

# State support for winemaking on the Don as a basis for the development of enotourism

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**Abstract.** The monitoring of the dynamics of viticulture development in the Rostov region in the process of implementing the Subprogram "Development of viticulture and winemaking" from 2020 to the present is presented. The expert recognition of the uniqueness of the Don wines, is explicated, and the trends of increasing the competitiveness of products are determined. It is proved that state support for winemaking is a system-forming factor in the development of sustainable wine tourism. The research methodology was based on the use of the content analysis, as well of structural and functional analysis, document analysis. The problematic points of development of viticulture, winemaking and their foundations for the functioning of enotourism in the region were considered taking into account the analysis of the situation given by Roskachestvo experts. The results of the secondary (2023) mass survey of residents of the Rostov region are presented. Significant progress has been identified in the awareness of the residents of the region about the quality of Don wine and increasing interest in enogastronomical tours. It is concluded that it is relevant to conduct a horizontal analysis of local clusters in order to more clearly identify the level of correlation of wine production and enotourism with related industries.

## 1 Introduction

Achieving sustainable enotourism in a certain topos involves studying strategies for the sustainable development of the visiting territory in conjunction with such factors as direct tasting of wine products, familiarity with the specifics of wine production, the cultural and historical context of the wine region, the gastronomic content of the tour, the comfort of travel and accommodation, landscapes, the level of accompanying events and entertainment. However, it is hardly possible to argue with the fact that the backbone of this whole complex should be the direct presence of a wine product in a particular terroir and production. Unfortunately, the situation in the Russian Federation on this issue was not up to par until recently, which is due to the loss of a large number of wineries throughout the country in connection with the anti-alcohol campaign conducted during the perestroika period of our recent history. This problem is separately noted in the article [1], which says: "Vineyards were cut down or significantly reduced, which were the raw materials for wine production,

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among which there were quite ancient and unique varieties of wine breeds" [1, p.15]. The barbaric destruction of vineyards has hurt the economy of the state. One can only wonder that at least something was saved thanks to the enthusiasm and dedication of the true patriots of this type of activity. The mentioned criminal policy has not bypassed the Rostov region either. Therefore, during this period, any attitude towards the development of wine tourism in the region would be groundless and in a certain sense mocking. If before 1985, grape plantations in the region occupied 14,000 hectares of land, then "in 1985-1996, the area of vineyards decreased to 8.5 thousand hectares, of which about 60 percent were affected by phylloxera" [2].

It should be noted that at the regional level, effective steps were already taken in 1996 to correct the current situation, noted by the Resolutions of the head of the Administration of the Rostov region on the development of viticulture and winemaking. The task was set to restore the raw material base of the viticulture and wine industry, take measures to stop reducing the area, planting 3.5 thousand hectares of vineyards, of which "about 2.5 thousand hectares instead of areas affected by phylloxera, so that by 2000 the area under the vineyards would be brought to the level of 1995 - 8.5 thousand hectares" [2]. That is, it was at least about restoring the production level to a value of only 60% of the previous capacity. However, the real state of affairs, even in the definition of grape areas in the document, did not correspond to reality, and by 2000 the situation in the industry had not improved. Further steps to restore this industry are defined in the State Program of the Rostov region "Development of agriculture and regulation of agricultural products, raw materials and food markets", adopted by Decree of the Government of the Rostov Region dated 17.10. 2018 No. 652, which entered into force on January 1, 2019 [3]. The program is designed for two periods: stage 1 – 2019-2023; stage 2 – 2024-2030. The program includes the subprogram "Development of viticulture and winemaking" throughout the entire period. Thus, the regional program in a certain sense preceded the adoption of Federal Law No. 468-FZ dated December 27, 2019 "On Viticulture and Winemaking in the Russian Federation" [4]. Regulation of state support in the field of industry development by local government authorities is defined by the Regional Law of June 10, 1921 "On the development of viticulture and winemaking in the Rostov region" [5].

