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Study of Traditional Wines in Evros

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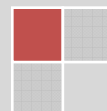


Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. Brief presentation of Evros Regional Unit.....	5
3. Methodology	7
4. Overview of the Food and Beverage sector in Greece	9
5. Wine production tradition and methods for cultivated wine varieties	11
6. History and tradition in Greek winemaking	14
<i>6.1 Greek Wine history</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>6.2 Viticulture as an economic activity</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>6.3 Classification of wine producing sector</i>	<i>18</i>
7. Viticulture and wine production in Evros.....	21
<i>7.1 Evros wines</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>7.2 The vineyards and wineries of Evros Regional Unit.....</i>	<i>27</i>
8. Opportunities for Evros to emerge as a wine-growing region - Added value of winemaking in the regional economic development.....	37
S – STRENGTHS	38
W – WEAKNESSES.....	38
O – OPPORTUNITIES	39
T – THREATS	40
9. Opportunities for the promotion of Evros as a wine-growing area combined with the tourist promotion.....	42
Bibliography	44
Annexes.....	46
Annex I. Cultivated and winemaking varieties in the Regional Unit of Evros.....	46
Annex II. The most important vineyards, wineries and distilleries in the Regional Unit of Evros.....	46
Annex III. RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE (VINEYARDS).....	46

List of Pictures

Picture 1. Political map of Evros Regional Unit.....	5
Picture 2. Stages of red and white vinification	13
Picture 3. Diamiatia or Zoumiatia	25
Picture 4. Karnahalas.....	25
Picture 5. Mavroudi.....	25
Picture 6. Keratsouda	26
Picture 7. Razaki.....	26
Picture 8. Pamidi	26
Picture 9. Voulgaroudes	27
Picture 10. Voidomatis	27
Picture 11. Gutsidis Wines: Vineyards.....	28
Picture 12. Gutsidis Wines: Aging facilities.....	28
Picture 13. Gutsidis Wines – Marous, Xino Mavroudi.....	29
Picture 14. Gutsidis Wines – Epillio, Cabernet Sauvignon with Mavroudi	29
Picture 15. Evritika Kellaria Winery – Building Facilities	30
Picture 16. Evritika Kellaria Winery – Building Facilities.....	30
Picture 17. Evritika Kellaria Winery – Vineyards.....	30
Picture 18. Evritika Kellaria Winery – Winemaking facilities	30
Picture 19. Evritika Kellaria Winery – “Onar” White wine.....	30
Picture 20. Evritika Kellaria Winery – “Orfeas”, Red wine.....	30
Picture 21. Melmar – Building Facilities	31
Picture 22. Melmar – Tasting Room.....	31
Picture 23. Melmar – Vineyard	32
Picture 24. Melmar– Aging cellar.....	32
Picture 25. Melmar– The award winning wines “Secret Path, Syrah 2016” & “Secret Path, Malagouza 2018”	32
Picture 26. Melmar– Adyton, Mavroudi.....	32
Picture 27. Bella Bros – Vineyards.....	33
Picture 28. Bella Bros – Winemaking facilities.....	33
Picture 29. Bella Bros – Tour on the vineyards	33

Picture 30. Bella Bros – Tour on the distillery.....	33
Picture 31. Bella Bros – “Onos”, Keratsouda wine.....	33
Picture 32. Bella Bros – “Peninta”, Red, syrah & merlot	33
Picture 33. Dionysos Wine Route.....	37
Picture 34. SWOT analysis	41

1. INTRODUCTION

The present deliverable: "Study of Integrated Methodology for Cultural, Natural Places and Traditional Gastronomy in the Regional Unit of Evros " (Deliverable 3.2.3) was prepared by GNOSI DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING P.C, according to specific contract with the Contracting Authority: DIMOSSINETERISTIKI EVROS SA, in the framework of the project "Promotion and development of natural and cultural heritage of Bulgarian – Greek cross-border region through smart and digital tools" (acronym "eTOURIST").

The eTOURIST project is implemented in the framework of the European Territorial Cooperation Program "INTERREG VA Greece - Bulgaria 2014-2020" under *"Priority Axis 2- A Sustainable and Climate adaptable Cross-Border area"*, thematic objective *"6-Preserving and Protecting the Environment and Promoting resource efficiency"*, investment priority *"6c: Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage"*, special subject *"4. Valorize CB area cultural and natural heritage for tourist purposes"*, co-financed by the European Union - European Regional Development Fund (85%) and National Resources (15%).

The aim of the eTOURIST project is to promote and develop cultural and natural heritage, gastronomy, including winemaking, in Evros and Haskovo for tourism purposes. The objective of the project includes the recording of cultural and natural heritage sites- mainly for tourist purposes-, traditional culinary and wines, including traditional recipes, as well as the development of software with all the above information but also texts, photographs, tourist routes, etc.

The purpose of the general study is the comprehensive recording and presentation of the cultural and natural resources, as well as the traditional gastronomy of the Regional Unit of Evros, as elements of local cultural heritage that can be exploited for tourism purposes.

The purpose of the present study is to record and present the winery in the Evros region and present the history of winemaking, the characteristics of the wine region, the unique wine varieties that can be found in the region, the existing wineries and opportunities for wine-making and wine exploration, with the ultimate goal the emergence of Evros as a wine-growing region and wine touristic site.

2. Brief presentation of Evros Regional Unit

The Regional Unit of Evros is located on the northeast corner of Greece and especially on the country's natural border with Bulgaria in north and with Turkey in east. It is one of the three tri-national places in Greece. It is the natural border of Greece with Turkey and Bulgaria, bordered by the Regional Unit of Rodopi in west and by the Thracian Sea in south. Undoubtedly the geographical location of Evros is considered as an advantage that can help in the stimulation of the local economy, trade and tourism. It was named Evros by the local river, which is the largest in the Balkans and crosses the northeast corner of Greece.

The Regional Unit of Evros is one of the five regional units of the Eastern Macedonia and Thrace region. In addition, Samothrace island is included in its administrative boundaries. The Regional Unit of Evros comprises 5 municipalities: Municipality of Alexandroupolis, Municipality of Orestiada, Municipality of Didymoteicho, Municipality of Soufli and Municipality of Samothraki. The capital of Evros is Alexandroupolis (72,750 inhabitants), which is the most important administrative, financial and commercial center of the region and at the same time the only port of Thrace.

Picture 1. Political map of Evros Regional Unit



Evros has a total area of 4,242 Km², and a population of 147,947 inhabitants, according to 2011 census data. It is the most remote Regional Unit of Greece, as Alexandroupolis (capital) is 840 km away from Athens, 340 km away from Thessaloniki, 295 km away from Istanbul and 60 km away from Komotini, where the headquarters of eastern Macedonia – Thrace are located.

Evros is a lowland area, with only 10.3% of mountainous places, compared to the extensive plains that occupy the 62.4% of its total area, the majority of which are cultivated. The existence of the river Evros, along with its tributaries and numerous irrigation canals contribute to the cultivation.

3. Methodology

In order to prepare this study, the project team, focusing on the bibliographic review, implemented a series of actions in order to obtain the required information and evaluate its usefulness in relation to the objectives of the project deliverable.

In particular, in order to capture the history of winemaking, the characteristics of the wine production region, the unique varieties for the region and the active wineries of Evros Regional Unit, the project team undertook the following actions:

- Collection of information about wine traditions in Evros region and especially for:
 1. the wine production tradition of Evros region,
 2. the cultivated methods that are used on the unique wine varieties of the region,
 3. the history and tradition of winemaking,
 4. the characteristics of the area concerning the wine varieties and wine that is produced.
- Evaluation of the opportunities for the promotion of Evros as a wine-growing region, by analyzing the information collected about the typical varieties of wine grapes in the region and evaluating their added value in the economic development of Evros.
- Analysis of the possibilities for promoting Evros as a wine-growing area, along with touristic promotion.
- Analysis of the information collected about the typical varieties of the reference area and evaluation of their added value to the economic development of the area, especially in relation to the tourism industry.

