

# The role of social capital and trust in the success of local wine tourism and rural development

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## Abstract

The development of wine and food tourism can reinforce local economies by attracting visitors and new inhabitants to small and picturesque rural areas. However, not all villages benefit equally from the same wine and food tourism trends. What makes some settlements and territories economically attractive and successful? What accounts for the difference between success stories and areas that are lagging behind, despite similar ‘hard’ factors? This article focuses on the soft elements: the role of community and entrepreneurial values, attitudes, networks, social capital and trust in the economic success of prosperous rural settlements. The article presents three empirical case studies of settlements in different wine regions in Hungary, based on semi-structured in-depth interviews. We conclude that the economic success of winemaking settlements is due either to lifestyle entrepreneurs moving in or to the strength of the locally bounded community.

## KEYWORDS

entrepreneurship, rural tourism, social capital, trust, wine tourism

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*It would be so nice if villages could survive. Here, too, if you walk around, where there is wine tourism, you see beautiful, flourishing settlements with cool people who try to make a living from this. It's very nice, it would be nice if everyone thought the same and this story could stay alive. If they see no opportunities and only poverty since their childhood, they will leave, and villages will die. (G3, a gastro entrepreneur in Grapevine)*

## INTRODUCTION

Promoting rural and wine tourism is a widespread strategy for territorial development, especially in rural areas with poorly performing economies (Lagos & Papatthanasiou-Zuhr, 2008). Wine tourism can help build entrepreneurial business development in related areas, such as food tourism, which contributes to rural development. The development of wine and food tourism can reinforce local economies by attracting visitors and new inhabitants to small and picturesque rural areas. However, not all villages benefit equally from the same wine tourism trends. What makes settlements economically attractive and successful? And what accounts for the difference between success stories and areas lagging behind, despite similar physical circumstances of production: soil, weather, the quality of the terroir? In the wine sector, economic success is often explained by natural advantages (Guthey, 2008). However, recent research has shown that knowledge and innovation networks as well as local socioeconomic institutions may be just as important, particularly in emerging regions (Holland et al., 2017). Our research thus focused on the soft elements: the role of community and entrepreneurial values, attitudes, networks, social capital and trust in explaining the economic success of prosperous rural wine tourism destinations in Hungary.

The 'Beaujolais story' is a great example of how hard factors (e.g., the quality of the terroir, grapes and wine) can be challenged and overcome by the right attitude, co-operation and innovative market ideas, even in a country with a strong wine tradition like France. Beaujolais is the southernmost area of Burgundy where Gamay is the predominant grape variety. A blue grape with a rich and relatively early harvest, it does not necessarily yield wine of the highest quality. However, producers realised that rapid fermentation using the technique of semi-carbonic maceration and then placing the wine on the market quickly could improve its quality—add to this a smart and deliberate marketing strategy, and that is how Beaujolais Nouveau was born (Asimov, 2020). Thanks to the collaboration of producers and merchants, it has since gained unprecedented global popularity. This example highlights that 'soft' factors such as innovative production techniques or great marketing can overwrite 'hard' economic factors, such as the quality of the terroir or the grape.

In Hungary, wine production, wine and food tourism do not enjoy the same cult status and strong traditions as in France. The production of quality wine started after the transition from the state-led socialist to a capitalist market economy in 1990 (Szabó et al., 2021). While the 'gastro revolution' (e.g., the re-appreciation of high-quality, pure/natural and local food) was slow to reach rural areas, wine and gastro culture and local gastronomic tourism have recently started to flourish (Szabó et al., 2021). In Hungary, due to the regression of agricultural activities, wine and food tourism is thus seen as a key element of regional development policies for rural areas (Csurgó et al., 2019). According to the 2030 National Strategy for Tourism Development, wine and gastronomy are crucial for the sector (Hungarian Tourism Agency, 2017). As such, the development of local food and wine tourism is supported both by international models and the national policy environment. It appears that all entrepreneurs need to do to implement attractive and successful activities in this field is to make use of these opportunities. As a result, many examples

and new local initiatives have emerged with the aim of promoting the economic development of rural settlements through enterprises built on wine and food tourism, not all of which succeed, however.

The present study will analyse three wine-based local economies in Hungary in order to answer the following research questions: (1) What is the role of 'soft elements'—community and entrepreneurial values, attitudes, networks, social capital and trust—in explaining the economic success of certain wine-based local economies? (2) Is the inflow of urban lifestyle entrepreneurs needed to initiate local development (as early studies assumed), or can successful development also be facilitated by a self-made entrepreneur community?

The article starts with an overview of the theoretical background: wine and terroir tourism, rural and lifestyle entrepreneurship and the role of social capital and embeddedness in the success of wine tourism. Our qualitative research method is further detailed in the Methodology section. In the Results section, we present three wine-based local economies in Hungary from a sociological point of view. In the discussion, we analyse the case studies to identify the different values, attitudes, forms of social capital and trust that make them successful. Finally, we present our conclusions.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### From wine tourism to terroir tourism

Following the crisis of the traditional agricultural system in the 1950s (Randelli et al., 2011), rural tourism has become an important element of regional development. Rural tourism is a 'country-side experience' encompassing a wide range of attractions and activities in agricultural/non-urban areas (Roberts & Hall, 2001). It meets several of the core requirements of regional development: It builds on local culture and heritage, promotes values related to nature and culture and contributes to the economic and social welfare of local (rural) areas (Bessière, 1998; Ray, 2001, 2006). Wine production and gastronomy have always been important elements of rural tourism since they meet the needs of (urban) tourists looking for authenticity and 'rural idylls' (Csurgó et al., 2019).

Wine tourism, consisting of visits to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine exhibitions (Hall et al., 2000) is a special branch of food tourism and has a long history, especially in Europe, although it has gained global popularity since the mid-1990s (Getz & Brown, 2006; Hall et al., 2000). From the supply side, wine tourism is an opportunity for local producers to build personal relationships with clients, meet, educate and sell their wine directly to customers (Getz & Brown, 2006; Pratt & Carlini, 2019) and increase sales (Alamanos et al., 2016; Molina et al., 2015).

