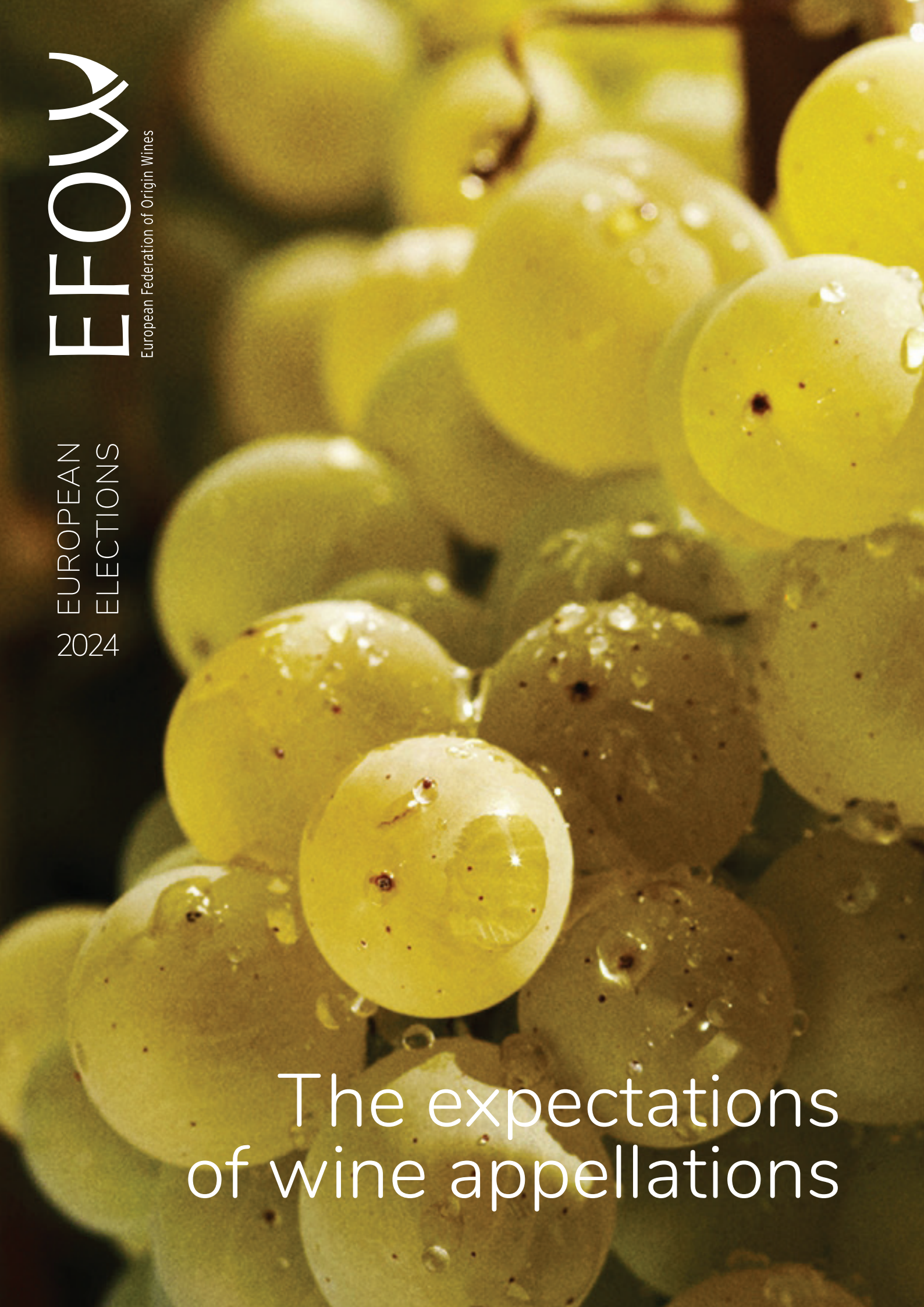




# EFOV

European Federation of Origin Wines

EUROPEAN  
ELECTIONS  
2024

The expectations  
of wine appellations

# Wine, a strategic sector for the European economy and agriculture

The EU wine sector in figures (2022/2023)

The world's leading wine producer with 150 million hl, accounting for more than 61% of global production<sup>1</sup>.

