EXPLORING THE MARKET POTENTIAL FOR IMPORTING THE COLOMBIAN COFFEE BRAND KINANU INTO HUNGARY

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Exploring the market potential for importing the Colombian coffee brand Kinanu into Hungary

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Abstract: This thesis examines the market potential for importing the Colombian coffee brand Kinanu into Hungary. Given Colombia's reputation as a global leader in coffee production, the introduction of Kinanu presents an opportunity to expand the presence of high-quality Arabica coffee in a market that predominantly relies on European suppliers. The research assesses consumer habits, market trends, trade regulations, and competitor analysis to determine the viability of this endeavor. Coffee plays a significant cultural and economic role worldwide, and Hungary is no exception. There is a growing appreciation for specialty coffee, which presents a unique entry point for new brands. However, the Hungarian coffee market is competitive, with established multinational brands holding strong positions through diversified product offerings and price-sensitive consumer strategies. Despite these challenges, the research identifies notable opportunities such as increasing consumer interest in ethically sourced and fair-trade coffee, strong preference for high-quality coffee, and openness toward new brands among coffee drinkers in Hungary. The study adopts a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data to provide comprehensive insights. A survey was conducted to examine coffee consumption habits, purchasing behavior, and consumer priorities, focusing on variables such as price sensitivity, frequency of consumption, preferred coffee types, and brand preferences. Additionally, an interview was conducted with a Kinanu representative to gain firsthand perspectives on the brand's production processes, sustainability initiatives, and motivations for expansion into international markets. The results from the survey and interview were analyzed alongside existing literature on international coffee trade, EU regulations for imports, and Hungary's coffee market dynamics.

Key findings indicate that Hungarian consumers prioritize coffee flavor above all other factors, with price and brand reputation playing secondary roles in their purchasing decisions. The strong preference for milk-based coffee beverages among younger consumers suggests that Kinanu could strategically tailor its offerings to cater to this demographic. Furthermore, despite concerns about price competitiveness, the study finds that Hungarian coffee consumers are generally open to trying new brands, provided they align with quality expectations. While Kinanu benefits from Colombia's internationally recognized coffee heritage, quality and artisanal practices, marketing efforts such as product sampling and fair trade certifications are a priority to get set foot in the Hungarian coffee market. This thesis also explores the logistical and regulatory challenges associated

with importing coffee into Hungary. EU food safety requirements, labeling regulations, and sustainability initiatives, such as the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), must be carefully considered by Kinanu to ensure proper compliance. Additionally, supermarket chains and specialty coffee stores represent the primary distribution channels, with an increasing number of Hungarian consumers seeking ethically sourced coffee while still seeking variety. The findings suggest that, while supermarket placement may be challenging due to competition with large-scale brands, establishing direct partnerships with them is the best course of action since it's the best way to get to a larger customer base, which based on the findings of the research, is open to trying new brands. Ultimately, this research concludes that Kinanu has the potential to succeed in the Hungarian coffee market, albeit with significant investment in marketing, consumer engagement, and strategic pricing models. The growing demand for high-quality coffee, coupled with an increasing interest in sustainable and fair-trade options, provides a favorable environment for entry. By aligning with consumer expectations and leveraging Colombia's coffee reputation, Kinanu can make a space in Hungary's dynamic coffee landscape, contributing to both commercial success and the promotion of ethically sourced coffee practices.

Keywords: Coffee, Colombian coffee, Hungary coffee market, coffee export, coffee consumption habits, international trade regulations, coffee consumer preferences, Fair-trade, sustainable coffee.

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I hereby declare that this thesis is my own and autonomous work. All sources and supporting material used have been indicated as such. All texts either quoted directly or paraphrased have been indicated by in-text citations. Full bibliographic details are given in the reference list which also contains internet sources containing URL access. The use of artificial intelligence was implemented in the writing of this thesis for grammar checking and correction, key-words identification and formatting purposes. No writing was done with the use of AI.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the opportunity of successfully introducing the Colombian coffee brand Kinanu into the Hungarian coffee market, focusing on the objectives set by the brand of gaining popularity and achieving profitability in the long term. Coffee, as one of the most consumed beverages globally, plays a significant role in the economies of many nations and is deeply integrated into everyday life and cultural practices on a global scale. Hungary in particular has experienced an increasing interest in coffee, marked by its role not only as a daily household staple for a significant number of coffee consumers, but also as a social beverage enjoyed in various settings. The Hungarian coffee market is diverse and competitive, with multiple international brands catering to a wide range of consumer preferences. Among these, coffee sourced directly from Colombia remains relatively underrepresented despite Colombia's reputation as one of the leading coffee producers globally. This creates a potential niche for the introduction of Kinanu, a Colombian coffee brand recognized for its quality and strong connection to sustainable and artisanal practices. In order to study this possibility, it is imperative to understand what the trading scene for coffee between the two countries is, and if there are any additional challenges that might arise through the trading process. Additionally, identifying the main distributors and competitors and what their main strengths are, will aid in the understanding of the Hungarian coffee market. Lastly, analyzing the coffee consumption habits of the target demographic is imperative to assess whether Kinanu can achieve their short-term and long-term goals.

Using a mixed-method approach, this research combines quantitative data from a survey conducted with Hungarian coffee consumers and qualitative insights from an interview with a Kinanu brand representative. The survey focuses on consumer preferences, behaviors, price sensitivity, and interest in fair-trade coffee, while the interview provides valuable perspectives on the brand's strengths, goals, and preparedness for export. By combining these data sources and the existing information of the market, this study attempts to offers a comprehensive analysis of the opportunities and challenges associated with entering the Hungarian coffee market. This thesis also examines the regulatory and logistical frameworks for importing coffee into Hungary, focusing on the requirements imposed by the European Union and specific trade processes between Colombia and Hungary. Additionally, the study explores factors such as price competitiveness, product differentiation, and branding strategies that could influence Kinanu's ability to establish a foothold in the Hungarian coffee market. The ultimate aim of this research is to determine the viability of successfully exporting Kinanu to Hungary while identifying strategies to address potential obstacles. By bridging the gap between the Colombian and Hungarian coffee cultures, this study not only highlights the potential for market entry but also contributes to a broader understanding of international trade and business development in the coffee industry.

1. COFFEE MARKET ON A GLOBAL SCALE

1.1 Overview

Coffee is one of the most widely consumed beverages in the world, with millions of people drinking it daily across different cultures and regions. Its production involves a complex value chain that connects farmers, processors, distributors, and consumers on a global scale. It is estimated that around 100 million coffee farmers are involved in its cultivation and trade, making coffee an essential economic activity for many regions (Davis et al., 2019). Beyond consumption, coffee is also one of the most traded commodities globally, with many developing nations relying on its export as a key source of revenue (Abrhám, Vošta, Čajka, & Rubáček, 2021). Currently, coffee production is spread across approximately 70 countries, but just three—Brazil, Vietnam, and Colombia—account for 55% of the global supply. Brazil contributes between 32% and 34%, Vietnam 12% to 13%, and Colombia 8% to 9% (Pancsira, 2022). While domestic coffee consumption has grown worldwide, a majority of global production, which is over 70%, is mainly exported. In several countries, coffee exports constitute a significant portion of total trade, supporting national economies. In Africa, Burundi relies on coffee for 35% of its exports, Ethiopia for 25%, Uganda for 15%, and Rwanda for 10%. In Latin America, Honduras depends on coffee exports for 25% of its trade revenue, while Nicaragua relies on it for 15% (International Coffee Organization, 2019).The structure of the global coffee trade highlights its role as both a widely consumed product and a crucial economic driver. Its production and export dynamics continue to shape trade policies and business decisions in producing countries, as demand remains strong across international markets.

The global coffee trade is primarily based on two species: Arabica (*Coffea arabica*) and Robusta (*Coffea canephora*), which together account for nearly all internationally traded coffee. Arabica is the dominant species, representing approximately 60% of global coffee trade, while Robusta makes up the remaining 40% (Davis et al., 2019). Although hybrid coffee varieties exist, their contribution to global exports remains marginal, as they are primarily grown for local consumption in producing countries. Coffee production volumes fluctuate yearly, impacted by factors such as climate conditions, labor availability, and market demand. During the 2021-2022 period, an estimated 167.2 million 60kg bags of coffee were produced worldwide, with Arabica accounting for 93.97 million bags and Robusta contributing 73.2 million (International Coffee Organization, 2022). Global consumption of coffee has continued to rise, surpassing production growth in recent years. Between 2020 and 2021, total coffee consumption increased by an estimated 3.3%, reaching approximately 170.3 million 60kg bags in 2021-2022 (International Coffee Organization, 2022). Consumption patterns vary across regions, with Europe being the largest coffee consumer, reaching 54.2 million bags in 2021. Asia and Oceania followed with 40.8 million, while North America accounted for 31.9 million. In South America, consumption was measured at 26.72 million bags, Africa at 11.7 million, and Central America at 5.4 million (International Coffee Organization, 2022). These figures highlight coffee's sustained global demand and the continued relevance of its trade across multiple economic markets.

Coffee year commencing	2017	2018	2019	*2020**	*2021**	% change 2020/21
PRODUCTION	**167,806**	**170,195**	**168,902**	**170,830**	**167,170**	**-2.1%**
Arabica	98,128	99,855	97,014	101,157	93,970	**-7.1%**
Robusta	69,678	70,340	71,889	69,674	73,200	**5.1%**
Africa	17,404	18,510	18,666	19,331	19,270	**-0.3%**
Asia & Oceania	52,203	48,108	49,427	48,016	51,433	**7.1%**
Mexico & Central America	21,752	21,640	19,598	19,674	18,993	**-3.5%**
South America	76,453	81,934	81,214	83,812	77,473	**-7.6%**
CONSUMPTION	**160,006**	**166,730**	**162,998**	**164,865**	**170,298**	**3.3%**
Exporting countries	48,586	49,423	49,370	49,967	50,322	**0.7%**
Importing countries (Coffee Years)	111,421	117,307	113,629	114,898	119,975	**4.4%**
Africa	10,810	12,033	11,101	11,449	11,721	**2.4%**
Asia & Oceania	35,129	36,227	36,350	39,657	40,834	**3.0%**
Mexico & Central America	5,273	5,431	5,346	5,381	5,399	**0.3%**
Europe	53,527	55,452	53,949	51,983	54,206	**4.3%**
North America	29,939	31,789	30,581	30,292	31,913	**5.4%**
South America	25,829	26,324	26,321	26,603	26,724	**0.5%**
BALANCE	**7,799**	**3,465**	**5,904**	**5,965**	**-3,128**	

*preliminary estimates

Figure 1 - Coffee World Supply/Demand balance 2017 to 2021

Source 1 - International Coffee Organization report, December 2022

1.2 Market leaders and projections

In terms of annual revenue, the top five large-scale coffee chains generated significant sales in 2022. Starbucks led the market with an annual revenue of $32.3 billion, followed by JDE Peet's Coffee at $9 billion, PNRA (Panera Bread) at $6 billion, Tchibo at $3.8 billion, and Luigi Lavazza S.p.A. (Lavazza) at $2.7 billion (Ridder, 2024; Oakley, 2023). The demand for coffee is influenced by multiple factors, including product quality, convenience, method of preparation, and price (Wróblewski, Maciejewski, & Mokrysz, 2018). Coffeehouse chains play a crucial role in shaping consumer preferences, as their marketing strategies significantly impact purchasing decisions (Wróblewski, Maciejewski, & Mokrysz, 2018). Additionally, coffee has evolved beyond being just a beverage, becoming associated with social status and lifestyle choices. Regional and national cultures further influence consumer perceptions and trends within the coffee industry (Samoggia & Riedel, 2018).