More specifically, the methodological approach that was implemented, based on:

❖ Bibliographic overview of information and related documents from sources, such as sector studies, articles and strategic development policies on Food & Beverage and winemaking by institutions and organizations, e.g. the Hellenic Ministry of Agricultural Development and Food, the Foundation for Economic & Industrial Research (IOBE), the Federation of Hellenic Food Industries (SEVT), etc.

❖ Field research in the wineries of the Evros Regional Unit in order to collect information that will contribute to draw a more complete picture of the current situation of wine production in the region.

❖ Analysis and processing of collected information.

❖ Presentation of collected information in categories, based on the structure of the present study.

❖ Comments on collected information

Regarding the methodology of the field research, it is worth mentioned that the project team designed a specific questionnaire, which is presented in Annex III, which was send (by e-mail) to all wineries located in the area and follow-up telephone calls were made, in order to ask winemakers to participate in the survey.

4. Overview of the Food and Beverage sector in Greece

The Food and Beverage sector still maintains its fundamental role in the Greek economy, despite current difficult situation, as well as the Greek manufacturing industry in general, having all the necessary conditions to remain a key driver in the country's development.

The most important issues, regarding the role of the domestic Food and Beverage sector, as a springboard to growth, continue to be driven by extroversion and exports, product quality, product identity (brand name), but also the organized promotion of Greek food. More effective coordination and closer cooperation of sector representatives can help improving the efficiency and effectiveness of promotion of Greek products, ensuring that the right strategy is selected, as well as the stability of its long-term planning.

Creating added value and enhancing the extraversion of the sector are also significantly dependent on promoting the Greek products, through well-designed product distribution networks, based on quality and diversification as well as promoting the Greek and Mediterranean cuisine and dietary, both domestically and abroad. The link to the tertiary service sector in restaurants, hotels and tourism in general, the synergy of the first and third pillars of the Greek economy, is an additional means of promoting Greek products, adding value and export potential to the sector.

The Food Industry is one of the largest sectors in European manufacturing industry, while it is consistently emerging among the top sectors in relation to other important sectors of the European economy, such as the automotive sector, the chemical sector, the industrial machinery and metal products sector. Compared to the EU-28 members on average, the food sector in Greece has a greater contribution in the manufacturing industry in terms of number of enterprises, turnover, production value, gross added value and number of employees. The great share of the Greek food sector in manufacturing, reflects its domestic dynamic, but also the smaller development of other sectors of this industry.

The dynamic and neuralgic character of the Food and Beverage sector in Greece is demonstrated by its quantitative figures and trends (IOBE, 2017):

- Food and Beverage sector plays a particularly important role in the Greek processing as it is the largest industry in Greece accounting for approximately 30% of total employment and total revenue.
- Domestic food industry includes almost the 1/4 (26.4%) of all Greek manufacturing companies. The other two sectors with the most Greek manufacturing companies are Metal Products (14.3%) and Clothing (7.2%).
- Food and Beverage sector is also the largest employer of domestic manufacturing, as it also occupies almost the 1/3 of all employees, while Metal Products sector occupies the 6.1% and Clothing sector occupies the 5.9% of total employees in Greek manufacturing industry.
- Food and Beverage sector is highly ranked among the other sectors of domestic manufacturing industry, as it has the largest production value (24.3% of the total),

gross added value (24.6% of the total) and holds the first position in terms of turnover (almost 25.2% of the total), while Coke and refined products sectors accounts for the 24.8% of the total turnover in domestic manufacturing industry.

5. Wine production tradition and methods for cultivated wine varieties



Wine is a special agricultural product, as it is included in the Greek cuisine and dietary and also is a popular drink that accompanies and enhances a wide range of European and Mediterranean dishes, from the simplest and most traditional to the most complex ones. In addition, it is associated with relaxation, communication, food consumption and hospitality. Moreover, it is used in various religious ceremonies of many cultures

and also the history of the wine trade is really important in many countries through the world.

A key feature of the wine sector that should be under consideration, is the centuries-old tradition of vine growing and wine making in Greece, since the history of Greek wines covers the longest period worldwide, in terms of continuous vine cultivation and long-term wine production. Furthermore, wine sector is one of the most important sectors of the Greek economy, not only for the domestic beverage market, but also for the development and promotion of all Greek traditional products to foreign markets.

However, the modernization and development of wine sector as it known currently, began since the 1960s, when large companies invested heavily in the production of bottled wines. Nowadays, the wine industry in Greece is fragmented, as it includes a few large-scale wineries, as well as a large number of small and medium-sized wineries, agricultural cooperatives and import companies. Large companies control significant portions of the domestic bottled wine market, spanning the entire country through extensive distribution networks.

Medium-sized companies have so far managed to acquire significant shares of the bottled wine market through their focus on quality products and particular varieties. Bulk wine is mainly produced by small and medium-sized companies that distribute it in local markets.



In general, wine production in both the domestic and European markets is considered of the high quality and Greek wines have won many prizes in several international competitions.

Distribution activity is often undertaken by importing companies, which also have a well-developed distribution network. They import wines mainly from the EU, while also importing

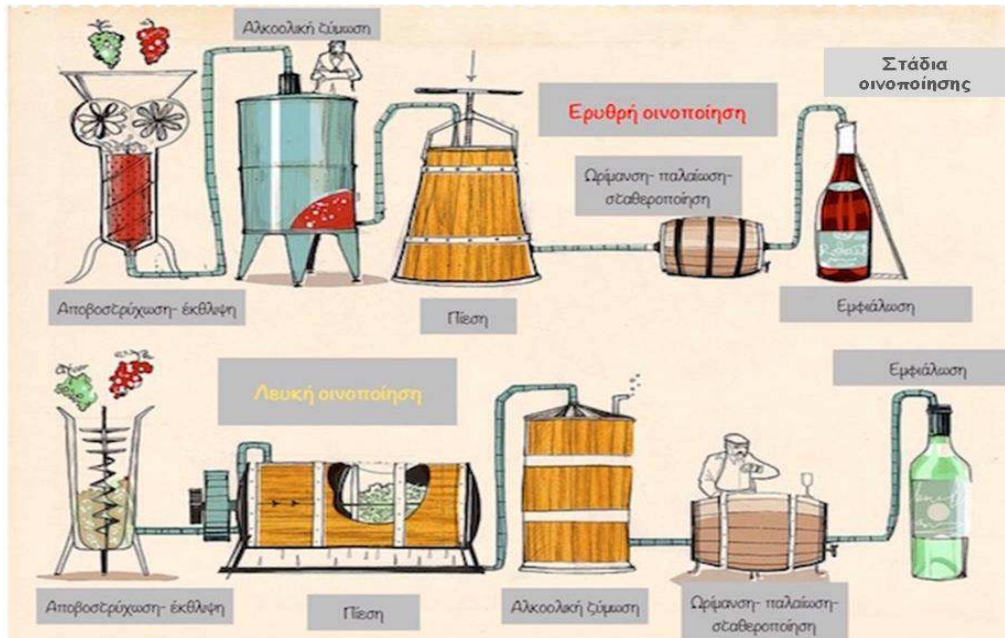
alcoholic beverages. By contrast, their main (or even exclusive) activity of wine making companies is the production and marketing of wine. Finally, agricultural cooperatives represent an important role in domestic production, and nowadays, the production of bio products with a purely 'Greek identity' has also begun, as the institutional framework for organic wine production has been identified following the adoption of the 9 March 2012 Implementing Regulation (EU) 203/2012, which refers detailed rules for the production of organic wines. Indeed, the shift to organic wine seems to have good prospects due to the ever-increasing demand for Greek organic wine from overseas markets but also from the Greek market and it is estimated that the income that producers can earn from organic wine is at least 20-25% higher than conventional wine.

