

Mediterritage

Valorisation économique du patrimoine naturel et culturel des montagnes méditerranéennes

SOUS-PROJET « WINOLIVE »

Présentation de la contribution de la Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Vratsa Région de Vratsa (Bulgarie)

1. Présentation générale du territoire/village

Overall presentation of the territory / Village

The Vratsa Region is situated in North-West part of Bulgaria on territory of 3 621.8 sq.km., this representing 1/26 of country's surface. The River Danube is the Northern natural border of the Region, and on the South is the border of Sofia Region. The perfect combination of good climate conditions and existence of rich soils on low land of the Danube plain, as well as the largest mountain range of Stara planina, are the visit card of the Region, meaning there are good opportunities to develop the agriculture /traditional sector in the past/ , tourism activities and sports. The population of 235 189 inhabitants is distributed over the 10 communities, the largest being Vratsa Municipality.



In economical terms it could be assumed theoretically that southern part of the territory is more industrialized one as the qualities of the cultivation land is as good as the first class agricultural land of the northern part and the means of living of the population should be connected to the industry. The most industrial enterprises are located in the region of the District center - the city of Vratsa. They are specialized mainly in metal processing, textile industry, furniture production, food and beverage, machine building, construction works.

In the end of the year 2005 there are 6484 companies registered in the District of Vratsa, of which 5,57% are in the public sector and 94,43% are in the private sector. According to the number of employees the biggest number of companies have a staff under 10 persons - 5814; 542 have between 11 and 100 employees, the rest exceed 100 persons personnel. Apart from these, 420 companies are involved in agricultural production. SMEs in the region are predominantly in the filed of services and small-scale manufacturing.

2. Situation du territoire / village par rapport au thème du sous-projet

Situation of the territory / village with regard to the sub-project

History

During the Bulgarian Renaissance, town Vratsa and the surroundings glorified as a wine production center. After the establishment of the Principality Bulgaria, in the region were available conditions for an intensive development of the viticulture. Wines from Vratsa had public and foreign recognition. In 1896 in Brussels, on the international competition for wines and liqueurs Stefan Kraskiov from Vratsa received a special award and a certificate.

The present

The District of Vratsa supplies 5,97% of the total agricultural output of Bulgaria.

In the period 2002-2004 the areas occupied by vineyards tended to decrease. In 2004 in Northwest region the vineyard areas totaled 8 598 ha. New vineyard areas were established in the last couple of years with the assistance from

State fund "Agriculture" and SAPARD. The expert observations showed that vineyards planted with varieties having higher price, such as Chardonnay, Muscat Ottonel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, were well tended. The areas, planted with lower priced varieties, less sought after by the wineries, were tended less well.

The wine production is an important industry for the Vratsa region. Within the last years, the specialist shows as main weakness of the wine industry are:

- ✚ The Bulgarian vineyard is old. The vine mortality rate is higher than the rate of replanting.
- ✚ The size of single vineyard is small and market for land is non-existent.
- ✚ Reliable sources for mother-vines are non-existent.
- ✚ Insufficient knowledge of modern wine-making techniques
- ✚ Wine equipment is old and often inadequate for modern wine-making
- ✚ Bulgarian wine sales and marketing are dominated by a limited number of companies.
- ✚ Lack of understanding of the new competitive environment
- ✚ Shortage of working capital.

Regarding that, the current project will respond to the actual needs of the wine producers in the region.

3. Les attentes par rapport au sous-projet

Expectations from the sub-project

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry Vratsa expects the following results from the project:

To establish strong relationship with the Greek and Italian partners and with the other organizations, participating in the project activities;

To exchange experience and best practices in the field of wine industry;

To help the local producers in developing of wine tours, wine roads and organizing educational seminars aimed at increasing public (domestic and international) exposure to the Bulgarian wines.

To develop new projects, concerning the popularization of the wine production in the rural regions;

To create the necessary environment to encourage grape growers to enter into the wine producing business;

To assist companies in having access to market information;

To give opportunity the local wine producers to take part in Wine festival and to popularize their production;

To popularize the production of wine, as a successful business in the mountain regions;