

# Transition to a **Sustainable Economy**: A Scoping Review of Literature Focused on **Sustainable Gastronomy**

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**Abstract** | The economic sustainability of destinations has become an evolving topic, specifically in the gastronomic tourism sector where new strategies are being called to make the sector more competitive and sustainable through the proposal of models for transitioning to a sustainable economy, supported by eco-friendly production and consumption. Despite the increasing interest in the topic, there is a scarcity of synthesis studies mapping research in sustainable gastronomy tourism, particularly regarding conceptualization, construct denominations, and fundamental factors for transitioning to a sustainable economy. The objective of this study is to map the literature on sustainable gastronomic tourism and to identify the factors of gastronomic tourism that may condition the transition to a sustainable economy. This objective is achieved through a scoping review of the literature, supplemented with a bibliometric study. Gastronomic tourism stands out as a crucial sector for transitioning to more sustainable economies by promoting low impact consumption and production and contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The analysis undertaken allowed us to conclude that the topic is increasingly capturing the interest of academia, although the current state of the literature is characterized by a reduced heterogeneity in research methods and that studies are predominantly focused on food

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production, accommodation and food and wine tourism, with a lack of studies involving other typologies of tourism. Avenues for future research are identified as well as the limitations of the current study. This topic of study is witnessing the development of a truly inclusive transtheoretical, multidisciplinary applied field of practice, however there is a scarcity of synthesis studies in the literature. This research addresses this gap contributing to conceptual clarity. From a practical perspective, the study also highlights gastronomic tourism management practices and policies that may improve the sustainability of the industry.

**Keywords** | Scoping review, gastronomy experience, sustainable economy, sustainable gastronomy, sustainable destination management

## **1. Introduction**

Sustainability has become a primary concern in the tourism sector in recent years, leading the industry to rethink their strategies (Bucar et al., 2019; Nicolosi et al., 2019; Afanasieva et al., 2022). New strategies have emerged from tourism actors post-Covid-19 pandemic, focusing on rethinking destination management models geared towards sustainability and implementing sustainable policies that consider the needs of the destination and the local population, as well as raise awareness among local actors prompting them to participate in sustainable development (Bezemer, 2021; Sumanapala & Wolf, 2022). The aim is to strengthen the competitiveness and attractiveness of destinations (Andrades & Dimanche, 2017; Antonakakis et al., 2019; Breiby et al., 2020) while promoting the sustainable development of local economies (Aall et al., 2015; Pratt et al., 2017; Bertocchi et al., 2021). Methods to maintain a balance between the economic, political, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development are crucial (Everett & Slocum, 2013; Biekša et al., 2022; Branstrator et al., 2023) and there is a need for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from the 2030 Agenda in the tourism sector (Cardoso, 2020; Branstrator et al., 2023; Di Pierro et al., 2023). Moreover, strategic partnerships among stakeholders in the tourism sector are essential in the planning and development of sustainable processes (Antonakakis et al., 2019; Kapecki, 2020; Albrecht et al., 2022). Simultaneously, these strategies should ensure tourism's contribution to local economic development in various spheres, such as increasing tourist demand, and promoting local production (Zamarreño et al., 2021; Bădan & Fîntîneru, 2022).

Sustainability is widely accepted as a desirable and politically appropriate approach to tourism development and this topic has captured the attention of academia (de Oliveira et al., 2024). Among studies related to transitioning to a sustainable economy, there are a few literature reviews that focus on the role of sustainable consumption in sustainable economy and growth (Lorek & Spangenberg, 2014) and the economic and social effects for transitioning to a green and sustainable economy in the tourism sector (Barbiroli, 2011). The literature highlights the following barriers in transitioning to a sustainable economy in the sector of tourism: lack of information on the benefits of transitioning to a sustainable economy (Sevarlic et al., 2012; Lawrenz et al., 2021), low environmental awareness among stakeholders in the gastronomic sector (Sevarlic et al., 2012; Guinot, 2020; Lawrenz et al., 2021), and insufficient sustainable policies (Sevarlic et al., 2012; Betz, 2015; Bernini & Cerqua, 2020; Dinica, 2021; Al-Housani et al., 2023).

Nowadays, it is thought that gastronomy plays a significant role in influencing travelers' decisions (Forrest et al., 2023). Food is an essential part of travel, and travellers often spend a large percentage of their budget in food consumption (Kuhn et al., 2024). Sustainability, experience, authenticity, culture, and tradition are some important values associated with the new gastronomy tourism movement (Tendani, 2023). Several authors have voiced concern about the necessity of implementing sustainable policies that consider the economic, social, and environmental aspects of sustainable development regarding the management of gastronomic events (Diaconescu et al., 2016; Kim & Kim, 2018). The food system contributes to land and water degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change (Richardson & Fernqvist, 2024).

Joassart-Marcelli (2021) introduced the concept of “gastrodevelopment” when referring to the link between gastronomy and economic development. According to the author, tourist destinations can strategically use local cuisine for branding and regional development, thereby improving tourists' experiences and reinforcing regional identity. Despite the increasing interest in the topic, there is a scarcity of synthesis studies mapping research in sustainable gastronomy tourism. As noted by authors such as D'Amato et al. (2019), Lawrenz et al. (2021) and Forrest et al. (2023) there is the need to develop theoretical foundations of sustainable economy linking gastronomic tourism and territorial sustainability as a way to generate local wealth. In this context, the following research question is proposed: *Are there precedents regarding the identification of factors in gastronomic tourism that condition the transition to a sustainable economy?*. Related with the research question that guides this study, the general objective of this research is to map the literature on sustainable gastronomy

and to identify the factors in gastronomic tourism that condition the transition to a sustainable economy. Secondly, this study also aims to determine the background and theoretical foundations associated with the research topic, identify possible gaps in the existing literature, and recommend lines of future research.

The study is structured as follows: in section two, the groundwork behind the research (background and fundamental theoretical aspects) is formulated, followed by the description of the research methodology in section three. Subsequently, the research results are revealed in section four, and the conclusions of the study are presented in section five.

## **2. Conceptual background**

The concept of sustainable development emerged in the 20th century in the Brundtland Report (Lorek & Spangenberg, 2014; Guinot, 2020; Biekša et al., 2022), but it was only with the definition of the 17 SDGs in the 2030 Agenda in 2015 that concern arose about linking sustainability to the services sector (Cardoso, 2020; Biekša et al., 2022; Branstrator et al., 2023). On the other side, the Covid-19 pandemic led to a global economic crisis (Cristina et al., 2021; Diepolder et al., 2021; Oncioiu et al., 2021), prompting governments to focus on implementing public policies aimed at developing the local economy (Alam et al., 2021; Bezemer, 2021), fostering public-private partnerships (Kapecki, 2020; Dell'ovo et al., 2021), and motivated increased concern for the implementation of the 17 SDGs of the 2030 Agenda (Biekša et al., 2022; Alabdulwahab, 2023). The relevance of sustainable economy has been referenced by academia in relation to various topics including the need to increase tourism revenues (Bernini, 2020), reducing the environmental footprint (Chekima et al., 2016; Felicio et al., 2021; Biekša et al., 2022), stimulating business innovation (Biekša et al., 2022; Hyk et al., 2022), and supporting environmental and social sustainability (Santeramo et al., 201; Petrescu et al., 2020).