Moreover, in recent years, the **quality and reputation of bottled Greek wines** has greatly improved, which is confirmed by the ongoing prizes awarded in international competitions. Many companies have invested in modernization, which are sometimes part of EU and national co-funding programs. The export orientation of (especially large) companies in the sector is strong. The main exporting markets for Greek wines are Germany, USA, Canada, France and Belgium, where the top 3 of them are considered strong homogeneous communities that absorb a large share of exports.

The wine market includes the 'cold' one, which mainly refers to Entertainment and restaurant and catering services, as well as the 'hot' one, which is related to domestic consumption. Distribution of products is mainly made through wholesalers and dealers, while supermarkets and cellars are the major retail outlets (ICAP, 2010).

In recent years, there has been a significant improvement in the technology of wine sector. The stages of wine production are quite standard, while at the same time significant automation has been implemented in many individual stages. Large companies, under continuous modernization investments, have adopted many automated systems, which include several stages from receiving raw materials until final products delivery from the warehouse. Automatic stainless- steel grates control electronically various raw material characteristics, permanent stainless steel pipelines transfer product from one stage to another, automatic presses have the ability to split fractions of the product, refrigeration machines control fermentation temperatures and finally stainless steel tanks have replaced concrete ones. Today, stainless steel tanks cover about the 60% - 70% of the needs of the Greek winery on average, and production units as well as aging areas, are in most cases temperature controlled.

Picture 2. Stages of red and white vinification



In particular, oak barrels are used for aging wines which are replaced by companies. The production process is completed with the automatic bottling, labeling and final packaging of products. In smaller companies, the above stages of production are usually more traditionally followed, and there is high degree of manual bottling. In general, large companies, as well as cooperatives, have high production capacity, but they are not exploited efficiently. Higher levels of utilization, reaching 80%, exist in large enterprises, with high production volumes, unlike cooperatives with limited utilization.

However, every business should strive to have strong production capacity, in order to be able to respond to high volumes of raw material entering during the harvest period. The next stages of the production process require high capacity in tanks and aging areas. Regarding aging area, businesses are seeking to expand and renew barrels, as well as to design special areas where tastings, guided tours, shopping and other similar activities take place etc, with a view to expanding communication with consumers.

Finally, it should be noted that all wine companies have their own chemical laboratory. However, gaps have been identified in applied wine research in viticulture, wine-growing technology, improved yields. These gaps cannot be easily filled because they require specialization and research activities. Bodies and organizations that co-exist in the same field are unable to cooperative effectively because of various problems they are facing.

6. History and tradition in Greek winemaking

6.1 Greek Wine history

Any reference to the history of Greek wine inevitably contains elements concerning culture, economy, religion, social life, daily life, and the places where wine growing, wine production and wine consumption took place.

The history of Greek wine covers an extremely long period of time, the longest in the world, regarding continuous cultivation of vine and the production of wines over time. The beginning of viticulture in Greece goes back to historical times and has centuries-long tradition. Since then, vineyards and wine have been accompanying Greece and its residents until today, without interruption. Concerning Greek heritage, that is, local mores, customs, traditions, as well as Greek cuisine, the wine is prominent and is an integral part of them. Even in our cultural heritage, it has been a source of inspiration for writers and artists.



The wine production may not have been born in Greece, but it was the **ancient Greeks** who developed the art of winemaking, vine cultivation and wine marketing at a high level. Even more, they managed to elevate the wine from being just a drink and helped the early development of a rich wine culture. For example, the ancient Greeks believed in a wine patron god, Dionysus, fact that shows the importance that was given to this "divine" drink. It is no accident that in ancient Greece wine was praised by poets, historians and artists and also frequent references to wine were found in the works of Aesop and Homer.

However, in Greece, wine was considered as a privilege of the upper social classes. During the classical period, including the Golden Age of Athens with the birth of democracy, philosophy and the great flourishing of the arts, wine was incorporated into everyday life and social gathering, in particular through the famous "symposia". It has to be mentioned that archaeological investigations discovered the first traces of winemaking in Philippi in eastern Macedonia during the prehistoric period (around 4,500 BC). The ancient Greek wine tradition found its continuation in the Roman period, with the adoption of many cultivation and wine-making techniques by the Romans, while Byzantium and Christianity made a catalytic contribution to the historical continuation of viticulture and wine. For about one million years, the monasteries were places of viticulture and winemaking with their organized wineries. During the Byzantine times, a great civilization flourished in Greece, preserving from the ancient Greek, among other things, the language and great tradition of vine growing and wine production of the "byzantine wine". Some winemaking practices have been maintained, others have evolved, but Greek wine always played an important both commercial and social role.

The contribution of Christianity will be a catalyst for the historical continuation of wine in Greece, as the vineyard - literally - decorates all Byzantine art, the monasteries are active vineyards (Mount Athos) and the Holy Communion used sweet wines, produced in the Greek islands. However, wine-growing in Greece, despite the support of Byzantium, will go through difficult times, as hostile raids on the mainland and piracy on the islands disrupted the permanent and long-lasting calm of vine cultivation, but there were again periods of great demand for Greek wine. On the other hand, many regions, once again led by the Aegean islands and Crete ("Passos wine"), were leading the way in the export of wines through the seafront roads and the rich tables of the Byzantine emperors.

During Ottoman Empire rule, Turks, mainly due to their religion and unlike other conquerors, did not capitalize on the wealth of the Greek vineyard. At best, after the fall of Istanbul, they let the wine-growers produce their own wine, just as their ancestors did thousands of years ago, and also providing them privileges of self-government (wine trade in the islands) or autonomy (Tamas Treaty). Although, the Muslim religion prohibited wine-making, as well as the cultivation of vines by Muslims, allowed the collection of taxes on wine-growing and the production of wines by Greek Christians. Thus, in many places of the Ottoman Empire, where local residents continued to grow vineyards, local lords retained some of the wine produced quantities. In many cases, the residents refused this tax on slavery. Thus, many vineyards were abandoned or destroyed as retaliation, while elsewhere, historic vineyards continued to be cultivated.

In the Mainland, the local monasteries which owned large vineyards, as well as the first organized wineries, helped in the preservation of many Greek varietal wines. Most important were the monastic states of Mount Athos, which had already produced the famous wines (e.g. wines of "Meteors").

During the first period of Greek independence from Turks and since the establishment of the Greek state, as an independent state, the first attempts at viticulture and wine production began and the first Greek oenologists appeared. After the mid-19th century, the first major wineries emerged, which were owned or participated by Europeans (Klaus in Achaia and Toul in Kefalonia), essentially defining the principles of modern Greek winemaking. These wineries had direct access to European ports. There were also major wineries in Attica (Kampas) and less famous in Nemea, Samos, Naoussa and Santorini, which held the leading Greek export markets, with Russia as the main market.

The first Greek oenologists studying in France returned in Greece, while the country expanded its borders, annexing the Ionian Islands and Thessaly region to its territory, reaching about half of its today's area.

The presence of large cooperative wineries (in Crete, Rhodes, Samos, Nemea, Patras, Naoussa, Santorini, Tyrnavos, etc.), as well as large private winemakers (Boutari and Tsandali in Macedonia and Kourtakis in Attica) led to the absorption of large quantities of grapes and the production of good quality commercial wines.

During the **Modern period**, in 1971 the first modern categorization of Greek wines took place, as the first designations of origin of wines in Greece are legislated to the standards of French legislation.

6.2 Viticulture as an economic activity

Greece is a country with a long tradition in viticulture, where viticulture and wine production are integral activities to many places and continue to grow alongside the cultural heritage of each region. Thus, wine is an important product for both domestic agricultural production and industry.

During the last 150 years, wine production has undergone a revolutionary evolution both as an art and as a science. Having access to cooling, wineries have been able to control the temperature of the fermentation process and the production of high-quality wines in areas with high temperature. The introduction of harvesting machines has allowed winemakers to increase the size of their vineyards and make them more productive. Although the wine industry faced the challenge of meeting the demands of an ever-expanding market without losing the distinctive character of its wines, technology helped ensuring a quite consistent supply mechanism of high quality wines.