The global coffee market experienced disruptions during the 2021-2022 period due to the lasting effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite an increase in consumption, coffee supply declined by approximately 2.1%, largely due to labor shortages, which subsequently impacted pricing. The ICO Composite Indicator Price for coffee rose to 197.91 US cents per pound in response to these changes (International Coffee Organization, 2022). Looking ahead, price volatility is expected to persist due to external factors such as annual weather fluctuations and economic instability in key coffee-producing countries (International Coffee Organization, 2022). In response to these challenges, coffee production companies have implemented strategies to stabilize market prices and increase sustainability efforts. Fairtrade, which provides farmers and workers with minimum price protection, is one such initiative aimed at securing equitable trade conditions (Fairtrade International, 2024). With growing consumer awareness and the influence of digital platforms, market projections suggest continued global growth in coffee demand and production, despite challenges faced by the industry (Pancsira, 2022).

Coffee beans and related derivatives are permitted for import into the European Union and are not subject to the novel food regulation, except for specific extracts (Klingel et al., 2020). Green coffee imports make up more than 95% of the total volume of coffee products brought into the EU, while green decaffeinated coffee, roasted coffee, and soluble coffee represent the remaining 5% (European Coffee Federation, 2023). Germany was the leading importer in 2022, accounting for 36.8% of the EU's total coffee imports, followed by Italy at 22.1%, Belgium at 12.8%, and Spain at 8.7%. These four countries together handle over 80% of total coffee imports within the EU.

Brazil and Vietnam remain the primary suppliers of green coffee to the EU, contributing more than 55% of total imports, while Uganda and Honduras alternated between third and fourth place (European Coffee Federation, 2023). Colombia, previously the fourth largest supplier, has seen its market share decline from 6.5% to 4.2% in recent years. The total value of the EU coffee market was estimated at EUR 25.93 billion in 2022 (European Coffee Federation, 2023). European coffee demand is largely concentrated in the Eurozone, which remains the largest net importer of coffee. Additionally, sustainability concerns and initiatives to support coffee growers have increasingly influenced consumer preferences and industry practices (Vochozka, Petrách, & Janek, 2022).

Total Coffee Sales in EU27 Markets 2020-2022
In volume ('000 tonnes) and in value (EUR million)

	2020		2021		2022	
	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value
Austria	41	783	45	918	48	1,002
Belgium	46	632	48	652	50	698
Bulgaria	19	282	19	305	20	344
Croatia	21	175	22	183	22	200
Czechia	25	400	24	416	25	495
Denmark	33	448	33	459	34	514
Estonia*	05	140	06	152	06	163
Finland	46	374	48	407	49	480
France	220	4,207	230	4,474	232	4,958
Germany	450	4,995	450	5,359	450	6,171
Greece	33	349	34	372	34	514
Hungary	29	353	30	367	30	412
Ireland	08	250	09	283	10	320
Italy	184	2,339	186	2,348	186	2,476
Latvia*	04	155	05	156	05	164
Lithuania	12	175	12	181	12	247
Netherlands	98	1,103	98	1,111	98	1,175
Poland	104	1,068	106	1,094	106	1,326
Portugal	27	566	29	668	31	630
Romania	47	436	47	484	48	598
Slovakia	14	273	15	284	14	301
Slovenia	14	172	15	182	15	200
Spain	136	1,761	144	1,867	144	2,004
Sweden	84	502	85	517	87	537

Figure 2 - Total Coffee Sales in EU27 Market 2020-2022 by Volume and Value

Source 2 - European Coffee Report 2022/2023 - Data collected from Euromonitor International

2. COFFEE MARKET IN HUNGARY

2.1 Overview

Hungary's accession to the European Union had a considerable impact on its foreign agricultural trade, leading to sustained growth in both exports and imports in the years following (Csaki & Jambor, 2009). The benefits of this expansion were particularly evident in the agricultural sector, where products such as coffee, tea, and cocoa became essential components of Hungary's import economy. These commodities accounted for nearly 400 million euros in imports, highlighting Hungary's strong reliance on EU-based trade partnerships (Magda & Bozsik, 2018). This integration into the European trade system facilitated greater market stability, improved access to suppliers, and provided Hungarian businesses with new opportunities to diversify their offerings. Hungary continues to maintain a well-established coffee culture, reflected in the high percentage of daily coffee consumers across the country. Approximately 83% of Hungarian households report drinking coffee regularly, integrating it into both personal routines and social interactions. By 2022, per capita coffee consumption averaged 2.8 kilograms, underscoring the beverage's importance in Hungarian lifestyles (Medve, 2024). Coffee consumption has expanded beyond traditional settings, with cafés and specialty coffee shops playing an increasingly central role in shaping consumer habits and preferences. This shift has resulted in greater demand for high-quality coffee options, driving growth in both domestic retail markets and imports.

Despite the increase in coffee consumption, Hungary does not directly source large quantities from the world's primary coffee-producing nations, such as Brazil, Vietnam, or Colombia. Instead, most imports are supplied through intermediary trade networks within the European Union. In 2023, Germany remained Hungary's largest coffee supplier, accounting for imports valued at over 30 million euros, followed by Slovakia, which contributed coffee imports worth over 29 million euros (Medve, 2024). This reliance on EU-based suppliers rather than direct imports from producing countries illustrates Hungary's interconnected trade dynamics within the Union, as well as logistical preferences that favor regional sourcing and distribution. The structure of Hungary's coffee import market reflects both accessibility and the sustained demand for diverse coffee products among Hungarian consumers. As consumer preferences continue to evolve, factors such as ethical sourcing, sustainability, and specialty coffee products are becoming increasingly relevant. The availability of Fairtrade-certified coffee, organic blends, and premium varieties has gained attention in recent years, signaling potential shifts in purchasing behavior. Additionally, the rise of coffee tourism and café culture has influenced market trends, shaping opportunities for both international and domestic brands seeking to establish a presence in Hungary’s growing coffee industry (Csaki & Jambor, 2009).

2.2 Consumption distribution

According to a survey conducted in March 2022 by Coca-Cola HBC Hungary, coffee consumption habits among regular drinkers in Hungary show a strong preference for daily intake. Approximately 29% of respondents consume one cup of coffee per day, while around 60% drink two or three cups per day, highlighting coffee’s central role in daily routines. Consumption patterns also vary by age group, with individuals aged 40-49 being the most frequent coffee consumers. Within this demographic, half of the respondents reported drinking two to three cups a day, and 14% stated they consume more than three cups daily. In contrast, younger consumers exhibit lower levels of coffee consumption. Among the 18–24 age group, only around half reported drinking coffee regularly, suggesting a potential shift in beverage preferences or differing consumption habits across generations (Coca-Cola HBC Hungary, 2022).

In terms of distribution, retail stores account for the majority of coffee sales in Hungary, making up approximately 86% of total transactions. These sales serve an estimated 2.76 million consumers and are distributed relatively evenly across income brackets, suggesting widespread access to coffee across various socioeconomic groups (Emori, 2024). At-home coffee preparation remains the dominant method of consumption, with around 93% of Hungarian coffee consumers preferring to brew their coffee at home rather than purchasing it from cafés or restaurants. However, coffee drinking is also a popular social activity, with significant consumption occurring in workplaces, social gatherings, family reunions, and events (Emori, 2024). Retail store offerings reveal further insights into consumer preferences regarding coffee formats. Coffee beans represent approximately 35% of total sales, ground coffee comprises 34%, and instant coffee accounts for 31% (Emori, 2024). This relatively balanced distribution indicates that Hungarian consumers value different forms of coffee products depending on convenience, quality, and preparation methods. Espresso remains the most preferred brewing style among consumers, with 53% identifying it as their preferred way to enjoy coffee. Café latte and cappuccino follow as the next most popular options, enjoyed by 31% and 30% of consumers, respectively (Trademagazine, 2021). Age-group differences also influence coffee preferences. Based on the data collected in the Coca-Cola HBC Hungary and Costa Coffee survey, younger consumers aged 18-29 show a distinct preference for milk-based drinks compared to the general market. Within this group, cappuccino and café latte are particularly favored, consumed at significantly higher rates of 47% and 46%, respectively—well above the national average of 30-31% (Coca-Cola HBC Hungary, 2022). These findings suggest that younger consumers may prioritize taste variety and customization when selecting coffee, reinforcing the importance of product diversification within the Hungarian coffee market. Overall, coffee consumption in Hungary is shaped by a mix of traditional habits and evolving trends, with strong preferences for at-home brewing, affordability, and diverse product offerings. The variations in consumption across age groups and preferred coffee formats indicate potential market opportunities for brands that cater to both classic espresso drinkers and those seeking milk-based beverages.

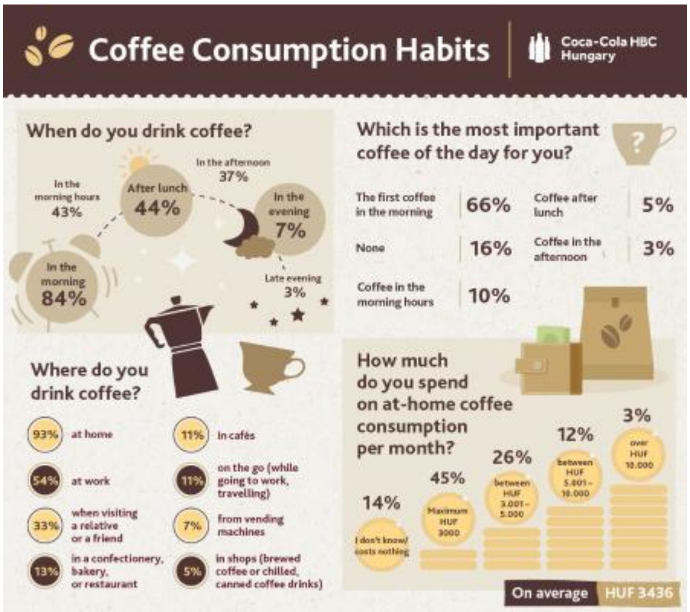

Figure 3 - Coffee Consumption Habits in Hungary

Source 3 - Coca-Cola HBC Hungary survey, June 2022

2.3 Coffee consumption factors

Price remains the most influential factor in the average coffee consumer in Hungary in purchasing decisions. There is a notable tendency of cost-consciousness shaping their buying habits (Emori, 2024). The balance between affordability and quality is particularly important, as consumers often prioritize economic value over premium characteristics. Robusta coffee, known for its strong and earthy profile, is generally priced lower than Arabica coffee, which is more refined in taste and therefore the preferred choice among consumers (Klingel et al., 2020). This price differentiation plays a key role in consumer selection, especially in retail environments where price-conscious buyers seek cost-effective options that still meet their flavor expectations. According to the survey conducted by Coca-Cola HBC Hungary, the average Hungarian coffee consumer spends a maximum of HUF 3,000 per month on at-home coffee consumption. Around 20% of consumers allocate between HUF 3,000 and 5,000 monthly, while 12% spend between HUF 5,000 and 10,000. Only 16% of consumers appear willing to pay an additional HUF 1,000 for premium coffee brands, reinforcing the importance of price sensitivity in purchasing choices. However, consumer behavior shifts notably when purchasing coffee outside the home. While affordability remains relevant, quality and convenience take precedence when visiting cafés and restaurants. Most consumers are willing to spend an average of HUF 1,132 for a cup of coffee in a café, with age differences influencing spending habits—30-39-year-olds tend to spend more, while 18-24-year-olds generally pay less per cup (Coca-Cola HBC Hungary, 2022). These findings indicate a contrast in attitudes toward coffee pricing, where consumers exercise more caution in grocery purchases but exhibit greater flexibility in social and recreational coffee consumption.