The tourism industry emerges as an important tool for diversifying and promoting the local economy (Bernini, 2020) through the adoption of sustainable practices that ensure the equitable economic development of the regions (Dolnicar & Leisch, 2008; McLoughlin et al., 2018; Abd Hamid et al., 2021), supported by public policies that regulate sustainable destination management (Dredge & Jamal, 2013; Guinot, 2020) and contribute to the well-being of the local communities (Chinwong et al., 2021; Branstrator et al., 2023).

The notion of gastronomic tourism dates back to Long's (1998) use of the term “culinary tourism” and reflects the idea of experiencing other cultures through local cuisine (Moreira et al., 2024). Gastronomic experiences are important for tourism activity since local food and cuisine reflect a destination’s cultural heritage (Kuhn et al., 2024). For example, traditional Portuguese cuisine was defined as an intangible asset that is part of Portugal's cultural heritage through the Resolution of the Council of Ministers No. 96/2000:3618. The recognition of its value creates increased responsibilities regarding the defence of its authenticity. Authentic gastronomic offers, with a regional identity can strength customer relationships and foster sustainability (Salvado & Kastenholz, 2024).

Considering the relevance of the sustainable management of gastronomic events, it may be necessary to introduce changes in the design and management of these events, which reduce the environmental impact and guarantee the economic viability and well-being of local communities. Sustainable gastronomy has prominently contributed to promoting the sustainable economy by encouraging the preservation of gastronomic authenticity (Clodoveo et al., 2021; Pramezwary et al., 2022), fostering local production and consumption (Chekima et al., 2016; Hosoda, 2016; Hasanzade et al., 2022), and incentivizing the implementation of sustainable policies in the production, distribution, and consumption chain in the gastronomic sector (Everett & Slocum, 2012; Forrest et al., 2023), which influence the reduction of waste and emissions of gases into the atmosphere (Scholz et al., 2014; Harrer et al., 2021).

## **2.1. Main theoretical approaches**

In terms of conceptualizing the construct of sustainable economy few studies address its definition. Lorek and Spangenberg (2014) define it as sustainable forms of consumption and production that reduce environmental impacts and ensure human well-being. On the other hand, Al-Thani and Koç (2023) go further and analyse the evolution of the concept of sustainable economy from 1700 to 2050, defining it as a dynamic and balanced economic system that meets human needs within ecological and social limits, without compromising the system's ability to meet the needs of future generations. Furthermore, according to D'Amato et al. (2019), Fiksel et al. (2021), and Oncioiu et al. (2021), sustainable economy has given rise to different denominations that encompass the concept itself and include the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, including:

- (i) Bioeconomy: economy system based on the production and use of renewable biological resources and the consequent conversion of these resources and waste into

value-added products, such as food, feed, biological products and bioenergy (European Commission, 2012);

- (ii) Circular economy: economic system that is based on business models which replace the end-of-life principle with reducing, reusing, recycling and recovering materials in production/distribution and consumption processes (Kirchherr et al., 2017; Guinot, 2020; Fiksel et al., 2021; Vamza et al., 2021);
- (iii) Green economy: actions employed to protect the environment and increase the competitiveness and productivity of resources relevant to the economy (Oncioiu et al., 2021);
- (iv) Knowledge economy: knowledge-based economy encompassing sustainable technological solutions (D'Amato et al., 2019; Al-Thani & Koç, 2023).

## **2.2. Key factors for transition to a sustainable economy**

Sustainable development of gastronomic tourism is undoubtedly important due to its influence on social, cultural values, the natural environment, and the local economy (Aliyev, 2022; Tryzno & Piechołk, 2022), and is considered a sustainable model for the economic development of local communities (Niedbala et al., 2020; Di Pierro et al., 2023; Eren et al., 2023). Academia emphasises that the transition to more sustainable tourism practices involves paying attention to the following SGD, established by the United Nations in its 2030 Agenda:

- (i) Eradicating poverty: Implementing policies that ensure the sustainable development of the region (Cardoso, 2020; Cristina et al., 2021);
- (ii) Decent work and economic growth: Strengthening and diversifying sustainable ecosystems in small and medium-sized enterprises (Santeramo et al., 2017; Al-Housani et al., 2023; Forrest et al., 2023);
- (iii) Sustainable cities and communities: Promoting the reuse and recycling of municipal waste to ensure the economic prosperity of the destination (Cardoso, 2020; Biekša et al., 2022);
- (iv) Responsible production and consumption: Encouraging the implementation of sustainable production, consumption methods (Hosoda, 2016; Harrer et al., 2021; Armutcu et al., 2023), and practices (Mendes et al., 2021; Castillo-Manzano &

Zarzoso, 2023), throughout different links in the production chain, for example, in the agricultural sector (Hasanzade et al., 2022; Arslan et al., 2023; Zain et al., 2023), to preserve gastronomic authenticity (Clodoveo et al., 2021; Pramezwary et al., 2022);

- (v) Partnerships to achieve the SDGs: Establishing public-private partnerships (Berg & Hukkinen, 2011; Everett & Slocum, 2013; Creech et al., 2014; Alola et al., 2019; Kebete & Wondirad, 2019; Fang et al., 2022), which promote support for local producers, increase consumer demand, and reinforce local tourism (Sevarlic et al., 2012; Nicolosi et al., 2019), and also stimulate the development of public policies that respond to the needs of stakeholders in the gastronomic sector (Everett & Slocum, 2013; Creech et al., 2014; Cristina et al., 2021; Al-Housani et al., 2023) and regulate sustainable environmental practices (Dinica, 2021; Felício et al., 2021; Khahro et al., 2021).

In relation to gastronomic events, possible routes to achieve the sustainability of these events emphasised in the literature include: involving local stakeholders in event sustainability issues (Ioppolo et al., 2016); improving the design and management of the events (Jasiński & Żabiński, 2022); conciliating the need for reducing the environmental impact of the events with the economic viability and social well-being of the communities (Fassio, 2017); preserving authenticity (Borcoman & Sorea, 2023); and leading tourists to increase spending on the events (Bitušíková, 2023).