In this context, structural changes have been made in recent years aiming to increase the competitiveness of Greek wines in order to gain an appropriate position in the international market. In the last five years there has been a trend of international extroversion by Greek winemaking companies. Although production of Greek wine has declined, there is a shift towards higher quality bottling and export of wine, as well as closer cooperation between businesses in the sector.

The winery sector is one of the most important sectors of the Greek economy not only for the domestic beverage market, but also for the development and promotion of Greek traditional products in foreign markets.

In recent years, the Greek wine industry has made great improvements by implementing significant investments in modern winemaking technology. Moreover, the new generation of winemakers are trained in the best wine schools in the world and Greek wines continue to receive the highest awards in international competitions, as well as the recognition that they deserve worldwide. What many call “**modern Greek wine regeneration**” came about in the last decades of the 20th century and was characterized by various events, both in viticulture and in wine making.

In the Greek market, besides to the large winemaking companies, small and medium-sized, vertically integrated wine farms are also being developed, that produce limited-production wines, by using both Greek and international vine varieties. There are enthusiastic

winemakers (many of them oenologists too), who either continue, or revive historic Greek vineyards and sometimes creating new ones.

In the meantime, there were hundreds of Greek oenologists, mainly studying in France and also in other European and other countries, as well as graduates of Greek universities specializing in Viticulture and Oenology¹, who were scientifically strengthened the country's potential, by directing production to harness Greece's unique varietal potential, through modern technology and winemaking techniques. During the same period, there were new professionals in the wine industry, such as Greek wine journalists and Greek winemakers, while were being organized important Greek wine fairs (Oinorama, Dionysia) and other competitions (Greek wine competition, International Wine Competition of Thessaloniki).

The result of these developments is beginning to appear in the Greek market, where domestic consumers and visitors from all over the world discovered the Greek wines. Consequently, modern Greek wine regeneration continued, with a new wave of small wineries development, towards the end of the 20th century, culminating in the first decade of the 21st. Many of these wineries are owned by traditional wine-growers who invest in wine, while newer and older wineries are increasingly interested in wine tourism. Nowadays, modern Greek wine regeneration has now brought results and domestic wines are continuously winning many prizes in competitions. However, well-equipped, state-of-the-art wineries, enthusiastic winemakers and skilled oenologists are also using the Greek grapes varieties. In addition, it has to be mentioned that there are Greek vine varieties that are producing many exceptional and world-class wines. It is clear that the upgrade of the quality of modern Greek wines cannot be considered as accidental and temporary. As a result, more and more attention is now being paid to the vineyard, especially to the optimization of its cultivation, by implementing modern and approved techniques, as well as to the emergence of indigenous varieties.

However, Greece remains a relatively small country, especially in terms of wine production, with an area of 615,000 acres of vineyards. The area of vineyards has been the same over the last decade, although a slight increase is expected in the coming years. The number of vine growers is about 180,000, which equals to the 1/5 of the landowners involved in agriculture. Thus, the size of vineyard ownership is about 5 acres, which means that vine cultivation in Greece is a highly fragmented sector. Furthermore, there are more than 1.290 wineries that produce wine, with this number increasing almost every week².

In 2017, the annual production of Greek wine amounted to 2.5 million hectoliters, making Greece the 17th wine producing country in the world. White wines dominate, with red wines accounting for the 1/3 of total production. The percentage of wines produced from Greek varieties reaches the 90% of total production. The three most important varieties in terms of quantity are: "Savatiano", "Roditis" and "Agiorgitiko".

¹ School of Oenology and Beverage Technology in Athens

² <https://winesofgreece.org>

The main wineries are located in the regions of Crete, Peloponnesos, Macedonia, and Central Greece. The largest protected area of Designation of Origin for red wines is “Nemea”, for white wines is “PDO³ Patras”, for sweet white wines is “PDO Samos” and for red sweet wines is “PDO Mavrodafni Patras”. However, it has to be mentioned that only in a few places in Greece there are no vineyards. There are totally 33 “PDO zones”, the most notable of which are PDO Mandineia (with Moschofilero wines), Naoussa PDO (from Xinomavro) and PDO Amyntaio (from Xinomavro). There are also more than 100 PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) zones.

6.3 Classification of wine producing sector

The wine producing sector, according to the Hellenic Statistical Authority classification, falls under the sub-branch 159.3, which is included in main branch “159 – Distillery”. However, the varied characteristics and the different properties that wine may have are the characteristics to classify it. Classification of wine helps in easy reference and easy separation, and thus facilitates selection process, since grouping wines on the basis of common characteristics helps to reduce unfair competition and protect consumers. For this reason, the classification characteristics of wines are defined and controlled by the Greek legislation.

The most important wine classification categories are listed below:

- *Aging time of wine*

This kind of wines classification depends on the time elapsed between harvest and the time when wines can be released for consumption.

- *Color of wine*

This is the simplest kind of wine classification. In particular, there are White and Red wines.

- *Sweetness of wine*

The sense of sweetness is one of the key features of wine. Sugars are the most important compounds found in wine, left over from the fermentation process, that have sweet taste.

- *Carbon dioxide(CO₂) content in wine*

³ Protected Designation of Origin

This kind of classification applies to wines which, when opened, emit carbon dioxide. This gas may be either naturally produced during fermentation process or artificially added during wine production.

▪ *Administrative Classification - Legislation*

This kind of classification includes all Legally Protected Vineyards and Geographical Indications. The concept of “Protected wine-growing area” is very old in the wine sector. In ancient Greece, the kings were stamping the clay shelves of amphorae with the seal of the specific geographical indication and there were laws that “protected” the quality of the local wine. This system was later adopted in France where the concept of “Appellation d’Origin Controlee” refers to the selected and checked vine until the final bottle control process.

Another classification, which is defined by European legislation and adopted by the Greek one, classifies wines into two main categories as shown in Figure 1.2.: (a) Quality Wines Produced in a Specified Area (V.Q.P.R.D.) and (b) Table Wines. In particular, V.Q.P.R.D. wines include Superior Wine of Designated Origin, and Wines of Controlled Designation of Origin. “Designation of origin” means that the name of wine, recognized as a common commercial name for a region's wines when they satisfy specific conditions regarding:

- the wine production area
- the varietal composition of the vineyards
- cultivation techniques
- the methods of winemaking
- the minimum alcoholic strength
- Area yield.

As a result, the classification of wines into legally defined and regulated classifications is presented below, based on the relevant Directive/ Common Market Organization, adopted with a view to the wine sector restructuring:

i. Protected Designation of Origin Wines (PDO): Protected Designation of Origin Wines are produced from grape varieties that are came from vineyards located in the protected area's borders and the grapes are (at least to some extent) vinified in local wineries, too. The yield of the vineyards may not exceed 1,200 kg per acre. In order to be placed on the market, they must go through classification, regarding both their analytical and organoleptic components. In Greece, Protected Designation of Origin Wines (PDO) have also a special control film that is usually placed on the neck of the wine bottle.

ii. Protected Geographical Indication Wines (PGI): Protected Geographical Indication Wines are also produced in legally designated areas and by local wineries. Unlike PDO wines, the grape varieties from which these kinds of wines are produced may also be non-native and

generally leave more flexibility to the varietal composition of the wine produced. The yields of the vineyards, as well as the key elements of their production are controlled at the same way as in PDO wines, but there is no requirement to classify them.

iii. Wines without Protected Designation of Origin: Wines without Protected Designation of Origin are those that can be produced by any grape variety, in any geographical place and can be mixed with any other different kinds of wine. These wines are produced according to all wine-making rules required by the relative legislation, but are not subject to restrictions on the yield of vineyards or the origin of grapes.

7. Viticulture and wine production in Evros

Eastern Macedonia and Thrace region and especially Evros and Soufli, are considered as famous wine-growing areas with local, old grape varieties since the early 18th century.

