



Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

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Weaknesses and Challenges of Promoting Farm-tourism for Rural Development:

A Cross-regional Perspective

Marta Disegna¹, Francesco Marangon², Christine Mauracher³, Linda Osti¹, Isabella Procidano³, Stefania Troiano²

¹Competence Centre in Tourism Management and Tourism Economics (TOMTE), Free University of Bozen-Bolzano; ²University of Udine; ³University Ca' Foscari Venice

Introduction

Farm tourism has been increasingly considered an effective catalyst of rural development and regeneration (Sharpley & Vass, 2005)

It is widely promoted as a means of counteracting the social and economic challenges facing rural areas, primarily those associated with the decline of traditional agrarian industries (Williams & Shaw, 1998)

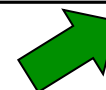
Also in Italy, farm tourism has been used as an alternative form of tourism and as a means of diversification of agricultural activities able to:

- increase the added value of rural economies (Brown & Reeder, 2007)
- create opportunities of social and cultural development of rural areas

During last years the supply has increased following the constantly growing demand for this form of tourism (Istat, 2011)

Number of farm-tourism operators in Italy 2004-2009

TIPOLOGIE	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Variazioni 2009/2004	
							Assolute	%
AGRITURISTICHE								
ALLOGGIO								
- Aziende	11.575	12.593	13.854	14.822	15.334	15.681	4.106	35,5
- Posti letto	140.685	150.856	167.087	179.985	189.013	193.480	52.795	37,5
- Piazzole di sosta	5.386	5.826	6.935	7.055	7.320	7.785	2.399	44,5
RISTORAZIONE								
- Aziende	6.833	7.201	7.898	8.516	8.928	9.335	2.502	36,6
- Posti a sedere	266.654	277.866	298.003	322.145	337.385	365.943	99.289	37,2
DEGUSTAZIONE								
- Aziende	2.737	2.542	2.664	3.224	3.304	3.400	663	24,2
ALTRE ATTIVITA'								
- Aziende	8.240	8.755	9.643	9.715	10.354	10.583	2.343	28,4
<i>di cui con:</i>								
- <i>Equitazione</i>	1.494	1.478	1.557	1.559	1.615	1.548	54	3,6
- <i>Escursionismo</i>	2.692	2.981	3.131	2.879	3.140	3.071	379	14,1
- <i>Osservazioni naturalistiche</i>	265	575	517	558	607	623	358	135,1
- <i>Trekking</i>	1.463	1.426	1.465	1.629	1.657	1.674	211	14,4
- <i>Mountain bike</i>	2.422	2.258	2.311	2.347	2.398	2.309	-113	-4,7
- <i>Corsi</i>	812	942	1.025	1.256	1.407	974	162	20,0
- <i>Sport</i>	3.006	3.474	3.682	3.758	4.203	4.168	1.162	38,7
- <i>Varie</i>	4.003	4.288	5.043	5.395	5.616	5.994	1.991	49,7
AGRITURISMO								
- Aziende in complesso	14.017	15.327	16.765	17.720	18.480	19.019	5.002	35,7



Number of farm-tourism operators in Italy 2009-2010

REGIONI	Totale				Alloggio			
	2009	2010	Variazioni		2009	2010	Variazioni	
			assolute	%			assolute	%
Valle d'Aosta-Vallée d'Aoste	53	51	-2	-3,8	40	40	-	-
Lombardia	1.246	1.327	81	6,5	627	677	50	8,0
Trentino-Alto Adige	3.192	3.339	147	4,6	2.774	2.931	157	5,7
Bolzano-Bozen	2.863	2.990	127	4,4	2.529	2.666	137	5,4
Trento	329	349	20	6,1	245	265	20	8,2
Veneto	1.261	1.305	44	3,5	731	772	41	5,6
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	524	553	29	5,5	264	281	17	6,4
Liguria	441	459	18	4,1	369	380	11	3,0
Emilia-Romagna	896	1.008	112	12,5	641	738	97	15,1
Toscana	4.046	4.074	28	0,7	4.002	4.050	48	1,2
Marche	771	749	-22	-2,9	697	655	-42	-6,0
Lazio	704	832	128	18,2	521	613	92	17,7
Abruzzo	663	636	-27	-4,1	568	545	-23	-4,0
Molise	89	94	5	5,6	64	63	-1	-1,6
Campania	849	849	-	-	636	636	-	-
Basilicata	224	228	4	1,8	194	198	4	2,1
Sicilia	538	568	30	5,6	486	516	30	6,2
Sardegna	775	800	25	3,2	587	604	17	2,9
TOTALE	16.272	16.872	600	3,7	13.201	13.699	498	3,8