Using the example of an analysis of the development of viticulture in the Rostov region, this article aims to consider the role of state regulation and state support for this type of management and show its relevant connection with the ideas of sustainable enogastronomical tourism. Sustainable tourism is a projection of the paradigm with its focus on future generations, outlined in the United Nations Environmental Protection Program "Sustainable Development Goals for 2030", which identified 17 target areas for sustainable development, 5 of which relate to sustainable tourism [6]. The UN WTO Convention on the Ethics of Sustainable Tourism, adopted in September 2019 in St. Petersburg, focuses on increasing the responsibility of all parties interested in implementing sustainable tourism projects [7]. The task is to turn production areas into tourist destinations.

## **2 Materials and method**

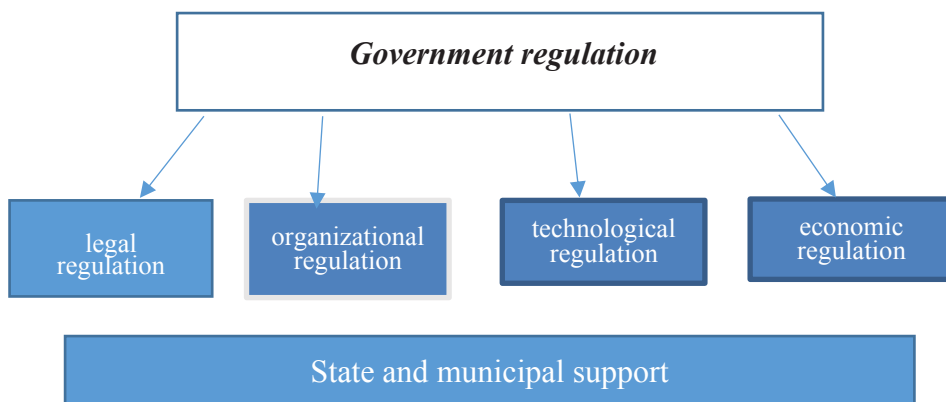
This study claims to be an monitoring of the dynamics of viticulture development in the Rostov region in the process of implementing the regional program [3] in the period from 2020 to the present and the impact of its results on the development of wine tourism in the region. The study was conducted on the basis of materials from the territorial body of the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation, including for the Rostov region, regulatory and legal acts of the Russian Federation, executive and legislative authorities of the Rostov region, the International Organization of Viticulture and Winemaking [8], research by domestic and foreign scientists, materials of the Association of Winegrowers and

Winemakers of Russia [9]. The research methodology was based on the use of content analysis as the main method, as well as the method of structural and functional analysis. The problematic points of development of viticulture, winemaking and their foundations for the functioning of enotourism in the region were considered taking into account the analysis of the situation given by an independent wine expert, experts of Roskachestvo, based on reports and speeches by industry leaders and subjects of the tourism industry presented in the open press and the Internet. For the second time in 2023, a mass survey of residents of the Rostov region was conducted using a questionnaire that includes identical sections with the mass survey of 2021 "socio-demographic characteristics, interest in wine products and their production, preferences in choosing wine, willingness to participate in wine tourism events, awareness of Rostov wine tourism, the main dimensions of wine tourism tourism experience" [1, p.19] in order to conduct a comparative analysis of changes in respondents' opinions over a fairly short period between surveys. The sample size was 472 respondents.