In the Evros region - and especially in Soufli - wine-growing and wine production has grown rapidly from 1870 to the early 20th century. Then, due to the construction of the Orient Express line and the French installation of railway infrastructure, many French grape varieties were planted.

In fact, the French taught local people the method of linear vineyards, while in the rest Greece this kind of cultivation began in the early 1980s.

At the same time, large quantities of wine and probably grape must have been exported to France. The economic boom of wine production and exports was between 1880 and 1898, when “grape phylloxera” destroyed all of French vineyards. This economic boom ended with the Balkans and the First World War, during which the majority of the local vineyards were destroyed.

Nowadays, the professional cultivated vineyards are limited and the quantity of wine production is lower than this area can produce. In addition, the local grape varieties constitute a relatively untapped natural resource, valuable to the local economy, which may be lost due to the extensive cultivation of commercial grape varieties that dominate the wine market and leave no room for other varieties.

7.1 Evros wines

The local vineyards are mainly located in the central (Soufli area) and northern part of Evros, near the borders of Greece and Bulgaria (Trigono region). The long tradition of Evros in viticulture and wine production is justified by the establishment of “PGI Evros”, in which the presence of red wine indigenous varieties of “Karlahanades”, “Mavroudi”, “Mpogiamades” and “Pamidi” are remarkable.

In the Regional Unit of Evros, wines with Protected Geographical Indication (“PGI Evros Wines - Evros Local Wines”) are produced by grapes that came from vineyards located at altitudes exceeding 20 metres, within the boundaries of the PGI Evros zone, that was established in 2010.

Some varieties of PGI Evros wines are the following:

- Athiri

- Asirtiko,
- Zoumiatiko (damiatis),
- Malagouzia,
- Chardonne,
- Sauvignon Blanc,
- Trebbiano,
- Karlahanades,
- Keratsouda,
- Limnio,
- Mavroudi,
- Moshomavro,
- Mpogialamades
- Pamidi,
- Sefka,
- Grenache Rouge,
- Cabernet Sauvignon,
- Carignan,
- Merlo,
- Senso,
- Syrah,

The most common types of PGI Evros wines are:

- ☒ White dry, semi-dry, semi-sweet, sweet
- ☒ Rose dry, semi-dry, semi-sweet, sweet
- ☒ Red dry, semi-dry, semi-sweet, sweet

This classification was instituted in July 2010 and the production and distribution of PGI Evros wines has already begun.

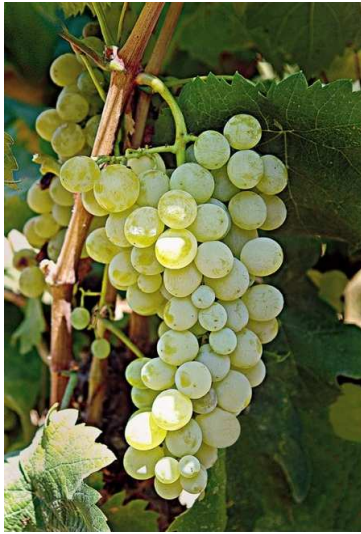
Table 1 summarizes the **16 winemaking grape varieties** cultivated and vinified in the Regional unit of Evros. Two of them are French, but due to they are growing in specific territories have eliminated their "native" traits and acquired their own distinct identity.

Table 1: Cultivated and vinified winemaking grape varieties in Evros Regional Unit

No	VARIETY	DESCRIPTION
1	Alponoura	White, disease-resistant, mid-range variety, with a long bunch of grapes
2	Bogiolamas or Bougiolamas	Red variety, almost dyed, with deep pale black color. The plant is sturdy, productive, very sensitive to late-seed, but has a lot of aromas and thick bunch of grapes. It is widely used in spatial vinification in blends in order to improve the color of wines produced.
3	Neroproimia	Red late variety (harvested in October) with a large bunch of thistles. Highly resistant to botrytis.
4	Opsimo Soyfliou (oriental razaki)	Table white variety, once exported in large quantities to Germany. It is sensitive to rain.
5	Pamidi	In particular they are two varieties, one red and one rose. Both are harvested in the beginning of September and have small grapes - in rose variety the bunch of grapes has thick color and in the red variety has light color. It is vibrant, sturdy, fertile, productive plant, but it is very sensitive to botrytis and acid rot.
6	Razaki (Avouz ali)	White, vibrant productive and durable variety, once exported in large quantities to Germany. It is considered to be the most important table variety of vine with a large geographical distribution. The commercial ripening of grapes is escalating, depending on the region and the cultivation interventions from early September to late October. Razaki grapes are highly preserved and transported and are therefore considered to be the best trade variety.
7	Chasselas Dore	Red variety from the glorious French period. Durable, late, moderate bunch of grapes.
8	Cinsault	Red variety, also from the glorious French period, it is durable, it has medium bunch of grapes and aromas ideal for nouveau wine production.
9	Tsaousis	White early variety with sparse bunch of grapes and aromatic with delicate peel. It is a variety of winemaking and tableware. Very sensitive to diseases.
10	Voidomatis	Red variety. Its grapes are thick peel, have intense color, are dense and durable.

No	VARIETY	DESCRIPTION
11	Voulgaroudes	Red variety especially durable, with late harvest, small bunch of grapes, aromatic and tannic.
12	Damiatis or Zoumiatis	White midrange variety, known since the 12th century. With a thinner bunch of grapes and moderate durability, it is used for winemaking. It produces wines of moderate alcoholic strength, moderate acidity and slightly aromatic taste.
13	Karapapas	Red variety with thick bunch of grapes becoming extinct. There are very few plants in the vineyards of Evros region.
14	Karnahalas	<p>Red indigenous variety (called the "red" gold of Evros vineyards). It comes from for green harvesting and is ideal for long aging. It produces aromatic and at the same time tannic wines, with a well balance between alcohol and acidity, good thickness and good color.</p> <p>There are historical references to his cultivation in the late 19th century. Nowadays, it is only vinified in Evros and Tenedos, and efforts are being made by the local wineries to spread "Karnahalas" variety on the market by planting new areas.</p>
15	Keratsouda	Rose variety with bright pink color. Winemaking and tableware, with crisp flesh and many flavors. It is an early, durable and highly productive variety.
16	Mavroudi or Sefka	Red variety, resistant to drought and infestation by Iodine and Botrytis. It is characterized by very high yields without any need for special inputs, by particular aromas and harvest at the end of September. It can be aged for a long time due to its heavy aroma, rich sweet taste and quite robust tannins. It is a pure Thracian variety. The name of the variety Mavroudi comes from the dark (black) color of its bark peel, and this is why Mavroudi is mainly used for the production of dark red wines, which are however difficult to obtain. In Bulgaria it is called Mavrud, Kachivela or Tsiganka.