(*) - Un'azienda può essere autorizzata all'esercizio di una o più tipologie di attività agrituristiche

N.B. - Le Regioni: PIEMONTE, UMBRIA, PUGLIA e CALABRIA sono ancora in fase di elaborazione e controllo dei dati.

Research objectives

Main objective:

Analyze the characteristics of farm-tourism operators from a cross-regional perspective in North Eastern Italy gaining a deeper understanding of farm tourism activities

To investigate this point the research aims mainly to:

explore how operators promote their activities and point out potential and barriers for farm tourism activities

explore the environmental key factor that influences the development of farm tourism activities

Methodology

Existing databases on farm tourism activities have been collected to determine sampling techniques and sampling size

A quantitative questionnaire has been created

Farm-tourism activities have been personally interviewed

Despite the quantitative questionnaire, time has also been taken for qualitative questions / discussions

The area of investigation

To make the provinces compatible we have analysed only farm-tourism activities between **50 and 450 meters** above sea level.

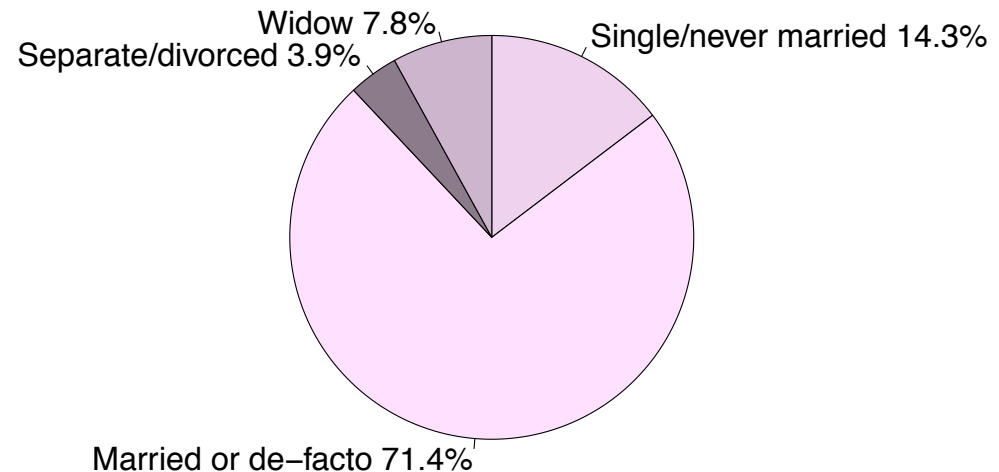
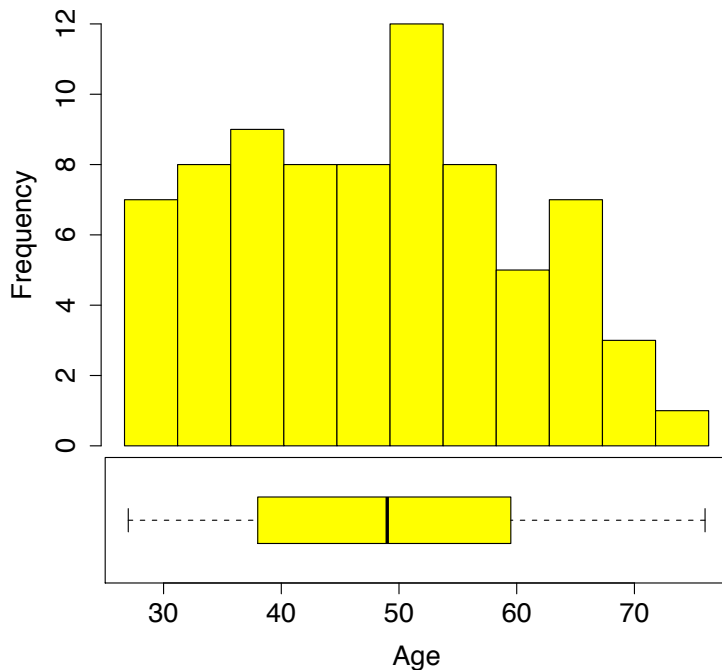
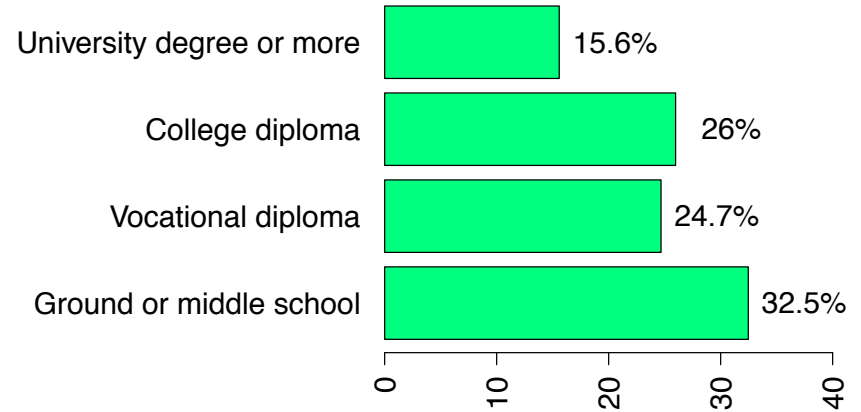
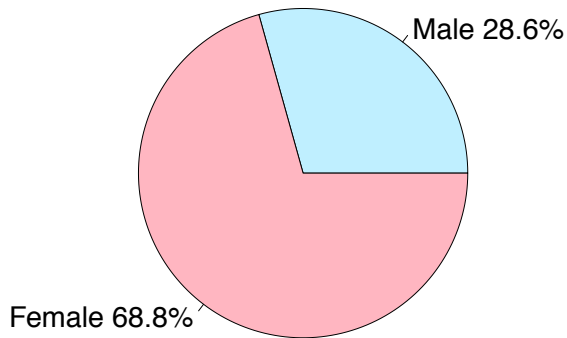
Only activities with **accommodation** were sampled.

77 farm-tourism activities (out of 405) interviewed:
35% in Bolzano
21% in Udine
44% in Treviso



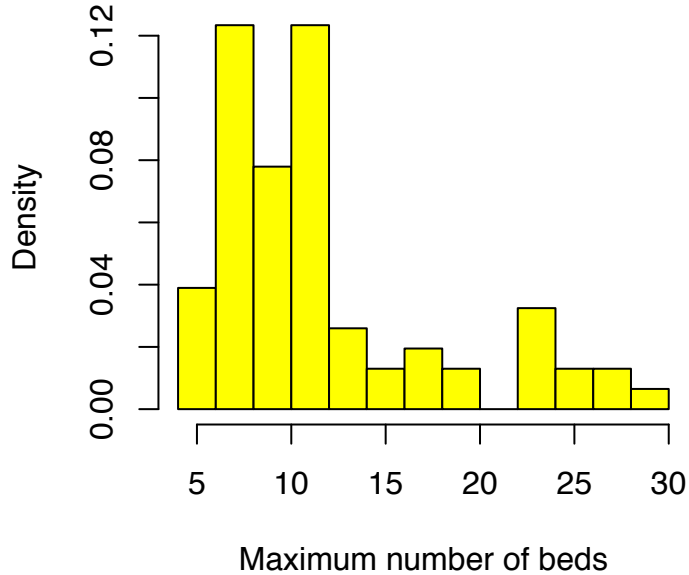
Characteristics of the respondents

The majority of respondents are owners or managers of the farm-tourism (80%) and they are:

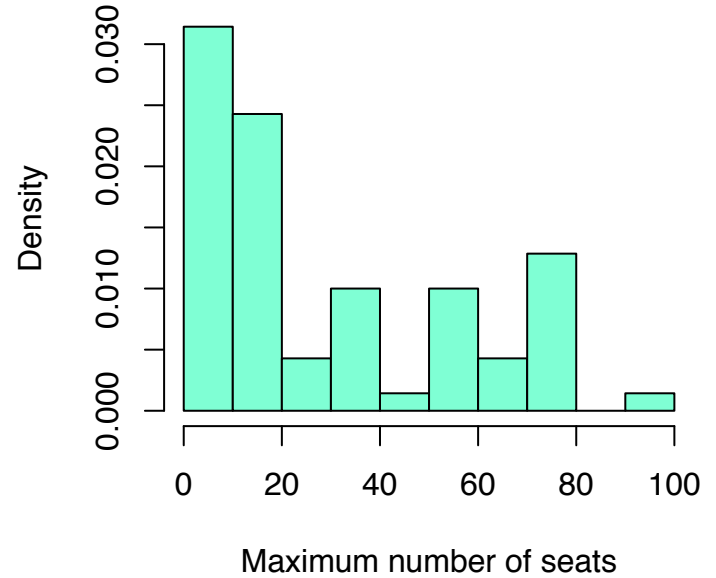


Characteristics of the farm-tourism activities

Maximum number of beds (mean = 12 beds)



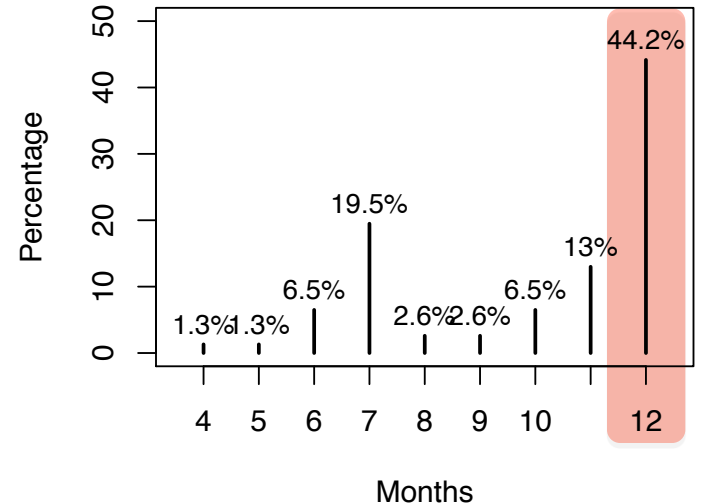
Maximum number of seats (mean = 31 seats)



Total number of employees (mean = 5 employees)



