

CONVERGENCE BETWEEN THE WINE SECTOR AND RECREATIONAL TOURISM IN SUPPORT OF SUSTAINABLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

IRINA RABOȘAPCA¹ , ANDRAS-ISTVAN BARTA¹ ,
EDUARD SCHUSTER¹ , ȘTEFAN BILAȘCO² ,
TANIA MIHĂIESCU³ , CAMELIA MARIA ȘTEFĂNUȚ⁴

ABSTRACT. – **Convergence Between the Wine Sector and Recreational Tourism in Support of Sustainable Local Development in the Republic of Moldova.** The morphological, climatic, and sociological conditions characteristics of the Republic of Moldova are favourable to the development of viticulture as a key component of the national economy. In the current context, the economic importance of viticulture can be enhanced through agritourism, rural tourism, gastronomic tourism, and leisure tourism. This new dimension of viticulture has the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of human communities by enabling the multifunctional use of local resources. One possible pathway to achieving this goal is the promotion of nature-friendly activities (such as ecotourism and farm-to-fork initiatives), in line with the principles of the circular economy.

Keywords: *favourability, viticulture, economy, ecotourism, resources, sustainable development.*

-
- ¹ Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Geography, Bistrița Extension, 3-5 A. Mureșanu str., Bistrița, Romania, e-mails: irina.rabosapca@ubbcluj.ro, andras.barta@ubbcluj.ro, eduard.schuster@ubbcluj.ro
² Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Geography, 5-7 Clinicilor str., Cluj-Napoca, Romania, e-mail: stefan.bilasco@ubbcluj.ro
³ The University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Agriculture, 3-5 Mănăstur Str., Cluj-Napoca, Romania, e-mail: tania.mihaiescu@usamvcluj.ro
⁴ The University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Agricultural and Industrial Engineering, 3-5 Mănăstur Str., Cluj-Napoca, Romania, e-mail: camelia-maria.balan@student.usamvcluj.ro



1. INTRODUCTION

The tradition of vine cultivation and winemaking in the Republic of Moldova is a deeply rooted element of national culture, transmitted from generation to generation and contributing to the international recognition of Moldovan wines. The prestige enjoyed by Moldovan wines and grapes on regional and global markets stands as proof of the sector's quality and competitive potential. In addition, the added value of viticultural and oenological products serves as an incentive for investors, thereby stimulating the development of prosperous and sustainable businesses.

The presence of grapevines on this territory dates back to ancient times. The domestication and cultivation of wild forest grapevines most likely occurred during the Cucuteni-Trypillia culture (6th – 4th millennium BCE), which also encompassed present-day Moldova. The Greek colonies along the entire northern coast of the Black Sea (8th – early 7th century BCE) played a significant role in the development of viticulture and winemaking in the region, introducing new grape varieties - including those obtained through cross-breeding with local ones - and new techniques for vine cultivation and grape processing (Alexandrov & Găină, 2015).

With the spread of Christianity, wine became part of the Eucharistic ritual, and by the early medieval period, the first vineyards were established. In the 18th century, Dimitrie Cantemir, in the chapter „On the Plains and Forests of Moldova” from *Descriptio Moldaviae*, identified vine plantations as one of the greatest assets of Moldovan land (Găină, 2000, p. 7).

Following the annexation of Bessarabia by the Tsarist Empire, a large-scale colonisation process took place, especially in the southern part of the region, where settlers were granted preferential conditions (agricultural land, tax exemptions, etc.). As a result, the area attracted Germans, Bulgarians, Gagauz, Greeks, Armenians, and French settlers, who introduced new grape varieties and different cultivation and processing technologies. By 1861, colonists owned 11.8% of the total vineyard area in Bessarabia.

A major role in the development of the sector was played by the Bessarabian College of Viticulture, established in 1842 as a horticultural school and later transformed in 1891 into a college specialising in viticulture and winemaking. The experimental station attached to the college was the only scientific research centre for viticulture and winemaking in Bessarabia (Wine of Moldova, Wine of Moldova, 2024).

The political and social events of the first half of the 20th century – World War I, the Russian revolutions, the formation of the Moldovan Democratic Republic, the integration into a new socio-economic framework after unification with Romania, and World War II – had a negative impact on the development of viticulture (Găină, 2000, p. 7).

After World War II, the USSR invested in the establishment and development of viticultural research centres subordinated to the Academy of Sciences. The Moldovan Scientific Research Base, which began operations in 1947, initially had only one institute – History, Language, and Literature (dating from 1938–1939) – alongside seven research sectors, including botany, geology, viticulture, and fruit-growing. In 1950, the Institute of Fruit Growing, Viticulture and Winemaking was founded (Academia de Științe a Moldovei, n.a.).

Until 1991, research, breeding, and production activities were oriented toward the preferences of the Soviet Union, both in terms of grape varieties and the quantity and quality of production. Table grape varieties and sweet or semi-sweet wines – predominantly white – were favoured. During this period, hybrid grapevines were gradually replaced with noble varieties, leading to increased diversity, quality, and market appeal. This transition also stimulated the emergence of numerous nurseries and viticultural research centres dedicated to grafting, acclimatisation, and the development of new varieties.