While initially, wine tourism was conceptualised as travel motivated primarily by and focused on wine tasting, wine events and purchases, the perspective has recently widened to focus on the entire terroir—its lifestyle, landscape and culture—sometimes referred to as 'terroir tourism' (Holland et al., 2017; Kastenholz et al., 2021). The term terroir encompasses the complex interactions among the physical, cultural and socioeconomic factors of a particular region that can be tasted in the wines it produces (Sommers, 2008). According to Holland et al. (2017), terroir tourism is a combination of wine tourism, viticulture and winemaking with regional development.

As many studies have shown, wine tourists seek a complex, memorable and authentic experience including arts, architecture, heritage and local food (Carlsen & Charters, 2006; Dowling & Getz, 2000; Roberts & Sparks, 2006). The concept of terroir brings together the geographic,

economic and cultural aspects of local development to create a particular ‘taste’ of a place and a motivation for travel (Marlowe, 2022). Since wine tourism is locally embedded, it can incorporate several types of local products and services; thus, terroir tourism is closely linked to the concept of values-based territorial food networks—which emphasises the complexity of food production as an inherent part of human life—as it is crucial for creating or maintaining important social, cultural, environmental and economic values and can create opportunities for the survival/revival of rural economies.

Consequently, wine tourism can contribute to the development of the local economy by generating employment and income for locals, protecting their cultural identity (Byrd et al., 2016; Güzel, 2016; Güzel et al., 2021; Scorrano et al., 2018) and promoting the strategic development of rural tourist destinations (Getz & Brown, 2006).

## Wine tourism entrepreneurship, lifestyle entrepreneurship

The EU’s regional development policies treat entrepreneurs as the engine of economic development. The aim of entrepreneurship-based regional development is the optimal use of local resources to develop and sustain strong local and external relations between different actors and to connect local systems to global processes (Gülümser et al., 2009). Ideally, the entrepreneur is a creative/innovative person who analyses the opportunities, creates value, takes financial, social and psychological risks, has a visionary view and innovates to make a profit (Schumpeter, 1934).

However, rural entrepreneurship is a much narrower notion than entrepreneurship based in rural areas (Labrianidis, 2006). Rural entrepreneurship creates new added value based on local resources, characteristics and peculiarities (Overbeek, 2009; Pato & Teixeira, 2016; Ray, 2006), employs a local workforce and local services (and provides new services) and thus produces income for the region (Csurgó, 2019; McElwee & Atherton, 2011). Wine tourism entrepreneurs promote rural development and contribute to the region’s image by investing in local values.

According to Güzel et al. (2021), the individual characteristics of each entrepreneur are the main factor in the success of a wine tourism business. The ‘entrepreneurial attitude’ consists of creativity, innovation, risk-taking and the ability to discover new opportunities and cope with challenges, while imagination, belief and passion are important values for ‘pioneer’ investors, particularly in emergent wine tourism (Güzel et al., 2021).

Early studies assumed that newly arrived urban lifestyle entrepreneurs (Stone-Stubbs, 2007) who have the social capital to connect rural settlements to supra-regional development flows are important elements of change and development. According to the literature, lifestyle entrepreneurs represent a specific class of entrepreneurs who move to rural areas for their quality of life and then start small enterprises, both to forge closer links with their new home and to replace or complement their urban income (Dias & Silva, 2021; Pato & Teixeira, 2016). Lifestyle entrepreneurs strive for work–life balance (Newbery et al., 2011), instead of focusing on profit maximisation (Pato & Teixeira, 2016). As they are embedded in the local community, lifestyle entrepreneurs have an outstanding opportunity to involve local stakeholders in tourism development; at the same time, their external point of view, wider knowledge and own experiences as former tourists result in innovative ways of ‘selling the place’ (Dias & Silva, 2021). In addition, the influx of new entrepreneurs can also stimulate locals to launch their own businesses (Akgün et al., 2011).

However, successful rural (wine) tourism is not the exclusive domain of lifestyle entrepreneurs. The latest studies (Akgün et al., 2011; Gülümser, 2009) have concluded that there is no difference

between local entrepreneurs and the arrival of new entrepreneurs in this respect. Newberry et al. (2011) studied the network of entrepreneurs in rural tourism and found that even if individuals and enterprises do not engage in 'entrepreneurship' in the classical sense, they may still act in an entrepreneurial manner at the community and ecosystem level.

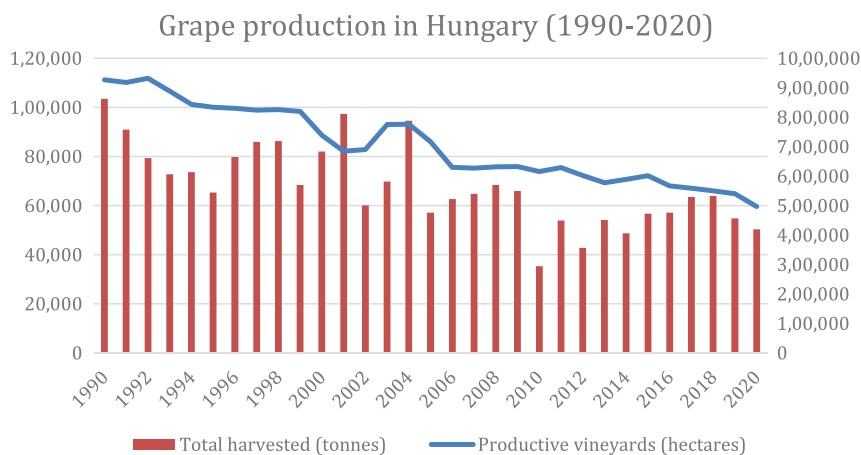
Rural entrepreneurship is closely linked to elements of social capital: It is embedded in the local community, affected by local social networks, promotes regional co-operation, employs local people and so forth (Akgün et al., 2011; Bosworth & Farrell, 2011; Gülümser et al., 2009), all of which are part of the concept of social capital. It is therefore worth paying detailed attention to this topic.

## Social capital and embeddedness in the creation of a wine tourism ecosystem

In recent decades, scientific opinion has increasingly recognised that entrepreneurs are not isolated actors but that entrepreneurship is rather a contextual process: A potential enterprise depends on local information and resources, where ideas worth undertaking are the product of local demand, financed by local banks and investors (Kalantaridis & Bika, 2006). Rural entrepreneurship is typically based in a specific rural area and embedded in the local community and local social networks (Akgün et al., 2011; Bosworth & Farrell, 2011; Gülümser et al., 2009). Embedded operation means that local enterprises and the local entrepreneurs themselves are personally committed to their community—they not only keep its welfare in mind while managing their economic operations (Bosworth & Farrell, 2011) but also take responsibility for it.