In order to mitigate the negative impacts on the environment (Mariappan et al., 2019; Guinot, 2020; Niedbala et al., 2020) and support the equitable development of local communities (Alola et al., 2019; Antonakakis et al., 2019; Cristina et al., 2021), academia also recommends the following actions in the gastronomic tourism sector: reducing carbon dioxide emissions (Santeramo et al., 2017; D'Amato et al., 2019) and food waste (Fiskel et al., 2020; Antunes et al., 2022) through the promotion of sustainable production and consumption (Barbiroli, 2011; Lorek & Spangenberg, 2014; Chekima et al., 2016; Weinberg, 2000; Ionescu et al., 2020; Bădan & Fîntîneru, 2022; Armutcu et al., 2023). To implement these actions, experts emphasise the importance of balancing the various dimensions of sustainable development (economic, political, social, and environmental) (Cardoso, 2020; Cristina et al., 2021; Di Pierro et al., 2023).

### 3. Methodology

To summarise the current literature, identify gaps and define a future research agenda (Tricco et al., 2016; Kastner et al., 2012; Peters et al., 2021), a scoping review technique was employed in this study (Appendix 1). Scoping reviews are an increasingly popular form of knowledge synthesis method that can be applied in alternative to systematic reviews to clarify or map the use of key concepts (Colquhoun et al., 2014; Tricco et al., 2018). Colquhoun et al. (2014) defines a scoping review as “a form of knowledge synthesis that addresses an exploratory research question aimed at mapping key concepts, types of evidence, and gaps in research related to a defined area or field by systematically searching, selecting, and synthesizing existing knowledge” (pp. 1293-1294). According to Tricco et al. (2016), scoping reviews differ from systematic literature reviews in the sense that while scoping reviews are exploratory in nature, being more suitable to examine areas that are emerging, or to present a broad overview of studies results, without a concern for studies’ quality assessment, systematic literature reviews, which emerged in the area of medicine, are more suitable to address very specific research questions, based on particular criteria of interest. According to Peters et al. (2018), if the research is focused in the identification of certain characteristics/concepts in papers or studies, and in the mapping, reporting or discussion of these characteristics/concepts, then a scoping review is the better option than a systematic literature review. Considering the explorative nature of the present study, which does not involve hypothesis testing, the authors opted to conduct a scoping review (Peters et al., 2015; Munn et al., 2018; Pollock et al., 2022). Table 1 offers a comparison between the two review methods.

Table 1 – Objectives of systematic and scoping reviews

Systematic Review	Scoping Review
Examine the data pertaining to specific phenomena.	To determine the kinds of evidence that are available in a certain field.
Verify existing procedures, look into any deviations, find new procedures, and test hypotheses.	To define important terms or concepts in the literature or to pinpoint important traits or elements associated with a concept.
Determine and provide information for future study areas.	To investigate the methods used in research on a particular subject or area.
Determine and investigate contradicting findings.	As a precursor to a systematic review.
Guide decision-making.	To determine and examine knowledge gaps.

Source: Based on Peters et al. (2018)



According to the original methodological framework for scoping reviews published by Arksey and O'Malley (2005), the process of conducting a scoping review involves the following stages: (i) identifying the research question; (ii) identifying relevant studies; (iii) selecting studies; (iv) charting the data; (v) collating, summarising, and reporting the results (5).

On December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a literature search was conducted using the alternative terms "gastronomy tourism\*", "gastronomy experience", "gastronomy sustainable\*", "sustainable economy", "sustainable destination management", in the title, abstract, and keywords. Articles written in languages other than English were excluded, as well as publications that are not peer-reviewed scientific articles (e.g., books, book chapters, conference proceedings). The Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus databases were used for the literature search, as they are the two leading sources of English-language peer-reviewed academic articles in social sciences (Baceta et al., 2019; Zhu & Liu, 2020; Prancutè, 2021).

The selection of articles was carried out in two phases: initially, titles and abstracts were read, and articles that did not correspond to the research objective were discarded. In the second phase, the focus shifted to reading the full texts of the articles. After reading the articles, a snowball technique was applied to identify further relevant articles for the research. Following this process, a final sample of 88 articles was obtained for subsequent content analysis. The selection process is represented in figure 1. The data analysis technique applied to summarise the studies was content analysis. The categorization scheme followed an inductive logic, in which categories and sub-categories were defined based on the reading of the articles.

Furthermore, to analyse the content of the selected articles, a bibliometric analysis was conducted using the VOSviewer software. This tool is useful for mapping bibliographic data for research purposes and establishing associations between key terms, and it has been employed by López et al. (2018), Niñerola et al. (2019), and Donthu et al. (2021) in similar studies. Vosviewer performs visualization of similarities and multidimensional scaling, to generate bibliometric maps. Van Eck and Waltman's (2014) recommendations regarding the number of occurrences (minimum 9), and percentage selection of the terms retrieved (60%), were employed. Also, to prevent deviation in the data, fractional counting was considered preferable over full counting (Perianes-Rodriguez, Waltman, & Van Eck, 2016).