By the early 1980s, the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR) ranked sixth globally – after Spain, Italy, France, Portugal, and Romania – in terms of vineyard area, total grape production, and wine output. On 16 May 1985, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued a decree titled On Measures to Eradicate Drunkenness and Alcoholism, and the Production of Surrogate Alcohol. As a result, between 1985 and 1987, 30% of Moldova's vineyards were destroyed – more than were lost during military operations in World War II.

Following the dissolution of the USSR and the attainment of independence, this vital economic sector of the Republic of Moldova underwent numerous reforms and faced significant challenges. Its fluctuating evolution can be attributed to unstable markets and shifting consumer preferences. In 1992, Moldova became a member of the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV), and in 1994, the Moldovan Parliament adopted the Law on Vine and Wine. Later, in 2013–2014, the National Office for Vine and Wine (ONVV) was established (Wine of Moldova, 2024b).

Currently, research in viticulture is conducted under the National Institute for Applied Research in Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (Government Decision No. 668 of 25.09.2024), which includes the Department of Food Industry and Winemaking and the Centre for Implementation and Production in Winemaking.

A historical overview of Moldovan viticulture reveals that vines and wine have always played a vital role in the territory's cultural and socio-economic development, consistently contributing to local prosperity.

2. THE WINE SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

In 2024, Moldova’s vineyard area stood at 120.2 thousand hectares, representing a 53% decrease compared to 1985—a loss of 135.8 thousand hectares. However, an analysis of the past five years indicates a slight recovery and increase in vineyard area in 2024 compared to 2021, 2022, and 2023.

Table 1. Evolution of vineyard areas

Year	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Area, 1000 ha	256	220	201	186	149.1	148.2	144.9	135.4	121.2	117.5	116.5	115.1	120.2

Data source: Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Moldova, 2024
(National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, 2024)

An analysis of the fluctuations in vineyard surface area over time reveals four distinct stages.

Stage I (1980–1995) coincides with the decline and collapse of the USSR and the onset of the transition toward a market economy. During this period, the main causes of the reduction in vineyard area were:

- Gorbachev’s anti-alcohol campaign, which led to the dismantling of large areas of vineyards;
- The shift to a market economy and the loss of traditional sales markets following the dissolution of the USSR;
- The privatisation of agricultural land, which resulted in the fragmentation of vineyard holdings and a drop in production, with many vineyards—particularly those owned by private individuals—being abandoned.

Stage II (1995–2000) was marked by the transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy, structural reforms, economic crises, and gradual integration into the global economy. The main factors behind the continued decline in vineyard area included:

- Economic downturns, high inflation, and rising unemployment, which triggered the emigration of skilled labour previously engaged in vineyard maintenance;
- The 1998 economic crisis in the Russian Federation, which severely affected the Moldovan economy by reducing exports—Russia being the main importer of Moldovan wines.

Stage III (2000–2020) was characterised by moderate economic recovery and market diversification. Key developments affecting the viticulture sector during this stage included:

- The Russian embargoes of 2006 and 2013–2014, which resulted in the loss of major export markets, economic losses, abandonment of some vineyards, repurposing of land, and a shift toward other agricultural sectors;
- The redirection of wine exports toward new markets, particularly within the European Union. During this period, Moldova signed trade agreements with the EU, culminating in the 2014 EU–Moldova Association Agreement;
- The modernisation of the wine sector and increased investment in infrastructure. A process began of replacing ageing, low-quality vineyards with more productive grape varieties, albeit on smaller plots of land;
- The development of wine tourism (Government Decision No. 554 of 24 May 2004 on the approval of the National Tourism Programme „*The Wine Route in Moldova*”, Official Gazette No. 88–90, Article 700, dated 4 June 2004).

Stage IV (2020–2023) corresponds to the COVID-19 pandemic, during which wine demand fell significantly while maintenance costs rose, leading to a further reduction in cultivated vineyard areas.

Starting in 2024, a noticeable increase in vineyard surface area has been recorded, rising from 115.1 thousand hectares in 2023 to 120.2 thousand hectares. This growth can be attributed to several key factors: the implementation of European and local agricultural support programmes aimed at vineyard replanting; the expansion of exports to the European Union and the diversification of target markets; increased domestic and foreign investment in the sector; the introduction of new grape varieties, particularly table grapes in high demand for export; and, not least, the growing popularity of wine tourism.

At present, the Wine Register of the National Office for Vine and Wine lists 249 registered viticultural units, which together account for 61,054 hectares of vineyards, including table grape varieties (Wine of Moldova, n.d.). The remaining vineyard area is held by unregistered enterprises and private individuals, who generally show limited interest in the touristic valorisation of these resources.

In this context, viticulture in the Republic of Moldova exerts a significant influence on major economic indicators. This sector not only contributes to the growth of national GDP but also plays a key role in regional development by attracting investment and generating employment opportunities. Owing to its

specific nature, viticulture is closely linked to a range of other economic sectors. Complementary areas that support viticulture in the context of local development include: agriculture (particularly livestock and apiculture), industry, transportation, tourism, education, training and research, as well as marketing and branding.

