of St. John the Evangelist, city museums, memorials, parks, and more—can drive sustainable tourism when incorporated into interpretative routes and experiential products, exemplifying the argument that local assets are crucial for sustainability. The tourism offer in Krško is based on the intertwining of cultural heritage, natural resources, local gastronomy, events, and experiential tourism. Due to its location along the Sava River, the city provides a natural and landscape framework that complements the historical and architectural structure of the historic town centre. Cultural institutions, local providers, the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Tourism Krško, and urban events all play an important role in developing this tourism offer.

Stakeholder involvement is also essential for the development of sustainable tourism. Tourism development that occurs without residents' participation can lead to conflicts, loss of identity, and opposition to projects. The involvement of local residents, public institutions, entrepreneurs, associations, and municipal authorities increases the acceptability of development measures, strengthens the sense of belonging, and enables long-term destination management (Alastair Morrison, 2024, pp. 89–119; Bert Smit & Frans Melissen, 2018, pp. 74–82). In Krško, this is

particularly important given the city's diverse heritage, its historical identity, and the need to connect cultural, tourism, educational, and economic actors.

Based on the literature review and examples of good practices, it can be concluded that the sustainable development of the historic town centre of Krško requires the coordinated implementation of spatial, content-related, organisational, and participatory measures. Key elements include the development of interpretative routes, improved promotion, strengthening local cooperation, sustainable mobility, the integration of natural and cultural elements, and the creation of authentic tourism experiences (Charles Goeldner & J.R. Brent Ritchie, 2011, pp. 371–388; Bernard Lane & Elisabete Kastenholz, 2018, pp. 25–42).

Based on this theoretical framework, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: Residents and visitors recognise the historic town centre of Krško as a destination with significant potential for sustainable tourism development.

H2: Insufficient infrastructure in the historic town centre of Krško constitutes an important barrier to sustainable tourism development.

H3: There is a clearly expressed willingness among local stakeholders to cooperate in shaping a sustainable tourism offer in the historic town centre.

These hypotheses are derived from theoretical assumptions about the roles of cultural heritage, infrastructure, stakeholder cooperation, and spatial interpretation in sustainable tourism. Their verification enables an understanding of whether the historic town centre of Krško possesses perceived tourism potential, which barriers limit its development, and the level of readiness of the local environment for cooperation in creating a sustainable tourism offer.

### **3 Methodology**

The research is based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, enabling a comprehensive insight into the development potential of sustainable tourism in the historic town centre of Krško. Such an approach enables data triangulation and enhances the reliability of the results.

The quantitative part of the research was conducted via an online survey from 27 July to 3 September 2025 using the 1KA (EnKlikAnketa) platform. A total of 168 respondents participated in the study. The sample was combined (convenience and purposive sampling), including residents of the Posavje Region and visitors to the study area. The questionnaire consisted of 18 questions, predominantly closed-ended, with a few open-ended questions.

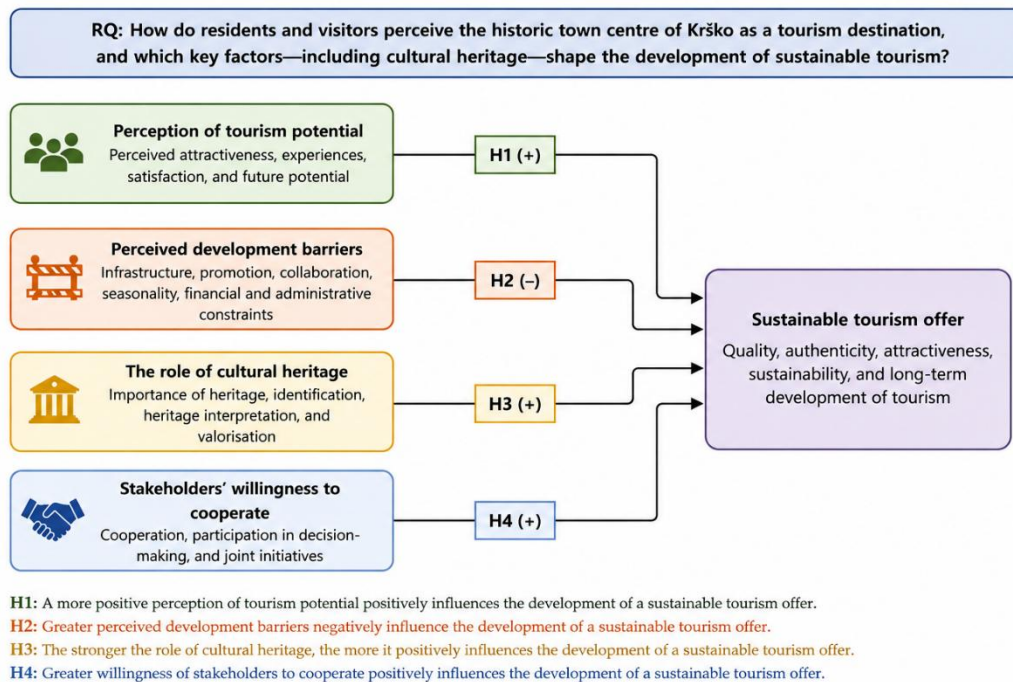
The qualitative part of the research included five semi-structured interviews, conducted between 4 and 15 August 2025, with representatives of key stakeholders (tourism and cultural institutions,

municipal authorities, and the local community). In addition, five systematic field observations were conducted between 6 and 24 August 2025, spanning different temporal and spatial contexts. Supplementary stakeholder responses obtained through e-mail correspondence and personal communication were also included.

The research model is based on the assumption that the development of sustainable tourism in the historic town centre of Krško results from the interaction of four key factors: perception of tourism potential, perceived development barriers, the role of cultural heritage, and stakeholders’ willingness to cooperate. These factors influence the creation of a sustainable tourism offer.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual research model of the study.

