vinetur

Italy Launches Nationwide Campaign to Reframe Wine as Cultural Heritage

Government initiative led by Agriculture Ministry promotes responsible consumption and targets younger Italians amid shifting attitudes toward alcohol

Thursday, February 26, 2026



Italy has launched a major media campaign to elevate wine as a central pillar of its national culture. The initiative, led by the Ministry of Agriculture, aims to go beyond traditional marketing and address growing European concerns about alcohol and public health. The campaign was unveiled in February 2026 by Agriculture Minister Francesco Lollobrigida, who described wine as an essential part of Italy’s food heritage and landscape.

The government has allocated more than €15 billion to the agricultural sector, with a significant portion dedicated to strengthening the wine industry. According to Lollobrigida, the campaign is designed to highlight the complexity of wine, emphasizing that it is not just an alcoholic beverage but a key element of Italian conviviality and tradition. The campaign will promote responsible consumption and showcase the intergenerational transmission of wine culture.

This is the first time Italy has launched such a comprehensive campaign targeting all segments of society. The timing reflects what officials describe as a period of deep transformation. On one hand, there is increasing regulatory and cultural pressure on alcoholic beverages across Europe. On the other, consumption habits are changing, especially among younger Italians who no longer see wine as an automatic part of their cultural identity.

The campaign seeks to clarify the distinction between responsible consumption and abuse, while reaffirming wine's role in the Mediterranean diet and Italian culinary tradition. The wine sector represents €14 billion in annual revenue, accounting for 10% of Italy's agri-food industry, with exports expected to reach €8 billion in 2025.

Lollobrigida insists that the campaign's goals are not commercial but cultural, educational, and social. The messaging focuses on wine as a vehicle for relationships and dialogue between generations. It also aims to counter both trivialization and demonization of wine in public discourse.

One concern addressed by the ministry is the risk of cultural homogenization that could strip wine of its territorial and identity-based significance. There is also growing ideological opposition that reduces wine to its alcohol content, ignoring its broader cultural value.

To ensure the campaign is seen as constructive rather than defensive, officials say it relies on balanced content and objective data. The message is not to encourage increased drinking but to recognize wine's place in Italian tradition while promoting moderation.

The campaign targets both the general public through television and print ads, as well as younger adults through social media and digital platforms. Special attention is given to communicating with people aged 25-35, using language that avoids paternalism and presents wine as a conscious choice linked to quality experiences and family histories.

Italy's position at the European level remains firm against alarmist labeling on alcoholic beverages. The government supports transparent information but rejects measures it sees as punitive or stigmatizing for traditional products like wine.

The Ministry of Agriculture has also introduced regulatory changes, including a new fiscal regime for dealcoholized wines established by decree at the end of 2025. This move aims to help producers reach new consumer segments while maintaining clear standards for quality and origin.

Industry leaders have welcomed the initiative. Since August 2025, representatives from across Italy’s wine sector have worked with the ministry to shape messaging that resonates with younger consumers. The slogan “Wine is our time. We cultivate what unites us” reflects an effort to present wine in an accessible way, moving away from elitist stereotypes.

Piero Mastroberardino, vice president of Federvini and coordinator of the National Wine Committee, said he hopes the campaign will foster a climate of truth and positivity around Italian wine. Lamberto Frescobaldi, president of Unione Italiana Vini, called it an exciting effort that puts responsible consumption at the center of public attention.

The government plans to continue supporting producers at major international events such as Vinitaly and Wine Paris while investing in innovation, sustainability, and protection of geographic indications. Officials say their long-term vision is to secure Italy’s position as a global leader in both quality and cultural significance for wine, even as scrutiny over alcohol increases across Europe.