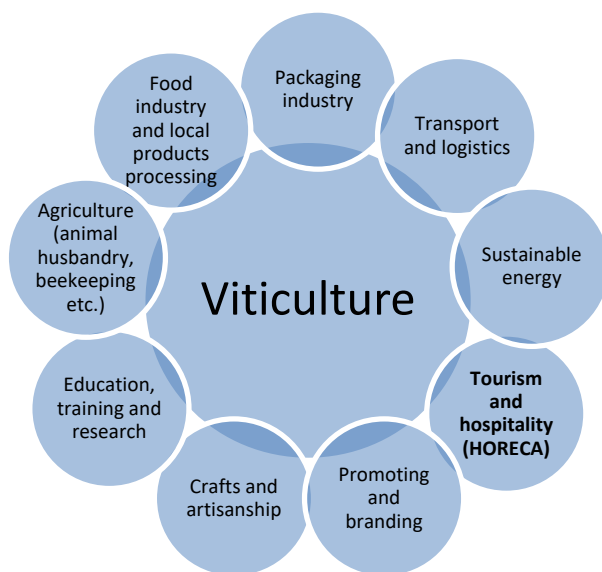


Fig. 1. Fields of activity complementary to viticulture.
Source: the authors.

For sustainable and efficient local development, as many of the aforementioned sectors as possible should be integrated, depending on local specificities and available resources. Viticulture and winemaking play a crucial role in supporting and advancing rural communities by providing a stable source of income for populations living in vine-growing areas and by enabling the valorisation of local products and potential through short supply chains.

Sustainable local development through viticulture—and, by extension, through tourism anchored in this sector—requires the balanced use of local resources to foster economic growth, improve the living standards of local communities, protect the environment, and preserve cultural identity.

Viticulture and tourism are inherently compatible and can function together as drivers of sustainable economic development, with each reinforcing the growth of the other. In this context, modern wineries do more than produce quality wines—they also contribute to the economic and cultural development of their regions by attracting visitors.

CONVERGENCE BETWEEN THE WINE SECTOR AND RECREATIONAL TOURISM IN SUPPORT OF
SUSTAINABLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

A viable strategy for the sustainable development of rural agricultural regions involves combining wine tourism with sports tourism, rural tourism, and ecotourism. A successful winery visit should not be limited to wine tasting alone, but should offer a broader range of recreational activities, including guided vineyard tours, wine tastings, outdoor activities, events, and festivals.

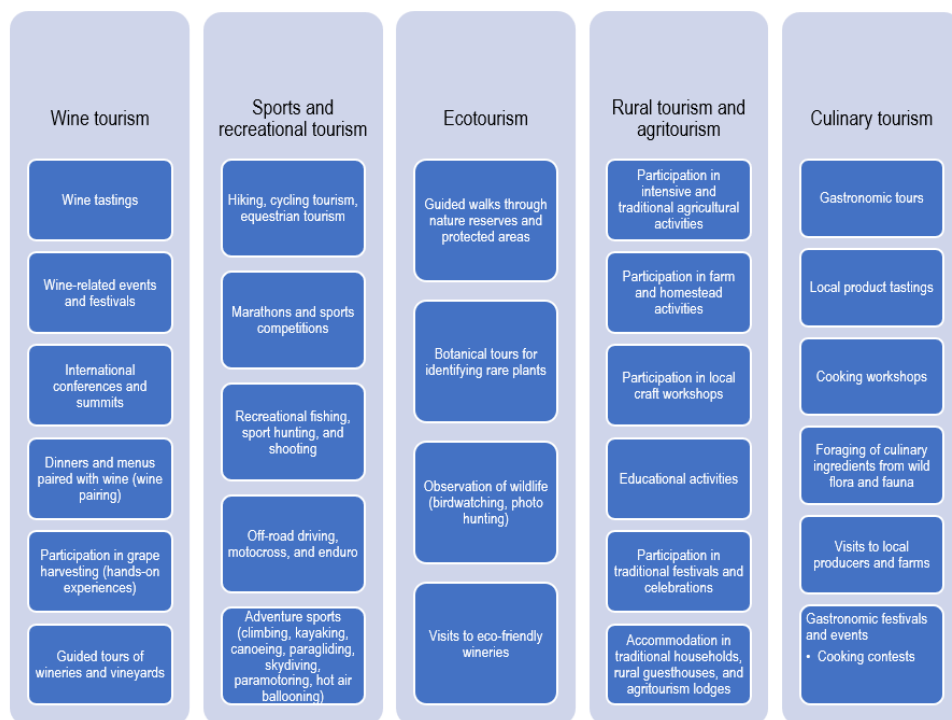


Fig. 2. Sustainable tourism-related activities.

Source: the authors.

Combining these various forms of tourism has the potential to transform wine-growing regions into fully developed tourist destinations. To ensure the successful implementation of such an integrated strategy, the following actions are required:

- Development of comprehensive tourism packages, which involves collaboration between wineries, tour operators, and local public administrations;
- Creation and expansion of tourism infrastructure, including environmentally friendly facilities such as marked trails, camping areas, and eco-friendly guesthouses;

- Support for eco-friendly local producers through fiscal policies and subsidy schemes;
- Promotion and branding of destinations and sustainable tourism activities to enhance visibility and attract responsible visitors;
- Promotion of sustainable development through education and awareness campaigns targeting both tourists and local communities, emphasising environmental protection and responsible consumption.