**Figure 1**  
Research model



The primary measurement instrument used in this research was a structured questionnaire. The structure of the measurement instruments is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**

Research measurement instruments

<b>Research dimension</b>	<b>Quantitative instrument</b>	<b>Qualitative instrument</b>
Respondent profile	Demographic questions	—
Tourism behavior	Tourism habits and visitation patterns	Field observation
Tourism potential	Likert-scale assessment	Semi-structured interviews
Development barriers	Rating scale assessment	Stakeholder interviews
Cooperation and participation	Cooperation willingness scale	Stakeholder questionnaire
Development proposals	Open-ended questions	Observation and stakeholder feedback

Note\*: Overview of quantitative and qualitative measurement instruments

The questions were predominantly closed-ended (Likert scales and multiple-choice), enabling quantitative analysis, and were supplemented with open-ended questions to obtain additional insights.

Data analysis was conducted using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. An overview of the data analysis methods is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**

Data analysis methods

<b>Methodological phase</b>	<b>Quantitative methods</b>	<b>Qualitative methods</b>
Data reduction	Descriptive statistics	Coding of responses
Data organization	Frequency distributions	Thematic analysis
Comparative analysis	Relative proportions	Descriptive and comparative observation analysis
Group analysis	Basic comparisons between groups	Spatial and temporal comparison
Thematic interpretation	—	Tourism potential; development barriers; stakeholder cooperation; heritage interpretation; promotion
Synthetic interpretation	Statistical interpretation	SWOT analysis

Note\*: Overview of quantitative and qualitative measurement instruments

Data obtained through field observation were analysed using descriptive and comparative methods, with a focus on comparing spatial and temporal differences in the use of space. To provide a comprehensive interpretation of the results, a SWOT analysis was applied, integrating findings from all research methods and enabling a systematic evaluation of development opportunities.

The reliability of the research was ensured through methodological triangulation, as data were collected using multiple methods (surveys, interviews, observation, and stakeholder feedback). This approach enabled the cross-validation of the results. The validity of the research was strengthened by including diverse participant groups (residents, visitors, and stakeholders), which provided a multi-perspective perspective on the issue under investigation.

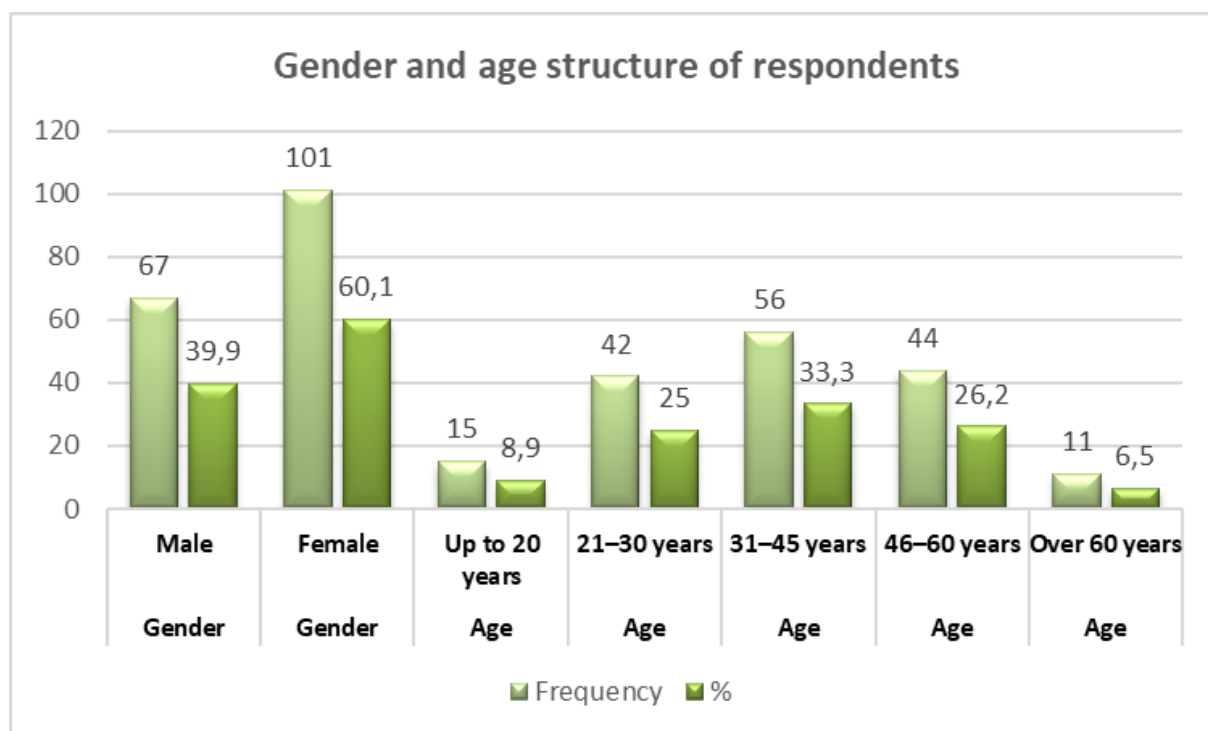
The use of a structured questionnaire and a standardised observation form contributed to greater data comparability. Nevertheless, the research includes certain limitations: convenience sampling of survey respondents, a limited number of interviews, and time constraints of the observation period. These limitations may affect the generalizability of the findings; however, the combination of methods provides a sufficiently reliable interpretation of the research problem.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Sample structure

The results are presented in relation to the research questions and hypotheses, focusing on the perception of tourism potential, development barriers, and stakeholder cooperation in the historic town centre of Krško.

**Figure 2**  
Gender and age structure of respondents 2020



As shown in Figure 2, the sample is predominantly female (60.1%; n = 101), while males represent 39.9% (n = 67). The largest share of respondents falls within the 31–45 age group (33.3%; n = 56), followed by those aged 46–60 (26.2%; n = 44) and 21–30 (25.0%; n = 42).