In addition to pricing considerations, coffee tourism and café culture significantly impact spending behavior. At least 52% of coffee consumers take ambiance and brand reputation into account when selecting where to purchase coffee (Coca-Cola HBC Hungary, 2022). A well-designed café experience enhances consumer engagement, elevating coffee from a simple daily necessity to an integral part of social life. The growing popularity of specialty coffee shops and experiential consumption has contributed to the perception of cafés as cultural spaces rather than mere retail outlets. For many consumers, variety in brewing methods, bean origins, and presentation styles increases the appeal of premium coffee options. The ability to experiment with new blends and flavors fosters consumer exploration and a willingness to spend more on higher-quality products (Coca-Cola HBC Hungary, 2024). Seasonal and limited-edition coffee offerings also play a role in influencing purchasing decisions, providing brands with opportunities to generate excitement and attract new customers. Given the connection between affordability and consumer experience, coffee brands operating in Hungary must strike a balance between competitive pricing and quality assurance. While cost-conscious consumers dominate the at-home market, cafés provide an avenue for premium and specialty coffee offerings. As sustainability and ethical sourcing continue to gain traction, brands that align with emerging consumer priorities—such as Fairtrade certification and environmentally responsible practices—may further appeal to evolving market demands.

Beyond the variety of coffee itself, packaging design and product size have become increasingly relevant factors in purchasing decisions. Hungarian consumers tend to prefer larger packages that provide value for money, while distinctive designs help brands stand out in a competitive market (Emori, 2024). A well-designed package can signal quality and reliability, influencing how consumers perceive the product before even tasting it. This trend highlights the importance of branding in the coffee industry, as companies work to align visual appeal with their market positioning. According to a survey conducted by Costa Coffee Brand, one of Hungary's leading premium coffee suppliers, coffee is considered a "powerful inspirational factor" by many consumers. Beyond its functional role as a source of energy or relaxation, coffee has become associated with lifestyle, creativity, and cultural identity. Consumers increasingly seek brands that reflect their personal values and preferences, leading to a shift toward more consumer-oriented marketing strategies (Coca-Cola HBC Hungary, 2024). Whether through storytelling, ethical sourcing, or social engagement, brands that successfully connect with their audience can build long-term loyalty in an evolving and competitive market.

2.4 Market leaders

The Hungarian coffee market is predominantly controlled by multinational corporations, which have established a strong presence and maintain significant market shares (Gutiérrez et al., 2009). Despite this dominance, some national brands have managed to grow in prominence over the past decade, gaining a more competitive position. These brands are primarily distributed through large retailers and supermarket chains, such as Lidl, Spar, Tesco, Coop, and CBA, all of which serve as major industry players and influence consumer purchasing habits (Emori, 2024). Among the leading coffee brands by market share are Tchibo, Jacobs Douwe Egberts, Nestlé (including its Nescafé and Nespresso lines), Lavazza, J.M. Smucker, and Mocca Negra. Mocca Negra holds a unique position within the market as a major player with 100% Hungarian ownership, making it one of the few locally established brands competing against global corporations (Gutiérrez et al., 2009). While these companies lead in sales volume, they also leverage a variety of marketing strategies to maintain consumer interest and loyalty. One of the most effective tactics employed by market leaders is in-store engagement initiatives, such as product-sampling campaigns, which are particularly successful among price-sensitive consumers looking for affordable yet high-quality coffee options (Emori, 2024). Two primary factors contribute to the success of dominant brands in the Hungarian coffee market: pricing and product diversity. As outlined in section 3.3, pricing is a major consideration for Hungarian consumers, many of whom seek a balance between affordability and quality. Discounts, promotions, and bundled deals play a crucial role in attracting customers, especially in supermarkets where competitive pricing drives purchasing behavior. Alongside price sensitivity, product variety is another essential aspect shaping consumer preferences. Hungarian consumers tend to favor a diverse selection of coffee flavors, roasting strengths, and caffeine levels, leading to growing interest in specialized and premium blends. Additionally, there has been a noticeable increase in demand for Fairtrade-certified and responsibly sourced coffee, reflecting a broader shift toward ethical consumption practices (Emori, 2024).

Despite the efforts of major brands to foster customer loyalty, brand commitment among Hungarian coffee drinkers remains relatively low. Only around 34% of consumers demonstrate strong brand loyalty, while the remaining 66% are more inclined to experiment with new products or show little interest in sticking to a specific brand over time (Medve, 2021). However, coffeehouse chains, cafés, restaurants, and bakeries exhibit slightly different trends in customer retention. Approximately 42% of consumers who frequent these establishments prefer to return to familiar locations, indicating that the ambiance, consistency of product quality, and familiarity of service play a role in influencing customer decisions (Garai Fodor, Vasa, & Popovics, 2024). Beyond brand recognition, other critical factors in café selection include predictable coffee quality and a comfortable, inviting atmosphere, both of which contribute to consumer satisfaction and repeat visits. As the Hungarian coffee market continues to evolve, the interaction between multinational brands, local businesses, and shifting consumer preferences will play an increasingly important role in determining market dynamics. Understanding these factors offers insight into opportunities for new entrants and strategies for maintaining competitiveness within an industry driven by both affordability and product differentiation.

3. COFFEE MARKET IN COLOMBIA

3.1 Overview

Before the 2000s, coffee and coffee-based products represented approximately 60% of Colombia's total exports, making it one of the country's most influential economic sectors. As a major producer and exporter of high-quality Arabica coffee, Colombia relied heavily on its coffee trade to sustain national revenue and international economic ties. However, after the economic aperture of Colombia in 1995, the country's export composition changed significantly. Coffee exports fell sharply to just 3.9% of total national exports as the government and private sector prioritized diversification. New industries gained prominence, particularly the extraction and export of natural resources such as coal, hydrocarbons, and gold. Additionally, agricultural exports shifted focus to alternative products like flowers and bananas, which benefitted from Colombia's abundant farmland and low labor costs (Cubillos T., Soltész, & Vasa, 2021). Despite this shift, coffee has remained a cornerstone of Colombia's export economy, with the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia continuing to lead as the country's largest non-mining exporting entity. Alongside coffee exports, the Unión Bananeros de Urabá has strengthened its role in Colombian agricultural trade, contributing to the diversification of export offerings (Cubillos T., Soltész, & Vasa, 2021).

Colombia remains one of the world's largest coffee producers, ranking alongside Brazil and Vietnam. Unlike Vietnam, which primarily exports Robusta coffee, Colombia's coffee industry is centered around Arabica beans, known for their superior flavor profile and global demand (Huancas Segura, Castro-Ramírez, & González-Díaz, 2024). Despite the country's established reputation in the coffee sector, Colombia's coffee export volumes have fluctuated in recent years. According to the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia, exports declined by 8% in 2022, dropping from 12.4 million 60kg bags in 2021 to 11.4 million bags in 2022 (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia, 2023). This reduction in export volume reflects multiple challenges, including market competition, shifting consumer preferences, and domestic economic factors impacting production and trade logistics. Additionally, unpredictable weather conditions, supply chain disruptions, and increased production costs have contributed to variations in export performance.

Despite the decline in export volume, coffee remains one of Colombia's most profitable commodities. In 2022, coffee export revenue reached approximately $3.5 billion, marking a 12.4% increase compared to 2021. This revenue growth suggests that while trade volumes have faced obstacles, coffee prices have remained favorable, allowing Colombian exporters to maintain strong financial returns. The leading destinations for Colombian coffee exports include the United States, Belgium, Germany, and China. Notably, trade with the US saw a significant reduction, with Colombian coffee imports dropping by 33.82% between 2022 and 2023. In contrast, China demonstrated a notable increase in demand, with imports rising by 75.40% in the same period. This shift indicates China's growing role as an emerging market for Colombian coffee exports, potentially reshaping future trade strategies (Huancas Segura, Castro-Ramírez, & González-Díaz, 2024). Colombia's coffee trade benefits significantly from its free trade agreement with the European Union, which was enacted in 2014. This agreement eliminated tariffs on Colombian exports to the EU, allowing coffee producers to compete more effectively in the European market (European Commission, 2014). Additionally, the agreement established an EU trust fund for Colombia, with contributions from 19 EU member states, including Hungary. This fund was designed to support business development, investment opportunities, and the expansion of trade relationships between Colombia and the European Union (Cubillos T., Soltész, & Vasa, 2021). As Colombia continues to navigate the complexities of international trade, expanding its export destinations and strengthening its partnerships within the EU will remain critical in ensuring the long-term stability and growth of its coffee industry. Given the increasing global interest in sustainable and ethically sourced coffee, Colombia may further leverage its position as a high-quality coffee producer to meet evolving consumer demands and secure its presence in competitive international markets.

Importadores	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total acumulado
Estados Unidos	969,548	984,370	1,269,510	1,676,670	1,109,622	6,009,720
Bélgica	120,297	190,323	248,580	301,767	212,433	1,073,400
Alemania	187,794	207,848	238,832	278,402	198,697	1,111,573
Canadá	170,885	180,841	247,102	306,123	185,635	1,090,586
Japón	181,451	201,283	216,282	277,647	166,081	1,042,744
China	16,761	23,977	47,277	78,310	137,354	303,679
Corea del Sur	84,511	110,163	137,832	166,609	128,504	627,619
Italia	58,591	52,190	65,149	75,726	60,525	312,181
Reino Unido	47,470	55,900	77,320	86,754	53,573	321,017
Australia	36,551	45,589	54,684	65,106	52,647	254,577

Figure 4 - Free On-Board value in USD of world coffee exports

Source 4 - Anfibios scientific journal. Performance of colombian Coffee Exports during the period 2019-2023

3.2 Key exporters and brands

According to the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia, the main exporters of Colombian coffee in 2021, based on production volume, included the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia itself, alongside multinational companies such as Sucafina, Olam Agro Colombia, Cóndor Café Collective, and Carcafé (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia, 2022). These exporters play a crucial role in maintaining Colombia's position as one of the world's leading coffee suppliers. As previously mentioned in section 1.1, Colombia ranks among the top three coffee-producing countries globally, alongside Brazil and Vietnam. However, despite its strong production capacity, Colombia's coffee industry has faced fluctuations in trade due to climatic challenges, economic shifts, and market volatility, all of which have impacted export volumes in recent years.