[1 OIV\\_World\\_Wine\\_Production\\_Outlook\\_2023.pdf](#)

Approximately 3.2 million hectares of vineyards<sup>1</sup>, i.e. almost 44% of the world area and almost 2% of the EU's agricultural area.

[1 EU-27 estimated agricultural balance sheets \(europa.eu\)](#)

2.2 million farms cultivating vines in 2020<sup>1</sup>

[1.Vineyards in the EU - statistics - Statistics Explained \(europa.eu\)](#)

16 wine-producing Member States: Spain, France and Italy (which together account for 77% of the EU's wine-growing area<sup>1</sup>), Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

[1.Statistics by country | OIV](#)

Around 80% of the EU's wine-growing area is devoted to the production of quality wines<sup>1</sup> (wines with a geographical indication: PDO and PGI). Without appellation wines and wines with geographical indications, there would be no European wine sector.

[1.Statistics | Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](#)

Nearly €17 billion worth of exports outside the EU<sup>1</sup>, a very positive contribution to the European trade balance (€11 billion)<sup>2</sup>. European wine is one of the most exported European agricultural products outside the EU<sup>3</sup>.

[1.Wine trade \(europa.eu\)](#)  
[2.monitoring-agri-food-trade\\_aug2023\\_en\\_0.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)  
[3.monitoring-agri-food-trade\\_aug2023\\_en\\_0.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

### WINE APPELLATIONS

The appellation wine sector is a perfect example of a sector that is **constantly modernising while preserving the traditions and skills rooted in its different terroirs**. These high-quality products, with their great variety and originality, **cannot be relocated or copied**. This production model is based on an atomised network of small and medium-sized businesses, often family-run, which create numerous direct and indirect jobs in rural areas, including thousands of jobs in wine tourism. **The wine sector's contribution to the economy of the EU's territories is considerable and indispensable, as in many regions of the EU there is no viable agricultural alternative to winegrowing.**

For centuries, **wine production has been a way of life in many parts of Europe**. It is a tradition that is part of a shared culture and heritage. The fruit of a long labour, wine requires passion and in-depth knowledge of soil use, grape varieties, science and business expertise.

Wine production has an important heritage value. The sector has a positive social and cultural impact on communities living in rural areas. **Wine appellations not only help to define and strengthen local socio-economic systems, but also shape and define landscapes. They also contribute to demographic stability in these rural areas and facilitate social cohesion.** For all these reasons, many of Europe's wine-growing regions are included on **UNESCO's list of recognised World Heritage Sites**.



# A SECTOR FACING MULTIPLE CHALLENGES

The expectations  
of wine appellations

WINE APPELLATIONS ARE A HIGH-PERFORMANCE,  
STRUCTURING SECTOR.  
HOWEVER, THIS DYNAMIC REMAINS FRAGILE CONSIDERING  
THE CRISES AFFECTING THE SECTOR.

**Trade, geopolitical and health crises have had negative economic effects on the sector.**

Wine operators have been held hostages to retaliatory measures (e.g. the conflict over Chinese solar panels in 2013, 2023 Chinese anti-dumping investigation into electric cars and the taxes imposed by the Trump administration in 2019).

**Climate change and the risks associated with it** - droughts, torrential rain and storms, frosts and hail at unusual times, more frequent and longer heatwaves - **are having a major impact on production and harvesting and influence the wines' characteristics.**

As the weather becomes increasingly warmer and drier, the vine's biological cycle speeds up, the grapes are harvested earlier and ripen faster, which increases the alcohol content of the wine and also leads to changes in its acidity. Ripening of the skins and seeds is slower, which reduces the aromatic and taste complexity of the product, as well as its ageing capacity, all this making it more difficult to obtain wines that are balanced visually, olfactory and taste-wise.