Picture 3. Diamiatis or Zoumiatis



Source: <http://www.newwinesofgreece.com>

Picture 4. Karnahalas



Source: <http://www.bankofwine.gr>

Picture 5. Mavroudi



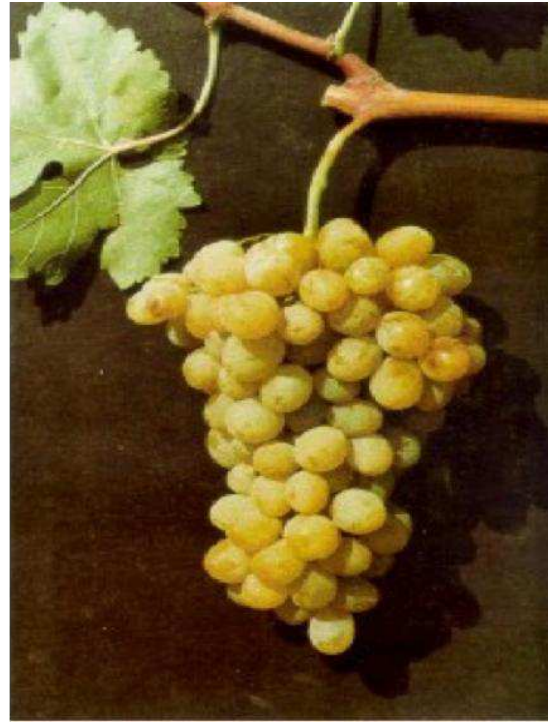
Source: <https://www.ypaithros.gr/>

Picture 6. Keratsouda



Source: <http://winewalker.gr/>

Picture 7. Razaki



Source: www.gaiapedia.gr

Picture 8. Pamidi



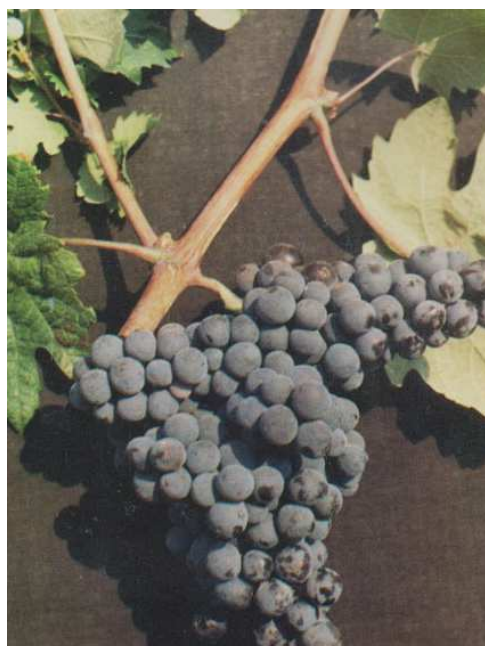
Source: <https://www.ilovegreekwine.com>

Picture 9. Voulgaroudes



Source: <http://winewalker.gr/>

Picture 10. Voidomatis



Source: <http://winewalker.gr/>

7.2 The vineyards and wineries of Evros Regional Unit

Local vineyards and wineries can play significant role in attracting visitors, developing wine tourism and thus contributing substantially to the economic development of the Regional Unit of Evros, especially if they are combined with other tourism infrastructures.

The most important wineries of the Regional Unit of Evros, many of which should be visited are the following:

Gutsidis Wines	<p>They are located at the place Dikaia of Municipal Unit of Orestiada in Evros.</p> <p>This vineyard extends over hills where ancient Thracian tombs are located and is called "Vineyards of Dikaia" and has been recorded since the 16th century by Turkish historian and traveler Evliya Celebi.</p> <p>The refugees from Eastern Romulia who came here carried vines from varieties such as sour Mavoudi (Xinomavro) and Pamidi.</p>
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	<p>The wine is produced by organic grapes, while being the northernmost winery in Greece. At an altitude of about 300 meters and continental climate, the vines grow in cold winters and mild dry summers. The climatic conditions, largely depended on Evros River, are creating the character of Gutsidis wines produced by Greek and international grape varieties, such as Assyrtiko, Malagouzia, Roditis and Sauvignon Blanc (White) and Xiniri, Mavroudi, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Merlot and the special local Pamidi variety (Red).</p> <p>The winemaking process is certified by TUV AUSTRIA HELLAS</p>
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Picture 11. Gutsidis Wines: Vineyards



Picture 12. Gutsidis Wines: Aging facilities



Picture 13. Gutsidis Wines – Marous, Xino Mavroudi



Picture 14. Gutsidis Wines – Epillio, Cabernet Sauvignon with Mavroudi



Source: <http://gutsidis-wines.com>

Evritika Kellaria Winery	<p>In northeastern Greece, 10 km away from the border with Turkey and Bulgaria, in Marassia of Trigono Municipal Unit of Orestiada, the Evritika Kellaria Winery is located on a hill surrounded by vineyards. It is a visited Winery & Distillery- a distillery with bottled wines, retsina, tsipouro (with or without anise) and liqueur. The produced wines are "Onar", "Orpheus" and "Enigma".</p> <p>The winery is certified by HACCP & ISO 22000: 200, and in its facilities are included a tasting room, an outlet, a museum and training room.</p>
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Picture 15. Evritika Kellaria Winery – Building Facilities



Picture 16. Evritika Kellaria Winery – Building Facilities



Picture 17. Evritika Kellaria Winery – Vineyards



Picture 18. Evritika Kellaria Winery – Winemaking facilities



Picture 19. Evritika Kellaria Winery – “Onar” White wine



Picture 20. Evritika Kellaria Winery – “Orfeas”, Red wine



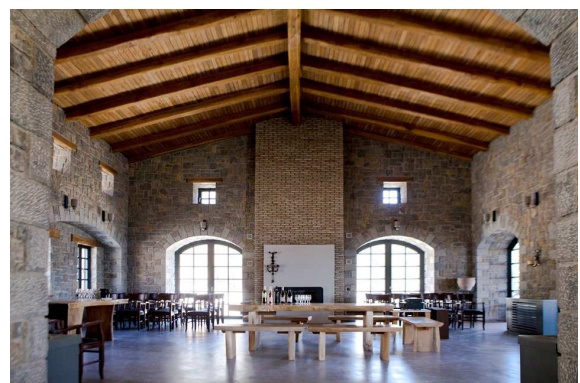
Source: Archive of Evritika Kellaria Winery S.A.

<p>Melmar Winery</p>	<p>MELMAR Winery is located at the Daphnes region of Samothraki. It was established in 2013 and since 2015 has been operating both at the domestic and the international market with the wines “ADYTON” and “SECRET ROAD”. It is a state-of-the-art winery with oenological equipment, an independent chemist with state-of-the-art measuring and control equipment, stainless steel double-walled tanks, oak barrels for aging wines, a functional wine cellar with ideal temperature and humidity conditions. Malagouzia, Assyrtiko, Mavroudi and Syrah from the wider area of Thrace, winemaking with modern methods and respect for tradition.</p> <p>Winemaking is carried out under strict temperature conditions and under constant quality control.</p> <p>The ripening, aging and storage of wines takes place at 60-65% humidity conditions and under 15-17^o Celsius degrees.</p> <p>The visit to MELMAR Winery includes, among others, a tour at the vineyard and at the production, bottling and aging facilities. Guests can taste and buy wines in the specially designed tasting room, while enjoying the magnificent view of the Aegean Sea.</p> <p>Accommodation facilities are also located within the property of the winery.</p>
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Picture 21. Melmar – Building Facilities



Picture 22. Melmar – Tasting Room



Picture 23. Melmar – Vineyard



Picture 24. Melmar– Aging cellar



Picture 25. Melmar– The award winning wines
“Secret Path, Syrah 2016” & “Secret Path, Malagouza
2018”



Picture 26. Melmar– Adyton, Mavroudi



Source: <https://www.melmarwinery.gr>

<p>Winery - Distillery Bella Bros</p>	<p>Bella Bros vineyards occupy an area of 350 acres in the Alania region of Soufli. The grape varieties come from Soufli and Thrace region. Moreover, there are other varieties such as Moschofilero, Assyrtiko, Athiri, as well as Cinsault, Merlot, Cabernet which have been adapted to the microclimate of the Soufli area since about 1880. It is worth mentioning that the varieties of "Karnahalas" and "Keratsouda" are cultivated exclusively in Soufli. What is more, this winery is famous for its local tsipouro.</p>
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Picture 27. Bella Bros – Vineyards



Picture 28. Bella Bros – Winemaking facilities



Picture 29. Bella Bros – Tour on the vineyards



Picture 30. Bella Bros – Tour on the distillery



Picture 31. Bella Bros – “Onos”, Keratsouda wine



Picture 32. Bella Bros – “Peninta”, Red, syrah & merlot



Source: Bella Bros, Facebook

At Table 2 are presented the other important vineyards, wineries and distilleries of Evros.