### 3 Results

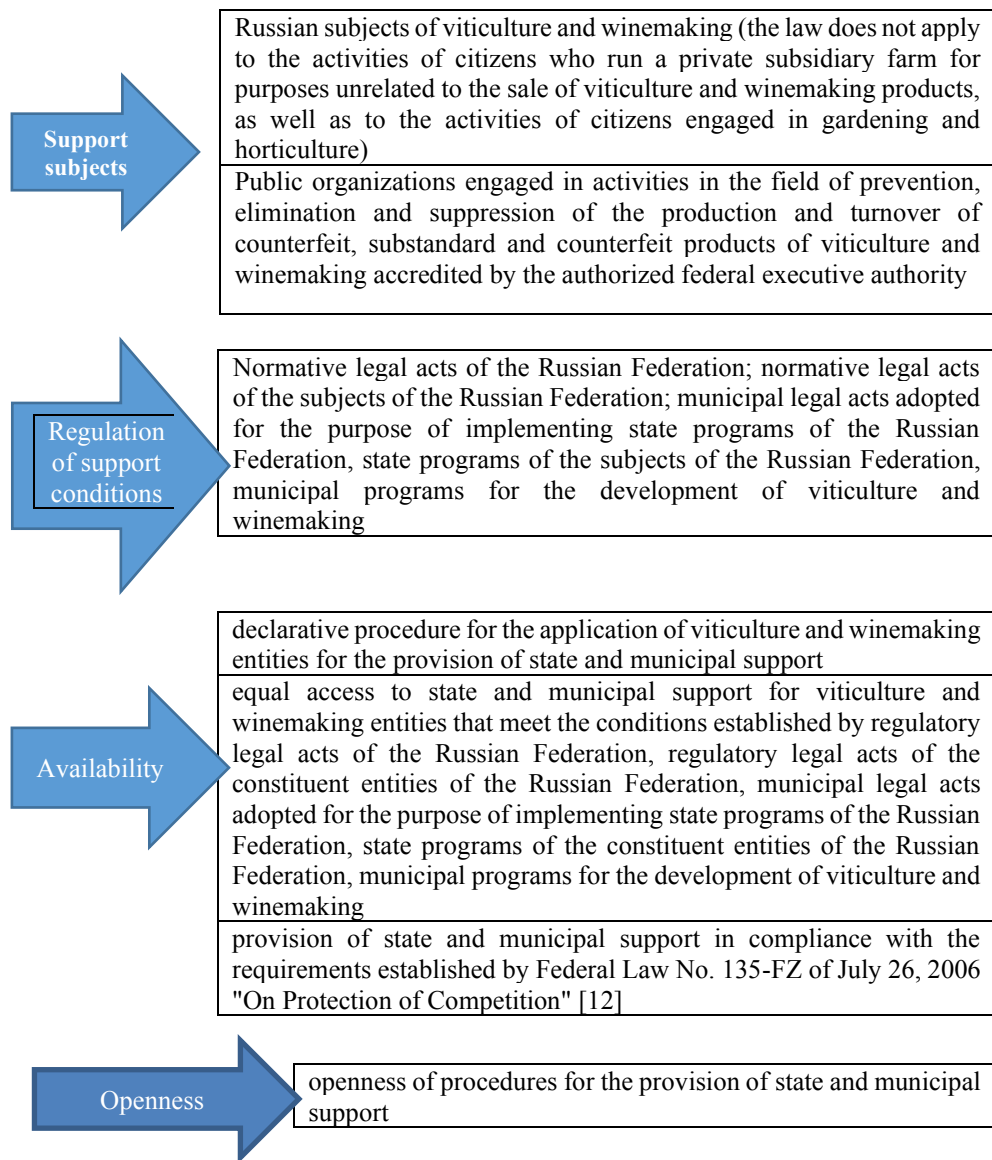
#### 3.1 First of all, the restoration of viticulture in the region

Most authors consider state support "as an integral part of state regulation" [10,11], which is all the more significant during periods of imbalance in a certain economic sector, as is the case in the problem considered in this article. The integration of stabilizing factors into the segment of viticulture and winemaking development is aimed at reviving the industry and increasing the competitiveness of its products in the domestic and foreign markets. State regulation is carried out taking into account the mechanisms of a market economy, is carried out at the macro level across the entire range of measures in their complex, includes state support and state assistance both at the level of state-owned enterprises and small and medium-sized businesses. In the law [4], one can see a clear declaration of goals and the establishment of the foundations of state regulation in the field of viticulture and winemaking, which is shown in Figure 1:



**Fig. 1.** Fundamentals of state regulation

The basic principles of state and municipal support in the field of viticulture and winemaking development are shown in Figure 2 [4, art. 33]:



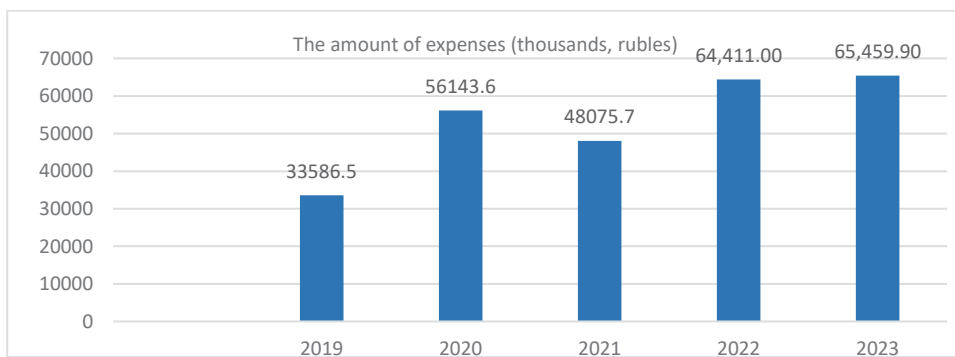
**Fig. 2.** Principles of support

In the wine culture, a specific territory, a status officially recognized zone for growing wine grapes, the so-called appellation (from French - the name) is of great importance. The appellation is considered in conjunction with a specific terroir as a combination of climate, soil type and terrain, which concretizes the authenticity of the origin of a particular variety. Currently, there are 15 PGI (wines of protected geographical indication with the designation of the region of production) in the Russian Federation, of which seven are large regions and eight are domestic Kuban. PGI have every reason to become regional appellations. These are the following: PGI "Crimea" (Republic of Crimea), which has about 20 wineries; PGI "Nizhnyaya Volga" (Volgograd Region) – 4 wineries; PGI "Dolina Dona" (Rostov Region) – 8 wineries; PGI «Stavropol'ye» (Stavropolskiy krai) – 2 wineries and 3 farms; PGI «Dagestan» (Republic of Dagestan) – 5 wineries; PGI "Terek Valley" (Kabardino-Balkarian

Republic) – 5 wineries; PGI «Kuban» (Krasnodar Territory) – PGI "Kuban. Taman Peninsula (Temryuk District) – 8 wineries; PGI "Kuban. Afips River Valley (*Seversky District* – 1 wineries; PGI "Kuban. Eastern Azov Region" (Yeisk District) – 1 wineries; PGI "Kuban. Semigorye" – 2 wineries; PGI "Kuban. Krymsk" (Krymsky district) – 8 wineries; PGI "Kuban. Gelendzhik"– 4 wineries; PGI "Kuban. Anapa" (Anapa district) – 6 wineries; PGI "Kuban. Novorossiysk"– 5 wineries. It should also be mentioned about the small territories of wine production ZNMP - these are wines of a protected designation of origin with an indication of the vineyard. There were 23 such cases at the time of 2020, 21 of which are included in the PGI of Kuban; “Galina Wine Studio (Arpachin)” – in the PGI “Dolina Dona”; “Derbent Wine Company” – in PGI “Dagestan”. The wineries of North Ossetia should also be mentioned.

It is obvious that wineries are mainly concentrated in the South of Russia, and the Rostov region is located near the northern border of grape growth. This brings with it certain production disadvantages, but also determines the specifics of the terroir. The Don Region is characterized by a seemingly not very favorable climate for growing grapes - hot summers and rather cold winters. Vineyards are covered with earth for the winter, which in itself is a costly event. In addition, during the ripening period of grapes, especially in September, there is a difference of up to 20 degrees between daytime and night temperatures. But it is these features of the terroir that ensure the uniqueness of the taste qualities of the Don wine. This has determined special attention to varieties with typical features unique to the Don region. State support was aimed at stimulating the renewal of areas occupied by vineyards, laying, maintenance, installation of trellises, uprooting of vineyards; acquisition of equipment for the production of viticulture products; laying and caring for vineyards; providing conditions for the preservation of vineyards of autochthonous varieties; technical modernization of viticulture and winemaking subjects.