Colombia primarily exports green and roasted Arabica coffee beans, which are highly valued in international markets for their superior quality and distinct flavor profile.

However, the number of internationally recognized Colombian coffee brands remains relatively small compared to other major coffee-producing countries. Among the most widely known and globally exported Colombian brands is Juan Valdez, followed by Sello Rojo, Oma, and Tostao (Huancas Segura, Castro-Ramírez, & González-Díaz, 2024). These brands have successfully established themselves in various international markets, leveraging Colombia's reputation for high-quality coffee. Nevertheless, many smaller Colombian brands also participate in exports on a limited scale, contributing to the country's overall coffee trade. In addition to corporate exporters, individual coffee producers in Colombia have gained access to international markets, largely due to initiatives developed by the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia. Recognizing the importance of supporting smaller producers, the federation has implemented a simplified export process that enables independent coffee growers to sell their products abroad. This system was designed to foster economic opportunities for local farmers, strengthen the Colombian coffee sector, and diversify its international trade portfolio (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia, 2025). As Colombia continues to navigate global trade dynamics, the ability of both large-scale and independent exporters to adapt to shifting market conditions will be key to sustaining the country's role in the international coffee industry.

4. HUNGARY AND COLOMBIA COFFEE TRADE MARKET

4.1 Import process for Hungary

The export and import market of each country has a stipulated set of policies to be followed, depending on the type of goods exported or imported. Trade between Hungary and third countries is regulated by EU legislation (Magyar kereskedelmi és iparkamara, 2024). Additionally, as stated by the Foreign Trade and Customs Regulations of Hungary, since 1991 freight forwarding and international transportation can be practiced without any special licensing or reporting obligation. However, Hungary still collects VAT on all goods that have Hungary as their final destination, which for most goods is 27% (International Trade Administration USA, 2024). When importing food of non-animal origin, it is mandatory of the importer to ensure compliance with the relevant requirements of EU food law or with conditions recognized as equivalent by the EU (European Coffee Federation, 2023). Under relevant requirements of EU food law, a number of rules and precautions in regards to contaminants apply in order to avoid health risks and ensure food quality:

1. The EU has legally binding targets for maximum residue levels (MRLs) for pesticides in food. These levels must be met in order to successfully import coffee.
2. Mould and other mycotoxins must be accounted for and properly dealt with before crossing borders. Ochratoxin A (OTA) is a particular mycotoxin that can be found in green coffee beans. OTA contamination can occur during production, post-harvest practices, or transportation in humid containers. The maximum OTA level for roasted and ground coffee stands at 3 μg/kg, and for instant coffee at 5 μg/kg.
3. Pathogens like salmonella and other types of microbe contamination can sometimes be found in coffee if harvesting and drying are not done properly. This can lead to the stopping of coffee imports or for them to be taken off the market.
4. The EU has rules regarding hydrocarbons and Mineral Oil Aromatic Hydrocarbons (MOAH) contaminants in certain foods, including coffee (Amonarmah Consults, 2024).

Moreover, adherence to hygienic standards based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) principles is required to keep traceability of the products and may be required for marketing and commercial reasons (European Union, 2011). Additionally, proper packaging and labeling of all coffee products, especially roasted coffee, have to follow European Union food labelling rules (Amonarmah Consults, 2024). Inside of the EU there are certain mandatory requirements for the coffee sector that include the environmental, social and economic pillars of sustainability. In the environmental aspect, on June 29 of 2023, the EU parliament passed the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), which bans imports into the European Union of coffee products from land that was deforested after December 31 of 2020 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024). As stated by the Ministry of Foreign affairs "EUDR also restricts importation of coffee products from lands acquired forcibly from local and/or indigenous communities, or whose cultivation involves labor and human rights abuses. Importers that fail to comply with EUDR could face fines of up to 4% of their net profit in any EU Member State."

For the possibility of selling the imported products in supermarket chains, some of them facilitate the diversification of their suppliers by providing events at which prospecting companies can introduce their products. Such is the case for Lidl, Spar and Tesco, who provide a wide set of guidelines, Questions and Answers section, and available business information in their official websites. Most of this information is available in English, but there are some specifics that are still in Hungarian. For the particular case of Spar, they have released an all-encompassing logistics manual for suppliers that provides information such as the handling of the packaging accompanying the goods, requirements for marking the goods delivered, and activities related to supplying (SPAR Magyarország Kereskedelmi Kft, 2021). Thanks to the increase in interest for specialty coffee and coffee tourism as a whole (Wróblewski , Maciejewski, & Mokrysz, 2018), there are ample specialty stores, mostly in Budapest, that have started to actively seek out Fairtrade certified brands with a variety of coffee blends. According to a specialty guide, there are about 158 specialty coffee stores in Hungary, with 108 of those being located in Budapest.

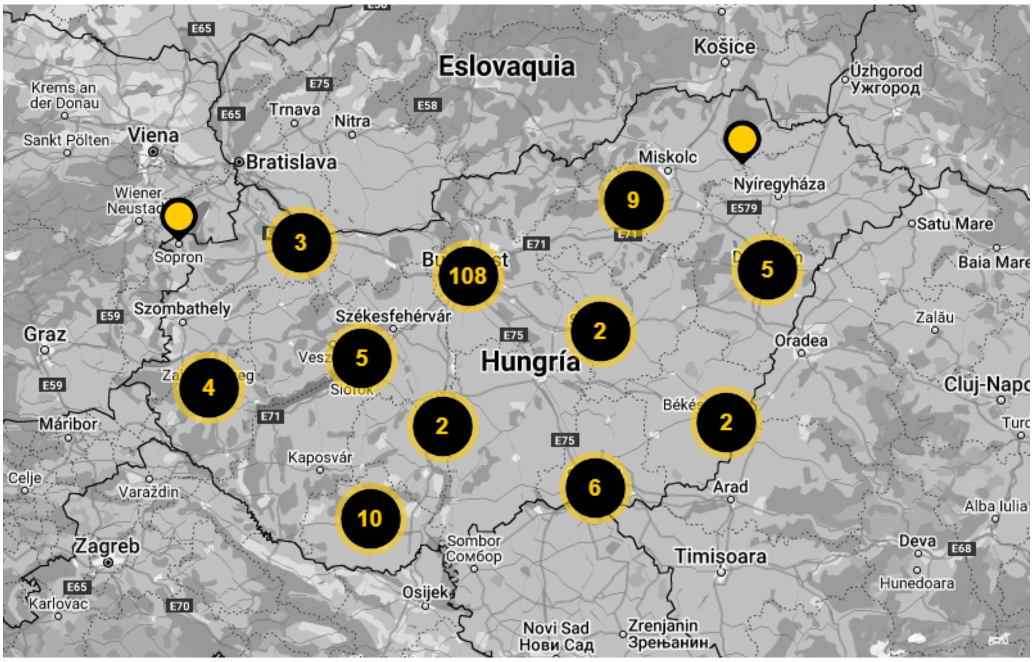

Figure 5 - Specialty coffee stores in Hungary

Source 5 - Google GeoBasis data, 2025.

4.2 Export process for Colombia

The first step for any coffee exporter in Colombia is to be registered in the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia (NFCG), as stipulated by the national government and the ministry of trade and commerce decree 1714 of 2009 (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia, 2025). The registration must be diligently completed before any procedure is done, as the NFCG has to assess that all applicants, either corporations or individuals, meet a fixed list of criteria for successful exportation. Among them are specifications such as packaging size limits and material, labelling and description of the product, and necessary commercial permissions to have before exporting (PROCOLOMBIA, 2019). This list of criteria has been compiled and distributed for public knowledge, and a thorough guide has been created by the NFCG.

For individuals, there is a simplified method provided by the NFCG which allows for coffee exports in smaller quantities. Coffee exports done through this method are handled by certified postal companies: 4-72, FedEx, DHL, UPS, Deprisa, Servientrega, TNT, TRANEXCO, World Courier of Colombia, Compañía Panameña de Aviación and Courierbox Colombia SAS. The products that can be sent through these companies are limited to 60 kg of green coffee, 50 bags of 4 kg roasted coffee and 23 kg of coffee extracts and instant coffee, all which cannot exceed a value of $5000 (Procolombia, 2019). For companies and larger coffee exports, a declaration must be made through the NFCG website, where the total value in the specified currency, the type of coffee product, and the date of transport must be stated. The details of the export such as cargo verification number, country of destination, NFCG declaration number, packaging specifications and identification number of the company can be scrutinized at any point of transport in order to ensure proper handling of the products (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia, 2024). In addition to the legal requirements stipulated by the NFCG, all exporters must meet certain requirements imposed by the EU. As stated in section 5.1, all coffee products exports from third countries coming to the EU must meet the European Union Deforestation Regulation. Since August 2024, The NFCG has facilitated a geolocator service for all Colombian exporters, in order to ensure that all requirements of the EUDR are met throughout the production chain (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia, 2025).

5. DATA COLLECTION AND METHODOLOGY

As part of the research conducted for the possibility of importing this Colombian coffee brand to Hungary, a mix-method approach was used to better understand critical aspects of the study, such as market potential, risks, competitors, target demographics, and profitability for the exporting brand. On one hand, a survey was designed to examine some coffee drinking habits among consumers in Hungary, with the intent to gather data on preferences, behaviors, and market opportunities. On the other hand, an interview with the Colombian brand wishing to export to Hungary was conducted to gather insights into their operations, market perspectives, and export readiness.

5.1 Survey

The survey carried out for this research was designed with the purpose of gathering quantitative data about coffee consumers in Hungary. This survey was designed to assess participants' consumption habits, preferences and purchase behaviors, in order to have a better insight into the target demographic. Moreover, it was carried out with the intent of uncovering trends and patterns that could inform the market potential and strategic positioning of the Colombian coffee brand in Hungary. After gathering enough information and cleaning the data, a quantitative analysis focused on cross-tabulation and correlation analysis was conducted, along with data visualization.

The target demographic for the survey was individuals living in Hungary who actively consume coffee. Participation was not restricted to a specific age group, gender group or social status, and the questions within the survey that tackle these aspects are merely for data collection. As based on the information found in the literary review, coffee is a beverage that is consumed in a broad spectrum and cannot be only attributed to a singular group demographic, which is why the survey was focused on the behavioral aspect. In order to ensure anonymity and an accessible way of filling out the survey, it was hosted using Google Forms and distributed through various platforms such as Email, Messenger and Instagram. In-person interaction at locations such as university, the author’s workplace, and high people traffic areas was also part of the distribution.

Participants were invited to complete the questionnaire voluntarily, and no incentives, monetary or other, were offered.

