

What do we know about small wineries?

European Universities highlight, in the recently published study, the opportunities and needs of the wine sector and its untapped economic potential. More specifically, the University of Macerata and the consortium of "The Wine Lab" project, with the support of University San Raffaele - Rome, have put together an exploratory study on the tangible & intangible necessities emerged by **small wineries located in disadvantaged areas**.

Main findings include:

Difficulties of small wineries are related to their size, their location, and their low access to credit; being mostly family business with limited time and skills beyond production, small wineries have difficulties with bureaucratic duties and business management (planning, administration, marketing).

Assets of small wineries are related to the quality of their products and to their strong link with the territory, as set of tradition and culture.

University-business cooperation is positively perceived, as well as networking at territorial level. However, a barrier to network building can be represented by the time needed to build relations and trust between diverse players.

Skills mismatch is noticed between theory and practice, and the lack of educational offer in business, marketing, and financial skills. Transversal and soft skills are considered very important. Moreover, the links between universities and business in terms of joint curricula development are considered crucial for the students, who are less convinced instead that in the present situation their skills are suitable for the market.

Wine tourism is widely recognised as the most promising field for development: wineries are a mean for creating an interest towards the region and its cultural and touristic offer.

Policy intervention and creation of additional spaces and places of dialogue between business, university and decision-makers, are needed to pursue joint regional development.

The unique aspect of the study titled '[Learning landscapes: needs and opportunities in the wine sector](#)' ([Download here](#)) is that operations are analyzed from a combined academic-business standpoint; knowledge-based requirements are mapped, and recommendations on university-enterprise cluster creation & enhancements are offered, both domestically and across EU countries.

***The Wine Lab** is a project funded by the European Commission and implemented by a transnational expert consortium from Austria, Greece, Hungary, Italy and Cyprus.*