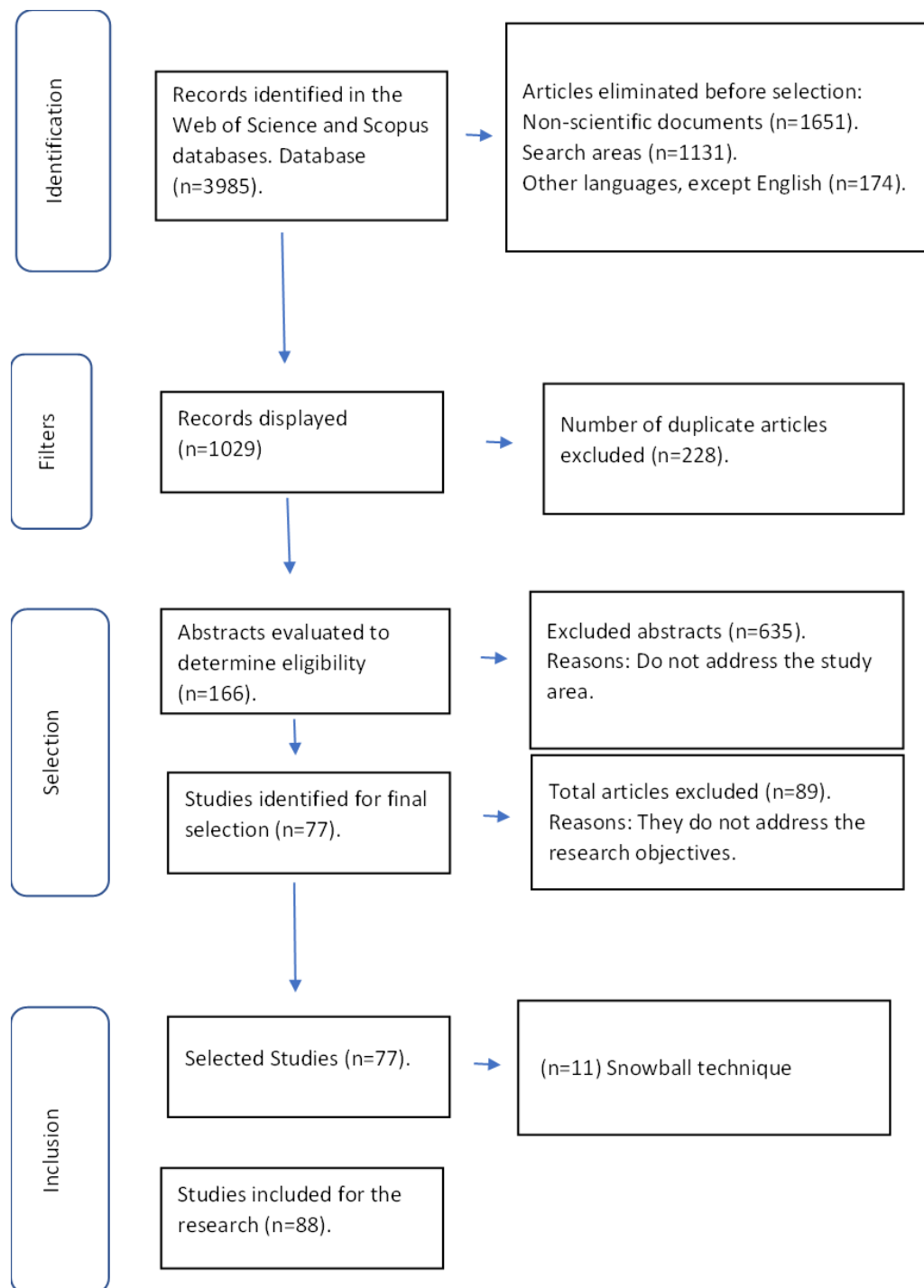


Figure 1 - Prisma Flow Diagram

Source: Authors (2024)

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Bibliometric study

Out of a total of 2615 terms found, 34 were automatically selected by the Vosviewer Software. The software automatically correlates the words, dividing them into five main clusters, identified by colours: yellow, green, blue, red, and violet. Figure 2 presents the relationships of the clusters and the words or sets of words that relate to them. The yellow cluster is focused on the effects of the coronavirus disease pandemic on the sector. Studies included in it mostly analyse the crisis's impact on the sector, as well as stakeholders' perceptions of these effects, and how actors reacted (e.g. Alam et al., 2021; Fiksel et al., 2021). The green cluster focuses on food production. These studies are centered in the topics of responsible production, organic farming, food security, certification procedures, and how these can contribute to heritage and authenticity preservation (e.g. Berg & Hukkinen, 2011; Everett & Slocum, 2013; Arslan et al., 2023). The blue cluster includes articles on the transition to a sustainable economy, highlighting the main challenges and constraints, including the need to balance between gastronomy tourism, community development, and the social impact of the sector (e.g. Andrades & Dimanche, 2017; Afanasieva et al., 2022). Furthermore, the red cluster covers the implementation of the SDGs. Articles within this cluster analyse sustainable economic development according to the SDGs, by using indices of integrated sustainable development and environmental footprint (e.g. Cristina et al., 2021; Biekša et al., 2023). Lastly, the violet cluster reflects research on the circular economy in gastronomic tourism in urban spaces. These studies investigate circular economy systems within gastronomic events, managers' understanding of circular concepts, and the progress made in adopting these practices (e.g. Guinot, 2020; Antunes et al., 2022).

Figure 3 presents the relationship between the most relevant terms found in the articles and studies by year. The period from 2018-2021 is identified as having the highest number of research and term correlations. The concern in studying the impact of gastronomic tourism on sustainability and the economy began to rise from 2019 onwards (e.g. Bucar et al., 2019; Mariappan et al., 2019; Meneguel et al., 2019), with specific studies identified in food production (farmers) from mid-2020 onwards (e.g. Ionescu et al., 2020; Hasanzade et al., 2022; Armutcu et al., 2023). After 2021, studies related to sustainable development goals (e.g. Khahro et al., 2021; Biekša et al., 2023), the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (e.g. Oncioiu et al., 2021; Tryzno & Piechotk, 2022), the circular economy (e.g. Lawrenz et al., 2021; Vamza et al., 2021), and bioeconomy (e.g. Dinica, 2021; Al-Thani & Koç 2023) prevail.

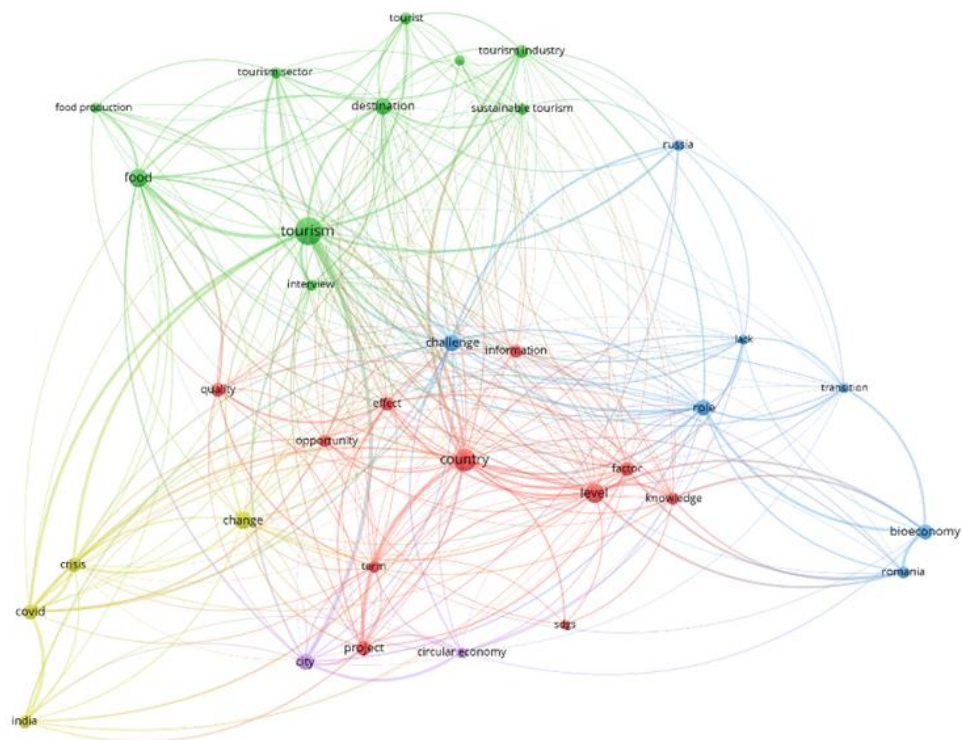


Figure 2 - Relationship between terms by Cluster

Source: Authors (2024)