Embeddedness is closely related to another commonly used term: social capital (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000). Social capital is 'the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures' (Portes, 1998, p. 6). Social capital enhances co-operation, promotes mutual assistance and creates bridges (Tomay, 2019). The concept of social capital has become particularly popular for its economic dimension: Social capital is important for the creation of exchange relations and can support the establishment of new businesses, open new markets and promote co-operation; it is, therefore, an essential element of entrepreneurship (Bodor, 2013; Füzér et al., 2006). Thus, social capital, that is, strong networks within the community, information sharing, co-ordination of activities, collective decision-making, trust and reciprocity, are essential ingredients of economic success (McGehee et al., 2010).

While research examining the role of social capital in wine tourism is sporadic, it indicates that social capital is closely associated with the success of tourism development (Hall, 2005; McGehee et al., 2010; Xu et al., 2020). According to Hwang and Stewart (2017), social capital is also important in the initiation of collective action for rural tourism development. Bonding social capital (Putnam, 2000; Townsend et al., 2016) facilitates tourism-related information circulation in the community, while bridging social capital brings in external sources of funds and expertise (Hwang & Stewart, 2017). Social ties and interactions facilitate the sharing of ideas, values and social norms. Furthermore, these ties help to shape a collective identity and a strong sense of community, which encourage various kinds of collective action (McGehee & Santos, 2005). According to a recent article (Dias & Silva, 2021), rootedness in the community together with the ability to establish a network of local contacts are essential elements for the competitiveness and innovation of small rural businesses: Both social capital and knowledge play a role in fostering innovation. Some studies also emphasise the importance of shared norms and trust for the effectiveness of (McGehee et al., 2010) and involvement in collective action (Hwang & Stewart, 2017).



**FIGURE 1** Grape production in Hungary (1990–2020). *Source:* Hungarian Central Statistical Office data, own edition

In recent years, the concept of entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems has emerged as a framework for understanding the characteristics of places where entrepreneurial activity flourishes. Spigel (2017, p. 50) defines entrepreneurial ecosystems as ‘combinations of social, political, economic, and cultural elements within a region that support the development and growth of innovative start-ups and encourage nascent entrepreneurs and other actors to take the risks of starting, funding, and otherwise assisting high-risk ventures’. The wine sector has many of the characteristics of an innovation ecosystem, as it consists of producers, suppliers, consumers and other stakeholders that depend on each other in order to reach a common goal (Marques et al., 2021). For instance, Franken et al. (2018) have found that the key to the success lies in co-operative action that defines and strengthens the identity of a wine destination. Social capital (market relationships, power relationships, collaboration and co-operation) is the ‘fuel’ driving the ecosystem (Marques et al., 2021).

## Hungarian wine and wine tourism

Thanks to its natural endowments and favourable climatic conditions, Hungary is a wine-producing country with a long history. After World War II, during the years of state socialism, mass production pushed quality into the background, but after 1990, viticulture was revived: Quality wines and wineries emerged, and wine has become fashionable (Szabó et al., 2021). The area under cultivation has decreased significantly since the 1990s. Hungary currently grows grapes on around 60,000 ha in seven wine regions and 22 subregions (Figures 1 and 2).

Although wine has always been an integral part of tourism in Hungary, it started to develop progressively in the 1990s. The number of wine festivals and events increasing since the 2000s (Szabó et al., 2021). More and more wineries are opening their doors to tourists, and some wine tourism enterprises market their production directly to customers (Szabó et al., 2021). Nevertheless, co-operation among wine market actors is still in its infancy (Hlédik & Harsányi, 2019). The first wine route was founded in 1994, by the Villány-Siklós Wine Route Association, based on

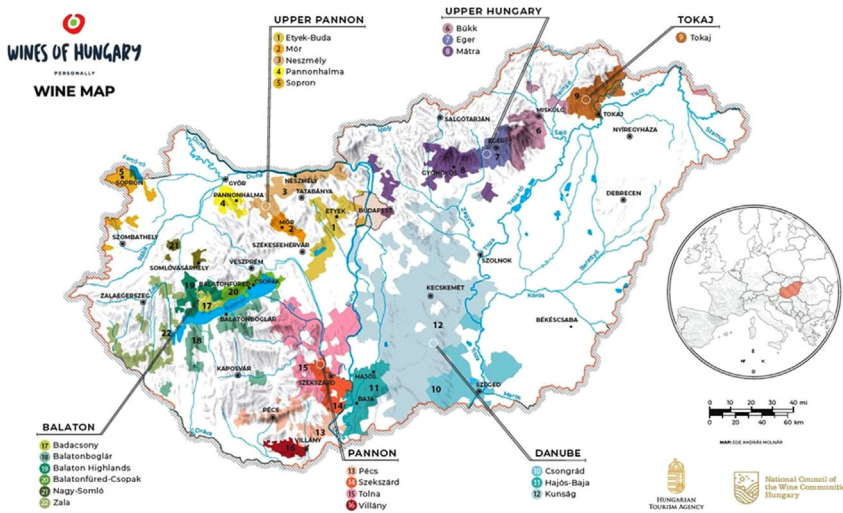


FIGURE 2 Wine regions of Hungary. Source: Hungarian Tourism Agency

foreign models. Today, some 30 wine route associations are trying to improve the reputation of Hungarian viticulture (Szabó et al., 2021).

The few available surveys clearly show that the public perception of wine tourism has changed in recent decades. According to a 2008 representative survey (GFK, 2008), only 20% of the Hungarian population participated or wished to participate in a wine tourism event, while in 2018 almost two-thirds (62%) of respondents stated that they go on wine-related domestic trips: 39% at least once a year and 21.5% less frequently, which is a significant increase (Hlédik & Harsányi, 2019; Szabó et al., 2021).