**Figure 3**

Educational structure of respondents

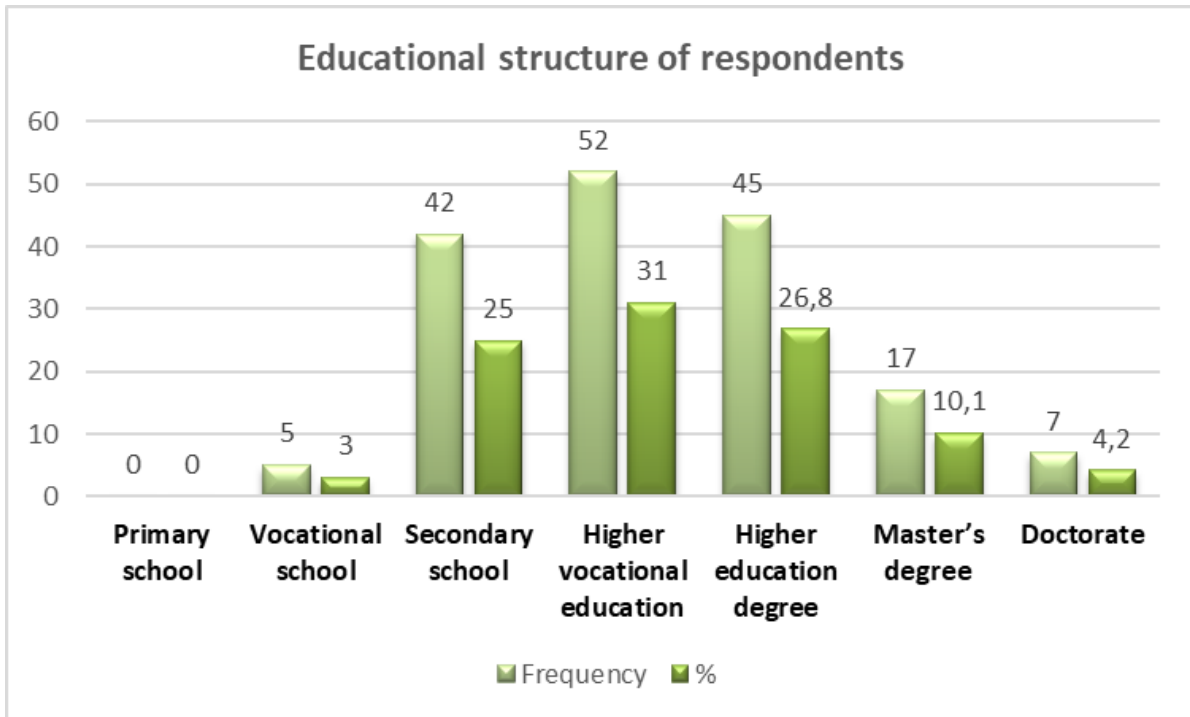
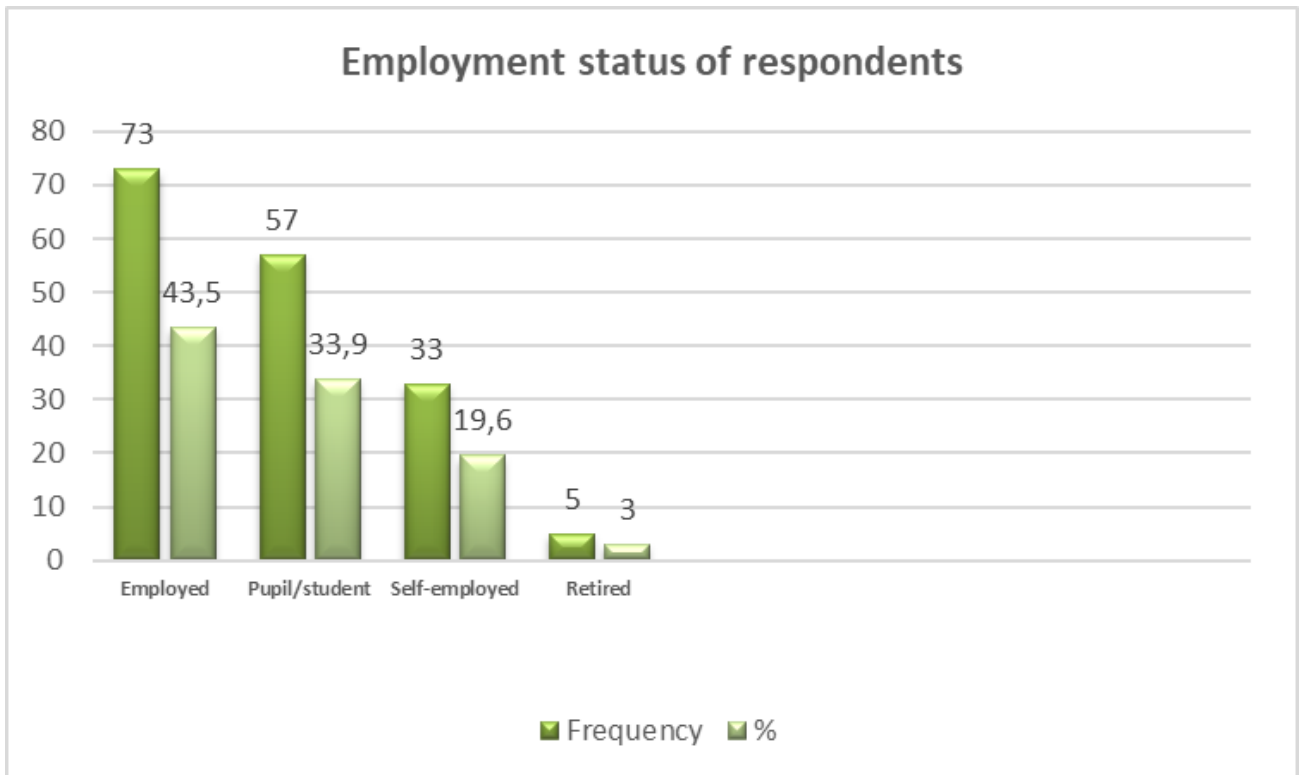


Figure 3 shows that the majority of respondents have higher vocational (31.0%; n = 52) and higher education (26.8%; n = 45), followed by those with secondary education (25.0%; n = 42).

