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THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL ELEMENTS: HUNGARIAN WINERY NETWORKS CASE STUDY

The main aim of this paper is to present social capital that encourages wine-makers participate in a network and to measure how soft factors such as trust, confidence and regional identity influence network formation. To achieve these goals 8 different wine regions in Hungary are examined. The analysis conducted allows concluding that there is a positive correlation between trust, confidence, regional identity and likeliness of entering or even forming a winery network.

Keywords: *social capital; winery networks; trust and confidence; regional identity.*

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РОЛЬ ЕЛЕМЕНТІВ СОЦІАЛЬНОГО КАПІТАЛУ: ЗА ДАНИМИ УГОРСЬКИХ ВИНОРОБНИХ МЕРЕЖ

У статті представлено соціальний капітал, що мотивує виноробів до участі в професійній мережі. Оцінено ступінь впливу м'яких факторів (довіра, впевненість, регіональна ідентичність) на формування таких мереж. Дослідження проведено на прикладі 8 винних регіонів Угорщини. Аналіз даних підтверджує висновок про існування позитивної кореляції між довірою, впевненістю в партнерах та регіональною ідентичністю з одного боку та ймовірністю приєднання до виноробної мережі (або навіть її заснування).

Ключові слова: *соціальний капітал; виноробні мережі; довіра та впевненість; регіональна ідентичність.*

Рис. 1. Табл. 2. Літ. 33.

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РОЛЬ ЭЛЕМЕНТОВ СОЦИАЛЬНОГО КАПИТАЛА: ПО ДАННЫМ ВЕНГЕРСКИХ ВИНОДЕЛЬЧЕСКИХ СЕТЕЙ

В статье представлен социальный капитал, мотивирующий виноделов к участию в профессиональной сети. Оценена степень влияния мягких факторов (доверие, уверенность, региональная идентичность) на формирование таких сетей. Исследование проведено на примере 8 винных регионов Венгрии. Анализ данных подтверждает вывод о существовании позитивной корреляции между доверием, уверенностью в партнёрах и региональной идентичностью с одной стороны и вероятностью присоединения к винодельческой сети (или даже ее основание).

Ключевые слова: *социальный капитал; винодельческие сети; доверие и уверенность; региональная идентичность.*

Introduction. The long-term dominant market position of traditional wine producing countries, such as France, Spain, Italy and Portugal has been facing challenges and serious threats since the beginning of the 1990's, as the new world wine producers, such as Chile, Argentina, Australia, USA and South Africa started outperform their traditional counterparts and show astonishing export performance at the global wine markets. While traditional European wine-producing countries could increase their export share from 15% to 32% in the global wine production between 1988–2009, which is an admirable performance, the new world wines reached 37% from their initial 3%, defeating traditional wine producers' countries domination

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(Anderson and Nelgen, 2011). The competitiveness of the New World wine-producing countries is based not only on the immense investments in viticulture, and on very sophisticated, well-targeted marketing activities, but also on success fun R&D and knowledge transfers between wine-growers. In these countries wine producers cooperate closely together in a form of an intercompany network or cluster, connecting farmers, cellars, traders, suppliers, R&D institutions, local governments and other professional organizations (Anderson, 2010).

With the growth of the wine industry in the New World many researchers focused on them and started projects on such intercompany cooperation, namely on networks and clusters. Porter and Bond (1998) were the first to analyze the California wine cluster, followed by many studies in wine sectors of Australia (Alyward, 2004, 2006), Argentina (McDermott, 2007), Canada (Wolfe et al., 2005) and Chile (Gwynne, 2008; Langen, 2003). Most of these studies conclude the following:

1. Characteristics of wine clusters vary largely, not only by countries but even within regions.
2. The role of innovation systems are emphasized as the driver of high performance of these countries.
3. The relationship between firms and public research centers are appreciated.
4. The word "cluster" emerges in these works, referring to tight cooperation between economic actors, R&D institutions, government and professional organizations.

Having seen the example of the New World, the European Union also developed its research in the wine industry cluster of France (Ditter, 2005; Remaud and Couderc, 2006), Spain (Larreina and Aguado, 2008), Italy (Morrison and Rabelloti, 2010) and Portugal (Rebelo and Caldas, 2011) in order to have a more clear picture. In general, these works are focusing on the analysis of agricultural knowledge and information systems (AKIS), and unfortunately they pay little attention to networks of winery firms, furthermore neglecting all soft factors, such as social capital and regional identity.