## METHODOLOGY

In the following, we present case studies of three Hungarian settlements that are active in grape cultivation and wine production. Case-study research is a common method in interpretative social science for understanding complex social phenomena beyond quantitative aspects and trends (Mabry, 2008). We used cross-case analysis (Andersson et al., 2002; Ryan, 2012) to explore whether and how successfully the settlements make use of opportunities for wine tourism deriving from their endowments, and to explore the role of community and entrepreneurial values, attitudes, networks, social capital and trust in the economic success of prosperous rural settlements. Each case-study settlement is located in a different wine region and has centuries-old tradition of grape cultivation. However, not all of them have become equally known and recognised during the viticultural renewal of the past decades.

Our first case study is Grapevine<sup>1</sup> located in a region enjoying both a good reputation and a rich harvest. This region pioneered the production of high-quality wine right after the collapse of the communist regime in 1990, and some bigger wineries already made it well-known nationally in the 1990s. However, Grapevine itself did not have any famous wineries, and its development only started in the 2000s. It became well known in Hungary only during the 2010s as a result of persistent development in wine and food tourism. The other two settlements, Barge and Sandy, are

located on Hungary's Great Plain, which—especially during state socialism—was famous for the quantity rather than the quality of its wine production (Papp, 2021). Thus, these two settlements have a strong disadvantage in terms of their hard factors and even their reputation. Nevertheless, as the example of Beaujolais shows, a disadvantage can become a catalyst for innovative initiatives and a driving factor for community collaboration (for a data-based comparison of the three destinations, please find Table 1).

Our case studies are based on 23 semi-structured in-depth interviews with local grape and wine producers as well as wine and gastro tourism operators.<sup>2</sup> Field research was conducted under the leadership of the authors by the Department of Sociology of the University of Pécs, with the participation of sociology students (for a more detailed data about the interviews, see Table 2).<sup>3</sup> We sampled the interviewees partly based on previous expertise in the field and partly on snowball sampling. In all three cases, we tried to reach all relevant winemakers, wine and food tourism actors in order to capture the entrepreneurs' point of view. For the sake of a more comprehensive and grounded analysis, and to make sure to include all important stakeholders, we complemented the interviews with field trips and participatory and non-participatory observation over the course of several years.<sup>4</sup> During the 1, 5–2-h-long interviews, we asked questions concerning embeddedness, social capital and trust (for more details, see the interview guideline in the Appendix). In analysing the interviews, we relied both on deductive categories, based on the literature review (social capital, trust, embeddedness) and inductive ones (collective entrepreneurship, socio-demographic background). Given its qualitative nature, there is no statistical generalisation in the study, but the results could be generalised based on a comparison with other studies.

## RESULTS

### Grapevine

Grapevine is a Swabian village<sup>5</sup> of almost 300 inhabitants in southwestern Hungary. A row of wine cellars outside the village indicates that grape cultivation and wine production have a long history here, even though years of mismanagement under state socialism diminished the traditional significance of the sector. Winemaking, especially the production of quality wine, only returned a decade after the transition, rooted in the village's natural endowments; its reputation has since grown through conscious marketing, and the festivals it hosts attract more visitors every year (Tomay, 2019).

Rural gentrification (Philips, 1993; Tomay, 2019)—the migration of urban artists and intellectuals to rural areas—started in the village quite early during the 1990s. The first wave of newcomers included an artist who later served as mayor for more than a decade. She put Grapevine on the tourist map by joining a multivillage arts festival, creating a wine route advertising both the village and the region and organising open wine-cellar events. Cultural and gastro festivals designed and supported by artists started to create a market for wine tourism, as gentrifiers arriving during the 2000s bought and renovated wine cellars and guest houses and opened new restaurants. Enterprises launched by the new inhabitants employ local workers, and some local residents also got involved in terroir tourism. The impact of Grapevine's new inhabitants in terms of stimulating a culture of enterprise is already visible: A young local farmer has started to produce garlic, and in a nearby village, cheese-making is turning from a hobby into a business thanks to increased demand from local caterers. Thus, Grapevine not only attracts new inhabitants but also encourages locals to start their own enterprises, which is a sign of an entrepreneurial ecosystem.



TABLE 1 Socioeconomic and wine touristic profile of the destinations

	Sandy	Barge	Grapevine
Area	50 km <sup>2</sup>	90 km <sup>2</sup>	10 km <sup>2</sup>
Geographic features	Great Plain, farmland (approx. 300 farms)	Great Plain, near the Danube	Transdanubia
Population (2020)	Approx. 2,100	approx. 3,000	Approx. 300
Socio-demographic character	Declining, depleting ageing	declining, depleting ageing	Declining, depleting ageing
Economic character, entrepreneurship	Approx. 460 enterprises exist, almost all of them under 10 employees, with low economic productivity	Approx. 650 enterprises exist, almost all of them under 10 employees, one of them is 50–250 employees, medium economic productivity	85 enterprises exist, almost all of them under 10 employees, and three above, but under 50 employees, with high economic productivity
Entrepreneurial income (corporate tax-base) 2019	Approx. 10,000 euros	Approx. 40,000 euros,	Approx. 10,000 euros
Role of agriculture	Important 20% of all employees had been employed in agriculture (2011); 2/3 of enterprises are in agriculture (2020); approx. 200 primary producers registered (2020)	Less important: 13% of the employees had been employed in agriculture (2011), half of the enterprises are in agriculture (2020), approx. 190 primary producers registered (2020)	Less important 19% of all employees had been employed in agriculture (2011) but only 1/3 of the enterprises are in agriculture (2020); 10 primary producers registered (2020)
Entrepreneurs in the field of tourism and hospitality (2020)	2	33	14
Yearly wine production of the wine region (2011–2020 average)	1,100,000 hl (Kiskunság)	60,000 hl (Hajós-Baja)	100,000 hl (Villány)
Number of wine producers engaging in wine tourism	According to the interviews, there is no wine tourism in the settlement	According to the different sources about 20–25 wineries are active in the open cellars and other wine events (from which we interviewed seven). From the seven founders of the wine association, five have been our interviewee	According to the website of the tourism association, seven wineries are involved in different wine events (festivals, open cellars), five of them were interviewed
Number of accommodation units and lodging capacity	There is no accommodation facility in the settlement officially	There are five to six registered accommodations and several other places to rent	According to the website of the tourism association, 16 guesthouses can be found in the settlement

Sources: Hungarian Central Statistical Office, National Regional Development and Spatial Planning Information System, National Council of the Wine Communities, Hungary, HNT, websites, interviews.

