



Press Release – 17/12/2024

High-Level Group on Wine

**The European Independent Winegrowers Welcome
HLG Recommendations but Call for Key Improvements**

The European Confederation of Independent Winegrowers (CEVI) acknowledges the recommendations of the High-Level Group (HLG) on the future of the wine sector, particularly the progress made on crisis management measures available to Member States (MS), climate change adaptation, and harnessing market opportunities. However, it highlights the need for more ambitious proposals regarding the EU’s trade policy, promotion, and wine tourism, and calls for better consideration of the needs of micro and small to medium enterprises (SMEs) that are the cornerstone of the Independent Winegrowers’ model.

“We are pleased that the HLG has understood our expectations on these essential issues, addressing structural challenges such as the management of production potential, climate change adaptation, and reducing trade barriers. These measures are indispensable for strengthening resilience and ensuring the competitiveness of European winegrowers,” said Matilde Poggi, President of CEVI.

CEVI welcomes, in particular, the inclusion of a nationally financed permanent grubbing-up measure in the crisis management toolbox available to MS, which would only need to be complemented by a temporary grubbing-up measure. It also values the support for climate risk prevention, and the facilitation of cross-border distance sales within the EU. However, a clear and precise timeline is necessary to guarantee the swift and effective implementation of these measures.

CEVI also identifies areas where improvements remain possible. While the extension of promotion support and the simplification of schemes for small producers are steps forward, these proposals fail to adequately support traditional wines, which are at the heart of Europe’s cultural and economic heritage. Similarly, support for wine tourism—a major growth driver for Independent Winegrowers—needs to be strengthened around our growers’ organisations to highlight their unique role in offering authentic vineyard experiences.

Furthermore, CEVI regrets that the recommendations do not provide greater support for the Independent Winegrower model, illustrated by small family-owned businesses that are true engines of the sector’s performance. European institutions must consider the specific needs of the Independent Winegrowers’ micro and SMEs (as well as their economic, environmental, and social contributions) to ensure fair and effective support for these businesses, which are essential to the sector’s economy and the vitality of rural areas.

“Independent Winegrowers have demonstrated the success of a model rooted in tradition, innovation, and sustainability. However, despite their significant role in strengthening resilience and creating value in the wine sector, this model remains under-supported. We expect European institutions to do more to preserve it,” added Matilde Poggi.

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About CEVI: CEVI, the European Confederation of Independent Winegrowers, is the only organisation representing and defending the interests of Independent Winegrowers at European level. Independent Winegrowers are entrepreneurs at the head of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), often a family business. They make everything from the vineyard to the table, meaning that they produce and sell their wines directly (to the consumer), thereby contributing to the vitality of wine-producing regions. CEVI currently represents Independent Winegrowers from 12 European countries. In Europe there are 200 000 Independent Winegrowers.

CEVI – European Confederation of Independent Winegrowers

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