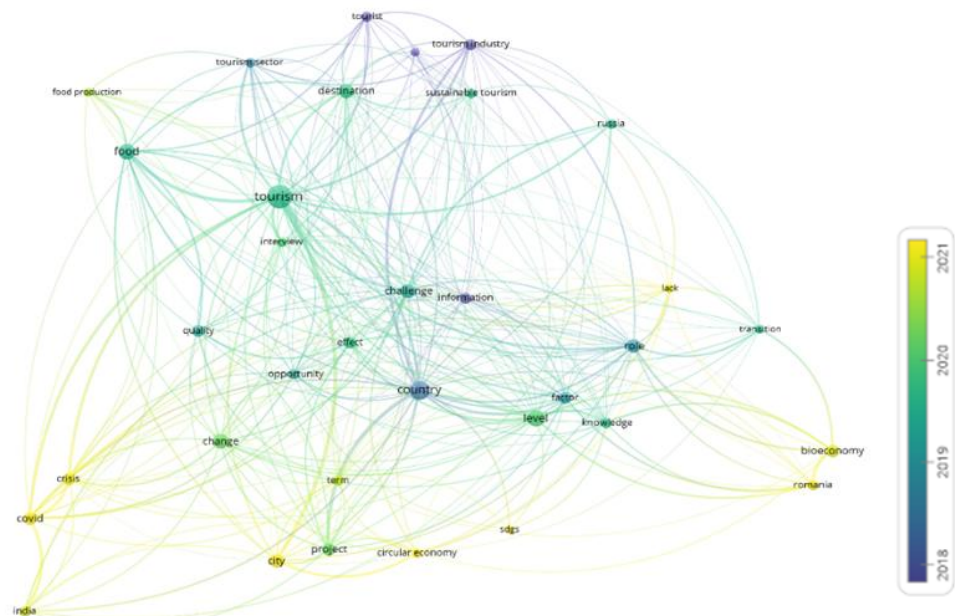


Figure 3 - Relationships between Studies by year

Source: Authors (2024)

#### 4.2. Overview of the selected articles

Analysis of affiliations reveals that authors are connected with academic centres located in 14 countries, with a prevalence of Italy (e.g. Bernini & Cerqua, 2020; Dell’ovo et al., 2023) Spain (e.g. Guinot, 2020; Castillo & Zarzoso, 2023), and the United States (e.g. Zhang et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2018). The following research centres/institutions stand out: The Federal Institute of São Paulo (e.g. Meneguel et al., 2019; Delgado et al., 2023), National Ukraine University (e.g. Afanasieva et al., 2022; Hyk et al., 2022), the University of Extremadura (e.g. Andrades & Dimanche, 2017; Cerro et al., 2017), and the University of Helsinki (e.g. Berg & Hukkinen 2011; D'Amato et al., 2019).

Research is mostly conducted in urban areas (e.g. Pratt et al., 2017; Mendes et al., 2021), and empirical case studies are predominantly carried out in Europe (e.g. Everett & Slocum, 2013; Eren et al., 2023). Regarding the methodology, it is evident that case studies (e.g. Afanasieva et al., 2022; Balan & Zeldea, 2023), T-test experiments (e.g. Alam et al., 2023; Al-Thani et al., 2023), and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS) (e.g. Chekima et al., 2016; Cerro et al., 2017) are the most relevant in research. On the other side, interviews (e.g. Berg & Hukkinen, 2011; Chinwong et al., 2021) and surveys (e.g. D'Amato et al., 2019; Hasanzade et al., 2022) constitute the most frequent sources of information. Regarding scales, open-ended questions (e.g. Lin & Lu, 2013; Santeramo et al., 2017) and 5-point Likert scales (e.g. Petrescu et al., 2020; Khahro et al., 2021) are predominant. Table 2 provides an overview of the reviewed articles.

In summary, it is possible to conclude that most studies were carried out in western countries, research mostly focused on urban environments, and that qualitative case study methodologies prevailed.

Table 2 - Overview of the selected articles

Academic Centre Location	Geographical Focus	Methodology	Measurement Methods	Year
Italy (9)	Europe (54)	Case study (49)	T-test and others (15)	2021 (18)
USA (7)	Africa (8)	Literature review (21)	SEM - PLS (7)	2023 (15)
Spain (6)	South Asia (7)	Empirical research (13)	VIF (5)	2022 (12)
Romania (5)	West Asia (6)	<u>Exploratory research</u>	AVE (4)	2019

		(8)		(9)
Germany (4)	South Asia (5)	<b>Information Source</b>	ANOVA (3)	2020 (8)
Ukraine (4)	East Asia and Pacific (4)	Interview (24)	CFA (3)	2017 (5)
Türkiye (4)	Latin America (4)	Survey (21)	Clusters analysis (2)	2018 (4)
Australia (4)	North America (3)	Secondary data (13)	Linear regression (2)	2016 (3)
Portugal (4)	<b>Context</b>	Focus group (4)	Pearson Correlation (2)	2015 (3)
Malaysia (3)	Urban (42)	Observation (4)	<b>Scale</b>	2014 (2)
Norway (2)	Rural (25)	Snowball (3)	Open ended questions (27)	2013 (3)
Brazil (2)		Workshop (3)	Likert 5 (10)	2012 (1)
Finland (2)			Dichotomous questions (9)	2011 (2)
<b>Filiations</b>			Multiple choice (5)	2009 (1)
Federal Institute of São Paulo (2)			Likert 7 (3)	2008 (1)
University of Estremadura (2)				2000 (1)
University of Helsinki (2)				
National University Ukraine (2)				

Source: Authors' Elaboration (2024)

### 4.3. Sustainable economy

Few studies specifically addressing the concept of sustainable economy within the framework of gastronomic tourism were identified. Some notable contributions include Lorek and Spangenberg (2014) who define the concept as the production and consumption in balance with the environment, contributing to human well-being. The circular economy connection is the most explored in the literature, with 11 studies affirming it as the basis for sustainable economy (e.g. Fiksel et al., 2021; Antunes et al., 2022; Al-Thani & Koç, 2023). The green economy perspective is mentioned by only four authors (D'Amato et al., 2019; Dinica, 2021; Oncioiu et al., 2021; Al-Thani & Koç, 2023), while the knowledge economy perspective is underexplored, being mentioned only by D'Amato et al. (2019) and Al-Thani & Koç (2023). Table 3 presents the relationship between the main denominations associated with sustainable

economy and the respective authors. The concept of circular economy involves two main cycles - a technical cycle and a biological cycle. Whereas in the technical cycle products are kept in circulation through reuse, repair, remanufacturing, and recycling, the biological cycle incorporates economic activities related to the invention, development, production, and use of biological products and processes (Tan & Lamers, 2021). While circularity may contribute to a more sustainable world, not all sustainability initiatives involve circularity. For instance, the green economy involves a different approach to sustainability. It is defined as an economy that results in increased wellbeing and social equality while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcity (Hope, 2022). Finally, it is believed that when sustainability knowledge among employees and across an organization is high, the coordination and communication of initiatives related with the circular economy are more effective (Erđiaw-Kwasie et al., 2023).