5.1 Survey questions

The survey had a total of 14 questions, with multiple choice answers. The option of adding a more personal response to every question was also added, in case the participants felt their answer was not available in the predetermined ones in the survey. Before presenting the questions, a short description detailing the purpose of the survey, the target audience, and the assurance of anonymity was set at the beginning of the form. Answer options that would indicate that the participant does not consume coffee were also added as a failsafe method in case they decided to partake in the survey, despite the introductory description. The first two questions of the survey ask about the age group and the gender of the participant, respectively. As previously stated, this was done for data collection in order to find possible trends and insights about coffee consumers; in this case, to find out if there are certain patterns in coffee consumption related to age and gender that could possibly be observed. The third question of the survey inquiries about the frequency of consumption, ranging from daily, few times per week, weekly, occasionally or never; this can give potential insights into the categorization between habitual consumers and occasional ones, as well as a way to understand the overall demand for coffee within its consumers and the market.

The fourth and fifth questions had the option to choose multiple answers and inquired about the main times of the day in which participants consumed coffee and the locations at which they mostly did. The idea behind these questions is to get a better understanding about the behavior of coffee consumers, and if timing and location preferences can help optimize marketing strategies for the Colombian coffee brand. Additionally, it can also provide data about the possible products that would perform better during certain time intervals, such as morning blends for breakfast or decaffeinated options for evening drinkers. The sixth question asked about the primary reason for drinking coffee. This was asked with the purpose of gaining insight about the reason behind the consumption of the beverage itself, and what could be the most important priority or motivation when purchasing and drinking coffee. Questions seven and eight inquired about personal preferences, asking the participants about their preferred type of coffee and what they consider to be the most important quality in a cup of coffee. Understanding what style of coffee is the most consumed can help figure out what blends and product offerings would be most suitable for the market, as well as identifying what the profile of the most desirable coffee could be; my opinion as the author is that a singular trait could be the most decisive factor for consumer's choices. Questions nine and ten were focused on the average expenditure, in Hungarian forints, of consumers per month and their primary place of acquisition (supermarkets, specialty stores, online retailers, or elsewhere). These questions have the purpose of estimating the average expenditure on coffee in the target market, and where it is mainly spent at; for example, a consumer might want to stay within a low monthly spending for coffee and buy it at their usual supermarket of choice, while another might prefer to spend more and buy their coffee at a specialty store.

Question eleven inquired about the preference in regards to coffee products when purchasing (ground coffee, whole beans, coffee pods or capsules, instant, or other). This can help provide additional data in regards to the buying habits of coffee consumers in Hungary, and identify if there is a particular trend that the Colombian coffee exporter might be able to prioritize when deciding what products to export. Questions twelve and thirteen asked participants what are some of the aspects that influence their choice of coffee brands and if the origin of the coffee beans was of importance to them. By analyzing consumer preferences, the Colombian coffee brand can differentiate itself from competitors in the Hungarian market, focusing on aspects that are most influential in driving consumer choice. It additionally serves as a way to understand what sort of criteria consumers have for buying a specific brand; whether it's sustainability, flavor profiles, or affordability. Moreover, this can also help build a lasting consumer base. The last question of the survey inquired about the participants' interest in trying new brands of coffee. This can help determine the willingness of coffee consumers in Hungary to explore and adopt novel brands, identify if there could be market entry challenges due to it being unfamiliar, and to understand which section of the coffee consumer demographic is more inclined to try the Colombian coffee brand. Furthermore, it can help with brand adaptability, since knowing the level of interest in new brands can help form strategies to position the Colombian brand as an intriguing and attractive option for coffee drinkers.

5.2 Survey results

After collecting the necessary data and cleaning it up, a total of 126 responses were found to be appropriate for the research. The four responses excluded from the total represent participants that state throughout the survey that they do not drink or do not actively buy coffee, or who provided ambiguous or contradictory information. Starting with the first question, the age group of 18 - 24 year olds represent the highest percentage among the participants, being around 51.59% of the total. This is followed by the age group of 25 - 34 year olds with 33.33% of participants, with the age group of 35 - 44 year olds being third with 11.9%, and the age groups of 45 - 54 and 55 - 64 year olds being both 1.59%, the lowest percentile within the total participants.

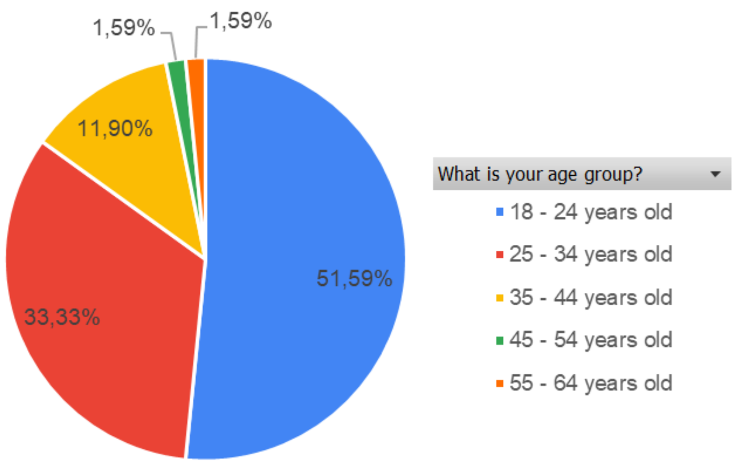

Figure 6 - Survey results question 1

The second question shows that the majority of participants were female with around 56% of the total, followed by 41% being male and around 3% preferring not to disclose their gender. The third question shows that more than half of participants drink coffee daily with 56.35% of the total, followed by few times a week as the second highest percentile with around 25.40% of the total, with occasionally and weekly being the lowest with approximately 15.87% and 2.38% respectively. The fourth question, which provided insight about the times of the day for coffee consumption, shows that out of 126 participants, 107 of them drink it in the morning, 89 participants enjoy it in the afternoon, 23 of them drink it during the evening, and only 4 enjoy coffee during the night.

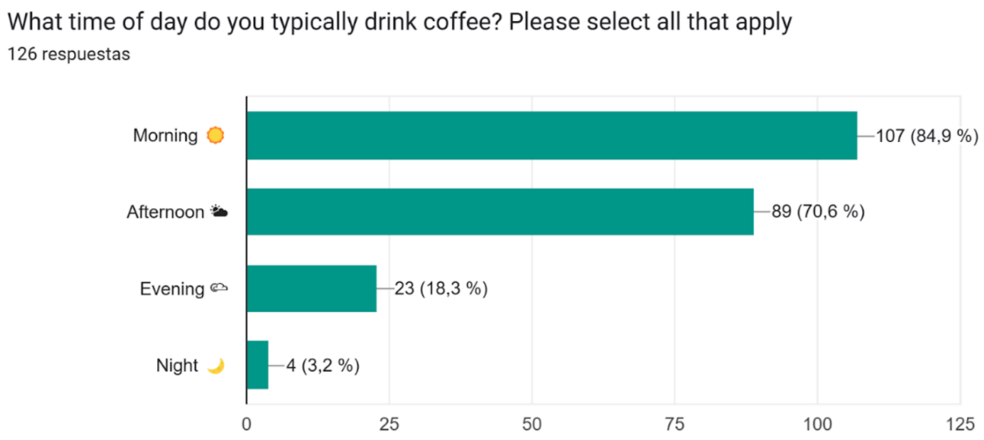

Figure 7 - Survey results question 3

Breaking down this information for more specific information, it appears that the morning and afternoon mix represents the most recurring behavior, as 58 of the total participants chose these times as their primary coffee drinking periods. This was followed by 31 of the total participants being exclusively morning drinkers, followed by 12 participants enjoying it during the morning, afternoon and evening. Additionally, it appears that the 4 participants that enjoy drinking coffee during the night enjoy drinking it during the morning as well. Of the remaining 19 participants that do not drink coffee during the morning time, 13 of them stated that they exclusively drink it during the afternoon. The remainder of participants chose a wide variety of times for their coffee consumption.

For the fifth question, the survey results indicate that the majority of participants consume coffee at home (81.74%), making it the most preferred location for drinking coffee. This reflects a strong preference for home brewing, potentially linked to convenience, cost savings, and personal preparation preferences. However, cafés and restaurants also play a significant role in coffee consumption habits, with 67.46% of participants frequenting these locations. The workplace or school is another key location for coffee consumption, selected by 63.49% of respondents. Additionally, on-the-go consumption is the least common, chosen by only 17.46% of respondents, reinforcing the idea that Hungarian coffee drinkers prefer more settled and routine-based consumption rather than mobile or grab-and-go options. The combination of drinking coffee at home, at cafés/restaurants, and at work/school is the most common, chosen by 24.6% of participants. This suggests that many consumers engage in coffee drinking across multiple settings. The second most common combination is at home and cafés/restaurants (15.87%), followed by at home and work/school (13.49%), showing that home brewing remains a consistent preference across multiple consumption patterns. Further looking into the results, 12.69% of respondents exclusively drink coffee at home. On the other end, 11.9% of participants reported consuming coffee across all four locations, representing a more flexible and diverse drinking habit that incorporates both personal and social coffee experiences.

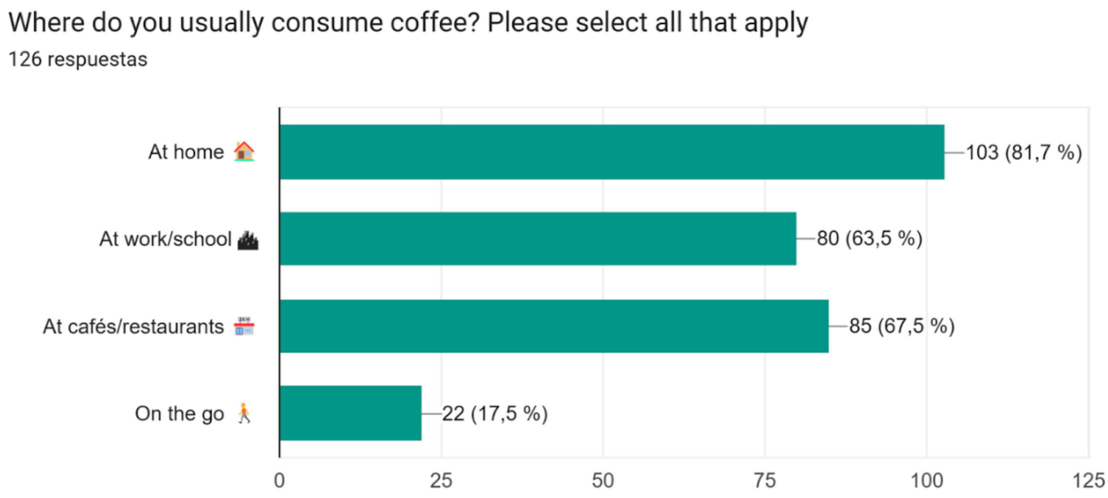

Figure 8 - Survey results question 5

The sixth question results show that the taste of coffee is the most important trait for consumers, as around 44.44% of participants chose this as their primary reason for drinking coffee. Caffeine follows as the second most significant reason, chosen by 32.54% of respondents. Out of habit seems to be the third most important reason for consumers, as 13.49% of participants chose this option. Additionally, a notable 7.14% of participants selected both caffeine and taste as equally important. Further looking into the results, the least significant factors influencing coffee consumption are availability, "other reasons," and selecting "all of the above," each chosen by only 0.79% of participants. This indicates that external variables like convenience or generalized factors do not significantly shape consumer preferences.