**Figure 4**

Employment status of respondents



As illustrated in Figure 4, the dominant groups are employed respondents (43.5%; n = 73) and pupils/students (33.9%; n = 57).

**Figure 5**

Statistical region of residence of respondents

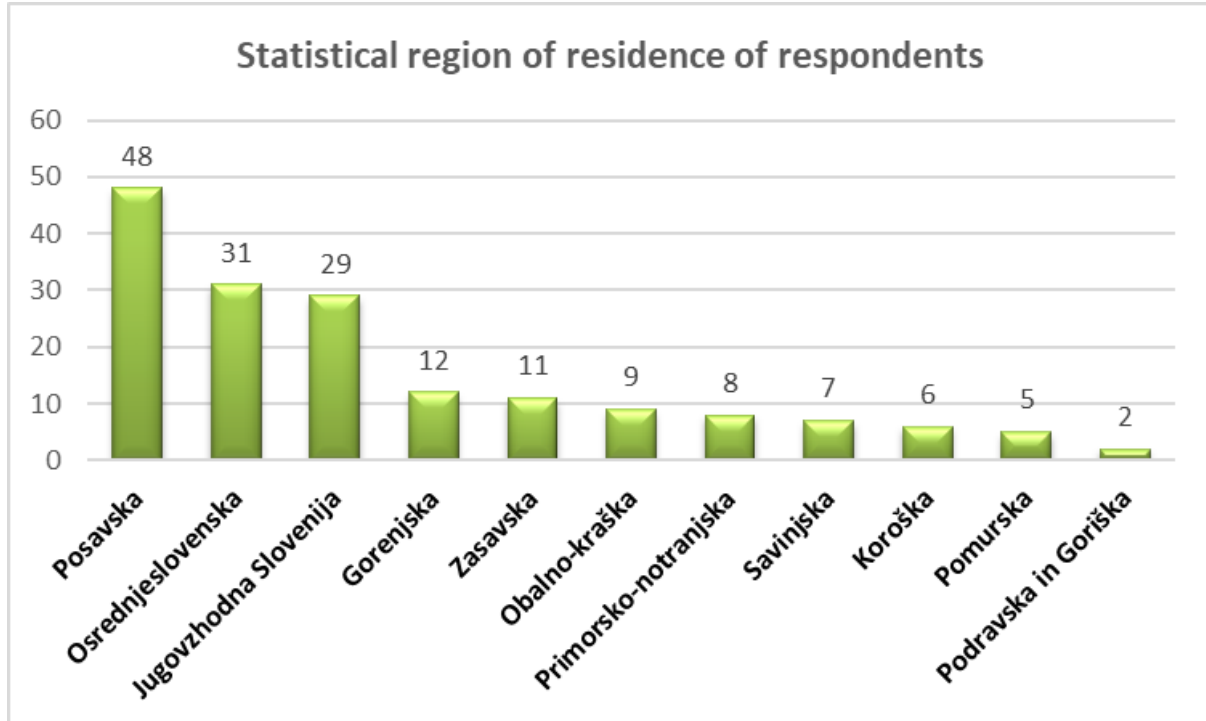


Figure 5 indicates that most respondents come from the Posavje statistical region (28.6%; n = 48), which is expected given the local focus of the study. A notable share of respondents also comes from the Central Slovenia and Southeast Slovenia regions, suggesting that interest in the area extends beyond the local context.

#### 4.2 Factors influencing destination choice, interest, and knowledge of the tourism offer

As shown in Figure 6, the most important factors influencing the choice of a tourist destination are historical atmosphere (n = 121), street events (n = 115), natural attractions (n = 112), and local gastronomy and events (n = 108). Sustainable orientation (n = 106) and cultural heritage (n = 101) are also highly valued, while accessibility (n = 45) and other factors are considered less important.

**Figure 6**

Factors influencing tourist destination choice and the attractiveness of historic town centres

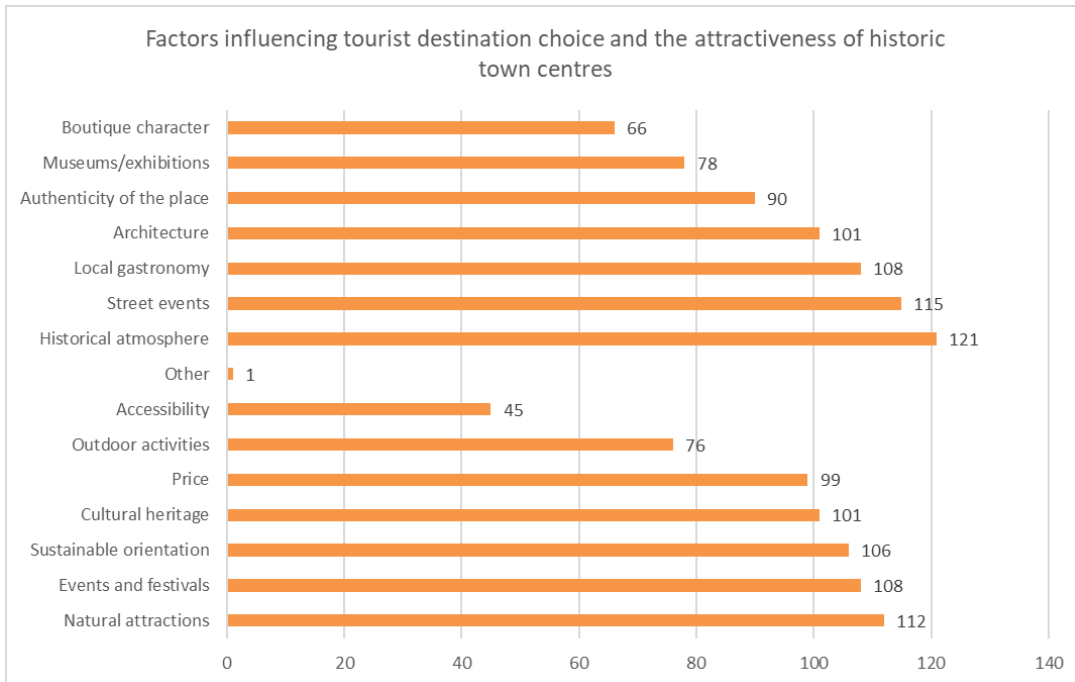


Figure 7 shows that respondents express a high level of interest in historic town centres, as 46 actively explore them, 42 express strong interest, and 38 believe that history makes them attractive. Nevertheless, knowledge of the tourism offer is somewhat limited, with 49 respondents rating it as good, 42 as average, 37 as poor, and 23 stating they are not familiar with it at all. These findings support Hypothesis 1 (H1), indicating that the historic town centre of Krško is perceived as a destination with significant potential for sustainable tourism development.