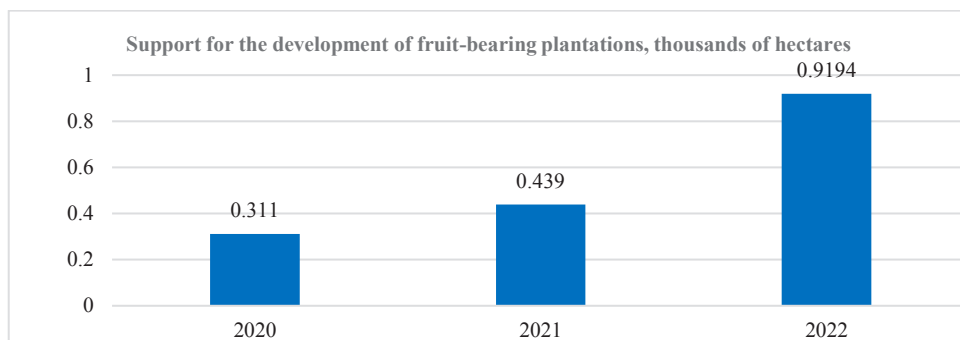
For the support of the industry in 2019-2023, support was allocated from the regional budget and gratuitous receipts to the regional budget, as shown in Figure 3 [5]. About 60 agricultural producers of the region received state assistance for the development of the industry.



**Fig. 3.** The volume of expenditures from the regional budget and gratuitous receipts to the regional budget for 2019-2023

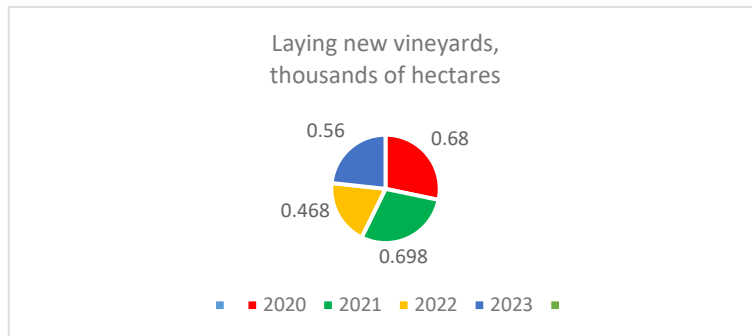
State support within the framework of the subprogram "Development of viticulture and winemaking" of the Rostov Region State Program "Development of agriculture and regulation of markets for agricultural products, raw materials and food" [5] is aimed at the implementation of such measures as:

1) support of subjects for processing areas of grape plantations in the fruiting age. Figure 4 shows the dynamics of this assistance:



**Fig. 4.** Support for the development of fruit-bearing plantations

2) A separate article prescribes support for the growth of autochthonous grape varieties, which should form the raw material basis for the production of unique Don varieties of elite wines. This event is held in two directions. Firstly, support is being provided for carrying out maintenance work on vineyards of autochthonous varieties in fruiting age - on an area of 232.7 hectares in 2022. For 2024, financing in the amount of 5 million is provided to ensure the preservation of the area of vineyards of autochthonous varieties. 940 thousand rubles. Secondly, the laying of new vineyards in the area of mainly autochthonous varieties is stimulated. At the same time, mainly autochthonous varieties are planted in new areas: krasnostop Zolotovskiy, Tsimlyansky black, Siberian, shoulder, kumshatsky white, Pukhlyakovskiy, Varyushkin [13]. In this regard, the following dynamics of the laying of new areas takes place (Figure 5):



**Fig. 5.** Laying new vineyards, thousands of hectares

3) An event to support the purchase of equipment for the production of viticulture products, technical modernization and re-equipment of agricultural producers.