An important factor in the development of tourism is the availability of accommodation in various regions of the Republic of Moldova. An analysis of the map below reveals that accommodation facilities are not evenly distributed, being concentrated mainly in the Chişinău metropolitan area (Centre), the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, and Cahul District (South). Most of these are large-scale establishments, such as hotels.

To ensure more balanced tourism-driven economic development, it is essential to invest in small-scale accommodation facilities, such as rural guesthouses and rural tourism lodges, which are far more suitable for ecotourism and recreational activities than large hotels.

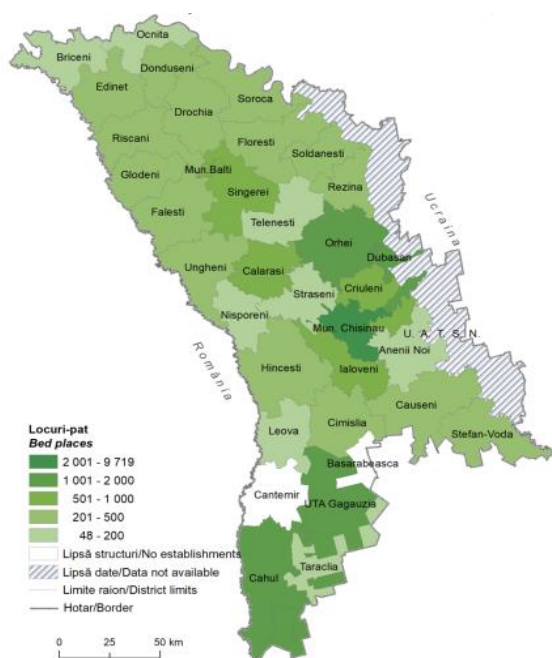


Fig. 3. Number of bed-places in accommodation facilities, in 2023
(map source: https://statistica.gov.md/ro/numarul-de-locuri-pat-in-structurile-de-cazare-9947_60207.html#gallery-1)

3. WINERIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

In the present study, a sample of 52 wineries and vineyards was selected, all of which, in addition to their wine production activities, exhibit genuine and exploitable tourism potential. The selection criteria included: the existence of visitor facilities (tasting rooms, guided tours, accommodation or food services); involvement in themed events (festivals, wine tours, cultural initiatives); and inclusion in regional or national tourism networks or routes, such as the *Wine Route (Drumul Vinului)*.

This selection is aligned with the study's main objective: to investigate how wineries can contribute to local development not only through production, but also by integrating into the rural tourism, agritourism, and ecotourism economy. The chosen wineries represent relevant examples of convergence between tradition, local entrepreneurship, and tourist appeal, and most effectively illustrate the potential for sustainable development in the rural areas of the Republic of Moldova.

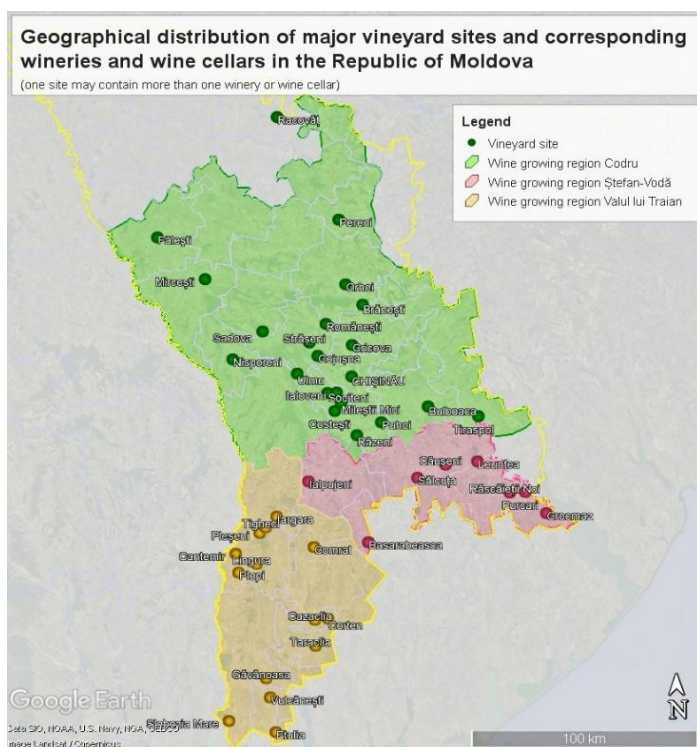


Fig. 4. Wine regions in the Republic of Moldova.
(Data source: <https://rvv.gov.md/homepage.jsf>)

The subsequent analysis focuses on these 52 wineries as representative case studies, offering a clear perspective on the contribution of the wine sector to the diversification of the local economy, job creation, and the promotion of Moldova's image as a wine tourism destination.

The wineries included in the study are located within the three officially recognised viticultural regions of the country. As one notices, the largest number is concentrated in the Codru wine region, situated in the central part of the Republic of Moldova.