European wine networks can be contractual, organizational or mixed. These networks are either vertical, or horizontal, and are more common in the upper part of the supply chain linking farmers and cellars, but examples can be found at the stages of distribution and supply to (Caffagi and Imacieli, 2010). However, in traditional wine countries there are still debates over conservative (traditional) and liberal (modern) orientation of wine production, they see organizational and business strategies applied in the New World countries as a benchmark, and they start adopting those measures to encourage innovation and enhance their competitiveness. Obviously, these wine regions are adopting the New World models in their own way, since all wine regions vary culturally, historically, and their territorial characters are not similar either.

In this paper we focus on the adoption of New World intercompany cooperation model in 8 different wine regions in Transdanubian part of Hungary. Analyzing these wine regions we measure how social capital can influence network formation through soft factors such as trust, confidence and regional identity. First of all, literature on social capital and regional identity is explored to have a general overview on how they promote social cooperation between firms and individuals, and later the connection between social capital and network is demonstrated.

Social capital. The phrase "social capital" was first mentioned by Hanifan (1916), who considered social capital as all those factors that determine people's everyday life, such as empathy, friendship, mutual sensitivity to each other and charity. The economic theory of Ben-Porath (1980) on effective economic exchanges saw social capital based on the so called "3F relations", namely families, friends and firms. Loury (1977) named all those resources social capital, as inherent in families, social relations, community institutions, deeply rooted in personal development and socialization. These thoughts and views were crystallized by the works of Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam, which created 3 remarkable theoretical standpoints.

Bourdieu (1997: 158) describes social capital as "capital stemming from social relationships or social obligation". In addition, he emphasizes the private nature of social capital, which refers to efficient mobilization of people and exploitation of their social relationships through reciprocity and mutuality. As he notes, social capital is the sum of actual and potential resources, linked to more or less institutionalized relations through mutual acquaintances or recognition. In other words, these resources are based on social belonging to a given group. According to Bourdieu (1997), the network of social relations are products of individual or collective investment strategies, since these strategies consciously or unconsciously aim at maintaining and creating social ties, that will directly have higher return on investment in the future (Csizmadia, 2009).

The second standpoint comes from Coleman, who provides a definition derived from education system combined with individual's social capital. His definition links contradictory elements perfectly together. According to Coleman (1998) social capital is embodied in the relations between individuals, and occurs, when relationships between individuals change so that to facilitate action. Coleman differentiates three types: 1) obligations and expectations; 2) information channels; 3) norms and sanctions. Coleman's definition is way beyond the scope of individual action, consequently forming a bridge toward the collectivist, community-based social capital interpretations.

The third standpoint derives from Putnam (1993) works, he understands social capital as a public good and gives a collectivist interpretation to it. He refers physical capital to subjects, human capital to unique characters of individuals, while social capital is defined as a collective criteria. In this case, collective criteria means relationships among individuals, close social networks, strong civil organizations, as well as commonly shared norms of mutuality and solidarity, and the problem solving potential of different social groups (Orban et al., 2005). According to Putnam, social capital is a cultural phenomenon, which means at the same time the ability of collective action and the trust or distrust in public institutions, which characterize large communities such as regions or even entire nations. Putnam (2000) emphasizes the role of trust, confidence, norms, and elementary networks, so to say the "civil virtues", through which social relations can easily exert their effects. Putnam completes the theory of social capital concept and stresses the collective/civil character of social capital. He sees it as a public good that is based on trust and transparency. According his view, social capital rests on high level of trust and confidence among individuals, and of course between public and political institutions. As a consequence, this creates a public good that boosts not only economic productivity but also increases the efficiency of the whole society. Regarding this paper's point of view, the presence of formal and informal social networks is essential, since these networks connect individuals and facilitates interaction among them.

Narayan (1995) defines social capital as a collection of rules, norms, obligations and mutual trust that ensures the members of society to achieve their goals. Its degree depends on those institutions, networks and norms, which shape the quality and quantity of social interactions. The most important theories and conclusions of the previous definitions appear simultaneously and the openness toward individual and collective aspects is striking (Orban et al., 2005).