We must add to these challenges, the **societal and generational changes** that have had a profound impact on the way alcoholic beverages are consumed, with a **sharp drop in wine consumption in Europe.**

All these factors are affecting operators' cash flow and their ability to invest, leading to far-reaching changes in the sector with the loss of planted areas, numerous jobs and farms, and a reduction in the supply of wine.

In addition, there is **growing regulatory pressure that is increasingly hostile to our sector**, due to **highly polarised and unbalanced public visions and policies on wine.** The sector fully supports actions and mobilises against alcohol abuse. However, we reject prohibitionist visions that aim to ban wine consumption outright, ignoring studies that differentiate between consumption patterns, age groups, pre-existing diseases, countries etc. We advocate and are committed to educating consumers about moderate and responsible consumption of our wines.



# WHAT SHOULD BE THE PRIORITIES FOR THE 2024-2029 LEGISLATIVE TERM?

The expectations  
of wine appellations

1

MAINTAINING A STRONG WINE POLICY WITH SPECIFIC RULES TO ENSURE THAT WINE DOES NOT BECOME JUST ANOTHER FOOD PRODUCT

(RE)INVESTING IN EUROPEAN QUALITY POLICY TO OFFER CONSUMERS AUTHENTIC AND SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

2

3

INVESTING IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOR PERENNIAL CROPS

PROMOTING WINE CULTURE AND MODERATE CONSUMPTION

4

5

PURSUING TRADE NEGOTIATIONS TO UNLOCK THIRD-COUNTRY MARKETS AND PROTECT EUROPE'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

SEEKING STRONG INSTITUTIONAL ALLIES FOR A STRONG WINE SECTOR

6

# 1

## MAINTAINING A STRONG WINE POLICY WITH SPECIFIC RULES TO ENSURE THAT WINE DOES NOT BECOME JUST ANOTHER FOOD PRODUCT

Since the founding of the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV), one hundred years ago, the **wine sector has been one of the most regulated economic sectors at international and European level.** The aim of the sector has always been to ensure a high level of standardisation for products from the vine, to guarantee the quality of products intended for consumers.

To date, **all the main provisions concerning winegrowing** - definitions, production potential, oenological practices, derogations from competition

rules, market and crisis measures, labelling, product specifications, protection of GIs, marketing rules, controls, the specific aid programme - **are governed by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).** Wine is considered an agricultural product, this is not the case for other alcoholic beverages such as spirits, beer, and cider.

**This coherent and specific regulatory framework is essential for our sector and a pillar of its success. It must be maintained and strengthened under the future CAP.**

## OUR PROPOSALS

**At a time when discussions are beginning on the reform of the CAP post-2027, EFOW calls on the European institutions to maintain a strong and specific wine policy with:**

- A dedicated wine budget;
- A specific aid programme for winegrowing (we do not wish to benefit from direct payments), including an agro-ecological component.

**And the strengthening and improvement of:**

- Wine regulatory tools (ex. vine planting authorisations, price guidance on PDO/PGI wine grapes etc.)
- Crisis instruments, including the agricultural reserve fund
- Insurance systems, which need to be better equipped to respond to climatic crises and diseases
- Tools to deal with extraordinary circumstances or situations of force majeure, introducing flexibility into the application of the rules, whether at budgetary level or in the implementation of support measures.
- Administrative simplification through the introduction of a single harmonised information system enabling administrations in all Member States to provide winegrowers with an identical format for all their administrative procedures.