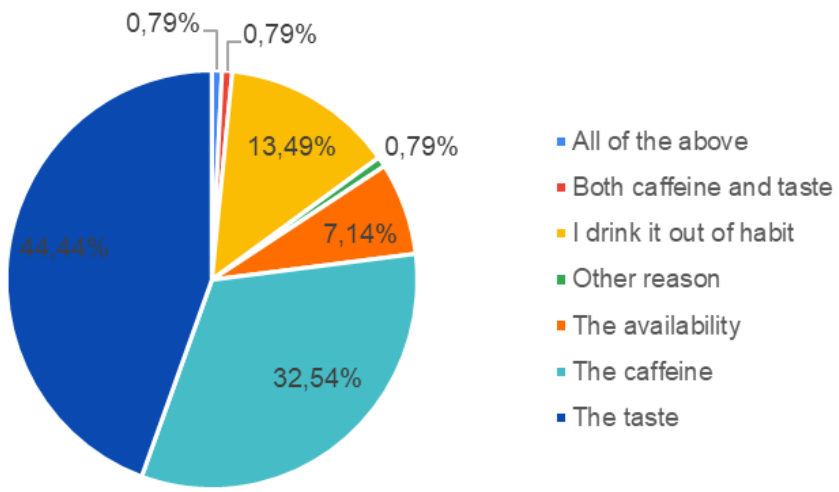

Figure 9 - Survey results question 6

The results for question seven show that Cappuccino to be the favorite type of coffee among consumers, with 37.30% having it as their preferred type. This is followed by Latte, being the favorite of 29.37% of participants. Espresso comes at third favorite, being the preferred type for 12.70% of participants. The remaining participants chose other types as their preferred coffee as shown in the graph.

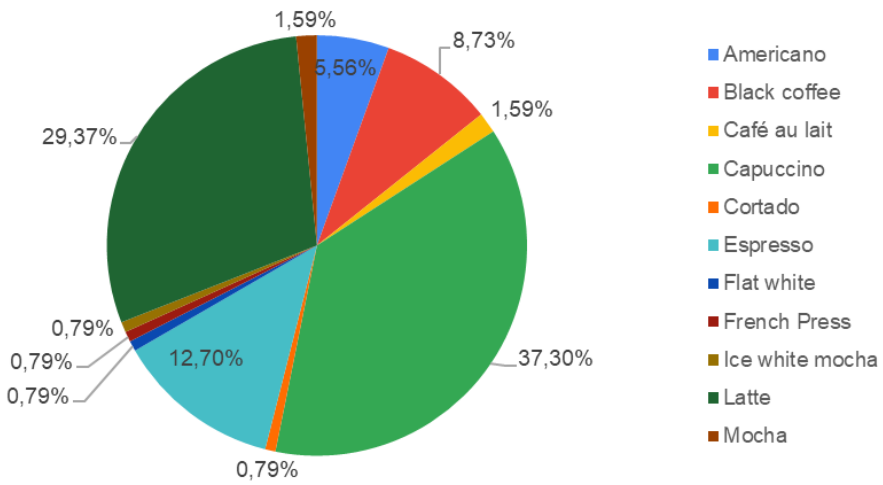

Figure 10 - Survey results question 7

Regarding the result for question eight, it appears that flavor keeps being the most important factor for participants, as 70.6% of respondents stated that it is the most important factor in a good cup of coffee, this is followed by aroma with 17.5% of respondents, strength with 8.7% of total participants, and surprisingly price being the lowest priority with only 3.2% of all respondents.

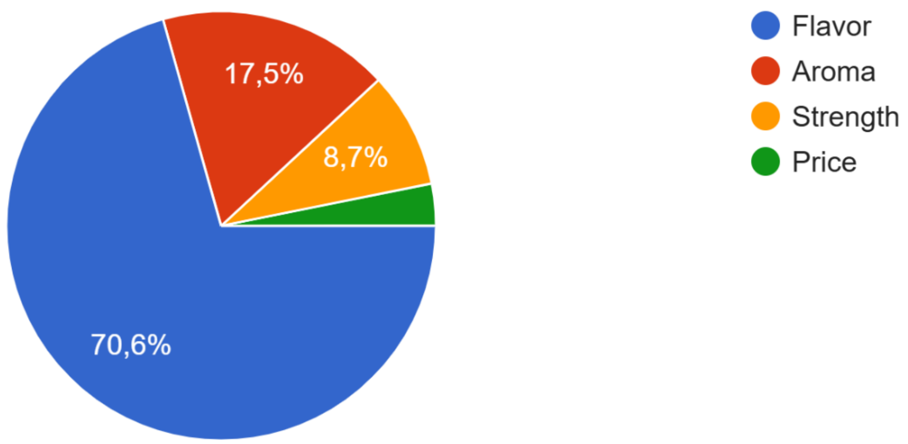

Figure 11 - Survey Results question 8

The survey results for question nine indicate that the majority of participants spend a relatively modest amount on coffee, with the largest segment falling within the 2,000–5,000 HUF range (30.16%), followed closely by those who spend less than 2,000 HUF (29.37%). This suggests that most Hungarian coffee consumers aim to keep their coffee expenses within a controlled budget, reinforcing the importance of affordability despite flavor being ranked as the top priority in coffee selection. Additionally, the distribution of spending highlights a gradual decline in the number of consumers willing to pay higher amounts. While 24.60% of participants spend between 5,000 and 10,000 HUF monthly, only 11.90% allocate between 10,000 and 15,000 HUF, and a mere 3.97% exceed 15,000 HUF. The overall average monthly spending on coffee among survey participants is around 5,500 HUF.

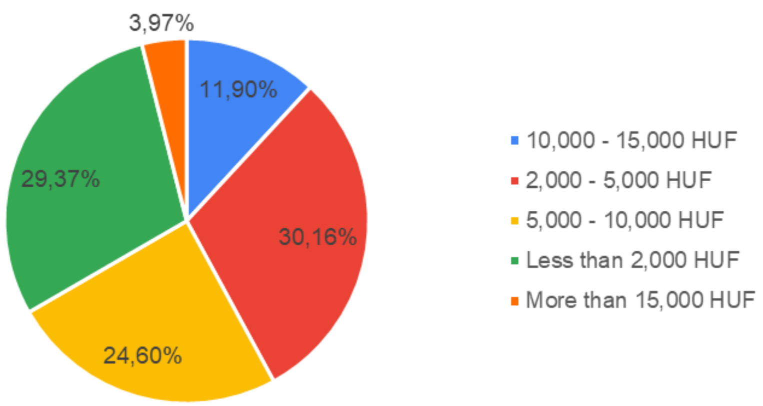

Figure 12 - Survey results question 9

The survey results for question ten highlight that supermarkets dominate as the primary coffee purchasing location, with 66.67% of participants selecting them as their main source. The second most popular option, specialty stores (24.6%), indicates a sizable segment of consumers who seek higher-quality or niche coffee products that may not be available in supermarkets. Only 3.97% of participants reported buying coffee primarily from online retailers, reflecting a relatively low adoption of e-commerce for coffee purchases. The remaining responses, including "Other" (2.38%) and "Depends" (1.59%), indicate that some consumers use varied purchasing methods based on availability or specific preferences. Additionally, the small percentage of participants selecting "All" (0.79%) highlights that few consumers spread their coffee purchases across multiple sources.

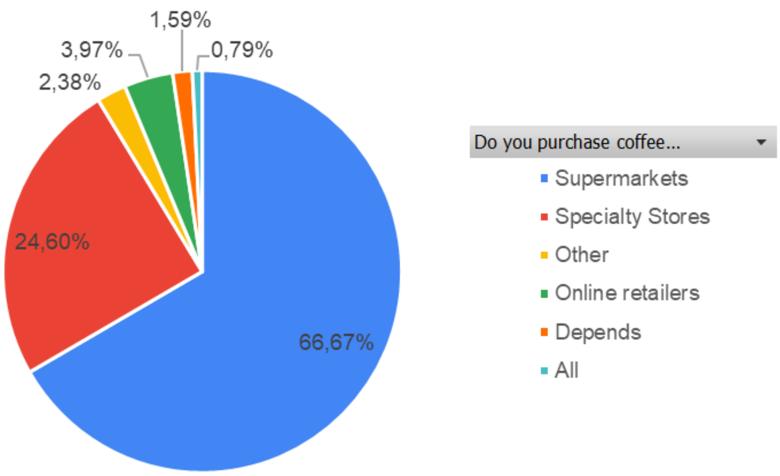

Figure 13 - Survey results question 10

The survey results for question eleven show that ground coffee is the most preferred option among participants, making up 36.51% of responses. Instant coffee accounts for 23.02%, whole beans make up 22.22%, and coffee pods/capsules represent 16.67%. This balanced division indicates that while ground coffee holds the largest share, there is still a sizable consumer base for alternative brewing methods. Additionally, the results show two small response categories, “Everything except whole beans” and “Whole beans and ground coffee,” each making up only 0.79% of responses.

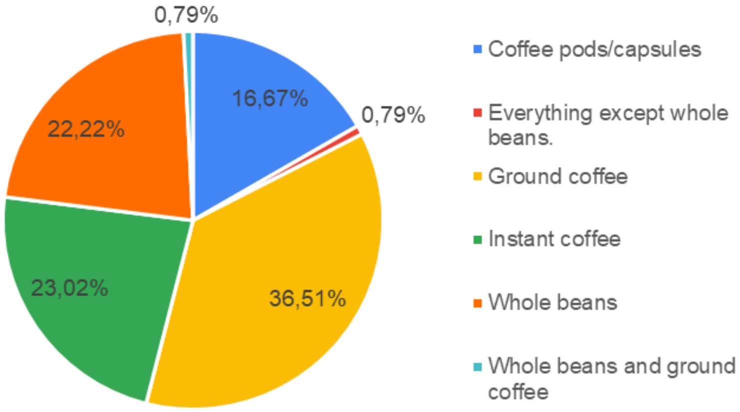

Figure 14 - Survey results question 11

Regarding question twelve, according to the results taste seems to be the most important factor for participants when buying a brand of coffee, as 89.7% of all participants included it in their reasons for choosing a particular brand of coffee. The other most important quality seems to be price, with 58.7% of all participants including it as part of their reasons for buying a brand of coffee. Recommendations as a factor when choosing a brand are to follow, with 38.9% participants including it in their reasons. Brand reputation is next, with 36.5% of all participants including it in their reasons.