Already, it is safe to note the revival of the wine industry in the region. The area of vineyards reaches 1.68 thousand hectares, of which more than 1.4 thousand hectares are fertile. According to the Minister of Agriculture of the Rostov region K. Rachalovskiy, "In 2024, vineyards are planned to be planted on the territory of another 100 hectares" [14]. It is important that the period of reduction of vineyard areas has been overcome and a unified policy is being implemented to restore this industry at the federal, regional and local levels. The production of wine products increases at least 2 times every year. There are forecasts of reaching a production volume of up to 7 million bottles per year. Thus, we can say that the main basis for the development of sustainable enotourism in the region already exists. But here it should be added that the correlating factor with the actual wine production is the original uniqueness and world recognition of the products offered on the tour for familiarization. Don wines are gradually

gaining their positions not only in the domestic, but also in international markets. The level of Don wine production can be judged by the results of the annual study "Wine Guide of Russia" conducted by Roskachestvo. 650 wines from ten Russian wine regions were reviewed. In the nomination "Best red wines", the 1st and 2nd places were won by the Don wines of Vedernikov Wineries: "Phantom. 50/50. Krasnostop Zolotovskiy/Cabernet Sauvignon" (2018) and "Phantom. 70/30. Krasnostop Zolotovskiy/Cabernet Sauvignon" (2018). Aged red wines "Krasnostop Zolotovskiy" from Vedernikov Winery (2019) and "Arpachin Wines" also turned out to be among the leaders. In the nomination "Best white wines", the top five included the wine "Etude No. 13" with a protected geographical indication (PGI) "Dolina Dona" dry white 2018 of the winery "Arpachina Wines". In the nomination "Best sparkling wine" silver was won by the Sibirskoye wine from the (PGI) "Dolina Dona" extra-brut white aged 2017 "Vedernikov Wineries". The largest number of places was won by "Tsimlyansk wines". In addition to those listed, the rating includes "Villa Zvezda", "Elbuzd", "Serdyuk's Cottage" [15].

At the II Russian Wine-making Forum, the products of the Tsimlyansk Wines company were presented at the TOP-100 Wines stand, the wines of the Don producers Vedernikov Winery, Elbuzd, Arpachin Wines were presented at the exposition of domestic winemakers [16]. The Tsimlyansk Wines enterprise was awarded ten medals at the International Exhibition of Food, Beverages and Raw Materials for their Production PRODEXPO 2023 (February 6-10, 2023, Moscow) [17]. For the first time in recent history, Don wines participated in an international competition in 2023. Korean Wine Challenge (KWC) in Seoul. In [17], two awards received by the producer of Vedernikov Winery are noted - a gold medal for sparkling "Siberian" / "Tsimlyansk black" Extra Brut of the 2019 harvest (91.25 points), a Silver medal for "Tsimlyansk black" rose brut of the 2020 harvest (88 points). It is the uniqueness of the autochthonous varieties of the Don vineyards that determines their competitiveness and attractiveness for the organization of wine tourism.

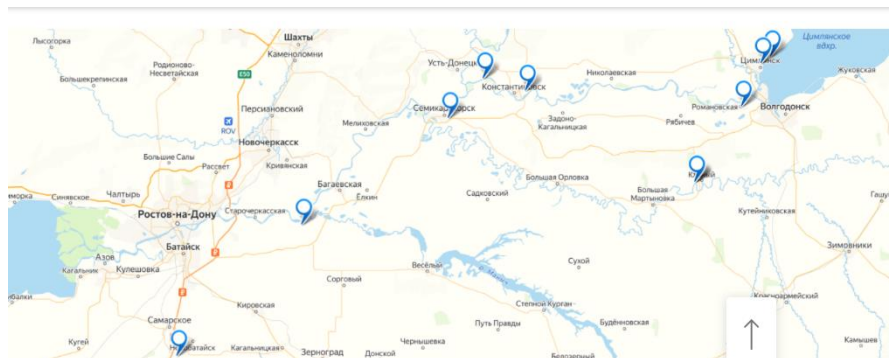
### **3.2 Prospects for the development of sustainable wine tourism**