**In view of the challenges facing the sector, we believe that the European Commission should set up a High Level Group, as it has done in the past, to define the priorities and guarantee a positive future for European winegrowing.**



## (RE)INVESTING IN EUROPEAN QUALITY POLICY TO OFFER CONSUMERS AUTHENTIC AND SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

**Two-thirds of the wines produced in the EU have a designation of origin or geographical indication.** This uniqueness is the foundation of the success of the European wine sector. **Geographical indications (GIs) prevent the relocation of wine production, create value for producers, protect the diversity of Europe's terroirs, grape varieties, soils and viticultural practices that are rooted in each region, while guaranteeing the origin and authenticity of the wines.**

**Quality policy is an EU success story.** For decades, it has been the driving force behind European agricultural policy, and GI products have been the ambassadors of European gastronomy and agricultural know-how throughout the world. **The EU's agricultural products' promotion and trade policies have made it possible to globalise the concept of GIs and to promote the quality of appellation wines in third countries.**

**With its very restrictive vision of sustainability, the von der Leyen Commission has called this strategy into question. In the context of the European Green Deal, the European Commission neglected the sustainable aspects of GIs and their role as levers for change.** By ignoring these aspects, preconceived ideas about GI products have emerged, suggesting that these products are not sustainable, either environmentally or socially. The EC considers most GI products to be 'bad' for consumers' health, because they contain high levels of salt, sugar, fat or alcohol. More globally, it wants products to be reformulated, something that possible for industrial products but not for our traditional products which depend

on a specific and long-established “recipe” that is highly valued quality by consumers. Based on its “analysis”, the EC has reduced the amounts allocated to the promotion of GI products, and we have seen a disengagement of the EC services with a desire to entrust the management of GIs to the EUIPO. **This approach is incomprehensible and counterproductive.**

**Wine appellations are fully committed to sustainable transition.** Back in 2022, EFOW commissioned a study on initiatives to improve sustainability undertaken by wine appellations in France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Conducted by **Arcadia International**<sup>1</sup>, the study highlights the fact that winegrowing is constantly investing in sustainability through regional sectoral plans, the development of sustainable rules in product specifications, adherence to sustainability certifications, and so on. As a follow-up to this study, EFOW, in collaboration with other European partners and research centres, is taking part in **a study on the contribution of GIs to sustainable development, a 4-year research project under the European HORIZON EUROPE programme**<sup>2</sup>. Finally, at the express request of the sector, the new GI Regulation is the first European text to include a definition of sustainability.

1. [Final-report\\_06-June-2022-EFOW-Study-State-of-play-sustainability-initiatives-wine-appellation-sector.pdf](#)  
2. [Funding & tenders \(europa.eu\)](#)



## /// OUR PROPOSALS

EFOW calls on the European institutions to refocus on GIs and to consider them as one of the cornerstones of the European agricultural policy. It is essential that the EC renews its commitment to the European quality policy and continues to invest in the promotion of these traditional products while improving the protection afforded to GIs. European and national public authorities must consider wine appellations as levers to ensure the development of sustainable practices across the EU. It is also crucial to continue to reinforce the research in the area of sustainability through EU funded projects.

This commitment to quality policy must be reflected in the strengthening of geographical indications as part of the post-2027 CAP negotiations, **by reinforcing the role of recognised producers' organisations, creating added value within the sector, protecting GIs as well as winegrowing landscapes, and improving dialogue between associations representing GIs and public authorities.**

To this end, we call on the European Commission to adopt an ambitious action plan for the development of GI products throughout Europe and to promote these products to consumers.



# 3

## INVESTING IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOR PERENNIAL CROPS

**Vines are a perennial crop which require several years before producing grapes (5 years); investment in planting take a long time to pay off. Adapting to regulatory changes therefore requires time and funding.**

Climate change and unpredictable weather conditions are catalysts for changes in winegrowing practices in appellations, as **vineyards cannot**

**be relocated.** Research into the vine genome, vine varieties and the adaptation/introduction of new vines is underway, not only to preserve the organoleptic properties of the wines but also to deal with climatic hazards. These hazards can destroy the fruits of a winegrower's labour in a matter of hours (torrential rain, frost), but they also increase the likelihood of vines developing fungal diseases.

## /// OUR PROPOSALS

EFOW calls on the European institutions to support research and innovation to allow the sector to improve its practices while preserving the traditions, quality and competitiveness of our wines.