**Figure 7**

Interest in historic town centres and knowledge of the tourism offer in Krško



### 4.3 Tourist habits of respondents in Slovenia

As illustrated in Figure 8, respondents most frequently undertake one-day trips several times a year (n = 45) or during holidays (n = 37), while 34 respondents travel more than once a month. A smaller share of respondents travel rarely or never (n = 23).

**Figure 8**  
Frequency of one-day trips in Slovenia

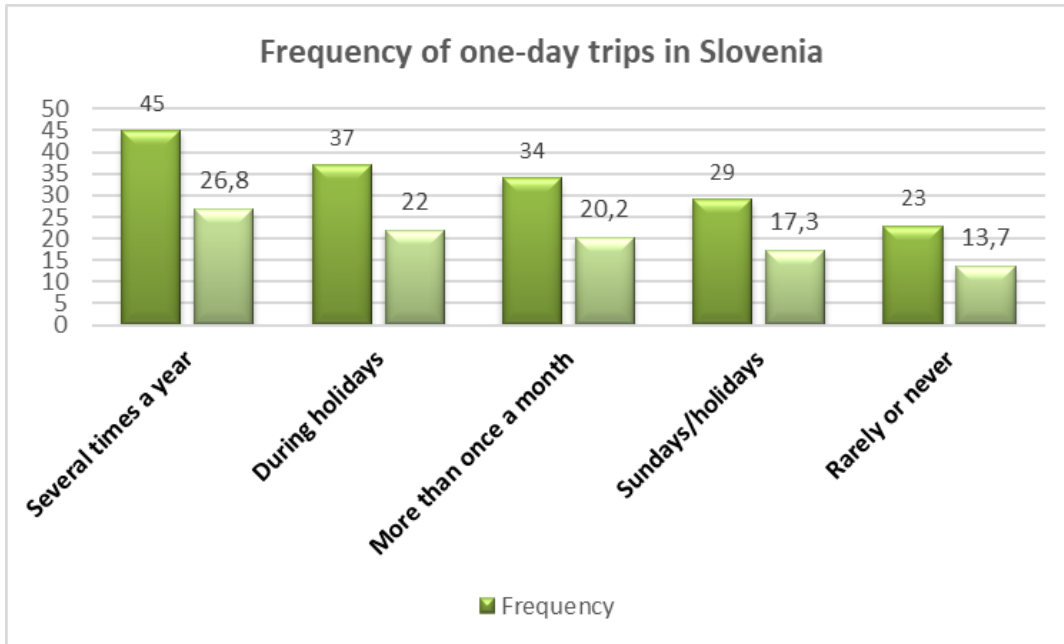
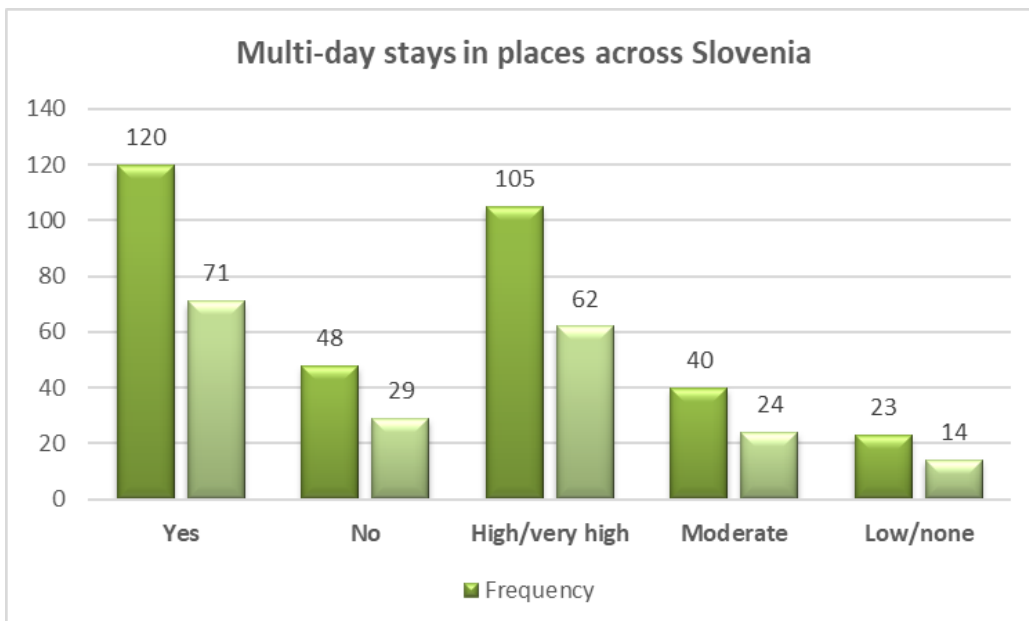


Figure 9 indicates that multi-day stays are relatively common, with 120 respondents engaging in such trips, compared to 48 who do not. These results suggest that both one-day trips and multi-day stays represent common forms of tourism behaviour among respondents.