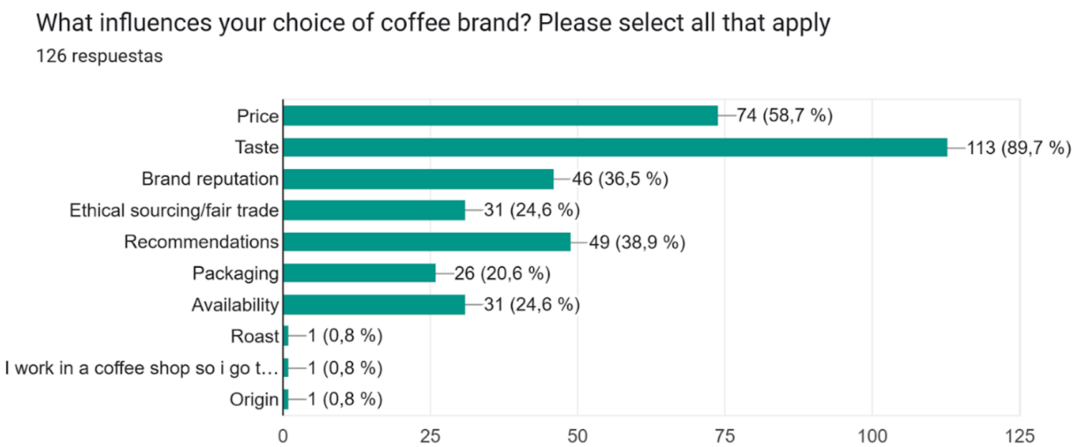

Figure 15 - Survey results question 12

The results for question thirteen, which ranges from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest rate, show that 31.7% of participants care somewhat about the origin of the coffee beans in the coffee they consume. It is important for 28.6% of total participants, but for 17.5% and 13.49% is not that important or not considered at all. Only for 8.7% of all participants does the origin of the coffee beans seems to be extremely important.

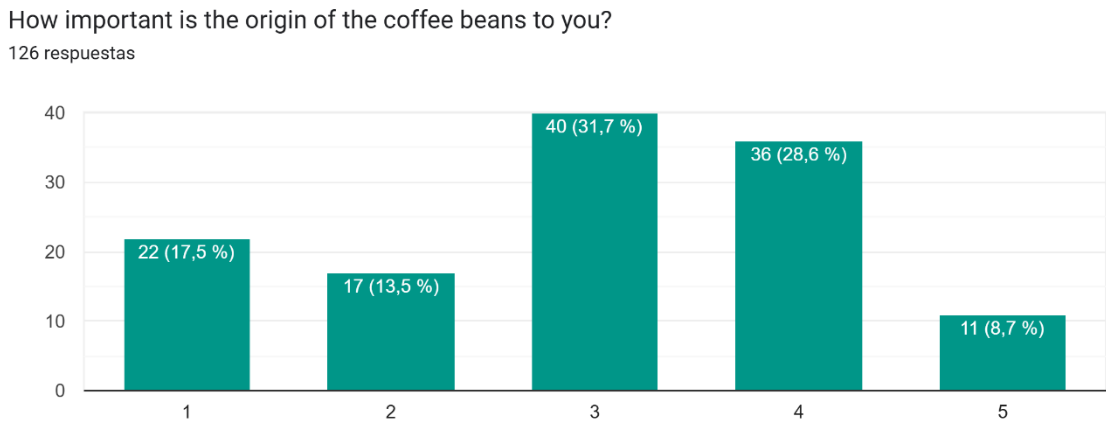

Figure 16 - Survey results question 13

Regarding the results for question fourteen, around 37.3% of all participants seem to be very interested in trying new brands overall and another 37.3% are somewhat interested. 19.84% of participants are neutral, and only a small percentage of participants are not interested.

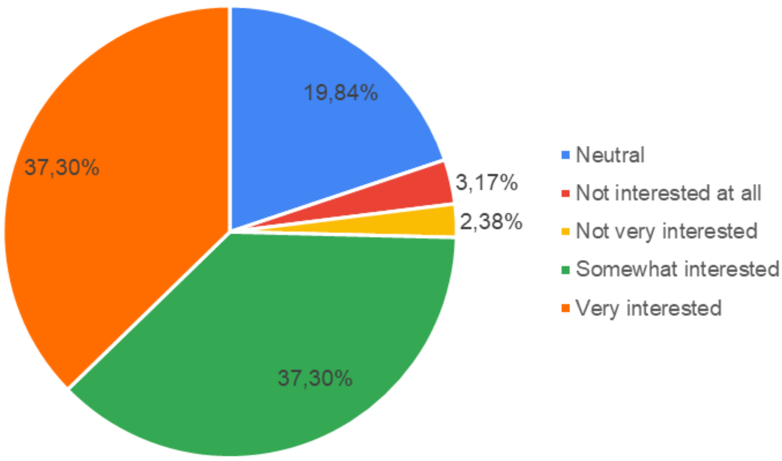

Figure 17 - Survey results questions 14

6. INTERVIEW

The interview conducted for this research involved a discussion between myself, the author, and a representative of the Colombian coffee brand Kinanu. As outlined in the literature review, the selection of Kinanu as the focal brand for this study was based on several key factors, including its diverse range of coffee products, its strong adherence to sustainability guidelines, and its direct connections with coffee producers in the Andean region of Colombia. While previous research provided a general understanding of the brand’s positioning, obtaining firsthand insights through an interview was essential for strengthening the analysis and further addressing the research questions presented in this thesis. The opportunity to directly engage with a Kinanu representative allowed for a deeper exploration of the brand’s export strategies, operational challenges, and perspectives on entering a new international market.

Prior to the interview, Kinanu requested clarification regarding the use of the information provided. It was confirmed that all collected data would be used exclusively for research purposes, with the assurance that the identity of the representative would remain anonymous if requested. To ensure a structured and effective discussion, an interview guide was developed, covering a range of topics relevant to the study. The key areas of focus included the general characteristics of the brand, its product offerings, motivations for exporting, market expansion strategies, and both short- and long-term goals. A semi-structured interview approach was chosen, allowing for flexibility in the conversation while ensuring that core themes were systematically addressed. This format facilitated a dynamic exchange, providing opportunities for deeper elaboration on key topics while maintaining a focused direction aligned with the research objectives.

To analyze the qualitative data gathered during the interview, a thematic analysis method was employed. The interview was transcribed and translated into English for thorough review, allowing for the identification of recurring themes and patterns in the responses. These themes were then systematically categorized to better understand the underlying factors that contribute to Kinanu's potential for entering the Hungarian coffee market successfully. Through this analytical process, five primary themes emerged, each reflecting critical aspects of the brand’s strategic approach, challenges, and opportunities in international trade. The frequency of each theme's occurrence within the interview discussion was noted, with "n" representing the number of times a particular theme was mentioned. This thematic breakdown provided valuable insights into Kinanu's vision for global expansion, its adaptability to market demands, and the specific strategies necessary to navigate the complexities of exporting coffee from Colombia to Hungary. These themes were the following:

1. **Unique flavor makes Kinanu coffee a unique product (n=9):** During the interview, one of the most important questions raised was what made Kinanu coffee stand out from other coffee brands. As stated by the representative of Kinanu, the brand believes that one of the most important aspects of coffee is its flavor, which is not something easy to achieve. He stated that every step of production is extremely important; factors like the soil, the altitude, the techniques used to grow coffee, the period of time optimal to ripen coffee beans, the roast methods and packaging can all affect the final flavor or taste of coffee. "One important thing to keep in mind when talking about the flavor of coffee, is that it speaks for itself…You can immediately tell that everything was done correctly when you have good coffee, so when you drink it you want to go for more, buy more. You would not drink coffee that tastes bad unless you really have to." he affirmed. Part of the uniqueness of the flavor of Kinanu coffee resides in the fact that all of the processes implemented for the production of their coffee still remains mostly artisanal, which means that a lot of care and rigorous monitoring goes into it. Additionally, Kinanu likes using the great variety of soils and other artisanal products available in Valle del Cauca, the region of Colombia where the brand is located, to add to the uniqueness of the flavor; they implement accents to the coffee that do not disrupt the overall flavor of the drink but provide a more complex and enjoyable experience. The way he describes it, depending on the preference of the consumer, they can find a special blend of coffee that will suit their tastes, such as caramel accents in a medium roast for consumers that prefer lighter and sweeter flavors, or a citrusy aftertaste dark roast for consumers that wish for a more unusual flavor in their coffee. According to the representative, flavor is also a very important factor because it also helps solidify the presence of the brand on the market, especially against other brands that use Robusta type for their blends, which is rather bitter and leaves a strong aftertaste.

2. **Kinanu coffee brand has the signature quality of Colombian coffee (n=7):** Another important aspect discussed during the interview was the fact that Kinanu brand, due to being of Colombian origin, already has a reputation that precedes it. As expressed by the representative, Colombian coffee already has a reputation at

an international level of being of high quality; this can be attributed to multiple factors, such as the biological diversity of the country, the presence of all thermal floors, the weather and the type of coffee grown. According to the representative, an important characteristic of Kinanu coffee is the fact that they exclusively grow arabica coffee, and they keep their blends pure, as one of the reasons for the staple of quality for Colombian coffee is that arabica coffee has a better body, flavor and aftertaste than blends that are only robusta coffee or a mix of the two. During the interview, it was stated that thanks to this already existing notion of high quality, Kinanu brand would most likely have an advantage in gaining the interest of coffee consumers in the Hungarian market. The representative expresses that based on his own experience when talking to people that have lived in Europe or currently live there, is that coffee is considered to be bitter, when this should not be the case. He states that part of the reason people tend to drink coffee with milk, sugar or other sweeteners is to hide the bitterness of the coffee; something that is not common in Colombia, where most people enjoy plain black coffee on its own. He considers this a point to be exploited when entering a new market that is not used to the quality of Colombian coffee.

3. **Exporting helps with Kinanu's mission in Colombia (n=6):** One of the recurring themes in the interview was Kinanu's motivation for expanding into the international market. As a brand founded and operated entirely by rural farmers and their families, Kinanu has established a strong presence within Colombia, gaining recognition for its commitment to quality and sustainability. Its growth has not only created employment opportunities for a significant number of people in the Valle del Cauca region but has also increased awareness of the dedication and labor required to cultivate coffee, a product deeply embedded in Colombia's identity and economy. The representative emphasized that international expansion is seen as a crucial step toward furthering Kinanu's mission, ensuring that more farming families benefit from the economic opportunities associated with global trade. By reaching new international markets, Kinanu aims to strengthen its support for small-scale farmers, improving their working conditions and overall standard of living. Expanding overseas would provide them with greater financial stability, access to better resources, and opportunities for development, making coffee production a more viable long-term livelihood.

Additionally, the brand's global presence would serve as a platform to educate consumers about the realities of coffee farming, fostering appreciation for the craftsmanship and hard work involved in the production process. Raising awareness about ethical sourcing and direct trade models could help create a stronger connection between consumers and producers, ensuring that farmers receive fair compensation for their labor. According to the representative, the key to ensuring a stable coffee supply in the future lies in mitigating negative environmental effects. Kinanu has already implemented sustainable farming techniques within Colombia, focusing on soil health, responsible water use, and biodiversity conservation. International expansion could further these efforts by aligning with global sustainability initiatives and collaborating with distributors and retailers that prioritize ethical and environmentally friendly supply chains. This approach not only benefits farmers but also promotes long-term resilience in coffee production, safeguarding both livelihoods and natural resources. Ultimately, Kinanu's expansion strategy is centered around economic empowerment, environmental sustainability, and consumer education. By entering new markets, the brand seeks to bridge the gap between producers and consumers, creating a more transparent and responsible coffee trade while securing a stable future for Colombian farmers. These aspirations align with broader industry trends toward ethical trade, sustainable agriculture, and heightened consumer awareness, positioning *Kinanu* as a strong contender in the global coffee sector.