The previous subsection provides evidence that the Rostov region has the necessary display facilities for the thorough development of wine tourism. Here, attention should be paid to the fact that state support for enogastronomical activities is systematically carried out, contributing to an increase in interest in this type of travel. Thus, with the support of the administration of the Rostov Region, on September 16, 2023, the First enogastronomical festival "Tsimlyansk Traditions" was held on the territory of the Primorskiy Park in Tsimlyansk [18]. On September 30, the enogastronomical festival "Valley of the Don" was held in Rostov-on-Don, within the framework of which a tasting competition was organized in the nomination for wines from autochthonous grape varieties. Professional wine experts, as well as representatives of the restaurant and hotel business and catering were invited to the jury [18]. Such a step seems timely due to the fact that until recently, and this was noted by experts, Don wines were practically not presented in Rostov restaurants [20]. On October 18, 2023, the Krasnostop Zolotovskiy festival, named after an autochthonous grape variety, was held in the village of Starozolotovskiy in the Konstantinovskiy district [21].

It is becoming a tradition to organize enogastronomical tours, the most popular of which are "Valley of the Don", "Walking along the Don!", "Big Cossack Circle". The Don Valley route covers such display objects as Vedernikov Winery, Tsimlyansk Wines Winery, Sarkel Manor, Villa Zvezda Winery, Bani Wine Winery, Arpachin Wine Winery, Elbuzd Winery. The list of wineries is presented in the order of the route. The tour lasts eight hours and also includes acquaintance of tourists with the cultural and historical sights of the Don region. The tour begins in the city of Semikarakorsk with a visit to the Semikarakor Ceramics enterprise, famous for the production of souvenirs from Semikarakor ceramics with the



symbols of the Don Cossacks. In Figure 6 [22], the nodal points of the route can be clearly represented.



**Fig. 6.** The route of the Don Valley tour

From Semikarakorsk, the movement continues towards the Konstantinovskiy district to the Vedernikov farm with a visit to the Vedernikov Winery, then to the Starozolotovskiy farm. Here, an open-air Ethnographic Museum becomes the object of display. In the direction of the following wineries, a stop is planned in the village of Romanovskaya with a visit to the Museum of Local Lore of the Volgodonk district. Thus, wine tourism includes elements of rural and educational tourism, acquaintance with the peculiarities of the traditional way of life of Cossack settlements on the Don and the history of the region. Next, the village of Sarkel, a visit to the winery "Manor Sarkel", arrival in Tsimlyansk to the winery "Tsimlyansk wines". Then the travelers turn towards the capital of our region – the city of Rostov-on-Don, on the way to which they stop in the Martynovskiy district in the village of Malaya Martynovka with a visit to the wineries "Villa Zvezda" and "Wine Baths". The final stage is the road to the village of Manycheskaya in the Bagaevskiy district with a visit to the winery "Arpachina Wines" and to the farm of Elzbuzd in the Azov district to the wine enterprise "Elibuzd". It is unlikely that there is any doubt about the exceptional attractiveness of this tour, combined with the gastronomic delights of the Don Cossack cuisine provided.

## 4 Discussion

The previous presentation shows that the region has all the necessary prerequisites for the development of sustainable wine tourism. A study conducted by an independent wine expert, president of the Union of Sommeliers and Experts Artur Sarkisian, who traveled throughout the region and visited 11 wineries, showed that "there is no mass cheap product on the Don, most produce a really high-quality product" [23]. The expert notes that "Don is an original wine, a real, unreal story of the homeland of the Russian sparkling wine" [ibid.]. It's time to get acquainted with such a unique product that has no analogues in the world practice. Also, the fact that wineries are based in close proximity to grape plantations, that is, in rural areas, determines the possibility of including elements of rural [24-27], ecological [28-31], ethnographic, cultural, educational and gastronomic tourism in the excursion program. And this is already a challenge to the level of guides, who must have a comprehensive in-depth knowledge of wines and winemaking, as well as about the history, culture and traditions of their native land, coupled with ideas about the peculiarities of rural life.

It seems fair to note that state support for the development of viticulture and winemaking on the Don is the basis for promoting the concept of sustainable enotourism in the region, because it is aimed at the future. Noting the importance of state regulation and targeted support and assistance for viticulture subjects, it is necessary to pay attention to the need for



the same level of measures for the development of enotourism. The website of the Administration of the Rostov region notes that since 2023, within the framework of the national project "Tourism and the Hospitality Industry" [2], work is underway to provide financial support measures to wineries in the region that receive tourists [32].