**Figure 9**  
Multi-day stays in places across Slovenia

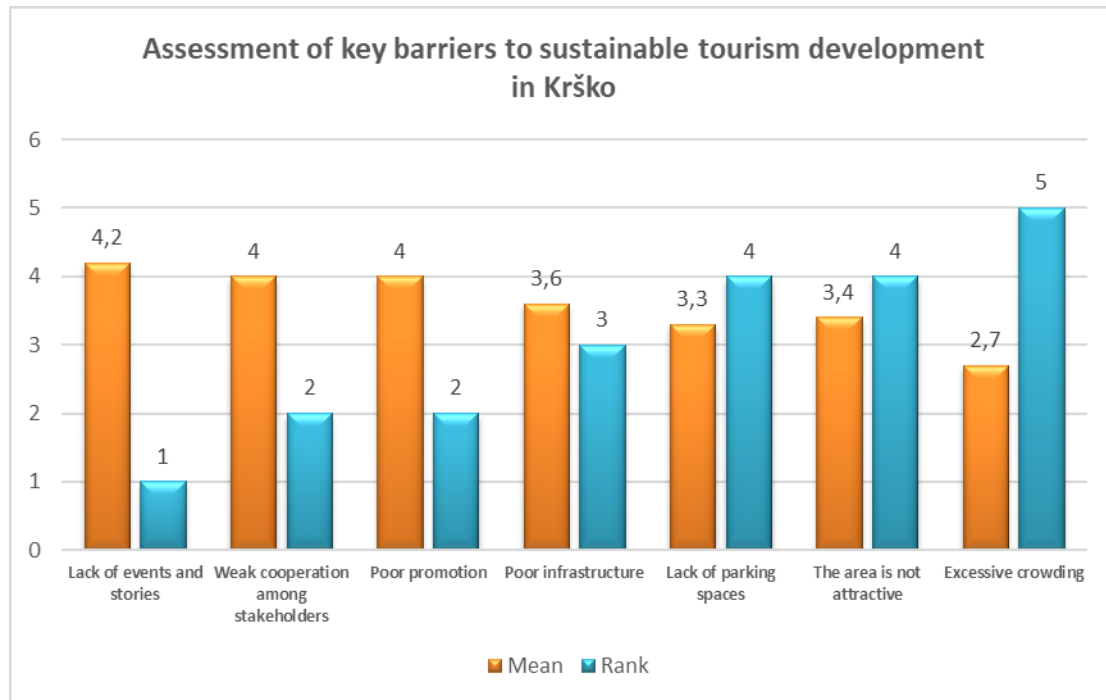


#### 4.4 Barriers, experiences, and development directions of sustainable tourism

As shown in Figure 10, the most significant barriers to tourism development are the lack of events and content (mean = 4.2), weak stakeholder cooperation (mean = 4.0), and poor promotion (mean = 4.0). These challenges may be attributed to limited strategic planning, insufficient development of experience-based tourism products, and weak coordination in destination management, particularly in the integration of local stakeholders in promotional activities.

**Figure 10**

Assessment of key barriers to sustainable tourism development in Krško

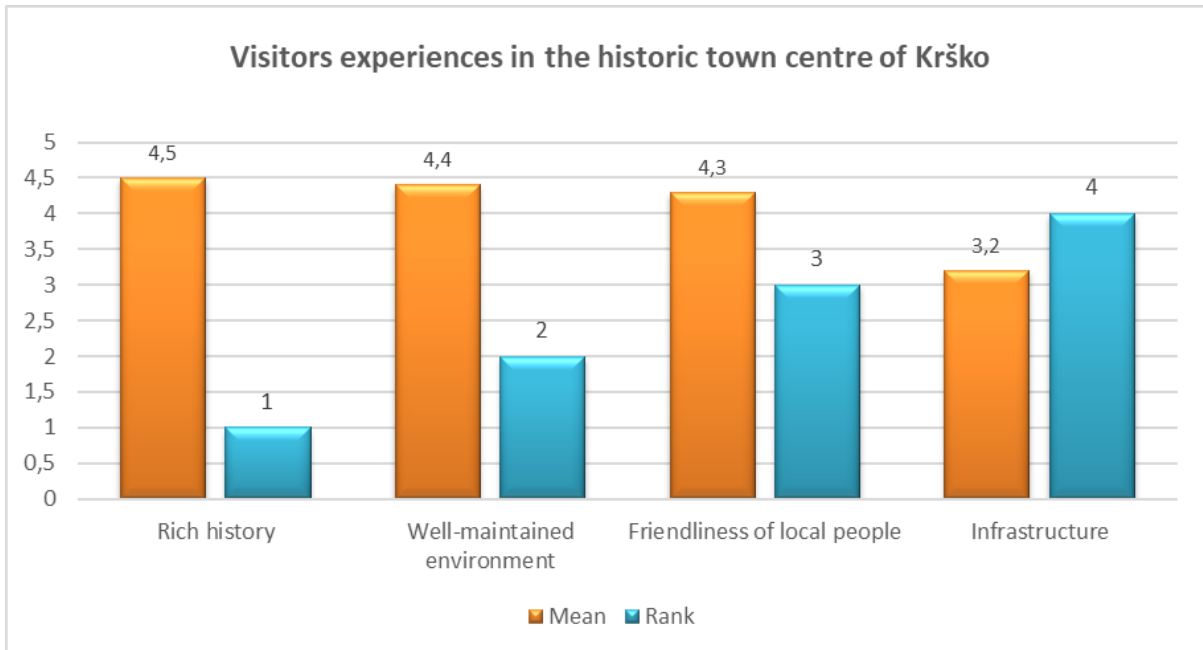


These findings partially support Hypothesis 2 (H2), suggesting that infrastructure is not the only limiting factor, while organisational and content-related challenges play a more significant role.

Figure 11 shows that visitors rate the highest elements as rich history (mean = 4.5), well-maintained environment (mean = 4.4), and friendliness of local people (mean = 4.3), while infrastructure receives a lower rating (mean = 3.2).