TABLE 2 Detailed list of interviewees

Code	Settlement	Characteristics	Relation to the settlement	Gender	Age	Year
G1	Grapevine	Wine tourism entrepreneur founding member of the tourist association	Settler	Female	30–50	2018
G2	Grapevine	Wine tourism entrepreneur	Settler	Male	30–50	2019
G3	Grapevine	Gastro-entrepreneur and accommodation provider	Settler	Male	30–50	2019
G4	Grapevine	Wine tourism entrepreneur	Outsider	Male	20–30	2019
G5	Grapevine	Native agricultural entrepreneur	Native	Female	50+	2018
G6	Grapevine	Wine tourism entrepreneur and accommodation provider, ex-mayor of the village	Settler	Male	50+	2018
G7	Grapevine	Native entrepreneur	Native	Female	50+	2018
G8	Grapevine	Gastro-entrepreneur	Settler	Male	30–50	2019
G9	Grapevine	Wine tourism entrepreneur and accommodation provider	Settler	Female	50+	2019
G10	Grapevine	Wine tourism entrepreneur	Settler	Male	50+	2019
B1	Barge	Local winemaker, wine tourism entrepreneur	Native	Female	30–50	2020
B2	Barge	Local winemaker, leader of the winemaker community and president of the tourist association	Native	Male	30–50	2020
B3	Barge	Local winemaker, wine tourism entrepreneur	Native	Male	20–30	2020
B4	Barge	Local winemaker and wine tourism entrepreneur	Native	Male	30–50	2020
B5	Barge	Local winemaker, wine tourism entrepreneur and founding member of the tourist association	Native	Male	50+	2020
B6	Barge	Local winemaker, wine tourism entrepreneur	Native	Female	30–50	2020
B7	Barge	Member of a local winemaker family and tourism manager	Native	Female	30–40	2020
B8	Barge	Winemaker, wine tourism entrepreneur	Outsider	Male	30–40	2020
S1	Sandy	Primary producer and president of the winemaker community	Native	Male	50+	2020
S2	Sandy	Local winemaker entrepreneur	Native	Male	40–50	2019
S3	Sandy	Member of a grape-cultivating family, primary producer	Native	Female	30–40	2019
S4	Sandy	Local winemaker entrepreneur	Settler	Female	30–40	2019
S5	Sandy	Primary producer	Settler	Female	50+	2019

Of course, they [those moving in] played an important role because everyone had a vision why they came here. They wanted to make wine or open a wine cellar. So these people already came here with an idea. They didn't just come here to have an easier life (...) And they played a role in the development of the village because if we co-operate and make something, everyone's business will flourish. (G5)<sup>6</sup>

Two of the 10 entrepreneurs whom we interviewed are original inhabitants running a family business; however, most of the local entrepreneurs arrived from somewhere else to start a business in the village. This sense of people 'coming from far away' is strengthened by the trajectories of these new arrivals: They have all travelled to many countries and lived abroad for shorter or longer periods of time (either as tourists or to work), which gave them new experiences, ideas and connections, thereby widening their horizons. Thanks to their lifestyle, they brought a more innovative and open-minded habitus to the settlement, which had an impact on its development. They launched enterprises partly by identifying potential markets and partly through travel and urban experiences, which helped them to create services that better reflect the needs of potential tourists.

These enterprises are strongly rooted in the local culture, resources and traditions. For these entrepreneurs, it is important to provide tourism experiences based on personal, direct encounters with their guests. Local winemakers, caterers and accommodation providers often co-operate well, based on a shared understanding that individual success can only come from joint success. They do not view each other as competitors but rather as offering complementary services. As the number of urban entrepreneurs moving in rises, the social capital in the village is becoming denser—a necessary factor for the embeddedness of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Here, people who left the city or who are entrepreneurs meet each other all the time, there are friendships, too. There is competition, but no jealousy. (G3)

Therefore, informal networking and trust are especially important for these entrepreneurs, notably when launching their enterprises. Such networks provide them with information as well as material and psychological support.

Many people in the village were very open and helpful in terms of how to plant carrots or to make them even (laughs). Really, 'let's plant together'. From that point, they helped my husband in the vineyard and with the wine. And interestingly, it wasn't the young generation but rather the old people we had good relations with. They liked it that we were a bit different. (G1)

A few years ago, a tourist association was founded in Grapevine, which now has one paid employee and works to build the brand of the village. Meanwhile, events are 'distributed' among the members, each of whom is responsible for one or two events, while being supported by all the others.

We have founded a tourist association with a very noble aim, not only for material reasons. The local government spent a lot of money on one event and the mayor and entrepreneurs together thought that it was not fair for the people who don't have a business and don't gain any profit from it. Therefore, the tourist association was founded to take over this part of the village's activities, to make it fair. (G1)

## Barge

Barge is also a Swabian settlement located along the Danube and features one of Europe's largest wine-cellar villages. Grape cultivation and winemaking have a long history in Barge, and wine tourism is not a new phenomenon either. The first wave flourished during the 1980s, mostly thanks to German tourists. However, after the transition in 1990, with the acceleration of the rhythm of life and the changing conditions of earning an income (Kovács, 2010, pp. 206–207), the village was affected by a common social process, namely, the devaluation of family plots and wine cellars.

[...] now it is only two or three of them. And they are between 80 and 90, they are old and tired and don't invite anyone in. But this thing became famous, and tourists kept coming, some by accident, some returned. They remembered being here before. They came again, found everything closed [...] They went home and told people about this beautiful wine-cellar village, but that it's not worth going because everything is closed. (B5)

After lying dormant for 30 years, winemaking in the village started to develop again in the 2010s, driven by the grandchildren of previous winemakers who resumed the craft using the barrels in their grandparents' cellars. They had the image of a glorious past in their minds and decided to revive village life through winemaking and wine tourism. One interviewee, a full-time entrepreneur who owns a sales company in the construction industry, started to make higher-quality wine with his friends and sell it for a higher price. Today, more than 25 wine cellars participate in regular events and promote tourism in the village.