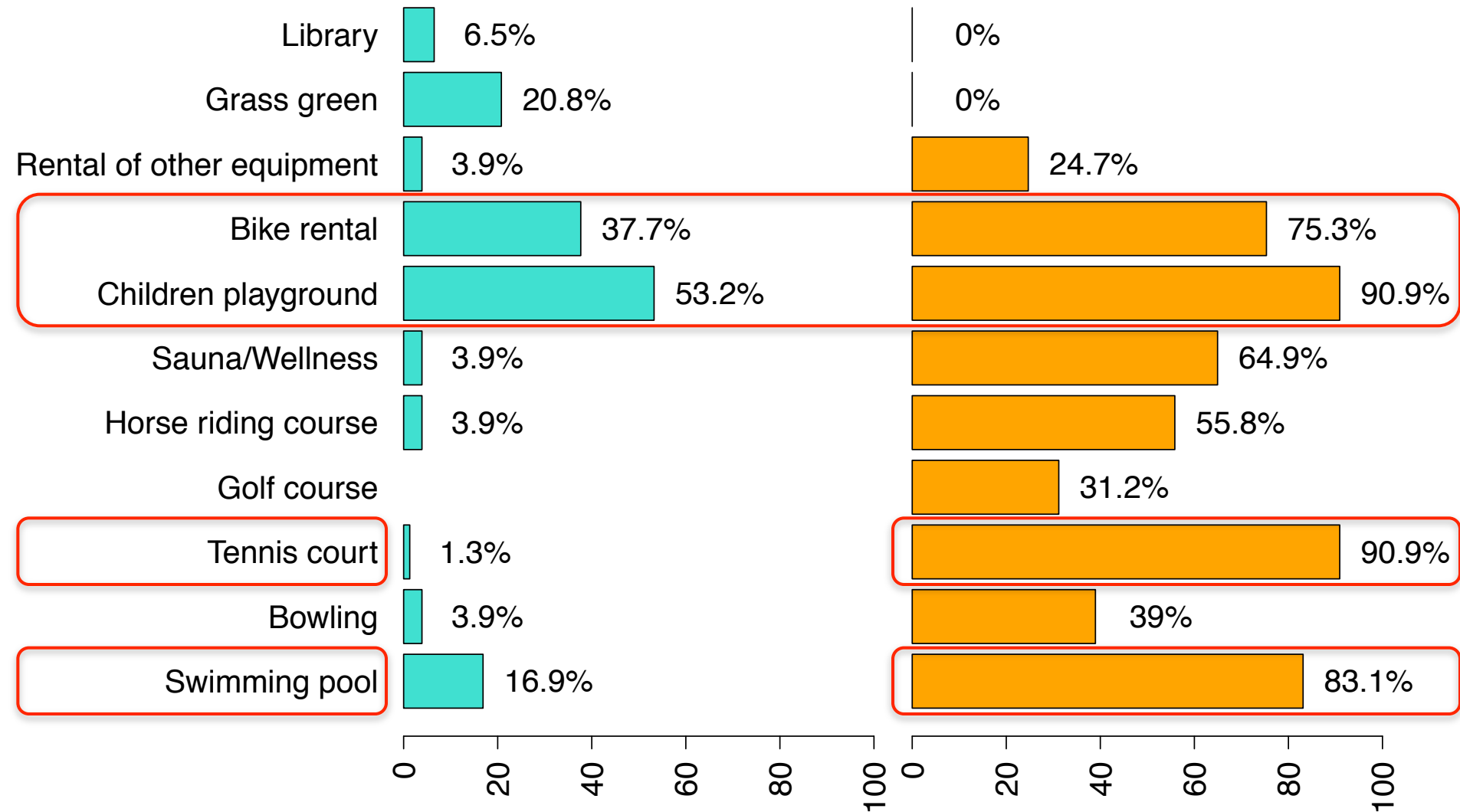
Annual length of farm activity (mean = 10 months)



Recreational equipment

Offered by the farm-tourism

Near the farm-tourism (max 10 km)