**Figure 11**

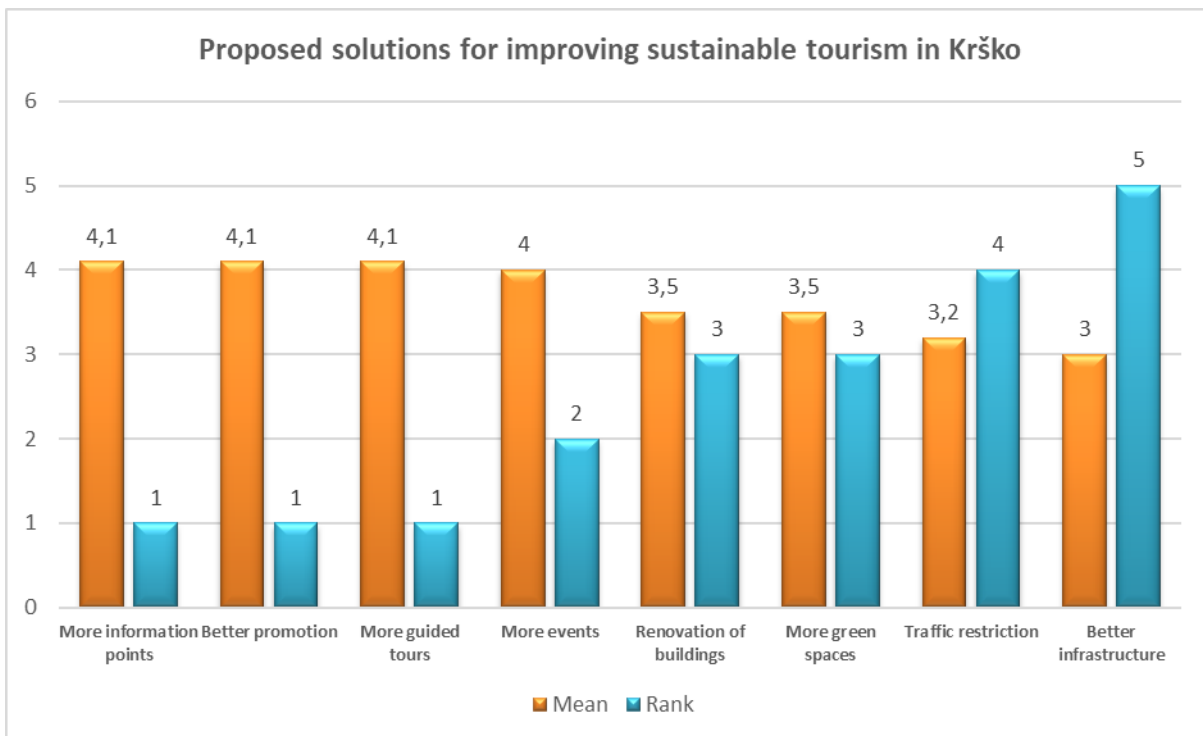
Visitors' experiences in the historic town centre of Krško



In addition, qualitative insights highlight the importance of stakeholder cooperation in addressing the identified development challenges. These findings support Hypothesis 3 (H3), indicating a clear willingness among stakeholders to cooperate in the development of sustainable tourism.

**Figure 12**

Proposed solutions for improving sustainable tourism in Krško



As illustrated in Figure 12, the most prominent proposed solutions include improved promotion, additional information points, and guided tours (all mean = 4.1), while infrastructure-related measures are rated slightly lower.

Visitor experience highlights rich history (mean = 4.5), well-maintained surroundings (mean = 4.4), and the friendliness of local people (mean = 4.3) as the most highly valued elements, whereas infrastructure receives a comparatively lower rating (mean = 3.2). Overall, the findings point to a strong cultural foundation of the destination, alongside the need to enhance organisational and infrastructural aspects.

Overall, the results indicate a clear gap between the recognised tourism potential of the historic town centre of Krško and its current level of development. While cultural heritage and visitor interest represent strong assets, limited promotion, insufficient content development, and weak coordination among stakeholders remain key challenges.

## 5 Discussion

The study confirms key findings in sustainable tourism, especially in smaller urban historical centres where cultural heritage offers strong development potential (Tanja Mihalič, 2006; Jernej Mlekuž, 2012). Visitors to Krško's historic centre show strong interest in historical content, architecture, and authentic spaces, reaffirming that cultural heritage motivates tourist visits. Storytelling, spatial symbolism, and personal experiences are especially important and align with interpretative heritage concepts (Miloš Veljković & Lea Marija Colarič-Jakše, 2014b; Charles Goeldner & J.R. Brent Ritchie, 2011).

The identified development constraints, such as the lack of coordination among stakeholders, a limited range of events, weak promotional support, and insufficient integration of heritage content, reflect challenges characteristic of smaller urban environments undergoing tourism revitalisation (Lea Marija Colarič-Jakše, 2017; Maja Koščak & Tom O'Rourke, 2018). Contemporary sustainable tourism approaches emphasise that effective destination management, high-quality interpretation, and cooperation among different actors are key conditions for long-term development. The results, therefore, clearly indicate a gap between the recognised spatial potential and its actual tourism development (Alastair Morrison, 2024).

An important finding of the study is also the willingness of local residents to participate in shaping the tourism offer. This confirms the importance of participatory management models based on the active involvement of the local community, cultural creators, and civil society in destination development (Bert Smit & Frans Melissen, 2018; Lea Marija Colarič-Jakše, 2018). The interviews also confirm that without effective cooperation among municipal, cultural, tourism, and non-governmental organisations, long-term development effects cannot be achieved (Maja Koščak & Tom O'Rourke, 2018).

Visitors value historical background, a high-quality environment, and social connection as core aspects of the space. This supports the idea that sustainable tourism depends on experience quality, place identity, and social interaction, not just infrastructure (Nataša Poljak Istenič, 2013). The findings match current European and national tourism strategies.

The developed interpretative model of three thematic routes represents a practical application of modern heritage interpretation approaches. The integration of natural, cultural, and symbolic content aligns with experiential tourism, which emphasises storytelling, multisensory perception, and local identity (Maja Koščak & Tom O'Rourke, 2018; Bert Smit & Frans Melissen, 2018). Such an approach enables visitors to experience the space more deeply and holistically while simultaneously strengthening the sustainable orientation of tourism development.