Of course, after a few glasses of wine, men feel stronger and braver and they started to say, 'you can't believe how big tourism used to be here and wine was selling so well and it could make a living' [...] and as we talked about it more and more, we started to go to other wine regions as wine tourists to see what it's like there, how it works. [...] then we came home and considered and 'why not to do the same here in Barge?' And in December 2012, we held the first open cellar days. (B5)

One of Barge's main resources is the cohesion of the local community, which is marked by the protection of traditions and strong bonding social capital. Grape cultivation, winemaking and related activities are a fundamental and organic part of the village. Most of the winemakers are natives of the village who spend most of their lives there. They know each other and have close family, friendship and neighbourhood ties that strengthen the local social network.

Six out of eight interviewees are primary producers, and only one of the interviewees makes and sells wine as a full-time job. The majority of the young vineyard owners just want to keep the local traditions alive while cultivating grapes and making wine in their free time. They do not hire any employees and do not look for external partners but build on local networks only. Worried about losing their traditions and about the depopulation of the village, they recognised that it is in their common interest to engage in wine tourism. However, the attitude of many of them is primarily centred on their work, the joy of 'working out here in the vineyard' and presenting and sharing their product rather than the logic of the market. In the beginning, they invested in production and processing methods in vain, as the village was not as popular as it is today.

In the 2000s, the number of winemakers in the cellar village dropped significantly. Old people slowly died and there was no one to replace them. And then in 2011–2013, people in their 30s started to make wine. This gave quite a good push because it was basically a group of friends who pulled a lot of people with them, including the older generation. (B2)

The reputation and popularity of wine tourism have begun to grow recently. The local winemakers had to come up with a way to attract visitors and customers to enable them to experience the ‘wine-cellar vibe’. They relied on online advertisements and events organised by the local tourism and wine marketing association. Joint tasks, notably the organisation and preparation of events, are carried out on a voluntary basis. The tourist association provides organisational support and an independent budget. But those entrepreneurs who would like to (and are able to) make a living from winemaking and related tourism activities need more than that. The successful winemakers, in addition to their local connections, have established a large network of partners throughout the country and believe that the key to their success is open-mindedness. They try to be present everywhere they can to promote their wine:

We know that if you went to a restaurant and a sommelier didn’t offer you Riesling italo from Barge, you would never taste it [...]. We bring the wine to restaurants because this is where sommeliers tell its story to the guests. Not like simple restaurants, where it doesn’t matter what you drink, but they give you a story. (...) Wherever our partners invite us, we go there. No matter what... this is always our priority, that we need to be personally present at smaller tasting events. People wouldn’t come here without any information, but if we go there and they personally get to know our wine, they will likely come visit us. (B1)

Professional know-how is freely shared within the community. This is an advantage in itself, but also provides special opportunities for smaller winemakers in terms of professional development and connections.

There is a wine region roundtable but in the form of the association. We taste and evaluate each other’s wines and try to form a characteristic wine image about specific grape varieties and specific wines. (...) Unfortunately, I have to admit that there are some winemakers who make wine of a quality that we are not proud of. But we try not to alienate them, but to help them on a path that brings the wine village forward. (B4)

## Sandy

Located on the Great Plain of Hungary, Sandy is a village with extensive farmsteads where grapes were first planted in the age of Empress Maria Theresa to prevent wind erosion of the sandy soil. Due to the poor quality of the soil and the difficulty of making a living, Sandy was established by settlers arriving from different places and in different waves (Pivarcsi, 2001). The fluctuation of the population is high, many people have left the village and many new residents have moved in. The biggest problem of the village is ageing, as most young people leave the family farm, and it is losing its charm with the changing conditions of earning an income.

Well, I think the problem is that families do not have more than 3–4 hectares of land. It is cultivated by the old people, but young people won't take it, because it's not enough to make a living. [...] I am saying that young people prefer to work in a workplace or move from the village. They see that it was a burden on their parents... they don't care and leave. (S1)

The community has thus become 'diluted', and the communication among its members is fragmented. Continuous population movements have also prevented the formation of a cohesive community, and there is not much of a civic spirit that would make the village attractive for young people looking to co-operate and launch an enterprise.

The village's natural endowments, past and resources are similar to the other two, but the soft factors of success seem to be missing: Social capital is eroded and there is a high level of mistrust in the community.

There's a girl who bakes things around here. She has been reported [to the National Tax and Customs Office]. People are envious in such a small village. So they don't take care of their own business... but report her. (S3)

Mistrust and scepticism towards the idea of fair growth—which is most visible in Sandy in our study—pose serious obstacles to economic growth. Three out of five interviewees in Sandy mentioned 'tax-free' or illegal economic activities. From the interviews, it emerged that this is common practice in the village and that most of the local entrepreneurs have gone down this path.

Now there is not enough work. I think if you are tricky or don't keep all rules, you can go high up. (S3)

In the background of this material, the mentality is different values associated with the culture of grape cultivation and winemaking. For the people of Sandy, the winemaking tradition is generally not an inherited value, but an opportunity to make money.

Well, I've been thinking for 2 or 3 weeks now that I don't even want to work that much anymore. Now I will cut out the vines that I cultivate without making real money from them. So, it makes no sense for me to just work for that. (S1)

As there is no sufficient motivation for investing any work and money in their craft, the local winemakers cannot keep up with changes in the market, meaning they fall behind the competition and need to shut down their grape-processing activities.

I used to send wine to Budapest in many trucks, but it's coming to an end. People prefer to buy bottled wine from shops. I didn't want to bring the wine for bottling because it would take a lot of development. I would need employees, bottling machines and all. And I cannot put that much work into it. (S1)

There are a few successful winemakers in Sandy who are willing to work with others to promote their wine across the country, but their attitude towards the local community is more guarded. This is not necessarily true of personal relations, but of the flow of business-related information; there is no evidence of co-operative bridging social capital since neighbourhood and friendship relations are also weak among the locals. 'Sometimes... they tell me that I don't care about people

in the village, there are so many programmes where I should go to. But I prefer to be on my own in the land' (S2).

## DISCUSSION

In this section, we will compare and evaluate our three case studies along the dimensions of values and attitudes, social capital and trust and provide sociological explanations for the differences we found (for a more structured comparison, see Table 3).

