

# UNWTO Hails Wine Tourism as an Approach to Sustainable Rural Development



*Madrid, Spain, 10 September 2018 – UNWTO called for wine tourism to be made part of national tourism and rural development policies at the 3rd UNWTO Wine Tourism Conference in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova (6-7 September 2018). The two days of*

*discussions engaged experts from 30 countries and addressed UNWTO's priority of enhancing tourism's socioeconomic benefits, looking at specific segments like wine tourism.*

The third edition of this UNWTO conference, held in partnership with the Moldovan government, came to the conclusion that to make wine tourism a tool for rural development local communities must be engaged in and benefit from the entire tourism value chain. It also called for governance models that could help destination managers offer wine tourism as part of a holistic rural and cultural tourism approach.

Among the main findings of the conference was the conviction of all participants that, if wine tourism is bolstered by partnerships, skills development, data-driven research and support to small businesses and entrepreneurs, it could be an area for job creation, innovation and new collaboration models.

“The complexity of wine tourism development and the diversity of stakeholders involved requires innovative models of collaboration; we need to break down walls and promote new

clusters,” said UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili.

The conference, which was opened by Pavel Filip, Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, called for more research in order to measure and understand wine tourism trends and consumers, and compare destinations internationally with the same criteria. It also concluded that creating job opportunities through wine tourism requires developing human capital skilled in new technologies and sustainability, as well as soft skills such as teamwork and how to tell the story of wine.



On meeting with UNWTO Secretary-General Pololikashvili, Prime Minister Filip described the wine sector as a crucial pillar within Moldova’s strategy to attract foreign investments and viewed the hosting of this conference as hugely important. Mr. Pololikashvili encouraged Moldova to take advantage of other tourism promotion platforms and increase connectivity with important source markets, pledging UNWTO’s full support to Moldova’s tourism development strategy.

In total the conference produced eight key areas of action: wine tourism strategy and governance; partnerships; community engagement; supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs; wine tourism for rural development; researching trends and consumers; skills development; and aligning tourism with the Sustainable Development Goals.

These action areas will be taken forward to the 4th UNWTO Wine Tourism Conference in 2019, which will be hosted by Chile. Portugal will host the 2020 edition.