As illustrated in the chart below, the emergence of wineries has evolved over time in response to various socio-economic and political contexts. Specifically, 10 wineries were established during the Tsarist Empire, 9 were founded during the Soviet era, and 33 have emerged since 1991. This significant growth in recent decades can be attributed to new market opportunities and increased access to distribution channels.

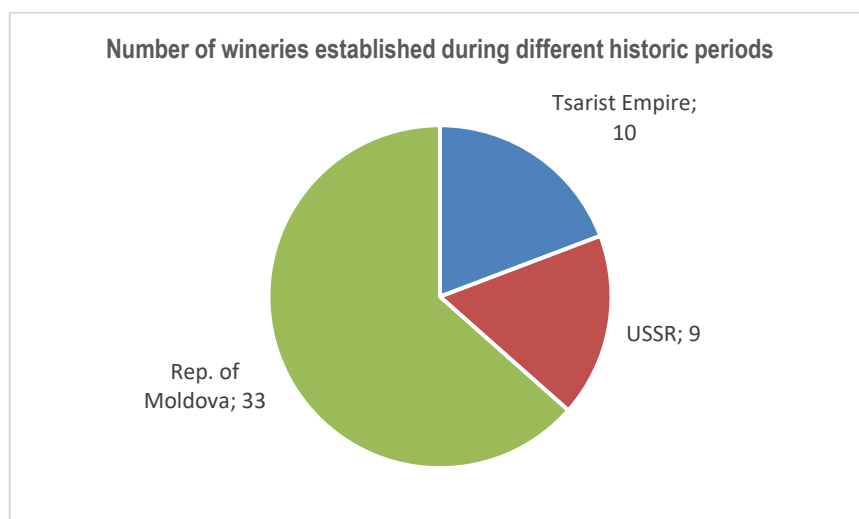


Fig. 5. Most wineries in the Republic of Moldova have been established after the country became an independent state.

(Data source: <https://wineofmoldova.com/ro/vinariile-din-moldova/>)

The chronological evolution of winery establishment in the Republic of Moldova during the post-Soviet period reveals a remarkable consistency, with at least one new winery founded each year (with few exceptions). This trend reflects a sustained interest in viticultural entrepreneurship and stands as evidence of the country's enduring potential in the wine sector.

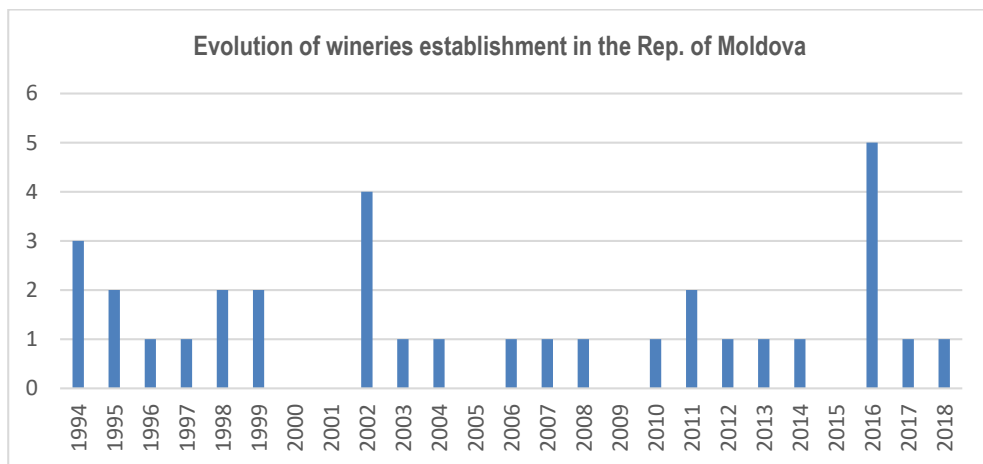


Fig. 6. The establishment of new wineries in the Republic of Moldova is linked to political decisions and economic trends.

(Data source: <https://wineofmoldova.com/ro/vinariile-din-moldova/>)

However, several annual peaks or particularly prolific periods can be observed within this evolution. The first surge followed the privatisation and liberalisation of the economy, which led to the acquisition of former state-owned production facilities and their re-launch as private enterprises. These new entities continued to benefit from access to external markets within the post-Soviet space, particularly the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The second peak, recorded in 2002, coincided with a period of moderate recovery across Moldova's economic sectors and growing market diversification. However, the orientation remained largely eastward, with the first Russian embargo occurring only in 2006.

The third notable peak in the establishment of new wineries occurred in 2016, following the 2014 signing of the Association Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union, along with the accompanying Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). These agreements encouraged the revitalisation of economic sectors affected by the Russian embargo, including viticulture, by granting Moldovan producers access to the EU single market.

An analysis of vineyard surface area cultivated by the wineries included in this study reveals a clear prevalence of medium-sized vineyards, with holdings between 100 and 500 hectares (19 wineries). These are followed—at a considerable distance—by small-sized vineyards (10–50 hectares, 10 wineries). Together, these two categories account for more than half of the total

cultivated vineyard area. The remainder of the vineyard stock is distributed among very small vineyards (0–10 hectares, 6 wineries), small-to-medium vineyards (50–100 hectares, 4 wineries), large and very large vineyards (500–1000 hectares and over 1000 hectares, 6 and 7 wineries, respectively).