### Values and attitudes

We found several differences in values and attitudes between the case studies: While the winemakers of Barge proudly take care of their inherited vineyards and their typical Swabian wine cellars, the inhabitants of Sandy have been producing wine for the market with fluctuating levels of profit from the very beginning. In Barge, winemaking is simultaneously considered a value, a tradition and an innovative vision, while Grapevine offers opportunities for innovative and open-minded lifestyle entrepreneurs to launch creative and free-spirited economic activities in the rural setting they longed for. Chiefly in the case of Grapevine, but at a certain level even in Barge, we can detect the initiation of a values-based territorial food network. In Sandy, by contrast, grape cultivation and winemaking are considered a rather difficult profession and way of making a living.

Regarding entrepreneurial values and attitudes, Barge confirmed Newberry's (2011) findings since a classical innovative entrepreneur was the first pioneer who involved the rest of the community in a collectively entrepreneurial ecosystem. Most of the other members do not have an entrepreneurial attitude but a more traditional peasant mentality (Kovács, 2010) in which work in itself, the freedom to engage in it and land ownership, is important. Our results also reinforce the importance of imagination, belief and passion for 'pioneer' investors (Güzel et al., 2021), which characterise the first lifestyle entrepreneurs in Grapevine.

### Social capital and trust

In general, our case studies confirm the importance of social capital in the success of rural wine tourism (Dias & Silva, 2021; McGehee et al., 2010; Xu et al., 2020). In both economically prosperous cases (Grapevine and Barge), we found a strong local network and information sharing within the community, as well as co-ordination of activities and collective decision-making (in the form of a local tourism association). However, there is a significant difference between the two: in Barge, bonding social capital acts as the driver, and collective action is primarily based on a strong sense of community, strong ties and shared social norms, without much of an external network. In the case of Grapevine meanwhile, the entrepreneurs moving in introduced a large amount of bridging social capital. Nevertheless, social capital and co-operative action created a wine tourism ecosystem in both cases. By contrast, the case of Sandy showed that a lack of trust and joint activities can be a serious obstacle to entrepreneurial development. Mistrust and scepticism towards the idea of fair business dealings—which in our study are most visible in Sandy—constitute seriously hamper economic growth.

TABLE 3 Comparative table of the three case studies

	<b>Exogen resources</b>	<b>Social capital and embeddedness</b>	<b>Co-operation versus competition</b>	<b>Entrepreneurial development and entrepreneurial ecosystem</b>
<b>Grapevine</b>	<p>Exogen resources</p> <p>Past and culture (grape cultivation and wine production have a long history), local workers, the village's natural endowments, incomers</p>	<p>Social capital and embeddedness</p> <p>Strong social capital (bonding, bridging)</p>	<p>Co-operation versus competition</p> <p>Co-operation instead of competition, tourist association</p>	<p>Entrepreneurial development and entrepreneurial ecosystem</p> <p>Mixed: exogen-endogen development, immigration of lifestyle entrepreneurs resulting a strong entrepreneurial wine tourism ecosystem</p>
<b>Barge</b>	<p>Exogen resources</p> <p>Network of partners (shared)</p>	<p>Social capital and embeddedness</p> <p>Local-incomers partnership (bridging), external partnership (bridging)</p>	<p>Co-operation versus competition</p> <p>Co-operation instead of competition, tourist association</p>	<p>Entrepreneurial development and entrepreneurial ecosystem</p> <p>Endogen development resulting a self-made entrepreneurial wine tourism ecosystem</p>
<b>Sandy</b>	<p>Exogen resources</p> <p>external partnerships</p>	<p>Social capital and embeddedness</p> <p>(bonding) external partnership, high level of mistrust, close kinship (bridging)</p>	<p>Co-operation versus competition</p> <p>Competition and mistrust</p>	<p>Entrepreneurial development and entrepreneurial ecosystem</p> <p>atomised community, wine tourism is practically non-existent</p>



## Entrepreneurial ecosystems

According to the literature (Bodor & Grünhut, 2015; Hankiss, 1986) mistrust and scepticism towards fair business contribute to passivity, prevent the forming of a co-operative community of local winemakers and grape cultivators, and thereby inhibit new ideas and co-operation. Common values and goals and awareness thereof are necessary elements for the establishment of active, self-developing communities (Hankiss, 1986). In Barge, the winemakers' efforts are sustained by strong local cohesion and social capital built on neighbourhood, family and friendship relations. Besides, a self-developing community has evolved that promotes the pursuit and recognition of common interests and goals, rooted in strong local social capital, a shared cultural heritage and a culture of cohesion. 'It works well because everyone has the same goal: To have a life here' (B6). Despite the fact that grapes do not have the same strong cultural value in Sandy as in Barge, an entrepreneur with an innovative and creative spirit could launch food and wine tourism there of the type seen in Grapevine, where the incoming entrepreneurs did not have any connection with winemaking before. However, in a passive community, there is no real possibility for self-development.

## Socio-demographic and economic factors

In addition to proving the importance of values, attitudes, social capital and trust, we also tried to explain the differences between the cases based on the socio-demographic and economic backgrounds of our interviewees. The entrepreneurs in Grapevine and Barge are generally younger and more educated and therefore more open to innovation and entrepreneurship than the farmers of Sandy. While most of the interviewees in Grapevine have a university degree, and those in Barge typically have higher or post-secondary qualifications, the interviewees in Sandy graduated from vocational or secondary schools. Grapevine's lifestyle entrepreneurs are older and more educated than their colleagues in Barge; they tend to run non-agricultural enterprises and have different values. They are attracted by the rural lifestyle and engage in a careful balancing act between work and pleasure; but at the same time, they have joined networks that allow them to promote and develop their local area as opposed to the entrepreneurs in Barge who put a lot of effort into their work and production (in line with the typical work ethos of Swabian peasants), with little time and energy left for marketing. The older and less educated entrepreneurs in Sandy tend to be more close-minded, causing them to turn inwards and limit their social contacts. Sandy's farmers are also poorer than their colleagues in the other two settlements, given that the latter have stable jobs in addition to their vineyards. While the interviewees in Grapevine and Barge can draw on salaries from full-time jobs and strive to have multiple sources of income, the producers in Sandy try to make a living from grapes and wine alone.

