



Bundesministerium
für Ernährung
und Landwirtschaft



Interim Meeting on the project “Facilitation of exchange through advice on harmonized wine regulations in the Western Balkans”

MINUTES OF THE MEETING



27th – 28th March 2019
Podgorica, Montenegro



1. Introduction

The Interim Meeting of the REAWG on Wine of the project “Facilitation of exchange through advice on harmonized wine regulations in the Western Balkans” was organized by the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in SEE supported by Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Federal Republic of Germany (BMEL) and GFA consulting group. The host of the meeting of the REAWG on Wine was "13. jul Plantaže" a.d. where the REAWG had the opportunity to visit the national and regional leader in vine industry of Montenegro and visited its vineyards “Cemovsko Polje” and wine route “Plantaze”.

The meeting took place in Podgorica, Montenegro on 27th – 28th March and gathered representatives of the relevant authorities on Wine from SWG members (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Srpska, Kosovo*, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro), national and international experts as well as the partners of the Project “Facilitation of exchange through advice on harmonized wine regulations in the Western Balkans”, GFA consulting group, BMEL and IAK Agrar Consulting GmbH.

*The list of participants is provided in **Annex 1**.*

2. Purpose of the meeting and topics discussed

Mr. Boban Ilic, SWG Secretary General introduced the participants with the main topics of the agenda and facilitate the meeting. The audience was also welcomed by the Montenegrin Ministry of Agriculture.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the main findings in viticulture and wine sector in SWG member countries/territories and the findings out of the topics indicated as priorities for the respective countries/territories by the REAWG on Wine.

Mr. Ilic gave an overview and present the main findings of the State of Art of the Viticulture and Wine sector in SEE Region, which was the main activity in the reporting period of the wine experts in the region as per the project “Facilitation of exchange through advice on harmonized wine regulations in the Western Balkans”. In addition, the progress of findings on the national priorities was presented by the national experts.

During the second half of the meeting main discussion was on the selected topic on “Administrative issues” - accompanying documents covered by Mr. Lutz van Elk (BMEL).

REAWG discussed on the future scope with regards to the activities on the related project for the period ahead.

*The program of the event is provided in **Annex 2**.*

3. Discussion on main findings on national priorities

Albania: The setting up of proper vineyard register in Albania needs to be done. The favorable climate conditions for grape production and different varieties of wine are great potential for Albania. The legal framework in Albania needs to be aligned in terms on “New viticulture and oenological practices”. The necessity of new up to date law harmonized with actual regional and EU framework is urgent in Albania. The law is extremely limited in its specifications and outdated. There is a need in Albania to see good examples/practices in the EU. For drafting the new law probably there will be around 3 months needed. The presentation is provided in **Annex 3**.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: At the level of the state (BiH) there is practically no effective regulation of the sector. The outdated and unenforceable Law on wine. At the moment there are 4 wine laws in power in BiH. Adoption of a new wine law and subordinate regulations at this level, all aligned with sectorial regulations in the EU, is urgently needed. At the FBiH level, the Law on Wine is partially aligned with sectorial regulations in the EU. There is a relatively new law on wine in the Republic of Srpska which is similar to the one in FBiH. Strategic plan on the state and the entity level for revising/creating new sectorial legislation in BiH will be done in a period of 5-7 years. Needs to be clarified on political level, so the pre drafts of the law to be done. The presentation is provided in **Annex 4**.

Kosovo*: The current legal framework for wines in Kosovo* is partly harmonized with the legislation of the European Union. The wine law is supplemented with administrative instructions currently 10 (ten). In 2019, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development has started to create the concept paper that preceded the drafting of the new wine law. The drafting of the new Law on Wines is foreseen to be made during 2020, while the adoption will take place in 2021. The presentation is provided in **Annex 5**.

Macedonia: The GI system on wine is partially harmonized with the EU PDO/PGI system due to the outstanding issue between the Republic of North Macedonia and the EU. The legal framework in the Macedonian wine sector is defined by the wine law that is in accordance with the EU regulation on the common organization of the wine market. In the future, the law should be changed, amendments should be done in two phases. These amendments should be done until the end of this year 2019. Final draft of the law to be done by December 2019. In May/June 2019 working group on law on wine should meet and work with aim to draft the law. Leader variety in Macedonia is “Vranec”. Wine industry in Macedonia is export oriented industry, but 80% is bulk wine. Tikvesh wine district is most important because 80% of wine producing is concentrated in here. Tikvesh wine is cheaper in other countries then in Macedonia. “Stanushina” unique autochthonous variety from red wines. The presentation is provided in **Annex 6**.