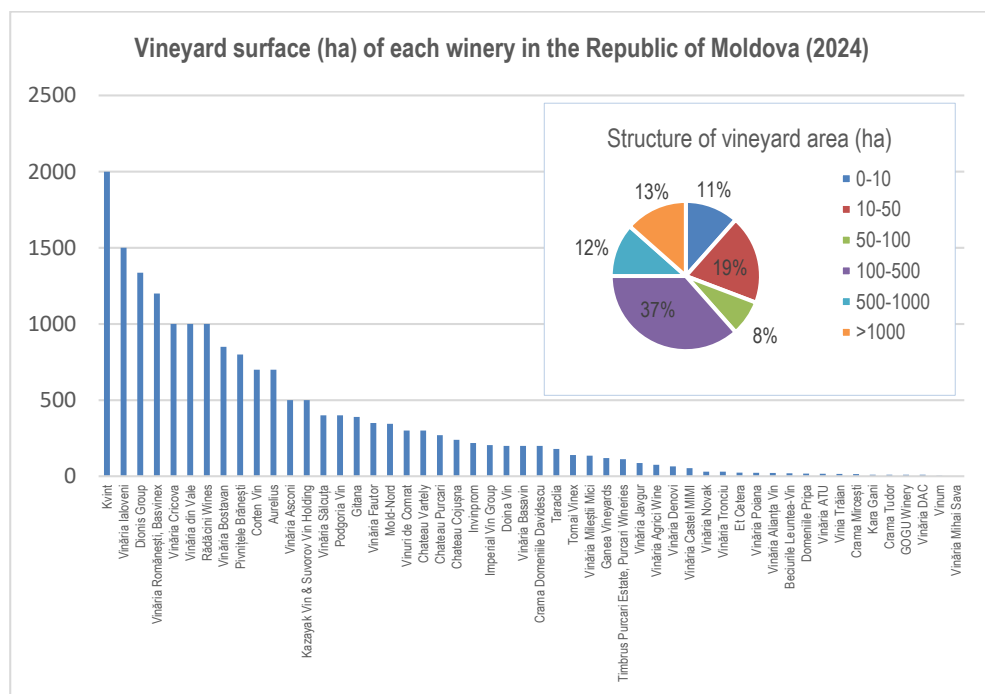


Fig. 7. A relative majority of vineyards in the Republic of Moldova consists of medium-sized plantations (37%) which, together with large and very large vineyards, represent roughly two thirds of all wineries.

(Data sources: <https://wineofmoldova.com/ro/vinariile-din-moldova/>)

It is also worth noting that the general trend in vineyard surface area per production unit is one of growth. At the same time, recent years have seen an increase in the number of wineries with very small and small holdings, indicating a marked expansion of family-based entrepreneurial ventures in the wine sector.

From a geographical perspective, all large and very large vineyards are located in the Codru (8 vineyards) and Valul lui Traian (5 vineyards) wine regions. Meanwhile, the majority of medium-sized vineyards are found in Valul lui Traian (9 vineyards), with the other two regions—Codru and Ștefan-Vodă—each hosting 5 vineyards in this category.

At the regional level, Codru displays the most balanced distribution across vineyard size categories, with proportions ranging from 8% to 21%, and three size categories each representing approximately one fifth of the total cultivated surface. This balanced distribution is partly due to the significantly larger size of the Codru wine region. By contrast, in the smaller regions of Ștefan-Vodă and Valul lui Traian, vineyards with areas between 100 and 500 hectares account for 50% of the total cultivated area in each region.

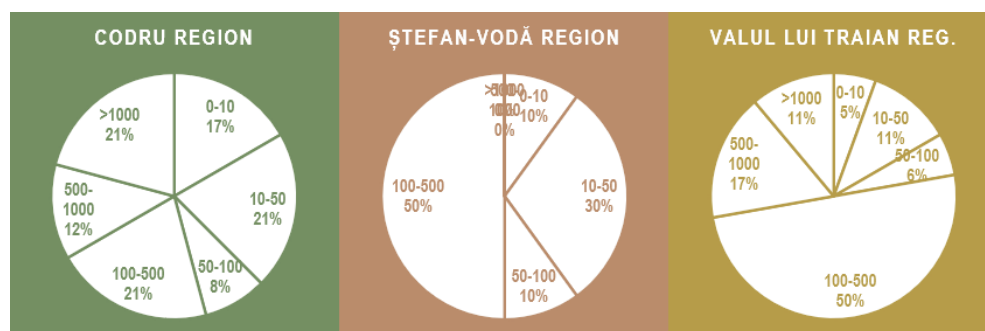


Fig. 8. Structure of vineyards by size (ha) in the main three vinegrowing regions of the Republic of Moldova.

(Data source: <https://wineofmoldova.com/ro/vinariile-din-moldova/>)

The diversity of wine assortments offered by the 52 analysed wineries constitutes a key factor in enhancing their tourist appeal. In addition to white and red wines—which make up the core offering for most producers—a significant number of wineries have expanded their portfolios to meet the varied preferences of consumers and, by extension, potential visitors.