Table 2: Vineyards, Wineries and Distilleries of Evros Regional Unit

No	Facility	Location & Description
VINEYARDS AND WINERIES		
1	Tassioulis Vine Art	Alexandroupolis, Local Airport - wines & ouzo, retsina
2	Kadoglou vineyard	Tychero, Soufli, Evros
3	Rigas Vineyard	It is located in Gemisti of Peplo (Feres, Alexandroupolis). It produces red wine (brusque, semi-sweet & sweet), tsipouro with or without anise in the traditional way, directly from first crushing grape juice, without chemical or any other special treatment.
4	Raptis Organic Vineyard	It is located in Kornofolia of Soufli and its total area amounts to about 65 acres. The cultivation is done in accordance with the principles of organic farming without the use of any chemicals, medicines and fertilizers. The main grape varieties of the vineyard are Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Syrah, Carignan, Grenache Rouge, Chardonnay. The winemaking process is performed in spatial type of facilities and the distillation of the grape marc for the production of tsipouro is made in traditional type of amphibians. This Vineyard mainly produces red wine and tsipouro with or without anise.
5	Goudousaki wines	It is located in the Mavroklisi Church of Orfeas (Soufli), which is about 90 kilometers north of Alexandroupolis. It produces red dry and semi-sweet wine, but also tsipouro without anise. The grape varieties that are used are Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Moschato Hamburg.
DISTILLERIES		
1	Gugulidis Ouzo	Orestiada Evros
2	Rakitzis Ouzo	It is located in Didymoteicho of Evros. It is the first Ouzo and Tsipouro distillery, founded by Thanassis Rakitzis in 1883. The success of Ouzo and Tsipouro Rakitzis is due to the special family recipe, which has excellent quality and unique taste.

No	Facility	Location & Description
3	Mitsa Distilleries	It is located in Kastanias region, of Orestiada (Evros). The distillery uses raw materials of pure quality for the production of ouzo, tsipouro, traditional liqueurs and other alcoholic beverages with the label "Alpha".
4	Goidas Distillery	Alexandroupolis, Evros
5	Evros Papadimitriou Distillery	Evros Papadimitriou distillery is located in the 11th km of Alexandroupolis - Feres and was founded 70 years ago by Panagiotis Papadimitriou. The distillery has become famous over the years with a wide range of products such as "Ouzo Evros 15", "Ouzo Distillery", "Tsipouro Magic" and various alcoholic beverages such as brandy and liqueur.
6	Ouzounidis distillery	3rd km Orestiada Didymoteicho – "Ouzo E17", "Ouzo Orestis", liqueurs, brandy
7	Hatzopoulos distillery	It is located in the 6th km of Alexandroupolis Feres. The distillery is the meeting place of tradition and experience with high end technology. It uses modern mechanical equipment, with respect to the environment and delivering products of high quality such as premium and standard ouzo, as well as tsipouro with or without anise.
8	Cooperative Diatrofiki Tsipouro Metaxi & Orfeas	Cooperative Diatrofiki is located in the 2nd km of Soufli Alexandroupolis in Evros and produces tsipouro exclusively from the grape varieties of Soufli.
9	Mandakis Stratos Distillery	Alexandroupolis, Evros
11	Bakaloudi distillery	Soufli, Evros
12	Basdanis Distillery	Nipsa, Traianoupolis, Alexandroupolis, Evros. Production of tsipouro in bulk
13	Nipsas Distillery	Nipsa, Traianoupolis, Alexandroupolis, Evros. Production of tsipouro in bulk
14	Distillery Petridis	Doksa of Metaxas, Didymoteicho, Evros. Production of tsipouro in bulk
15	Agorakis Traditional Distillery	Lyra of Tycherio, Soufli, Evros. Production of tsipouro in bulk

From the above wineries, the "Evritika Kellaria Winery" in Marasia region, outside Orestiada, and the "Bella Bros Winery" in Soufli, are making strenuous efforts to revive the local vineyards of Evros, recognizing that will benefit both the region's winemaking and the viability of the wineries, as it will be achieved:

- Direct sales to visitors - increased profit margins
- Instantly supply of the business with valuable information on consumer preferences
- Enhance brand recognition.

The most important barriers towards achieving the above mentioned targets are the high cost of infrastructure construction and maintenance, as well as the time wasted during organized visit tours.

8. Opportunities for Evros to emerge as a wine-growing region - Added value of winemaking in the regional economic development

Nowadays, the majority of the local vineyards and the main interest of wine-makers in the Regional Unity of Evros are concentrated in the municipal units of Soufli and Trigono. In addition, there is great potential on the development of wine tourism in Evros, as there is the ending point of **“Dionysos Wine Route”**, which is one of the famous wine routes of Northern Greece. Vineyards and wine production are also available in the Municipal Units of Alexandroupolis and Metaxades. Since 2010, the Protection Of Geographical Indication label of Evros can be placed on any wine that is produced in all over the Evros region.

Picture 33. Dionysos Wine Route



Tsipouro is also popular in the region, while Evros is one of the champions in the production of retsina. Most tsipouro distilleries are located in the wider area of Soufli, the largest of which is the Soufli Vineyard Cooperative, which was re-established under the name "Soufliotika Cellars". Furthermore, the "Stafylos" Association of Friends of Vine & Wine is also based in Soufli.

However, it is worth mentioning, that although a significant number of grape varieties have been cultivated in the region for over 200 years, they have not been exploited and promoted so as the regions will create a local wine identity different from the rest of Greece and Europe. Overall, vineyards of Thrace are in the last place out of the 9 wine-growing Greek Regions and they are also ranked last in the number of wines (produce only 55 different wine labels). Thrace is also one of the two wine-growing regions (along with Central Greece Region) that does not have protected designation of origin wines.

It is presented below an evaluation of the opportunities for the promotion of Evros as a wine-growing region through SWOT analysis, which is the most appropriate strategic planning tool taking into account both the internal and the external environment of an activity in order to achieve specific objectives.

S – STRENGTHS

S1. Superior quality of the product

Local wine which is selected and standardized in the regional wineries comes from traditional vineyards and it is produced by using modern methods and certified process, so that to guarantee its superior quality. Winemakers are also investing in research activities in order to produce new wine varieties. The necessary laboratory tests confirm its superior quality and the product bears the corresponding certifications.

S1. Traditional winemaking in Evros

In the historical and cultural heritage of the Regional Unit of Evros, wine is prominent and is an integral part of it. In general, it was the ancient Greeks who developed the art of winemaking, vine cultivation and wine marketing at such a high level. There is a long tradition of winemaking in Greece and wine consumption is inextricably linked to the greek lifestyle and diet.

S2. Participation in wine competitions

The exceptional quality of Evros wine it is considered to be as an important advantage for winning awards in wine competitions. In this case, the regional wine has another comparative advantage over competing products, while at the same time the recognition of the wine is constantly increasing.

S3. The favorable climate and soil

One of the main features of the regional vineyards is the large number of micro-regions with special ecosystem (soil - climate - vine variety), where local quality wines are produced. In each of these areas, the climate is extremely favorable to the vineyard. The Mediterranean climate of the region is affected by the influence of the neighboring mountains or the seashore, and acquires a unique character. Therefore, the vineyards are located in prime locations, either in lowlands, on mountain slopes, or close to seaside areas.

W – WEAKNESSES

W1. Funding Opportunities

The current unfavorable economic situation in Greece makes funding extremely difficult in order to start any business. Private investors are particularly cautious about investing and financing institutions provide loans under very strict criteria and unfavorable conditions for winemakers.

W2. Lack of experience

A typical winemaking company should control and take into account all the factors and potential risks that may arise when implementing its business plan. However, by entering an

industry where it has no prior experience, difficulties or even wrong choices may occur. Proper preparation will mitigate the potential impact of such an occasion.

W3. Difficulty in exploiting economies of scale

Especially for winemakers, which are at the start of their operations, the quantity produced usually is expected to remain low. As a result, new companies are not able to take full advantage of economies of scale in the overall production process of wine.

