

CALL FOR PAPERS

Recent trends in wine economics

A Special Issue to be published in the

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Wine is nowadays almost a ubiquitous product. Since when, a few decades ago, it was basically rooted in the Mediterranean basin a lot has changed. Although, the wine market is deeply differentiated and segmented, it is now undoubtedly globalized. In fact, an increasing number of key players in wine production and distribution are multinational corporations (Anderson and Pinilla, 2018). The share of wine sold in international markets has constantly increased and reached, on average, about 40% in the last years. Also, consumption trends are quite converging among geographical areas, and differentiation pertains more to life styles, consumers' typologies, drinking occasions and fashion trends than to nationality (Fine *et al.*, 2002). Successful *influencers* often reach the status of global *wine gurus* (Galizzi, 2013).

In recent years, the wine world has deeply changed also under different respects and some of these changes are worth recalling. First, technological innovations significantly changed the production process and its organization (Morrison and Rabellotti, 2017). The whole process is now more capital intensive and the different production stages are now more mechanized, quick, safe, easy to control and to standardize. Biological innovations also contributed to improve the production process and the final good. Second, overall wine quality has dramatically improved also under the pressure of a more and more sophisticated demand as wine has become a hedonic good for which also intangible attributes are key determinants of choice (Mac Donald *et al.*, 2013). Third, on the one hand, scale economies are now a major competitive factor following the widening of the market and due to the increasing needs of capital, R&D and marketing activities. On the other hand, interest for variety, for typical traditional wines produced by vertically integrated winegrowers gives room to smaller producers who can access distant markets via e-commerce (Dentoni and Reardon, 2010). Fourth, the rising role of technology and quality and the increasing complexity of supply chains require large amounts of information to be released. This need enhances the role of experts, journalists, bloggers and the like who are the true *deus-ex-machina* of the market being

able to create and tailor products on consumers' preferences, and who are, at the same time, also able to influence demand trends.

Because of the different forces in place, the industry is populated with a variety of supply chains, local clusters and global networks that often intersect with each other, resulting in a quite complex competition game. Undoubtedly, if the overall picture so far outlined witnesses the present complexity of this market, future expected changes seem even more challenging. Some of them are worth to pinpoint. Climate change has already become a major production re-localization driver but is expected to worsen and to pose every day new challenges and constraints that will ask for the search of new solutions. Furthermore, increasing demand for safety, for environment protection and ethical contents pushes for defining always new and more complex products where the set of attributes relevant for making purchases widens. Finally, the European wine policy reform that considerably liberalized production in major producing and exporting countries is expected to impact size and organization of the industry as well as product competitiveness (Gaeta and Corsinovi, 2013).

Italy is a traditionally important producer and consumer country and it has a prominent role in world wine markets. While sharing the overall depicted complexity the Italian wine sector presents some persistent peculiarities. Beyond the rhetoric of the success of the so-called Made in Italy food products, the sector enjoys many strengths but also faces relevant bottlenecks. Know-how and reputation are high thanks to its long tradition, but production is highly fragmented and firms are on average not as dynamic and innovative as in other countries. Furthermore, cooperatives -that account for a large share of total production- are often quite small, unevenly developed in the different regions, many of them lack human capital and their management is not always fully driven by market incentives (Cacchiarelli et al., 2016). The well-developed system of Geographical Indications also plays a twofold role as, on the one side, it enhances the visibility of smaller production areas and helps in differentiating the products, but, on the other side, it slows-down product innovation and makes supply less flexible and less reactive to demand changes.

This Special Issue aims at publishing original scientific papers focused on the wine industry and addressing the most relevant issues presently faced by the sector. The issue is focused on the Italian wine industry but also welcomes analyses on other countries and regional areas for international comparisons. These contributions are expected to shed light on present trends and to analyze the future tendencies in the global competition game. Scholars from different fields of economic analysis are encouraged to submit their work on wine supply, demand, market trends and policies. Empirical articles (aimed at collecting and interpreting large data samples or specific case studies)

as well as papers aimed at providing new theoretical insights are welcome. Any methodological approach, falling in the field of economic studies, is welcome.

The target audience of the Special Issue includes wine experts as well as economists whose research is focused in different sectors but who are interested in getting insights on a product that is gaining momentum in the Italian and world economy.

Papers for this Special Issue may address (among others) the following questions:

- How can wine supply chains, clusters and networks define effective strategies to face the challenges posed by globalization?
- How can family firms get a better market access and be more competitive in wine markets increasingly populated by large players?
- What will be the role for cooperatives in global wine markets and what coordination modes can be suggested for a better empowerment of their members and for enhancing the competitiveness of their products and improving their economic results?
- What are the recent trends in the industrial organization of the wine sector and how is market power distributed in the wine industry?
- What are the most recent trends and the future perspectives of wine retail and international trade?
- What are the most recent trends and the future perspectives of wine consumption and who are and who will be wine consumers?
- What are the most effective and rewarding quality clues and information strategies in wine markets?
- How to design and implement sound and coherent strategies for branding, labeling and communicating product origin?
- What role for wine policies in the future and how to balance the need for a better market orientation in old wine countries and for strengthening innovation and adaptation capacity of small producers in these countries?

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Timeline from Paper Submission to Publication

- September 15, 2019: Deadline for submission of full papers (online submissions are via <https://www.editorialmanager.com/itej/default.aspx>)
- December 15, 2019: deadline for receiving reviewers' comments
- March 15, 2020: deadline for sending revised papers
- June 1, 2020: closing second round of reviews (if needed)
- Summer 2020: publication of the Special issue