Specifically, 40 wineries produce rosé wines, valued for their freshness and light character, making them ideal for tastings during the warmer seasons and for younger or international audiences. Additionally, 18 wineries offer sparkling wines, which lend a festive and refined dimension to the visitor experience, often associated with special events and themed tours. A smaller yet noteworthy group of 9 wineries produce wine-based spirits (certified nationally under the name “*divin*”), thereby appealing to tourists interested in more complex products. Also notable is the case of one winery that produces orange wine, a niche, innovative product that may attract visitors seeking authentic and rare experiences.

This product diversification enhances the tourism potential of wineries by offering a broader range of personalised tasting experiences, thus increasing their competitiveness within the wine tourism sector in the Republic of Moldova.

Another important factor in the development of wine tourism is the availability of leisure and recreational opportunities, which may either be offered directly by the wineries themselves or be present in the surrounding area—complementing the oenological experience and contributing to the overall attractiveness of the destination. These activities may be integrated into the wineries' own tourism concepts or exist independently in their vicinity, forming additional points of interest for visitors.

For wineries that have invested in tourism infrastructure, recreational activities include guided vineyard tours, bicycle or carriage rides through the vineyards, outdoor picnics, creative workshops (such as traditional cooking, wine painting, or souvenir making), open-air concerts, vineyard film screenings, and even yoga or wellness sessions set in vineyard landscapes. Such experiences elevate simple wine tasting into memorable events with added recreational and cultural value.

Furthermore, the picturesque locations of many wineries—near natural, historical, or cultural landmarks such as monasteries, fortresses, caves, nature reserves, or villages with traditional architecture—offer additional opportunities for developing leisure routes for tourists. Collaboration between wineries and other local stakeholders (such as tour guides, guesthouses, and cultural centres) can lead to the creation of integrated tourism packages, which help extend visitors' stays and increase the economic impact on local communities.

As shown in Table 2, approximately half of the wineries included in the study offer specific, industry-related tourism services (restaurant, wine tasting, guided tours), with several including also lodging facilities. The table also highlights the leisure opportunities available in the vicinity of each winery, serving as a reference point for winery managers who have yet to develop tourism-related activities, as well as for prospective visitors. Regarding these opportunities, cycling, hiking, and free fishing are, unsurprisingly, the best-represented outdoor activities, as they require basic infrastructure and can be performed in a variety of landscapes. Other activities, on the other hand, while still practicable, necessitate a more complex infrastructure (waterjet, swimming, horseback riding, paragliding) or particular geographical features (motocross, climbing, kayaking, photo-hunting).

CONVERGENCE BETWEEN THE WINE SECTOR AND RECREATIONAL TOURISM IN SUPPORT OF
SUSTAINABLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Table 2. Facilities, services and leisure possibilities in each winery

	Name (established)	Facility type	Tourist services offered	Local leisure possibilities
1	Vinăria Agrici Wine (1958)	Wine production		
2	Vinăria Alianța Vin (1994)	Wine production		
3	Vinăria Asconi 1994	Wine cellar		
4	Vinăria ATU (2016)	Wine cellar, restaurant		
5	Aurelius 2018	Wine cellar		
6	Beciurile Leuntea-Vin (1817)	Wine cellar, restaurant, wine tasting room, showroom		
7	Vinăria Castel MIMI 1893	Wine cellar, restaurant, showroom, pool		
8	Chateau Vartely (1996)	Wine cellar, restaurant, showroom, sauna		
9	Crama Mircești (2011)	Wine cellar, showroom, restaurant		
10	Crama Tudor (2007)	Wine cellar, showroom, restaurant		
11	Vinăria Cricova (1952)	Wine cellar, restaurant, showroom		
12	Chateau Cojușna (1995)	Wine cellar, restaurant, showroom		
13	Domeniile Pripa (2016)	Wine cellar, showroom, restaurant, playground		

	Name (established)	Facility type	Tourist services offered	Local leisure possibilities
14	Et Cetera (2002)	Wine cellar, hotel, showroom, restaurant, playground, pool		
15	GOGU Winery (2011)	Wine cellar, restaurant, showroom, wine tasting room		
16	Kara Gani (2006)	Wine cellar, lodging, restaurant, showroom		
17	Kvint (1897)	Wine cellar, showroom, restaurant		
18	Vinăria Mihai Sava (2016)	Wine cellar, restaurant, showroom		
19	Vinăria Mileştii Mici (1969)	Wine cellar, restaurant, showroom		
20	Vinăria Novak (2004)	Wine cellar, restaurant		
21	Podgoria Vin (1999)	Wine cellar, restaurant		
22	Vinăria Poiana (1975)	Wine cellar, restaurant, lodging		
23	Chateau Purcari (1827)	Wine cellar, showroom, restaurant, lodging		
24	Pivniţele Brăneşti (2016)	Wine cellar, wine shop, restaurant, wine tasting rooms		
25	Vinăria din Vale (2002)	Wine cellar, wine tasting rooms		
26	Vinăria Javgur (1957)	Wine cellar, wine tasting rooms, showroom, restaurant, gazebo		

CONVERGENCE BETWEEN THE WINE SECTOR AND RECREATIONAL TOURISM IN SUPPORT OF
SUSTAINABLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