Montenegro: GI system in Montenegro is not yet set up. Geographical indications system in Montenegro is harmonized with EU PDO/PGI system. The basic for the new PDOs and PGIs viticulture zoning of wine-growing areas were prepared in 2017. Once the process is done, Montenegro will have 2 PGI and more then 6 PDO. Kratoshija is the oldest variety in Montenegro and has 17 different biotypes. Montenegro country of origin and spread of biotypes. The presentation is provided in **Annex 7**.

Serbia: In Serbia legislation is mostly in line with EU legislation. There were two big EU twinning projects. Serbia has a wine register, clarification of wine varieties and zones and is in line with the labeling regulation. Implementation of Vineyard register in Serbia is in line with EU requirements including working methods of data collecting regarding viticulture and vineyard parcels surface, conducting of administrative control and database management related to the Vineyard register, conducting of field control, control of data using digital geospatial data, orthophotography and other databases related to the Vineyard register, etc., as well as conducting of data registration on harvest declaration. Serbia has 7 oenological authorized laboratories. In Serbia there are two rulebooks for wine and aromatized wines. The presentation is provided in **Annex 8**.

4. Presentation on the topic: Best practices, “administrative issues” with the focus on accompanying documents

Mr. Lutz van Elk (BMEL) presented the SWOT analysis on the sector in the Balkans and some administrative issues within EU. Examples of the practices and procedures in Brazil, Canada and Japan. Brazil has e-certificates. New oenology (Annex) that came into force was presented also, which in his opinion is complicated for understanding. After his presentation, in discussion, he suggested to find company from abroad to do an “assessment” of the system in the countries/territories (by checking wineries, administrative procedures etc.), to check and give some recommendations. This should be done at the end of the project, but it’s also possible to be done earlier.

The present representatives from the ministries/institutions have been asked to think about the possibility, sensitivity of the subject in their countries/territories and give a response if this issue will be possible and needed.

It was added that the issue with the e-certificate in Brazil that was presented by Mr. Van Elk should be understood as suggestion that through the project it should be worked on the issue. Priorities by country should be clarified by the end of April. More details in **Annex 9, Annex 10 and Annex 11**.

5. Discussions on the topic on Digital platform

Regarding the topic on Digital platform - as regional goal, E-certificate and accompanying documents, the following discussions were concluded:

Regarding **Kosovo*** – Plan for meeting with the Ministry during April to be made with aim to make organizational chart who is doing what; Proposition is to start with Kosovo* regarding the “assessment”, because Kosovo* probably would accept.

For **Serbia** and **Montenegro**, it might be not necessary, since they have done everything which is in line with EU legislation. Montenegro need digitalization of the procedure and documents.

- It was proposed to hire an expert. “Terms of Reference” to be prepared for hiring expert who can do the software/open a tender or else. The other country/territory which already has such software to be contacted, to check how much it cost.

For **BiH** - one framework that generally says what will be regulated on state level and what on entity level. Draft an action plan to be settled and next that strategic document to be developed.

- It was again commented that there is no reason why any country would not accept the “assessment”, as it is free and that could help improve the system.

- It was suggested for Montenegro or others who are more advanced, to find someone to make a check list for the phase of implementation of the legislation.

Albania - in Albania there is no information who is responsible for this sector. This issue to be discussed with the Ministry requesting to assign person to work on this issue.

- It was suggested, the international expert to say what are his abilities in the context from reliable sources and what he has capacity to do, so the countries could give an input related to their needs, thus the international expert can make an organizational plan/schedule.
- There is a possibility by October 2019 to have a software which can be used and tested.

6. Future steps

The following was concluded regarding future activities by the end of the year 2019, based on the feedback, set as a priority needs from the experts – members of the REAWG on Wine:

(See the table below)

Conclusions:

- It was also agreed that assessments to be updated by all countries/territories by October 2019;
- The next meeting of the REAWG on Wine will be in October 2019 in Ohrid, North Macedonia during the Agricultural Policy Forum;
- Following the meeting in October, next meeting to be held at the end of February 2020 in Albania, Durres;
- In June 2020 - exposure visit in Germany and further meeting is planned. The REAWG discussed what would be of interest for the members of the group to see in Germany within the exposure visit;
- Kosovo* accepts to allow some expert to visit and make an “assessment” of the functionality of the system. It shall not be called inspection nor audit, but simply “assessment” which could prove whether the system is functional in order to develop a check list. This assessment and findings during the visit should be confidential and it shall not be used against them in any kind. This might be possibly done in June 2019;
- The other countries/territories don't express their interest at this point for such “exercise/assessment” in the country/territory.
- Space on e-cloud to be bought, where all documents produced, and information gathered will be available only to the members of the REAWG on Wine;
- The consultation services of the international expert on the following topics: Wine control, referent laboratories, legal design, checking of individual questions of concrete legal questions, set up a system of e-certificates to be used.
- The REAWG was asked to propose relevant topic on which the countries/territories need services of the international expert for Year 2019.