## PROMOTING WINE CULTURE AND MODERATE CONSUMPTION

4

**Wine consumption in Europe has fallen sharply in recent decades.** It has become a product of pleasure, conviviality, and culture, consumed on an occasional basis. **The European Commission estimates that European wine consumption has fallen by 7% between 2013/2014 and 2023/24, i.e. 11 million hectolitres less<sup>1</sup>. According to the European Commission's latest projections, consumption is set to continue falling between now and 2035<sup>2</sup>.**

Despite being an important part of the European culture, wine is under attack. There is **growing regulatory pressure that is increasingly hostile to wine, due to highly polarised and unbalanced public visions and policies on wine.**

The European wine sector is united in the fight **against excessive and dangerous wine consumption but we reject a prohibitionist vision.** Through European<sup>3</sup> and national programmes, we encourage responsible consumption based on moderation, pleasure and sharing.

Science keeps evolving on the analysis of the impact of wine consumption. In the latest study on the consumption of alcoholic beverages, published in the medical journal The Lancet in July 2022<sup>4</sup> researchers highlight that many other factors need to be taken into account when measuring the overall health risk associated with alcohol consumption, including pre-existing diseases rates, which vary according to region, age, gender and year, and that from the age of 40 onwards, moderate consumption can have certain health benefits.

The wine sector is committed to providing consumers with better information. It is **the only alcoholic beverage sector to make it mandatory for all operators to label the ingredients and nutritional declaration** of their products; this Regulation is in force in the EU since 8 December 2023.

1.Source: "EU Commission presentation to the Civil Dialogue Group on Wine, date 10 November 2023"

2.EU Agricultural Outlook 2023-35 report (europa.eu)

3.Wine In moderation

4.Population-level risks of alcohol consumption by amount, geography, age, sex, and year: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2020 - The Lancet

## OUR PROPOSALS

**EFOW calls on the European institutions to continue supporting the implementation of public policies on the reduction of excessive alcohol consumption, in particular through education and support programmes for people suffering from addiction problems. other initiatives such as the introduction of European health messages whose effectiveness is questionable should not be pursued.**

# 5

## PURSUING TRADE NEGOTIATIONS TO UNLOCK THIRD-COUNTRY MARKETS AND PROTECT EUROPE'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

The EU's quality and trade policies go hand in hand and are mutually reinforcing. **Through trade agreements, wine appellations have benefited greatly from better access to third-country**

**markets and improved protection of our GIs.** Our sector is, and hopes to remain, one of the biggest contributors to the EU's trade balance: €11 billion in 2023.

### /// OUR PROPOSALS

EFOW calls on the European Commission to pursue trade negotiations with key partners such as India and to finalise the ratification procedures for the agreements negotiated with Mercosur and Mexico. More broadly, **as part of the ongoing reflections on Europe's strategic autonomy, we call on the European Commission to take account of the issues at stake in terms of access to third-country markets and to reject any protectionist approach that would harm exporting sectors such as ours. We also call on the European institutions to take account of the potential consequences of trade disputes with third countries, as the wine sector has unfortunately been the victim of retaliatory measures by certain countries** in the past. We encourage the EU institutions to take a proactive approach with major trading partners to prevent conflicts and to ensure that wine is not held hostage in disputes that have nothing to do with our sector.





## 6

### SEEKING STRONG INSTITUTIONAL ALLIES FOR A STRONG WINE SECTOR

EFOW and its members hope that the next European Commission and European Parliament will make agriculture one of the major strategic objectives for the future of the European Union. Faced with various challenges, it is essential to give the European agricultural sector, and in