## CONCLUSION

Following the global trend that started in the mid-1990s, rural wine and food tourism gained popularity in Hungary in the 2010s. However, not all picturesque rural areas benefit equally from this trend. Our research in three Hungarian wine-growing villages sought to determine what makes one settlement successful while another struggles, besides the obvious differences in their natural endowments. Our assumption was that 'soft' elements—community and entrepreneurial

values, attitudes, networks, social capital and trust—are as important as the physical conditions in explaining the economic success of prosperous rural settlements or may even counterbalance them. It is no secret that no ‘Hungarian Beaujolais’ has yet emerged, but in the case of Barge, all the conditions are in place for the village to become a popular and successful wine tourism destination in the near future; and in the case of Grapevine, creative and innovative lifestyle entrepreneurs have maximised the natural endowments of the village, turning it into a popular domestic destination.

In the first case study, Grapevine, the village became a successful brand due to different waves of rural gentrification and its location in a famous Hungarian wine region: The arrival of pioneer gentrifiers (mostly artists and urban intellectuals) and the inflow of lifestyle entrepreneurs resulted in the formation of a creative tourist association that organises regular gastro events, thereby attracting wealthy urban visitors who pay a higher price for the local ‘handcrafted’ wine and food.

Barge, the second village in our study, is an example of embedded transformation, where economic revival and the development of tourism did not come from the outside but from a new generation of local winemakers. This generation, the grandchildren of the original winemakers, exhibit a new entrepreneurial attitude, innovativeness in the use of social media in their marketing activities and have given a fresh impetus to the village, whose tourism sector was underdeveloped for many years.

In the third settlement, Sandy, we found mistrust, a lack of inherited values, inflexibility, a feeling of vulnerability and acceptance of illegal economic activities. Most of our interviews here revealed a lack of openness and trust and the under-utilisation of social capital. Vineyard owners do not co-operate or support each other, and innovative entrepreneurship and collaboration are largely absent. As a result, there is no evidence of ideas and co-operation aimed at the development of the village. The local winemaking operations are therefore much less profitable than in the other two villages—despite larger volumes of production—given that they have been unable to build a brand or set up the kind of complex wine tourism services that would increase their income.

Our results reinforce many of the earlier findings regarding the role of wine tourism in local development, while some points refine them. As many authors described earlier (Getz & Brown, 2006; Pratt & Carlini, 2019; Tassiopoulos & Haydam, 2006), building personal contacts with customers and educating them is especially important for increasing future sales, especially for wine producers in emerging regions as we saw in the case of Barge.

In both successful case studies, wine tourism is based on a more complex ‘terroir’ experience rather than just wine tasting or wine events as Kastenholz et al. (2021) described it. Especially in Grapevine, we found that local arts, architecture, natural beauty, heritage, food and lifestyle are part of this experience, while authentic architecture and heritage are also an important part of the offer in Barge.

In Grapevine, there is strong evidence that wine tourism contributes to the local economy by generating tax revenues as well as employment and income; meanwhile, in Barge, we found evidence that wine tourism helps locals to protect their cultural identity and the cohesion of the community, in line with the findings of Güzel (2016), Güzel et al. (2021) and Scorrano et al. (2018).

Our results reinforce the findings of Güzel et al. (2021) that winemakers tend to focus on wine production instead of wine tourism. This is the case in Sandy, where wine tourism is practically non-existent, but it was also the situation in Barge before an innovative and risk-taking entrepreneur arrived who was embedded enough to involve others in the development of wine tourism events and marketing. In Grapevine, we found a rather different situation, as most of the

winemakers are lifestyle entrepreneurs who moved in first and then developed comprehensive business opportunities in wine tourism. While they stimulated the collaboration of other stakeholders in the development of local rural tourism, they had an external 'tourist' point of view, resulting innovative ways of 'selling the place'.

As this research shows, a high proportion of tourism entrepreneurs can have a positive impact on rural development, which can be further stimulated by entrepreneurs moving in—this positive cycle was clearly apparent in Grapevine, while it is not typical of the neighbouring villages. Our results reinforce the findings of Akgün et al. (2011) and Gülümser et al (2009) that entrepreneurship-driven rural development is not necessarily due to an influx of outside entrepreneurs: As the example of Barge demonstrates, an endogenous ecosystem of entrepreneurship can come into being without any entrepreneurs moving in.

Concerning the first research question, we can summarise our findings whether a village succeeds at boosting the local economy and attracting wine tourism depends on factors such as entrepreneurs' attitudes towards each other, the wider business environment, mutual assistance, co-operation, the organisation of joint events and the establishment of tourist associations, while a lack of trust and social cohesion have adverse effects.

As for the second question, whether successful development requires the inflow of urban lifestyle entrepreneurs or can also be facilitated by a 'self-made entrepreneur community', we found that both can work: Entrepreneurship-driven rural development can be initiated by the influx of outside entrepreneurs (as in Grapevine)—or, as the example of Barge demonstrates, an endogenous ecosystem of entrepreneurship can come into being without any entrepreneurs moving in.

## LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The main limitation of the study results from its qualitative nature: Our case-study fields are three randomly sampled settlements; thus, we cannot generalise the main conclusions, nor estimate the proportion of the above presented different wine-based development paths among other villages. The evaluation of their success in the long run will be a topic of further research as well as widening and deepening our knowledge of the 'ingredients' of successful rural entrepreneurial ecosystems, especially in emerging economies.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

## ETHICS STATEMENT

The authors confirm that no ethical approval was needed. The interviewees were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they will be anonymised.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

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## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>For the sake of anonymisation, we assigned fictional names to the villages.
- <sup>2</sup>Gastro tourism is chiefly important in the case of Grapevine, since four restaurants have been established in the last decade in the village. This case demonstrates how can a successful wine tourism initiate a wider development of food tourism, as well as a whole rural development.
- <sup>3</sup>The definition of native, settler and outsider in Table 1 are the followings: Native is a person born in the settlement, settler is a person who moved in the settlement, outsider is a person who does not live in the settlement; however his/her enterprise operates there.
- <sup>4</sup>We participated in five to seven gastro and wine events in Grapevine and Barge from 2018 to 2021 and spent several days in Sandy in 2019.
- <sup>5</sup>Swabians is a collective term for the German-speaking population in the Danube River valley. Most Swabian villages were founded after the expulsion of the Ottomans in order to repopulate the area and restore agriculture. After World War II, the majority of the Danube Swabians were expelled, their property seized and many were deported to labour camps in the Soviet Union.
- <sup>6</sup>For details of the interviewees, see Table 1.

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