Analyzing the concept of social capital in the theories of Fukuyama (1999, 2000) the following conclusion can be drawn: social capital promotes social cooperation between individuals, mobilizes informal social norms and commonly shared values. He also emphasizes, that economic life is inseparable from culture: inseparable from all those "irrational" values that are linked to morality, public spirit, family and religion. As a result, the neoliberal economic system, which is based on pure rational choices and decisions, works only within certain limits. Therefore, the major role of modern society is to ensure and maintain high level of social trust and confidence, and/or to create it, since the lack of social capital means more like an obstacle to economic development than the scarcity of physical capital (Fukuyama, 2000).

Social capital and regional identity. By projecting social capital to spatial dimensions we find regional identity. As Paasi (2002) states: spatial proximity results in interpersonal interactions among community members developed through direct, informal and long-term relationships which could facilitate intercompany interactions. People's integration in a region and establishment of social contacts, in other words social networks strengthens social capital. Furthermore, it is important to notice the extent to which people identify themselves with their region. Dealing with wine regions we must state that wine sector is a natural resource-based industry focused around what Mytelka and Goertzen (2003) refer to as "site-specific characteristics", where geographic proximity of economic players are emphasized by many researchers (Rosenfeld, 2000; Redman, 1994; Johnstone, 2003). Giving the fact that wine regions have very clear boarders (terrior) they are easy to differentiate from one another, as a consequence, wine growers and cellars can unambiguously identify themselves with the region. At this point individual and collective identification must be separated. Paasi (2002) and Rose (1995) distinguish between individual and collective identity when connecting identity and space, they claim that the sense of place is more than just one person's feelings about a particular place. They conclude that regional identity may be an important component of territoriality in various contexts and a significant element in the construction of regions as meaningful socio-political spaces.

Besides the distinction of individual and collective identity Keating (1998) refers to the importance of differentiation of local and regional identity, which is linked to the issue of scale and the definition of regions. Ray (1998) maintains that territorial identity represents an emerging form of local governance, especially in the field of rural development. Roca and Oliveira-Roca (2007) define territorial identity as a set of spatial fixes and flows that mark a geographical unit, such as a place or a region. According to Paasi (2009) regional identity is an idea that indicates social integration in a region. He defines regions as processes with boundaries, symbolisms and institutions. Furthermore, identity is part of regions' institutionalization, the process through which regions come into being (Paasi, 2003). Raagmaa (2002) emphasizes that spatial identity must relate to personal identity, and it is a social construct as well. People identify themselves with a certain area, not only with a landscape, but with a whole set that encompass culture, sociality, morality, tradition and the social system specific to a region.

It can be concluded, that regional identity extends the meaning of social capital as it promotes social cooperation between individuals, mobilizes informal social norms and commonly shared values and ones connectedness to the region.

Connection between social capital and intercompany networks. As the abovementioned authors and many others clearly define the high level of confidence as the fundamental element of social capital, they also highlight the need for networking, spontaneously emerging cooperation and trust, as soft factors. Researchers found that regions with high social capital and trust seems to be able to initiate and execute regional economic development strategies and projects more easily and more effectively than the regions with low social capital and low trust. As a result, social capital and networks have to be examined through trust and confidence, to which, we use the findings of Vadasi (2009). According to Vadasi, regional competitiveness can be evaluated by the level of development of clusters and networks located in this region. The lack of confidence can cause barriers to local and regional development, hindering birth and growth of strategic alliances. Vadasi's research shows that in the regions with low level of trust and confidence companies set up a defensive behavior, they generate conflict and at the same time they also refuse any form of cooperation. She concludes that through recognition of common interests and values the level of trust may increase between firms, leading to a certain willingness to work together. At this point Vadasi's thoughts have to be amended by Granovetter's (2005) findings, who sees this phenomena in a broader sense. Granovetter studies the impact of networks, as social structures, on economic performance. The following three points represent his results and findings:

1. Social networks affect the flow of quality information. It is widely known, that tested and proven sources are especially appreciated in a saturated and overloaded information environment.