W4. High pricing policy

The price of standard wine depends on a variety of factors. This is likely to create difficulties for the business, at least until it be able, to some extent, strengthen its position within the supplier network and distribution channels. The high pricing of bottled wines in restaurants reduces consumption and consequently producers' profits.

W5. Limited Dynamic Promotion

Like any new product, standard wine needs a dynamic market entry. Dynamic and well-coordinated marketing actions are needed to gain the attention of local and foreign consumers and persuade them to buy it.

O – OPPORTUNITIES

O1. Investment opportunities and promotion of winemaking

The promotion of Evros regional wines, with an identity and quality directly linked to their place of production, has become a strategic choice. Targeted actions per country are implemented by the Hellenic Ministry of Agricultural Development and Food so as to ensure that quality wines conquer foreign markets.

O2. Recognizing the value of Greek wine and increasing global demand

In recent years, consumers have been turning to wine because of their nutritional awareness and their interest in general health and well-being. Greek wine has begun to conquer markets that were not traditional targets. In particular, Greek wine has been recognized for its superiority over competing products from other countries.

O3. Foreign markets penetration potential

First of all, there are traditional wine markets mainly in Europe and North America, with well established distribution networks, where is possible to penetrate by using appropriate strategies. On the other hand, new wine countries are dynamically entering the wine market, by showing interest in wine consumption, even as a gourmet product, such as China, Russia and India.

O4. Forms of alternative tourism (agrotourism - wine tourism)

The Regional Unit of Evros is a popular traditional destination which attracts lots of tourists. This enables co-ordinated actions in cooperation with the development of alternative forms

of tourism e.g. agrotourism and wine tourism, so as consumers from all over the world, can taste Greek wine. In addition, Greek immigrants is a sure channel of communication for this Greek product, in different places worldwide.

O5. Participation in exhibitions

Numerous of food fairs are organized each year in many countries of the world, enabling businesses to promote their products and attract potential buyers. These should be an essential tool of business in trying to establish strategic partnerships.

T – THREATS

T1. Strong Competitors

In the field of standardized wine there are many businesses with a long-standing presence and an established market position. All of these domestic and international competitors will make it very difficult for a winery to enter certain markets.

T2. The rapid increase in world supply

Wine production is constantly increasing worldwide, because of the improved cultivation techniques applied, such as in Spain, as well as because countries such as Morocco and Tunisia are entering wine market more dynamically. Despite the lower quality of the wine from these countries, the increase in the quantity offered puts pressure on the price of the product.

T3. High price of standard wine

Evros regional wine has higher production cost than other wine-producing countries. This, coupled with the effort to exploit its superior quality, results in implementing higher pricing policy than competing products from other countries. It is also important to note that uncontrolled bulk wine trade illegally, differentiate terms of competition and price.

T4. High price elasticity of demand and income in non - traditional markets

Due to the fact that standardized Greek wine has entered the non-traditional markets as a luxury product, it has shown greater demand flexibility in terms of price and consumer income. Therefore, care must be taken so as the product reaches end consumers of these countries at a price which balances the afore mentioned parameters.

T5. Weak national promotion strategies

Competent bodies' efforts to promote Greek standardized wine in the world market, appear to be lagging behind those of other winemaking countries. More coordinated and dynamic marketing actions at national level are necessary for the expanding of wine industry, from production to marketing. As a result, the production and standardization wine companies are significantly relieved by the extremely high cost of individual promotion and the promotional efforts and opportunities for growth are particularly more effective.

In conclusion, in the Regional Unit of Evros a large number of winemaking companies are active, the majority of which are small sized. Imports of wine are at a low level and thus the number of companies involved in this activity is limited. Domestically produced products exceed domestic demand, which lowers the level of import penetration at relatively low levels.

As it has been already mentioned, regional winemaking companies are producing products of high quality. Furthermore, it is encouraging the fact that many winemakers are investing significant in the modernization of their units, aiming to improve the quality of the wines. The quality of the regional wines, coupled with the shift of many consumers to nutritional diet, contributes to the growing interest in these products.

At the following table, are summarized the results of the afore mentioned SWOT Analysis:

Picture 34. SWOT analysis

S – STRENGTHS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Superior quality of the product ✓ Traditional winemaking in Evros ✓ Participation in wine competitions ✓ The favorable climate and soil 	W – WEAKNESSES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Funding Opportunities ✗ Lack of experience ✗ Difficulty in exploiting economies of scale ✗ High pricing policy ✗ Limited Dynamic Promotion
O – OPPORTUNITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↗ Investment opportunities and promotion of winemaking ↗ Recognizing the value of Greek wine and increasing global demand ↗ Foreign markets penetration potential ↗ Forms of alternative tourism (agrotourism - wine tourism) ↗ Participation in exhibitions 	T – THREATS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Strong Competitors ✗ The rapid increase in world supply ✗ High price of standard wine ✗ High price elasticity of demand and income in non - traditional markets ✗ Traditional winemaking in Evros

9. Opportunities for the promotion of Evros as a wine-growing area combined with the tourist promotion

Wine in combination with the vineyards of the Regional Unit of Evros is a pivotal point for the development of wine tourism, as it can effectively establish a business environment for attracting tourists.

Wine tourism can be defined as a visit to vineyards, wineries, festivals or wine contests, where tasting different wines or visiting the main features of the region are the prime motivation for visitors. This definition excludes professional-motivated visits in wine-making regions, as wine tourism emphasizes on leisure activities.



Wine tourism has been identified as one of the sectors that are growing outside the traditional metropolitan areas and thus considered that plays an essential role in regional development, employment, business development, tourism and rural investment. Wine tourism contributes to the creation of jobs in traditionally rural and economically disadvantaged

areas and gives a strong competitive advantage to winemaking areas, by generating profits for winemakers. Therefore, wine tourism benefits local economy and not only local wineries.

A pivotal point of wine tourism are the "Wine Roads", which are paths that cross vineyards of a specific geographical area, recording visiting wineries, specialized wine tasting shops, restaurants and more. In most wine producing European countries there are officially defined wine routes (top organized are French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, etc.), while the countries of the so-called "New World", have a particularly high level of wine tourism development.

The Greek "Roads of Wine" are in constant development and those of Northern Greece are considered as the most important ones. Nevertheless, wine tourism in Greece is very dynamic, constantly developing and has a significant impact on the local economy of each region.

The choice of one wine region over another is mainly influenced by the presence of the winery in the area, which is also the dominant motive for the visit. However, there are also other specific or complementary incentives to either the destination (e.g. visit to a wine region) and the activity (wine tasting), or the combination of the above. The perceptions, past experiences, knowledge of wine, expectations as well as personal characteristics of a visitor determine the visit of a winery.

Visitors' motivations are multidimensional and vary according to the social characteristics of them, as well as their perceptions and interests. Occupation, educational level and income, on the one hand, and winery, meeting with the winemaker, wine and vineyard information, on the other, are considered as key features that differentiate winemaking visitors.

According to the different motives that visitors may have, they **can be categorized in four specific and distinct groups:**

- a) "wine lovers",
- b) "rookies",
- c) "occasional visitors" and
- d) "tourists".

All the above groups can, to some extent, contribute to the development of Wine Tourism.

On the occasion of "occasional visitors" and "tourists", who visit the winery either as part of their visit to the region or by accompanying other visitors, the winery can be an incentive to visit the area and promote rural tourism, with no particular gain for winemaking businesses.

On the other hand, on the occasion of «wine lovers", who are freelancers, highly educated and high-income, they are wine connoisseurs and interested in improving their knowledge on the wine through their visit to the winery and their meeting with the wine producer. on the occasion of "rookies" who are potential " wine lovers", under specific conditions, their visit to the winery gives a competitive advantage to the region and the regional wines produced wines, generate profits in winemaking companies and contribute to the development of the region's wine sector.

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Annexes

Annex I. Cultivated and winemaking varieties in the Regional Unit of Evros

Annex II. The most important vineyards, wineries and distilleries in the Regional Unit of Evros

Annex III. RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE (VINEYARDS)