Table 3 - Sustainable economy – Related concepts

Authors	Bioeconomy	Circular economy	Green economy	Knowledge economy
Al-Thani & Koç 2023	X	X	X	X
Antunes et al. (2022)		X		
Balan & Zeldea (2023)	X	X		
D'Amato et al. (2019)	X	X	X	X
Dell'Ovo et al. (2021)		X		
Dinica (2021)	X	X	X	
Fiksel et al. (2020)		X		
Guinot (2020)		X		
Lawrenz et al. (2021)		X		
Oncioiu et al. (2021)		X	X	
Santeramo et al. (2017)	X			
Vamza et al. (2021)		X		

Source: Authors' Elaboration (2024)

#### 4.4. Determinants of gastronomic tourism for transitioning to a sustainable economy

A total of 26 studies addressing aspects related to the transition to sustainable economy were identified, as outlined in appendix 2. There is a limited number of literature reviews on the concept (Barbiroli, 2011; Lorek & Spangenberg, 2014; Lawrenz et al., 2021) and some

studies focusing on the gastronomic tourism sector (Sevarlic et al., 2012; Lorek & Spangenberg, 2014; Chekima et al., 2016; Santeramo et al., 2017; Mariappan et al., 2019; Bernini & Cerqua, 2020; Ionescu et al., 2020; Zamarreño et al., 2021; Bădan & Fîntîneru, 2022; Armutcu et al., 2023; Balan & Zeldea, 2023).

It was possible to identify in the literature some models for transitioning to sustainable economy (Betz, 2015; Weinberg, 2000; Guinot, 2020; Ionescu et al., 2020; Dinica, 2021; Al-Housani et al., 2023). However, these models do not outline specific strategies. These studies suggest that promoting sustainable production and consumption are crucial aspects for transitioning to sustainable economy from the perspective of gastronomic tourism (e.g. Weinberg, 2000; Barbiroli, 2011; Lorek & Spangenberg, 2014; Chekima et al., 2016; Ionescu et al., 2020). This assertion is reinforced by other authors addressing specific sustainable development goals associated with transitioning to sustainable economy in the context of gastronomic tourism, which are detailed in table 4. The analysis reveals that studies mostly address the following SDGs: (1) eradicating poverty (Cardoso, 2020; Cristina et al., 2021), (8) decent work and economic growth (Aseaba, 2018; Cardoso, 2020; Khahro et al., 2021), (11) sustainable cities and communities (Cardoso, 2020; Biekša et al., 2023), (12) sustainable consumption and production (Lawrenz et al., 2021; Biekša et al., 2023; Delgado et al., 2023), and (17) partnerships for these goals (Cardoso, 2020; Biekša et al., 2023; Di Pierro et al., 2023).

Table 4 - How Sustainable Development Goals align within the Context of Gastronomy Tourism

<b>Authors</b>	<b>SDGs</b>
Aaseva (2018)	8
Ab Talib et Al. (2014)	12
Branstrator et al. (2023)	1-17
Biekša et al. (2023)	2-4, 7, 9-13, 17
Cardoso (2020)	1-5, 7-17
Creech et al. (2014)	1
Cristina et al. (2021)	1
Delgado et al. (2023)	1,12
Di Pierro et al. (2023)	1-17
Khahro et al. (2021)	8,11
Lawrenz et al. (2021)	12

Source: Authors (2024)



As previously mentioned, paying attention to the dimensions of sustainable development is one of the determining factors for transitioning to sustainable economies. In the analysis of the dimensions of sustainable development articles are categorised according to the subject of study (sustainable economy, sustainable gastronomy, and sustainable tourism), as shown in table 5. It is noteworthy that the dimensions of sustainable development in sustainable gastronomy and sustainable tourism emphasise more strongly the environmental, economic, and social dimensions of sustainability. Sustainable economy stands out as the approach that most frequently refers to all relevant dimensions of sustainability (Bernini, 2020; Bezemer, 2021; Biekša et al., 2023). However, there is an evident lack of studies exploring the political dimension of sustainability.

Among studies associated with the gastronomic sector, only the following tourism typologies were analysed in the literature: food production (e.g. Sevarlic et al., 2012; Mariappan et al., 2019; Ionescu et al., 2020; Armutcu et al., 2023; Balan & Zeldea, 2023), accommodation and food (e.g. Bernini & Cerqua, 2020), and wine tourism (e.g. Zamarreño et al. 2021).

Table 5 - Analysis of Sustainable Development Dimensions

Research Topic	Authors	Dimensions			
		Economic	Political	Environmental	Social
Sustainable Economy	Baloch et al. (2023)	X	X	X	
	Bernini (2020)	X	X	X	X
	Betz (2015)	X	X	X	X
	Bezemer (2021)	X	X	X	X
	Biekša et al. (2023)	X	X	X	X
	Bizoumi et al. (2019)	X		X	X
	Creech, et al (2014)	X		X	X
	Cristina et al. (2021)	X		X	X
	D'Amato et al. (2019)	X		X	X
	Dinica (2021)	X	X	X	X
	Diepolder et al. (2021)	X		X	X
	Felício et al. (2021)		X	X	
	Ionescu et al. (2020)	X			X
	Lorek & Spangenberg	X		X	X
	Petrescu et al. (2020)	X		X	X
Sustainable Gastronomy	Chekima et al (2016)	X		X	X
	Chinwong et al. (2021)	X		X	X
	Dong-Woo (2018)	X		X	X
	Di Pierro et al. (2023)	X		X	X
	Eren et al (2023)			X	
	Everett & Slocum (2012)	X	X	X	X
	Gosetti et al (2017)	X		X	X
	Mariappan & Zhou (2019)	X		X	

	Niedbala et al. (2020)	X		X	X
Sustainable Tourism	Branstrator et al. (2023)	X	X	X	X
	Campón- Cerro et al. (2017)	X		X	X
	Dolnicar and Long (2009)			X	
	Kim et al. (2017)	X		X	X
	Lin and Lu (2013)	X		X	X
	McLoughlin et al. (2018)	X		X	X

Source: Authors (2024)

In summary, it was concluded that existing research tends to emphasise the dimensions of sustainable production and consumption as key determinants for gastronomic tourism transition to a more sustainable model. Underexplored in the literature is the role of supply chain management, as well as the importance of the political/institutional dimension of sustainability, which refers to the level of institutional support and policies that directly or indirectly promote the other dimensions of sustainability (economic, environmental and social). The significance of supply chain management for achieving sustainable development in the food sector is reflected in the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015), which draws attention to the role of short supply chains in food quality and security, local job creation, social inclusion, and preserving cultural heritage. On the other side, the relevance of the political/institutional dimension of sustainability is underlined in the Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agricultural Systems framework from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (2014), which highlights the importance of governance policies, state-supported collaboration between industry players and public institutions, and the role of non-governmental entities in enhancing sustainability practices in the food sector. This study identified some conceptual models for transitioning to a sustainable economy. However, these models are theoretical in their essence, lacking the identification of specific strategies and actions.