2. Relationships and networks are the sources of reward and punishment. This applies more, when reward or punishment comes from cooperating parties.

3. Trust is gained and affected through relationships and networks. Therefore, trust is a fundamental element of economic and social mechanisms.

Granovetter's findings are in close relation with Coleman's (1998) 3 differentiated types of social capital concepts.

Research methods. This paper is empirically based, therefore, a quantitative descriptive research method is chosen, samples were taken once (Malhotra, 2005). The entire population of wine firms from 8 Hungarian wine regions covers 179 firms, with the sample restriction that they must belong to an active operating wine cluster or network. 128 replied resulting in the response rate of 71%, which is outstanding and statistically it can be considered as representative (Sajtos and Mitev, 2007). To collect data during the qualitative research phase surveys were created and delivered to respondents personally, by mail or online after an initial phone call about the research.

The respondents were asked a series of questions related to social capital, which measured the willingness of cooperation, the motivation of entering a network or cluster and the level of trust and confidence towards local economic actors in the wine industry. The respondents were asked to assess these factors on the five-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The final survey contained 57 questions, where the measuring level of the response combinations show 11 nominal, 18 ordinal and 62 scale variables. The average time necessary to fill out the survey took 18–25 minutes each. Statistical analyses were performed using "MS Excel" and "SPSS".

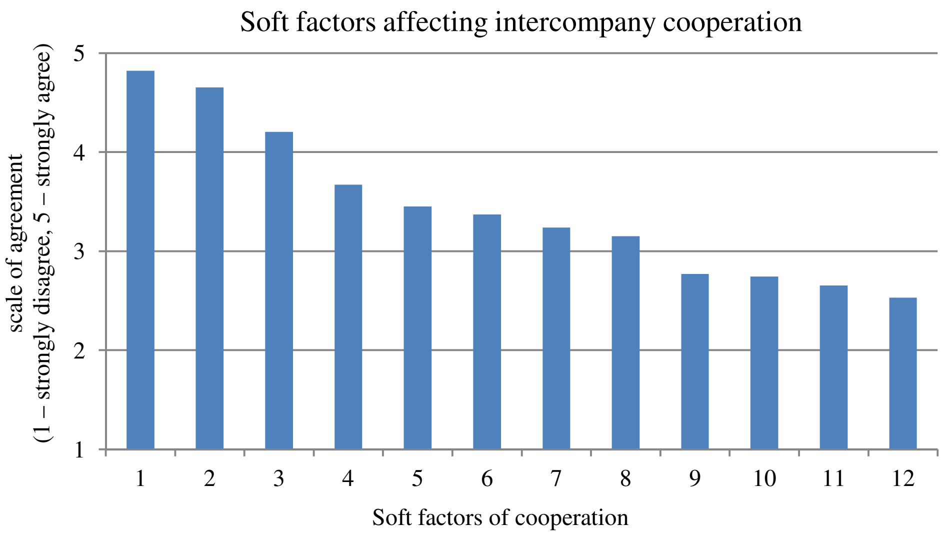
Results.

1. Soft factors affecting intercompany cooperation. Before the data were submitted to factor analysis using the principal component analysis, all those soft factors were ranked. After having assessed these soft factors on the five-point Likert scale by respondents, the mean, median and the standard deviation helped in ranking. Figure 1 shows the results.

It can be seen, that Vadasi's (2008) findings were partially accepted as the positive image of the region (4.82), identification with the region (4.65), former acquaintance with cluster members (4.20) were valued as the most important factors of entering a network or a cluster. The first 3 soft elements were followed by the factors such as possibilities of lobbying (3.67), trust and confidence to local actors (3.45), former strong connections with members (3.41), coping with former negative "memories" (3.23) and the possibility of dividing tasks between members (2.79). The results highlight the importance of confidence and connectedness in intercompany network formulation. Regarding Putnam (1993) and Coleman (1998) network density, confidence and durability of relationships, in other words, former connections with members, are the key elements to high level of trust and cooperation. Indeed, these soft factors of social capital are valued highly important by the respondents. Standard deviation approves it statistically, as it is always below 0.7, which means that wine growers and cellars uniformly share these values.