The authors of the article conducted a repeated mass survey of the population of the Rostov region in 2023 to compare with the results of a mass survey conducted in 2021, the results of which are presented in [1]. For a more complete identification of the answers by the respondents, the questionnaire contained the same array of questions as in the previous study. The sample was also formed on the basis of groups of the working-age population of various age groups over 18 years of age in various places of residence - cities and rural settlements. There are 472 respondents in the sample, with an equal percentage of men and women (50% each). In the responses of respondents to the question about their interest in information about wine and wine production, the following conjugacy matrix was obtained (Table 1):

**Table 1.** Interest in information about winemaking and wine

Are you interested in information about Don wines	Men	Women	Total
Yes	161	158	319
No	67	69	136
Total	228	227	455

Assessing the significance of the differences between the observed frequencies, it can be concluded that there is a manifestation/non-manifestation of interest regardless of the gender of the respondents. A 2.2-fold increase in the participants of the wine tourist route seems to be positive, and if in 2021 only 3% of respondents visited the wineries of the Don region, in 2023 their number increased to 7.3%. There is also progress in public awareness of the uniqueness of Don wines. If in 2021 there were 26% of such people, then in 2023 69% of respondents showed their awareness that the majority of Don wines are made from autochthonous varieties. The number of respondents who do not know anything about it and do not show any interest in it has decreased fourfold. The number of people wishing to participate in the wine tour has more than doubled.

A comparison of the results shows an increase in interest in winemaking on the Don, which indicates an increase in potential tourists. By the way, the results of the survey correlate with statistical data for the Rostov region, indicating that the number of participants in wine tours has more than doubled compared to 2021. The survey also showed that 37% of those who want to get firsthand information about the development of viticulture and winemaking as participants of the Don Valley wine tour or similar in the Rostov region, compared with 10% in 2021. Such dynamics indicates that the "ice has moved", and the task of ensuring the proper quality of the tours offered has arisen.

## 5 Conclusion

The monitoring showed positive dynamics in the development of the wine industry in the region, the creation of a good level of enogastronomical routes and increased interest of residents in wine tourism.

This undoubtedly confirms the effectiveness of public administration and the need for further targeted state support for wine producers, the development of public-private partnerships. However, there is a fact that the area of grape plantations developed to date has a value of 1.67 thousand hectares, that is, reaching the level of 1985 is unlikely to be expected in the near future. The year 2023 should be especially noted here, since at the time of 2022

there was even a decrease in the number of vineyards to 1.3 thousand hectares, which drew the attention of experts [33].

Cossack cuisine, cultural and historical objects of display, folk crafts, as well as (taking into account the intersection of enotourism with other types) the inclusion of elements of ecological and rural tourism in the programs, is of particular importance. The level of correlation of wine production with related industries in each locus of the trip, the study of their compromises and heterogeneities will become the basis not only for creating the attractiveness of the tour, strengthening the Don brand [34], but also for vertical interaction with the regional authorities in making effective decisions, including targeted state support. Accordingly, the prospects for the promotion of high-quality Don products through public catering enterprises in the settlements of the region and the country, mass consumption of products, will be more clearly defined. The development of tourism infrastructure undoubtedly serves to achieve the economic goal of sustainable tourism. In terms of the social goal of sustainable tourism, new employment opportunities are opening up in the field of tourism, "providing leisure for the local population and guests, protecting the cultural identity of the local population, expanding the participation of the local population in tourism policy and improving their quality of life" [35, 36].

С учетом специфики винных туров особой строкой стоит вопрос об осведомленности участников путешествия о проблемах, связанных с экологическими целями устойчивости в плане сохранения природных ресурсов, сокращения выбросов загрязняющих веществ, вызванных туризмом, ответственному поведению во время поездки [35, 37, 38]. In this regard, there is an urgent question about the comprehensive competence of wine guides who have knowledge not only about wine, but also about the history of the wine region, its ecosystem, cultural traditions and social responsibility of the tourist.

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