## 5. Conclusions

Sustainable economy is conceptualised as the balanced production and consumption in harmony with the environment, contributing to human well-being (Lorek and Spangenberg, 2014; Al-Thani & Koç, 2023). The background associated with the study of gastronomic tourism and sustainability is linked to the implementation of the SGDs and the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, which paved the way for concern about sustainable practices in the gastronomic sector (Alam et al., 2021; Cristina et al., 2021; Fiksel et al., 2021; Biekša et al.,

2023). As such, the determinants of gastronomic tourism for transitioning to a sustainable economy require special attention to the various dimensions of sustainable development: economic, political, social, and environmental aspects in production and consumption processes (Everett & Slocum, 2013; Bernini & Cerqua, 2020; Branstrator et al., 2023) and the implementation of the SDGs, especially the objectives of eradicating poverty, decent work and economic growth, sustainable cities and communities, sustainable consumption and production, and partnerships to achieve these goals (Cardoso, 2020; Biekša et al., 2023; Di Pierro et al., 2023).

Studies related to gastronomic tourism, sustainability, and the economy are predominantly focused on food production (farmers), accommodation and food and wine tourism, with a lack of studies involving other types of tourism, such as restaurants, and gastronomic markets. In terms of methodologies applied, case-studies are the most frequent and interviews and surveys are the most commonly used sources of data. There are a few literature reviews involving gastronomic tourism, the economy, and sustainability, particularly regarding the conceptualization of sustainable economy in the context of gastronomic tourism and the denominations of the construct. Studies addressing specific strategies for transitioning gastronomic tourism to a sustainable model were not identified. There is also a need for comparative quantitative studies between rural and urban areas and more attention should be paid to the study of the concept of sustainable economy in the context of gastronomic tourism, as the key elements of the concept are not clearly identified, and the study of the dimensions of sustainable economy is in an embryonic state.

Potential avenues to enhance the sustainability of gastronomic events include innovation, as well as targeted policies that assist industry actors and are in line with the SDGs. The lack of adequate legislation, bureaucratic processes, and the lack of human resources reduce the ability to innovate in the tourism sector (Almeida et al. 2024). Notwithstanding the possibility of introducing disruptive innovation, incremental innovation, which involves improving and adapting already existing technological solutions, may constitute a more practical solution given the reduced investment capacity of industry actors.

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of gastronomic events can be enhanced by sustainable production and logistics technologies that increase efficiency. These include e-procurement solutions, intelligent decision support systems for supply chain management and automation processes. Blockchain technologies can guarantee food traceability and can contribute to the social sustainability of gastronomic events by safeguarding public health.

Technologies based on genomics and bioinformatics (DNA barcoding or DNA genotyping) can be used for quality certification and to track and verify the genetic authenticity of food products offered in gastronomic events. Institutional and governance innovation can also be important. This involves collaboration initiatives linking industry actors (event organizers, local producers, academic institutions, nonprofit organizations, government and local authorities, and consumers). Horizontal collaboration involving coopetition ventures between different event organizers, and the exploration of untargeted market niches as well as new marketing channels constitute interesting pathways to promote gastronomic events.

The establishment of new governance structures, state-sponsored industry stakeholder engagement, and certification programs are some examples of government initiatives that may assist the sustainability of gastronomic events. Furthermore, since event planners might not be familiar with available technologies, training programs are crucial for encouraging the adoption of technology in the sector, as well as sustainability communication targeting the consumer. From an economic sustainability perspective, the provision of operational infrastructure is another area in which governments might provide support to the industry. This approach entails providing market structures and infrastructure, including event facilities and associated infrastructure such as warehousing facilities, cooling equipment, and transport vehicles.

This study involves some limitations that must be acknowledged. First, this research shares the common limitations of reviews, which are related to the authors' choice of keywords and databases. To mitigate this limitation, the combination of search terms that offered the most promising results was adopted, and the study focused solely on articles listed on Scopus and WoS databases, which provide some guarantee concerning the quality of the selected studies. Still, the consideration of other combinations of keywords and databases could have broadened the scope of the study. Furthermore, the study is based on a scoping review coupled with bibliometric procedures. Given the explorative nature of the research, it was considered that a formal systematic review of published material was not appropriate. Nevertheless, this study can serve as a starting point for future systematic reviews on the subject.

From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to knowledge by reviewing the theoretical underpinnings that connect gastronomic tourism to a sustainable economy. The results of the present study allow researchers to reflect, drawing on existing sources of understanding, to advance new knowledge on the field. From a practical standpoint, this study

could serve as inspiration for entrepreneurs to develop new concepts of gastronomic events that privilege sustainability principles. The study also emphasises some management practices and public policies that may improve the sustainability of the industry.

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## Appendix 1

### Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) Checklist

SECTION	ITEM	PRISMA-ScR CHECKLIST ITEM	REPORTED ON PAGE #
<b>TITLE</b>			
Title	1	Identify the report as a scoping review.	1
<b>ABSTRACT</b>			
Structured summary	2	Provide a structured summary that includes (as applicable): background, objectives, eligibility criteria, sources of evidence, charting methods, results, and conclusions that relate to the review questions and objectives.	n.a.
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>			
Rationale	3	Describe the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known. Explain why the review questions/objectives lend themselves to a scoping review approach.	2-5
Objectives	4	Provide an explicit statement of the questions and objectives being addressed with reference to their key elements (e.g., population or participants, concepts, and context) or other relevant key elements used to conceptualize the review questions and/or objectives.	2
<b>METHODS</b>			
Protocol and registration	5	Indicate whether a review protocol exists; state if and where it can be accessed (e.g., a Web address); and if available, provide registration information, including the registration number.	n.a.
Eligibility criteria	6	Specify characteristics of the sources of evidence used as eligibility criteria (e.g., years considered, language, and publication status), and provide a rationale.	5-6
Information sources*	7	Describe all information sources in the search (e.g., databases with dates of coverage and contact with authors to identify additional sources), as well as the date the most recent search was executed.	5-6
Search	8	Present the full electronic search strategy for at least 1 database, including any limits used, such that it could be repeated.	6