2. Correlation between soft factors. After having the soft factors ranked, correlations of variables were controlled for statistical significance with the Pearson's correlation coefficient in order to reveal the linear relationship between trust and confidence, regional identity, lobbying power, risk sharing and between former business relations or acquaintance. Boxplot helped identifying potential outliers, and then correlation analysis was performed. Correlations were accepted above the 0.01 significance level (Sajtos-Mitev, 2007: 211).

Table 1 demonstrates the correlation of variable 1 and variable 2 at the significance level of 0.000. All Pearson's coefficients are between $0.2 < r < 0.7$, which indicate intermediate positive relationship between variables (Sajtos-Mitev, 2007: 205). It can be concluded, that trust and confidence correlates statistically to risk sharing among members ($r = 0.657$), possibility of lobbying ($r = 0.608$), coping with former negative memories ($r = 0.505$), dividing tasks between the members of cluster or network ($r = 0.465$) or even it strengthens the lobbying power towards governmental institutions ($r = 0.460$).



1. Positive image of the region
2. Identification with the region
3. Former acquaintenance with cluster members
4. Possibilities of lobbying
5. Increasing trust and confidence to local actors
6. Sharing risks between members
7. Former strong connections with members
8. Coping with former negative "memories"
9. Possibility of dividing tasks
10. Increasing lobby power towards institutions
11. Former business connections with cluster members
12. Increasing lobby power towards suppliers

Figure 1. **Soft factors affecting intercompany cooperation, 2013,** *own research*

These findings on trust and confidence are in line with Putnam's (1993) statement on trust or distrust, namely trust, confidence, norms and elementary networks, so to say "civil virtues" exert and facilitate their effect in social relations. Regarding Coleman's (1998) 3 types of social capital utilization theory, the role of norms and sanctions are present in Hungarian wine clusters or networks. It helps overcoming former negative experiences, extends connectedness to local actors, thus creating mutual trust.

Furthermore, it can be stated, that former acquaintances correlate with active business connections between members ($r = 0.469$), help dividing tasks between local actors ($r = 0.437$) and a perfect tool of sharing risks and overcoming market threats ($r = 0.435$). At this point referring to Granovetter (2005) and Coleman (1998), social connectedness can greatly influence the development of social networks, which in turn affects the willingness to cooperate. Built on former connections companies do not set up defensive behavior, they realize common interest instead. After having social networks established, more mature corporate networks can evolve, which can also be found between Hungarian wine cluster members.

Regional identity or one's identification with the region as a soft factor effecting intercompany cooperation was measured in the research too. Table 1 shows a strong correlation between the identification with region, namely how one identifies himself with a certain region, with its culture, sociality, morality or traditions, and between projecting positive image of the region ($r = 0.599$). As Paasi (2009) states regional identity indicates social integration in a region. It is statistically proven, that active

Table 1. **Correlation of soft factors affecting intercompany cooperation, 2013,** *own research*

Variable 1	Variable 2	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Trust and confidence to local actors	Sharing risks between members	0.657	0.000	113
Possibilities of lobbying	Possibilities of dividing tasks	0.646	0.000	113
Trust and confidence to local actors	Possibilities of lobbying	0.608	0.000	113
Identification with the region	Positive image of the region	0.599	0.000	113
Sharing risks between members	Coping with former negative “memories”	0.517	0.000	113
Trust and confidence to local actors	Coping with former negative “memories”	0.505	0.000	113
Sharing risks between members	Increasing lobbying power towards suppliers	0.496	0.000	113
Business connections between members	Coping with former negative “memories”	0.475	0.000	113
Former acquaintance with members	Business connections btw. members	0.469	0.000	113
Trust and confidence in local actors	Possibilities of dividing tasks	0.465	0.000	113
Trust and confidence in local actors	Lobbying power towards institutions	0.460	0.000	113
Business connections between members	Possibilities of dividing tasks	0.437	0.000	113
Business connections between members	Sharing risks between members	0.435	0.000	113
Sharing risks between members	Possibilities of dividing tasks	0.422	0.000	113
Positive image of the region	Active participation in fairs and exhibitions	0.404	0.000	113

participation in fairs and exhibitions are influenced by regional identity between wine cluster members ($r = 0.404$). Giving the fact that wine regions have very clear boarders they are easy to differentiate from one another, as a consequence, wine growers and cellars can unambiguously identify themselves with the region and they are actually doing so.