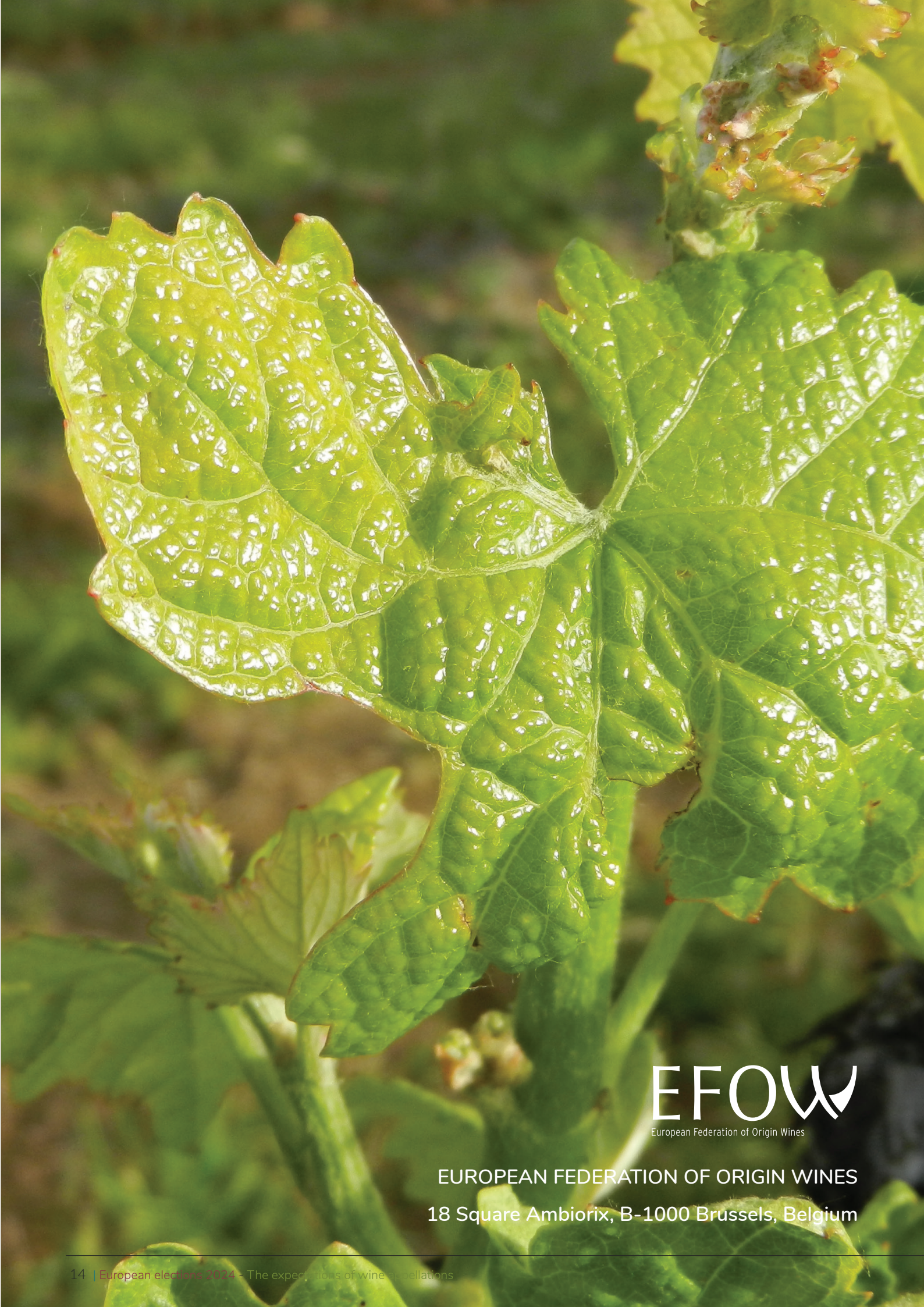
particular the appellation wine sector, the means to continue its transition towards a sustainable model while maintaining its ability to meet market expectations, its diversity and its competitiveness. It is also essential to recognise its contribution to regional development and European culture.



### OUR PROPOSALS

EFOW calls on the future European Commission **to strengthen the role of the Commissioner for Agriculture by giving him the post of Vice-President in the future Commission** and to increase the resources and actions of DG Agriculture.

EFOW invites future MEPs to get involved in the various committees of the European Parliament that will have to deal with wine issues in the broadest sense. We are also keen **to see the renewal of the Wine Intergroup**, the oldest intergroup in the European Parliament, which is an essential forum for exchange for our sector.



**EFOW**  
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