Selection of sources of evidence†	9	State the process for selecting sources of evidence (i.e., screening and eligibility) included in the scoping review.	6-7
Data charting process‡	10	Describe the methods of charting data from the included sources of evidence (e.g., calibrated forms or forms that have been tested by the team before their use, and whether data charting was done independently or in duplicate) and any processes for obtaining and confirming data from investigators.	n.a.
Data items	11	List and define all variables for which data were sought and any assumptions and simplifications made.	6
Critical appraisal of individual sources of evidence§	12	If done, provide a rationale for conducting a critical appraisal of included sources of evidence; describe the methods used and how this information was used in any data synthesis (if appropriate).	n.a.
Synthesis of results	13	Describe the methods of handling and summarizing the data that were charted.	5-6
<b>RESULTS</b>			
Selection of sources of evidence	14	Give numbers of sources of evidence screened, assessed for eligibility, and included in the review, with reasons for exclusions at each stage, ideally using a flow diagram.	7
Characteristic s of sources of evidence	15	For each source of evidence, present characteristics for which data were charted and provide the citations.	Appendix 2
Critical appraisal within sources of evidence	16	If done, present data on critical appraisal of included sources of evidence (see item 12).	n.a.
Results of individual sources of evidence	17	For each included source of evidence, present the relevant data that were charted that relate to the review questions and objectives.	Appendix 2
Synthesis of results	18	Summarize and/or present the charting results as they relate to the review questions and objectives.	10-14
<b>DISCUSSION</b>			
Summary of evidence	19	Summarize the main results (including an overview of concepts, themes, and types of evidence available), link to the review questions and objectives, and consider the relevance to key groups.	14
Limitations	20	Discuss the limitations of the scoping review process.	15
Conclusions	21	Provide a general interpretation of the results with respect to the review questions and objectives, as well as potential implications and/or next steps.	15

<b>FUNDING</b>			
Funding	22	Describe sources of funding for the included sources of evidence, as well as sources of funding for the scoping review. Describe the role of the funders of the scoping review.	n.a.

## Appendix 2

### Studies related to the transition to a sustainable economy

Author	Objective	Actors	Method	Methodology	Data Sources
Al-Housani et al. (2023)	Proposing models for transitioning to a sustainable economy	Local actors (entrepreneurs, potential or unsuccessful entrepreneurs, policymakers, industry and business representatives, program managers, and investors)	Qualitative	Exploratory approach	Interview
Al-Thani et al. (2023)	Evaluating and validating the characteristics of a sustainable economy	Experts from academic institutions and governmental bodies	Qualitative	Comparative review	Content analysis
Antonakakis et al. (2019)	Analysing the relationship between tourism and economic growth	Developed and developing countries	Quantitative	Empirical Method	Secondary data
Antunes et al. (2022)	Assessing the perception of residents of Leiria (a city in Portugal) regarding the concept of a circular economy and the acceptance of circular actions and projects	Residents, workers, and students	Qualitative and Quantitative	Case study	Snowball
Armutcu et al. (2023)	Helping to overcome obstacles to sustainable production and consumption by revealing the determining factors for green consumption.	Consumers	Quantitative	Case study	Questionnaire
Bădan y Fîntîneru, (2022)	Analysing changes occurring at the agricultural structural level based on the age group of farm managers in Romania between 2005 and 2016.	Farmers	Quantitative	Case study	Secondary data

Balan y Zeldea (2023)	Exploring the attitudes of Romanian farmers toward the bioeconomy and taking a step forward to determine a set of necessary scientific actions for the initiation of a national strategy dedicated to the bioeconomy.	Farmers, members of an agricultural association, manager, entrepreneur	Quantitative	Case study	Questionnaire
Barbiroli (2011)	Understanding the economic and social effects of transitioning to a green and sustainable economy.	n.a.	Qualitative	Narrative review	Secondary data
Bernini y Cerqua (2020)	Evaluating whether the adoption of a transition management tool in the tourism industry can simultaneously support economic growth and sustainability.	Service Industry Employees (accommodation and food & beverage)	Quantitative	Empirical research	Secondary data
Betz (2015)	Understanding how environmentally sustainable economy models can relate to social models, and study how social models impact the environment.	Society	Qualitative	Case study	Content analysis
Biekša et al. (2022)	Evaluating the development of sustainable economics in European Union countries through the analysis of the integration of sustainable development indicators	Society	Quantitative	Case study	Secondary data
Chekima et al.(2016)	Examining the impact of environmental knowledge, cultural values, and environmental advertising and determining the moderating effect of income level, educational level, and gender on consumers' ecological purchasing intentions.	Consumers	Quantitative	Case study	Survey

Cristina et al.(2021)	Presenting, evaluating, and identifying the necessary factors to measure the prosperity and sustainability of the economy.	Society	Quantitative	Empirical research	Secondary data
D'Amato et al. (2019)	Highlighting combinations of sustainability concepts (circular, green, and bioeconomy) and development models (growth, steady state, degrowth) that selected researchers have considered priorities for sustainability transformations.	Researchers	Qualitative	Exploratory approach (Q Method)	Survey
Dinica (2021)	Exploring how key political parties have implemented the only three economically discussed models in New Zealand since 2009: green growth (GG); circular economy (CE), bioeconomy (BE).	Political parties	Qualitative	Empirical analysis	Secondary data
Fiksel et al (2021)	Analysing the steps to ensure resilience in the circular economy in India.	Society	Qualitative	Case study	Narrative review
Forrest et al. (2021)	Evaluating projects aimed at developing the functioning of sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems to accelerate the transformation towards a sustainable food economy.	Entrepreneurs	Qualitative	Exploratory research	Content analysis
Guinot (2020)	Analysing the economic paradigm for a sustainable business model.	Entrepreneurs	Qualitative and Quantitative	Case study	Case study
Ionescu et al. (2020)	Presenting a sustainable economic model in the agricultural sector.	Agents in the agricultural sector	Qualitative and Quantitative	Case study	Secondary data



Lawrenz et al.(2021)	Identifying the main barriers to implementing the circular economy.	End-users	Qualitative	Narrative Literature review	Secondary data
Lorek & Spangenberg (2014)	Analysing the role of sustainable consumption in a sustainable economy and sustainable growth.	Non-governmental organizations	Qualitative	Narrative Literature review	Secondary data
Mariappan et al. (2019)	Identifying the economy and efficiency of organic agriculture, and the possibilities of reducing suicide amongst farmers	Urban Markets actors	Qualitative	Case study	Secondary data and Survey
Santeramo et al. (2017)	Investigating the role of consumer attitudes towards sustainable attributes (i.e., food security and environmental respect) in order to suggest their potential role in catalysing the transition towards bio-economies.	Fish consumers	Qualitative	Case study	Interview and focus group
Sevarlic et al. (2012)	Exploring the relationship between what has been identified as the role of government and cooperatives in building a sustainable economy and the current situation.	Farmers	Qualitative	Case study	Interview, comparative analysis, collected primary and secondary data
Zamarreño et al. 2021	Analysing how wine tourism contributes to sustainable economy and rural development in the area.	Winemakers and agents involved in the production of wine	Qualitative	Case study	Documentary analysis, Interview)