3. Factor analysis of soft factors. The soft factors were analyzed using the principal component analysis with varimax rotation to consider all valid observations of each variable for the missing data. The index of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) adequacy of the sample was 0,645 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (significant to 0.000) indicated the factorability of data. The KMO indicates that factor analysis is an appropriate technique (Sajtos-Mitev, 2007: 258).

The factor analysis result suggested that the motivation of entering a wine network or a cluster is explained by 4 factors, with 66.5% of the total variance explained. The Cronbach's alpha is above 0.5, which represents a good range for an exploratory study, furthermore, the items' coefficients absolute value are above 0,5 as well. It is possible to conclude that the items in each dimension of the construct are suitable for measuring all those soft factors that influence the motivation of entering a network or a cluster (Table 2).

Table 2 shows the variables and accordingly the emerged factors. They represent the dimensions of social capital, namely trust and confidence, regional identity, connectedness and distrust. The meaning of each factor can be inferred from the content.

In the case of Hungarian wine growers social capital is represented mainly by trust and confidence, which explains 29.2% of the total variance. The regional identity factor represents 11.8%, the connectedness factor 10.2% and finally the distrust factor explains 8.3% of the total variance.

The results call attention to the fact that the averages of the variables in each factor, in other words the soft factors motivating wine firms to enter a network, are very similar for "Trust and confidence", "Regional identity" and "Connectedness" factors, ranging from 3.2 to 4.3, while "Distrust" factor has the mean of 2.6. Therefore, we conclude that there is an important role of social capital in the decision on entering or formulating a wine network or even a cluster in Hungarian wine regions. However, distrust is present, but it is underweighted compared to the other 3 factors. In this perspective, we argued that the soft factors of social capital were effectively motivating for intercompany cooperation, as discussed previously.

Final considerations and future research possibilities. As wineries all over the world go through dynamic transformations under globalization, many wine producing enterprises in traditional European wine regions are forced to deal with low-cost, standardized quantities of the New World wine backed with heavy marketing campaigns. Hungarian wine producers are not exception; just like other traditional European wine producers they seek competitiveness through intercompany cooperation. Generally, Hungarian wine networks are present but formed rarely, which can be explained by bad memories of forced cooperation during communist era, lack of capital in the wine sector, distrust between actors and some opportunistic behavior with short term thinking (Cafaggi, 2010). To overcome these difficulties a supportive social and cultural background is essential, built on existing trust and confidence, in other words, on social capital.

Table 2. **Soft factors motivating Hungarian wine firms to enter a network or a cluster, 2013,** *own research*

Factor	Item	Loading	Mean
Trust and confidence 0.849*	Possibilities of dividing tasks	.822	2.77
	Possibilities of lobbying	.780	3.67
	Lobbying power towards government institutions	.746	2.74
	Increasing trust and confidence to local actors due to cluster	.699	3.45
	Sharing risks between members	.660	3.37
	Coping with former negative memories	.536	3.15
	Business connections between members	.513	2.65
Regional identity 0.703*	Positive image of the region	.817	4.82
	Identification with the region	.749	4.65
	Active participation in fairs and exhibitions	.518	3.95
Connectedness 0.639*	Strong connections to members	.798	3.24
	Former acquaintance with members	.797	4.20
Distrust 0.552*	Higher costs but low rate of return through cooperation with others	.783	2.68
	Due to distrust low level of knowledge transfer	.646	2.55

* Cronbach's alpha.

The research applied to the role of social capital in the wine industry shows that intercompany network formation is highly influenced by trust and confidence, regional identity and connectedness of local actors. However, distrust is still present, it cannot hinder network formation itself, but is able to slow down knowledge transfer between members. The results confirm the importance of assessing social capital in intercompany wine networks, which can be summarized: 1) high level of trust and confidence ease up intercompany formations; 2) intercompany networks divide risks among members; 3) intercompany network allow its members solve common problems more easily.

Future research should investigate the social capital evolution and their effect in wine clusters and networks on a longer time scale, exploring the role of trust and connectedness in emerging wine regions as well.

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Стаття надійшла до редакції 30.03.2015.