	Name (established)	Facility type	Tourist services offered	Local leisure possibilities
27	Vinăria Tronciu (2017)	Wine cellar, restaurant, showroom	  	   
28	Vinia Trăian (1975)	Wine cellar, restaurant, showroom	  	    
29	Vinuri de Comrat (1897)	Wine cellar, showroom, restaurant	  	  
30	Vinăria Basavin (1913)	Wine cellar, restaurant, lodging	  	  
31	Corten Vin (2003)	Wine cellar	 	  
32	Dionis Group (1998)	Wine cellar		     
33	Doina Vin (1875)	wine cellar		     
34	Crama Domeniile Davidescu (2002)	wine cellar		    
35	Vinăria Fautor (1997)	wine cellar		     
36	Gitana (1999)	Wine cellar, showroom		  
37	Ganea Vineyards (2014)	wine cellar		     
38	Imperial Vin Group (1977)	Wine production		  
39	Invinprom (1978)	Wine production		 
40	Holding Kazayak Vin and Suvorov Vin (1958, 1998)	Wine production		     
41	Mold-Nord (1994)	Alcoholic and non- alcoholic beverages production		  
42	Rădăcini Wines (2010)	Wine cellar		 
43	Vinăria Sălcuța (1995)	Wine cellar, showroom		     

	Name (established)	Facility type	Tourist services offered	Local leisure possibilities
44	Timbrus Purcari Estate, Purcari Wineries (2008)	Wine production		     
45	Tomai Vinex (1903)	Wine production		 
46	Vinăria Bostavan (2002)	Wine production, showroom, wine tasting centre	 	     
47	Vinăria DAC (2013)	wine cellar		  
48	Vinăria Romanești, Basvinex 1887 (1996)	wine cellar		     
49	Vinăria Denovi (2012)	Wine production, showroom		     
50	Vinum (2016)	Wine production		     
51	Taraclia (1955)	Wine production		 
52	Vinăria Ialoveni (1857)	Wine production		     

(Data source: <https://wineofmoldova.com/ro/vinariile-din-moldova/>)

LEGEND: Tourist services offered

	Accommodation		Water recreational activities
	Restaurant		Trips
	Guided tours		Cycling (own tracks)
	Wine tasting		Personalized offers
	Educational activities (production and harvesting)		

LEGEND: Local leisure possibilities

	Cycling		Waterjet riding		Paragliding		Hot air ballooning
	Hiking		Motocross		Shooting		Hunting
	Fishing		Climbing		Foraging		Off-roading
	Kayaking		Swimming		Drone racing		Pedal boating
	Foto hunting		Horseback riding		Farming		Windsurfing

Therefore, the leisure component is not merely optional, but a strategic pillar in strengthening the tourism supply of wineries. The integration of recreational activities within an authentic rural and viticultural setting transforms a winery visit into a multisensory experience and lays the groundwork for the sustainable development of wine tourism in the Republic of Moldova.

4. CONCLUSIONS

To ensure sustainable and efficient local development in the Republic of Moldova, it is essential to integrate viticulture with other forms of tourism—namely rural, ecological, sports, and gastronomic tourism—tailored to local specificities and available resources. Viticulture and winemaking not only support rural communities economically through stable incomes and short supply chains, but can also generate an amplified positive impact when combined with tourism.

The development of wine tourism requires the balanced use of local resources to support the economy, protect the environment, and preserve cultural identity. In this context, modern wineries are transforming into multifunctional destinations, serving not only as production centres but also as tourism hubs actively contributing to the revitalisation of rural regions. A viable strategy involves the diversification of visitor activities, ranging from tastings and guided tours to cultural events and outdoor experiences—creating well-rounded, memorable experiences for tourists.

REFERENCES

1. Academia de Științe a Moldovei. (n.a.). *Istoria AȘM*. Retrieved from <https://www.asm.md/informatii-generale>
2. Alexandrov, E., & Găină, B. (2015). De la popularizare la transferarea tehnologiilor inovatoare în sectorul vitivinicol. *Buletinul științific al Universității de Stat „Bogdan Petriceicu Hașdeu” din Cahul, Seria „Științe economice”*, 2(14), 84-91.
3. Găină, B. (2000). *Via, vinul și civilizația*. Chișinău: Litera.
4. National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova. (2024). *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Moldova*. Retrieved from https://statistica.gov.md: https://statistica.gov.md/files/files/publicatii_electronice/Anuar_Statistic/2024/Anuarul%20_statistic_2024.pdf
5. Wine of Moldova. (2024, September 3). *Wine of Moldova*. Retrieved from <https://wineofmoldova.com: https://wineofmoldova.com/ro/istoria-vinului-moldovei/>

6. Wine of Moldova. (2024b, September 3). Retrieved from <https://wineofmoldova.com/ro/istoria-vinului-moldovei/>
7. Wine of Moldova. (2024c, September 3). Vinarii & crame din Moldova - Wine of Moldova. Retrieved from <https://wineofmoldova.com/ro/vinariile-din-moldova/>
8. Wine of Moldova. (n.d.). *Vine and Wine Register*. Retrieved from <https://rvv.gov.md/homepage.jsf>