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► To cite this version:

Riccardo Bozzi, Bénédicte Lebreton, Herveline Lenoir, Juan Maria Garcia Casco, Matthias Petig, et al.. Survey of demographic and phenotypic data of local pig breeds of Treasure project. 9. International symposium on the mediterranean pig, Nov 2016, Portalegre, Portugal. hal-01603537

HAL Id: hal-01603537

<https://hal.science/hal-01603537>

Submitted on 5 Jun 2020

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SURVEY OF DEMOGRAPHIC AND PHENOTYPIC DATA OF LOCAL PIG BREEDS OF TREASURE PROJECT

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Abstract: Local genetic resources represent an important reservoir of biodiversity in the animal sector. Sustainable use of these resources can be an important source of income for farmers taking advantage of the peculiar characteristics of their products.

The different European local pig breeds have a different level of knowledge of their characteristics both at demographic and phenotypic level. This information, however, is fundamental to the management of the breeds and represent one of the first steps in a project for the enhancement of production. This paper reports the results of a survey on the demographic and phenotypic characterization of the 20 European local pig breeds involved in the TREASURE* project. The first part of the survey shows, for all populations involved, the available demographic parameters, the structure of the breed (i.e. number of males, females and replacements), the main morphological features, the reproductive information as well as some additional information collected at herd-level (i.e. temperament, holding, mating practices). A second module reports the results related to the origins and development of the breeds, to market characteristics and the presence and distribution of niche products. The survey concludes with a module related to the specific characteristics of each breed and the management of the same in relation to food and the environment. The survey is the starting point of the genetic and productive characterization of the breeds involved that are future actions of the TREASURE project.

Keywords: local pig breeds, demography, phenotypic data.

* This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 634476 (Project acronym: TREASURE). The content of this paper reflects only the author's view and the European Union Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

OC - 1438