Recreational activities offered by the farm

Indirect participation to farm activities 55.8%

Direct participation to farm activities 18.2%

Yoga 3.9%

Bird watching, plant spotting 24.7%

Courses (cooking, botany, etc.) 11.7%

Other sports 6.5%

Wine tasting 57.1%

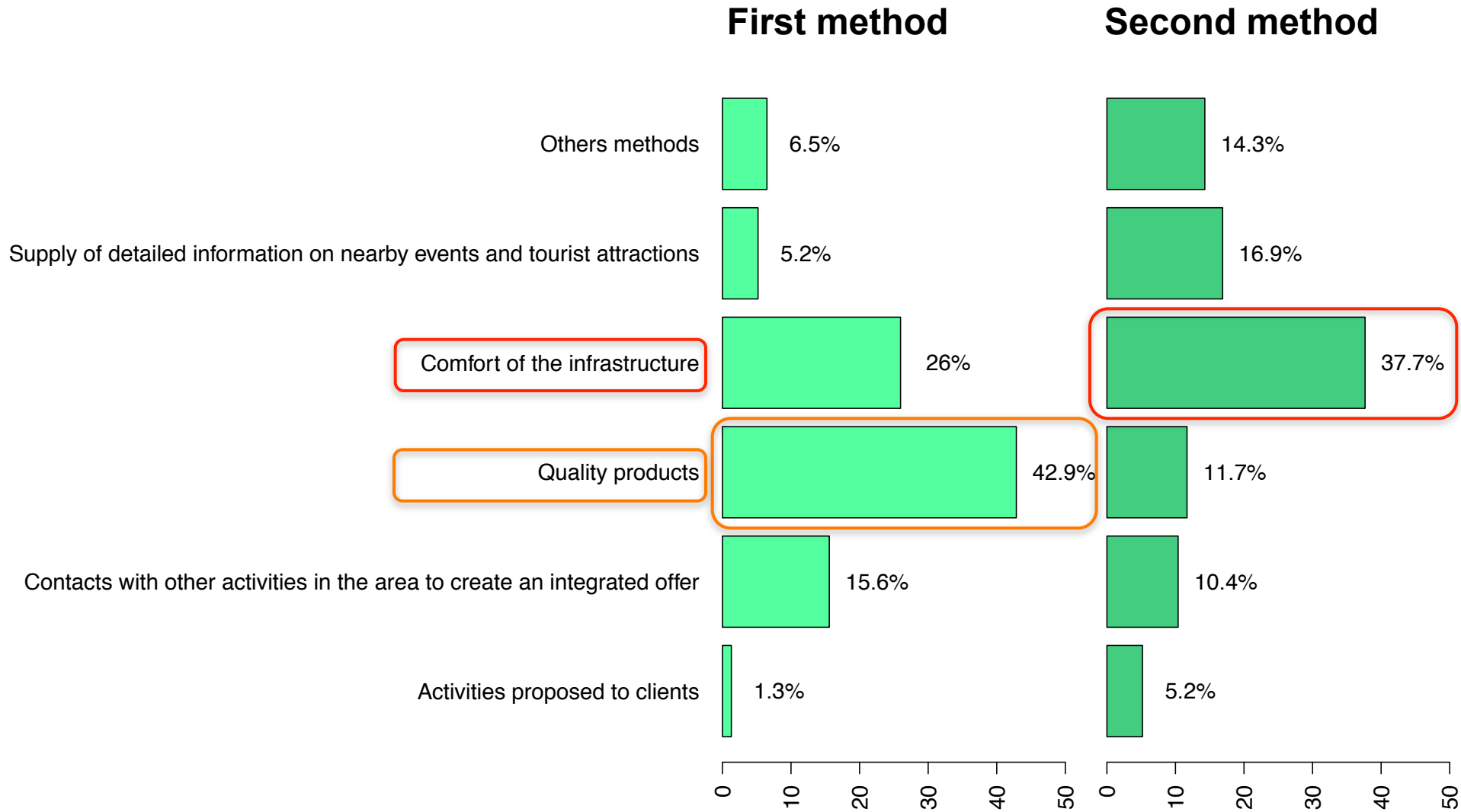
Bike tours 51.9%

Horse riding 7.8%

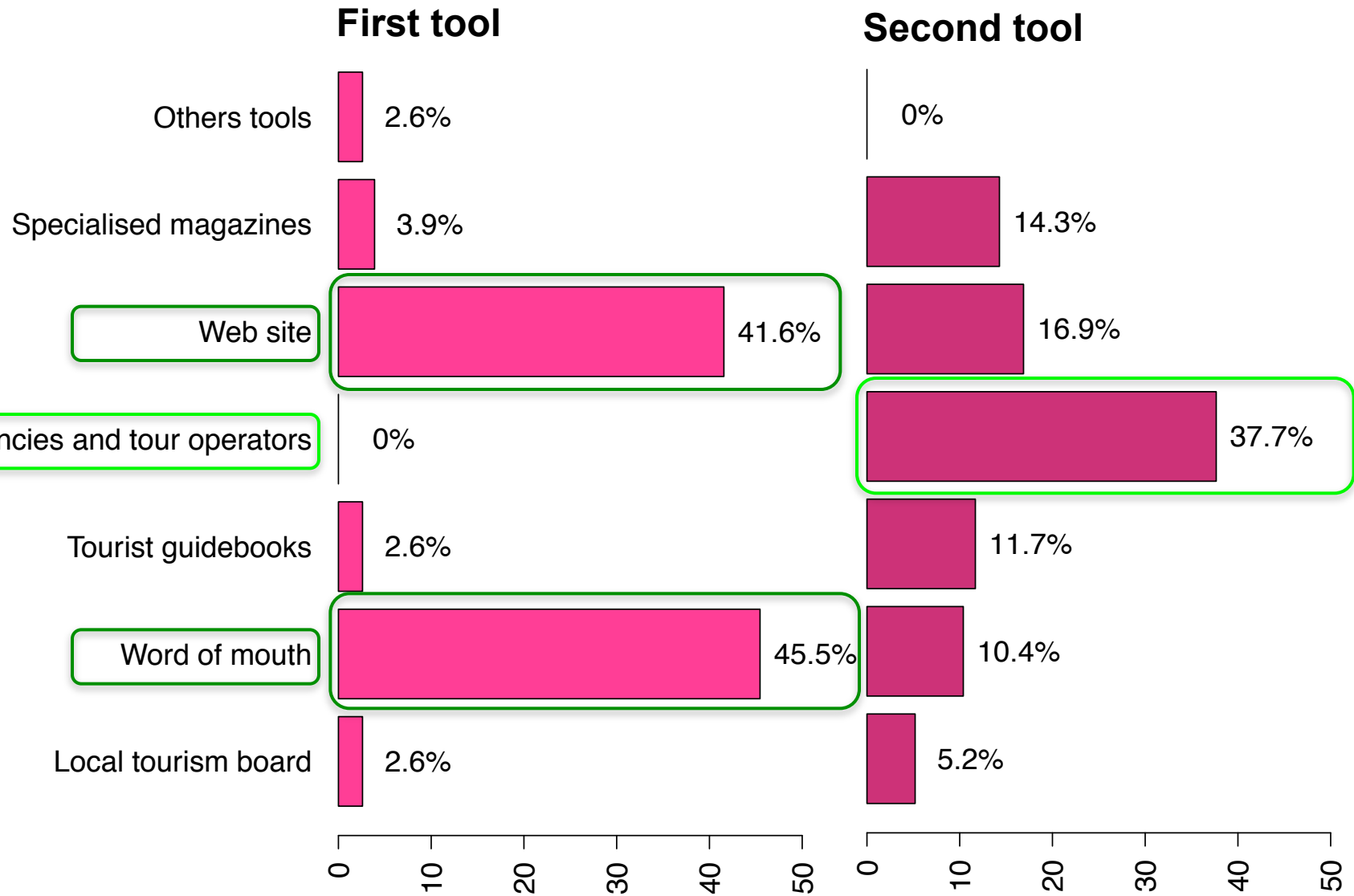
Walking/trekking 57.1%



Differentiation methods

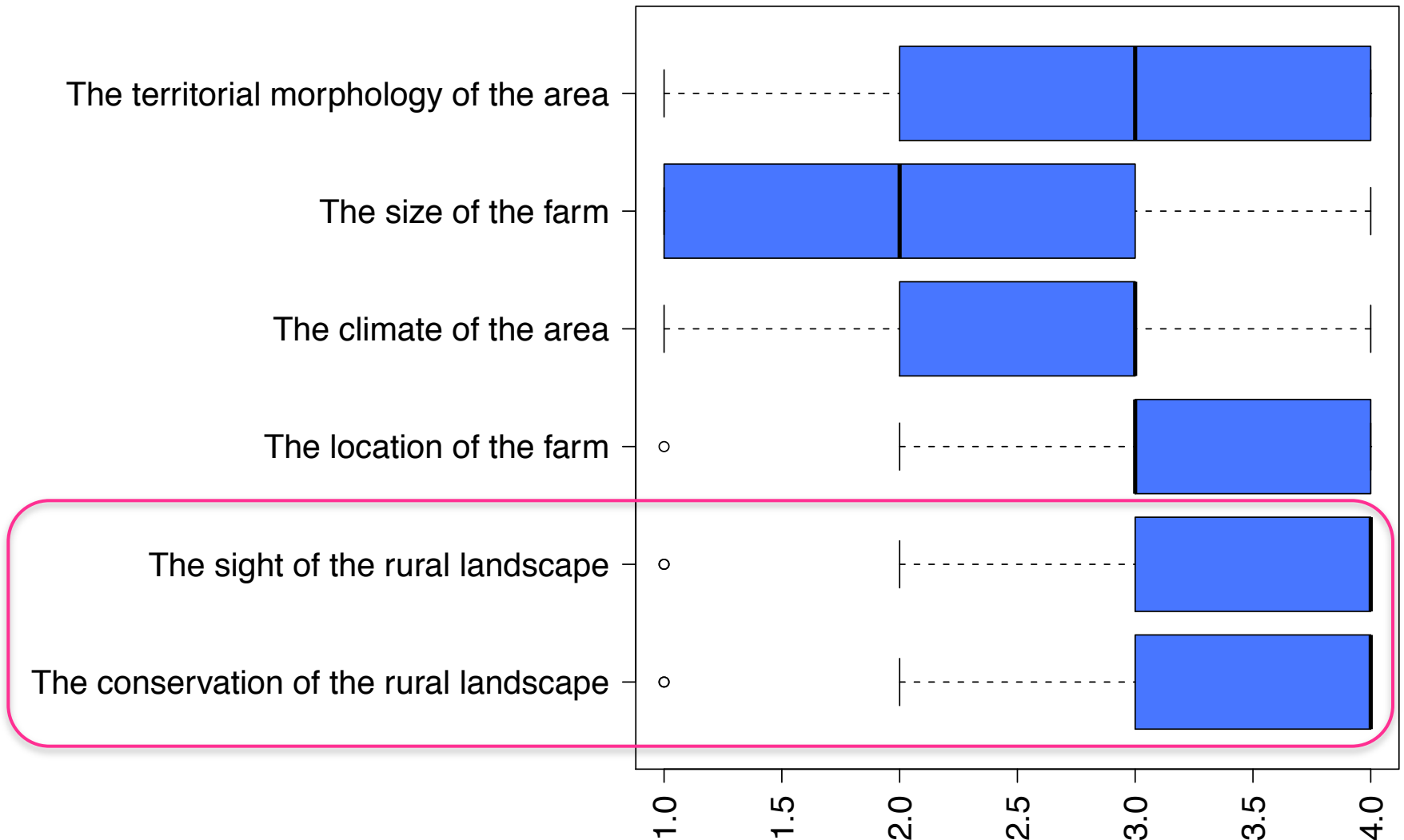


Promotional tools



Environmental context

How **important** are the following elements for the development of your farm-tourism activity?



Some conclusions

Although further research is needed to provide more widely generalized and deep results, the following **main points** were disclosed:

- ✗ Farm-tourism services are characterized on one hand as services that utilize local resources (traditional food, farming techniques, etc.) that are often forgotten in modern life, on the other hand as high comfort services
- Tourist satisfaction is an enhancer of farm tourism development: close interchange and direct feedback between visitors are more important than web site and travel agencies promotion
- ✗ Landscape and environmental resources are key factors

Next steps of the research:

- Determine the main reasons that push farmers to invest in farm-tourism activities
- Determine the viability of the promotion and investments exerted in farm-tourism sector by national laws and local governments to counteract the decline of traditional agrarian industries



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**Le voyage est un retour
vers l'essentiel!**

(Proverbe Tibétain)

**Thank you for your
attention!**

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