The comprehensive analysis, therefore, confirms the key theoretical assumptions of sustainable tourism: the importance of involving the local community, the role of interpretative storytelling, the central function of cultural heritage in shaping place identity, and the need for strategically coordinated destination management (Tanja Mihalič, 2006; Lea Marija Colarič-Jakše, 2017; Bert Smit & Frans Melissen, 2018). At the same time, the results highlight a significant gap between the existing potential and the current situation, providing a basis for future development measures and further research into sustainable tourism in the historic town centre of Krško.

Based on the results, the hypotheses can be interpreted as follows:

Hypothesis 1 (H1), stating that respondents perceive the historic town centre of Krško as a destination with significant potential for sustainable tourism development, is confirmed. The majority of respondents expressed a positive perception of its tourism potential, further supported by the high rating of the importance of cultural heritage and experiential elements.

Hypothesis 2 (H2), which states that insufficient infrastructure is a key barrier to development, is partially confirmed. Infrastructure is perceived as an obstacle; however, it is not considered the most important factor. Organisational and content-related challenges appear to have a greater impact on development.

Hypothesis 3 (H3), which posits a willingness to cooperate among local stakeholders, is confirmed. The results indicate a clearly expressed willingness to co-create the tourism offer.

The results also highlight several broader implications.

The research confirms that sustainable tourism extends beyond purely infrastructural and promotional aspects and is fundamentally underpinned by local community cooperation, the interpretation of space, and the development of tourism content. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods proved appropriate, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the studied issue.

An important finding of the research is that the destination possesses significant potential; however, it requires better coordination among stakeholders and a more strategic approach to development. The future development of sustainable tourism in the historic town centre of Krško will primarily depend on the ability to connect local actors and effectively interpret cultural heritage.

## 6 Conclusion

The research confirms that the historic town centre of Krško has significant, yet underutilised, potential for sustainable tourism development. Its key strengths are cultural heritage, local identity, and spatial characteristics, while development is constrained by the lack of interpretative content, weak promotion, and insufficient stakeholder connectivity. The results indicate that development is possible through improved cooperation, strategic planning, and enhanced tourism offerings.

### Contribution to the profession and science

This research contributes to a better understanding of sustainable tourism in smaller urban centres and highlights the importance of connecting heritage, local identity, and stakeholder participation. The presented interpretative model of three thematic routes offers a transferable solution for developing sustainable tourism products.

### Impact on practice

The results have practical value for tourism planning, as they emphasise the need for stronger stakeholder cooperation, the development of interpretative infrastructure, and the creation of a comprehensive tourism narrative. The research supports sustainable development based on high-quality visitor experiences and the active involvement of the local community.

### Research limitations

The main limitations of the study include a small sample size, the selectivity of the interview participants, time constraints during fieldwork, and the spatial focus of the research.

### Suggestions for future research

Future studies should include broader samples, analyses of the economic effects of tourism, and long-term monitoring of the development of tourism products.

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## Povzetek

### Razvoj trajnostnega turizma v manjših urbanih središčih: študija primera starega mestnega jedra Krškega

**Raziskovalno vprašanje (RV):** Raziskava obravnava staro mestno jedro Krškega kot potencialno destinacijo za razvoj trajnostnega turizma. Osrednje raziskovalno vprašanje je, kako prebivalci in obiskovalci zaznavajo to območje, kakšna je vloga kulturne dediščine pri oblikovanju turistične ponudbe ter kateri dejavniki vplivajo na razvoj trajnostnega turizma.

**Namen:** Namen raziskave je analizirati obstoječe stanje starega mestnega jedra Krškega ter opredeliti ključne priložnosti in ovire za razvoj trajnostnega turizma, s poudarkom na interpretaciji kulturne dediščine, vključevanju lokalne skupnosti in oblikovanju avtentičnih turističnih doživetij.

**Metoda:** Raziskava temelji na kombinaciji kvantitativnih in kvalitativnih metod (triangulacija). Uporabljen je bil spletni anketni vprašalnik (N = 168), polstrukturirani intervjuji s ključnimi deležniki, terensko opazovanje ter analiza interpretativnih poti.

**Rezultati:** Rezultati kažejo, da anketiranci prepoznavajo staro mestno jedro Krškega kot območje z izrazitim turističnim potencialom, zlasti zaradi kulturne dediščine in zgodovinskega vzdušja. Kot ključne ovire so izpostavljeni nepovezanost deležnikov, pomanjkanje dogodkov in šibka promocija. Med predlaganimi rešitvami izstopajo razvoj vsebin, izboljšanje promocije in večja vključenost lokalne skupnosti.

**Organizacija:** Raziskava prispeva k boljšemu razumevanju upravljanja trajnostnega turizma ter ponuja strokovne podlage za načrtovanje in usklajevanje aktivnosti med lokalnimi organizacijami, javnimi institucijami in drugimi deležniki.

**Družba:** Ugotovitve raziskave poudarjajo pomen trajnostnega razvoja turizma za krepitev lokalne identitete, socialne kohezije in vključevanja prebivalcev v razvoj turistične ponudbe, ob upoštevanju okoljskih in družbenih vidikov.

**Originalnost:** Prispevek vključuje razvoj avtorskega turističnega produkta, ki temelji na interpretaciji kulturne dediščine in povezovanju naravnih, kulturnih in simbolnih elementov prostora ter predstavlja inovativni pristop k razvoju trajnostnega turizma.

**Omejitve/nadaljnje raziskovanje:** Raziskava je omejena na obravnavano območje in vzorec anketirancev, zato so potrebne nadaljnje primerjalne raziskave in evalvacije predlaganih ukrepov ter razvoj novih pristopov interpretacije dediščine.

**Ključne besede:** staro mestno jedro, Krško, trajnostni turizem, kulturna dediščina, lokalna skupnost, interpretacija dediščine, turistični razvoj.



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