4. **The main goal for exporting to Hungary (n=6):** During the interview, the representative stated that the main goal for exporting to Hungary would be to tap into part of the European Union market; they understand that the process of exporting is not easy, but they have the willingness to invest and at least set themselves in the country, even if it takes more than a year. The representative also mentioned that they would be optimistic about introducing the brand, as they estimate their production to be able to supply an average chain of supermarkets, based on their own distribution in Colombia. He adds that gathering a stable number of consumers would be ideal, as he believes that social media can help greatly with promoting the brand.

7. RESULTS ANALYSIS

By interpreting and connecting the information gathered from secondary data sources, the survey, and the themes present in the interview conducted, it is possible to analyze the results and derive meaningful insights that highlight patterns, trends, and correlations. Firstly, as found throughout sections 1 to 4, the process of importing coffee from Colombia into Hungary is impacted by factors of international trade but it is entirely viable. Colombia exports high quantities of coffee every year on a global scale, particularly to the European Union, which is its primary consumer, and is not subjected to any special procedures that either benefit or hinder the import of the product into the EU. Thanks to the fact that Hungary is a member state, importing coffee from another country is only subjected to the legal standards settled by the EU, and as found in section 4.1 there are no additional country-specific requirements for its entry to Hungary. The existence of multiple international coffee brands settled in Hungary also provide certain amount of insight into the current state of the Hungarian coffee market; it is a diverse market with ample room for growth. This would mean that Kinanu coffee brand will be met with multiple competitors upon entry into the market, while still having the possibility of finding its place within it. Comparing the information reviewed during section 2 and the survey results from question ten in section 5.2, it is not far fetched to assume that since majority of coffee consumers in Hungary buy from supermarkets, they are exposed to this assortment of international brands. More adventurous consumers probably take notice of new brands introduced in their supermarkets of choice and are willing to try them out, while brand loyalists, despite sticking to their usuals, also become aware of the entry of new brands.

Secondly, according to the secondary data findings, the average Hungarian coffee consumer is very price conscious and usually goes for a lower priced product. This would seem like a contradiction to the findings of the survey which show that flavor overrules price by a wide margin in terms of importance for the average coffee consumer. However, when taking into consideration the survey results about the primary reason for drinking coffee, it makes sense that consumers would prioritize flavor, as the main reasons for drinking coffee are mostly about the actual taste and caffeine content. But if taste and caffeine are the top reasons for drinking coffee, then the survey results about the average monthly spending should also reflect this information; if price is not necessarily a priority when buying coffee, then there must be a reason as to why the monthly spending for majority of consumers is rather low. By further looking at the results, it is possible to connect and explain this disparity between low spending without price prioritizing and is by understanding the context in which coffee is mostly consumed. The most important factor to take into consideration is that majority of participants of the survey stated that they mostly drank coffee at home. This is important because even if participants were to drink coffee daily, buying a single package of either whole beans, ground coffee or instant can potentially last them for the entirety of the month. This would mean that it is not that price is not an important factor, but because of the wide variety of brands and coffee products available, consumers can rely on purchases of coffees that have a good flavor profile and can last them for majority of the month.

Thirdly, further exploring the purchasing behavior of coffee consumers by comparing the secondary data and the survey findings, there is a notable trend for younger consumers, particularly ages 18 – 24, as they tend to enjoy mostly milk-based coffee drinks such as cappuccino and latte, while coffee drinks such as black coffee and espresso tend to be enjoyed more by older consumers. According to sections 2.1 to 2.3, Robusta seems to be the more consumed type of coffee in Hungary despite its pungent earthy taste due to it being usually sold at lower or discounted prices. However, with the knowledge that flavor and caffeine content play the biggest roles in the primary reasons for drinking coffee among survey participants, it would make sense that this more earthy taste is better when paired with additives such as milk and sugar. Additionally, this also ties with one of the reoccurring themes discussed during the interview in regards to the flavor of Kinanu coffee brand; if consumers put so much importance in the taste of the coffee they drink, then a brand that can deliver high quality coffee, particularly the Arabica type with is more subtle taste and the wide variety of blends offered, will be able to reel in a stable number of consumers despite not being the cheapest in the market. This of course can only be achieved when paired with the knowledge that price, despite not being the number one factor, is still something that affects the final decision for purchasing.

Fourthly, as explored in sections 1.3 and 2.4, the average consumer's decision for their selection of coffee depends on factors such as quality, convenience and cultural context. Hungary in particular has seen an increase in overall interest for coffee among its population during the last decade thanks to it being adopted as a social ritual and the increase of its availability for all households. Additionally, when comparing this information to the survey results of question eleven, it is possible to see that once again, taste and price are the leading factors that influence consumer's purchasing decisions. Based on this, its possible to understand why majority of coffee consumers in Hungary tend to be brand explorers rather than loyalists; product variety in flavor and caffeine strength are something that are highly sought after, and with the presence of multiple international brands available in supermarkets and specialty stores, its easy for consumers to indulge in trying different brands, which is also supported by the survey results of question fourteen, as more than half of participants of the survey expressed that they are interested in trying new brands. Not to mention that since price can fluctuate for the same product from season to season, it can inferred that coffee consumers will be inclined to rotate between brands according to what suits their needs; a coffee brand from Brazil that tends to be cheaper might increase in price due to production falling in the country of origin, while a competing coffee brand from Hungary stays relatively the same. If this Hungarian coffee brand suits the tastes of the consumer, they will be more inclined to purchase it now while it is cheaper than the Brazilian brand.

Fifthly, based on the information available from previous studies, the coffee market as a whole is growing due to a multitude of factors such as an increasing global population and an all-time increase in popularity of the drink; so much so that the global supply of coffee has been falling behind global demand. By considering the international policies about fair-trade coffee and campaigns for environmental conservation, it can be inferred that part of the effort to stabilize the market is by making sure that coffee yields are not lost to natural disasters such as droughts or floods. As discussed during the interview with the representative of Kinanu, they are aware of these environmental requirements and actively participate in eco-friendly artisanal practices, while still incentivizing economic growth in the Andean region of Colombia. This view about coffee production is also an important factor to take into consideration when dimensioning how well the brand can be received in the Hungarian coffee market. Based on the survey results and the already available data, although small, there is certainly a growing interest about fairtrade and sustainable coffee from consumers. According to the survey results from question thirteen, the importance of the origin of the coffee beans in the coffee they consume is mostly neutral with a slightly bigger lean towards a positive response. This can be interpreted as the average consumer not necessarily looking out for sustainably grown coffee, but if provided with knowledge about a brand following environmentally conscious and fairtrade practices they would be more inclined to buy from that brand, than from one that does not apply them. With this in mind, it can be inferred that Kinanu's aim to promote themselves as a sustainable brand will impact their entry into the market in a positive manner, with the possibility to pander to more environmentally conscious consumers.

Lastly, we can deduce that to achieve their short-term goals of entering the Hungarian coffee market and gaining popularity, the Colombian coffee brand Kinanu would need to invest significantly in marketing. This is by comparing the points discussed during the interview about Kinanu's export purpose with the available secondary data reviewed and the survey results in section 5.2. As stated by the representative of Kinanu, one of the core aspects of the brand is that is backed up by the preexisting popularity of Colombian coffee as a whole. However, by following the trend of taste and price being the most important factors, they would have to implement a diverse set of strategies in order to successfully engage with consumers. To clarify, by further analyzing the results for question twelve of the survey, recommendations and brand reputation despite being ranked third and fourth for characteristics that influence choice of coffee brand, are notably less significant than taste and price. One way to overcome this would be by using marketing strategies such as product sampling, which as explored in section 2.4 is a common practice used by brands and distributors in the Hungarian coffee market. Additionally, as explored in section 2.3, some additional elements that coffee consumers in Hungary have increasingly taken an interest in is size and packaging design. If Kinanu brand were to use this information to its advantage, then they can respond accordingly by including the fair-trade qualification within their already elegant packaging to make it stand out from other international brands. Not only that, but they can also introduce products that cater to the size preferences of the average coffee consumer in Hungary.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The primary objective of this thesis is to assess the opportunity of successfully importing the Colombian coffee brand Kinanu into the Hungarian coffee market, based on the brand's goal of acquiring popularity and profitability in the long run. The findings from this research indicate that while the Hungarian coffee market has a sizable consumer base and it has been growing during recent years, there are certain challenges that might arise for the brand when settling in the market. Based on the data collected, it is entirely possible for Kinanu to establish long-term export agreements, thanks to the fact that the main distributors of coffee in the Hungarian market, namely supermarkets, already welcome a diverse bundle of international brands. Additionally, the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia provides excellent support for Colombian brands that wish to export to other countries, while keeping a strict adherence to fair-trade and hygiene standards set by the European Union and subsequently, Hungary. In regards to the Hungarian coffee market itself, the consumer base available is incredibly diverse between age groups, genders and class groups. And, while the general interest towards the origin of the coffee they consume tends to be neutral, there is a notable trend of consumers being open to brand-exploring based on their priorities of taste, while simultaneously wishing to stick to a budget. This can be seen in the leading brands in the Hungarian coffee market, which thrive due to their variety of products with prices ranging from cheap to expensive. Based on the established goals made by the Colombian brand when assessing whether or not exporting to Hungary would be profitable for Kinanu, the main challenge would be to keep prices accessible to the average coffee consumer. The export process might significantly increase the price of the products offered compared to already established brands in the coffee market; although there is indeed a decent section of the consumer base that does spend above the average on coffee, this would mean that the short-term goal of gaining traction and popularity in the Hungarian coffee market might be limited to this section of the consumer base. Furthermore, there would need to be significant investment from part of the Colombian coffee brand for marketing strategies that take full advantage of consumers' preferences, such as product sampling which directly panders to their priority for taste, which can overthrow the priority for price.

There are limitations to the scope of this thesis that should be taken into consideration. Firstly, although there is data available to the public in regards to the processing and distribution of coffee products in Hungary, some specifics such as revenue generated, and average pricing are considered as confidential information by a great portion of the main distributors. This would mean that any price approximations for selling would be based on pure speculation, and so the comparison between brands in regards to price is made entirely based on previous market reports and the survey results. A more accurate comparison could be made for future studies by requesting this information from the distributors themselves. Secondly, the results gathered from the survey is limited and not entirely representative of the entire coffee consumer base in Hungary. This is due to the limited number of participants. Some brand limitations could be language barriers and market entry challenges. If further research were to be done, a more in-depth study into the Hungarian coffee market with a bigger input from the target demographic would yield more extensive results.

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