«Does better-informed consumer lead to more conscious consumption? Sustainability in the wine sector. The case of ethical and fair-trade supply chain in the Italian wine industry.»

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Abstract

Much research, in the field of sustainable certification, has been focusing on the environmental aspect of the three-pillar definition of sustainability. This is valid for many sectors, and for the wine industry too. Nevertheless, there are raising concerns and requirements to adopt due diligence practices in many wineries across the world for respecting human rights. An emergency has been identified in the Italian supply chain; Scandinavian monopolies have started to take action to ensure Italian imported products are not contributing to the phenomena of caporalato.

Customers however, and the market, still are not fully aware nor relate fair trade actions to the field of wine; the same definition of sustainability for oenology is not well defined and widely shared. Hence this thesis aims to research the ethical implications of wine production and the potential influence on customers' choices as well as positive implication for wine producers' competitiveness and profitability. The focus is on the Italian situation and its relationship with the Norwegian market. Vinmonopolet presence and initiatives have been observed and considered when structuring the research around Norwegian customers' knowledge and interest. This is because Norwegians are advanced on sustainability and ethical matters in other industries, here their relations with wine have been explored.

Nevertheless, the intertwined dimensions of ethics and environmental concerns are not easily isolable, and customers are mainly interested in the more known and spread concept of environmental friendliness and chemical avoidance in wine. Therefore, the broad definition of sustainability in wine has been here addressed.

Keywords:

Wine, sustainability, consumer behavior, agriculture, caporalato, ethics

Abstrato

Pesquisas no campo da certificação sustentável têm se concentrado sobre o aspecto ambiental da definição dos três pilares de sustentabilidade. Isto é válido para muitos setores, também para a indústria do vinho.

Existem crescentes preocupações e pedidos para tomar as devidas práticas de cuidado em vinícolas em todo mundo pelo respeito aos direitos humanos. Uma emergência foi detectada na cadeia de suprimentos italiana; os monopólios escandinavos começaram a intervir para garantir que os produtos importados não contribuam para o fenômeno da contratação ilegal.

Os clientes e o mercado ainda não estão plenamente conscientes e não vinculam as ações de comércio justo ao setor vitivinícola; para enologia

a própria definição de sustentabilidade ainda não está bem compartilhada.

Esta tese tem como objetivo pesquisar as implicações éticas da produção de vinho e a influência potencial nas escolhas do cliente; a implicação positiva para a competitividade e rentabilidade dos produtores de vinho. O foco está na situação italiana e sua relação com o mercado norueguês. As iniciativas da Vinmonopolet foram observadas na estruturação de pesquisas em torno do conhecimento e interesse dos noruegueses. Como os noruegueses estão à frente em termos de sustentabilidade e questões éticas em outras áreas, foram exploradas suas relações com o vinho.

No entanto, as dimensões entrelaçadas de preocupações éticas e ambientais não são facilmente isoladas. Os clientes estão interessados principalmente no mais conhecido conceito generalizado de respeito pelo meio ambiente e contraste com a química no vinho. Portanto, uma ampla definição de sustentabilidade do vinho foi abordada aqui.

Palavras-chave: vinho, sustentabilidade, hábitos de consumo, agricultura, contratação ilegal, ética.

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List of abbreviations

CAP – European Union Common Agricultural Policy

CO_2 – Carbon Dioxide

CoSVi – Comitato della sostenibilità Vitivinicola (Committee of Wine Sustainability)

CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility

DEF – Documento di Economia e Finanza (Documento for Economics and Finance)

EU – European Union

Federdoc – Confederazione Nazionale Consorzi Volontari Tutela Denominazioni Vini Italiani (National Confederation of Voluntary Consortia for the Protection of Italian Wine Denominations)

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GHG – Greenhouse Gases

NGO(s) – Non-Governmental Organization(s)

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OIV – International Organization of Vine and Wine

PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

PGI – Protected Geographical Indication

PNR – Programma Nazionale di Riforma (National Reform Program)

PoS – Point of Sales

SDG(s) – Sustainable Development Goal(s)

SNSvS – Strategia Nazionale di Sviluppo Sostenibile (National Sustainable Development Strategy)

SQNPI – Sistema di Qualità Nazionale di Produzione Integrata (System of National Quality of Integrated Production)

UN – United Nations

UNGC – United Nations Global Compact

UNGP – United Nations Guiding Principles

WTP – Willingness to Pay

1. Introduction

Our society is shaken by extreme inequalities, environmental degradation, fueled by overproduction and overconsumption. In modern society, roughly forty million people are enslaved and involved in forced labor (Hodal, 2019). Hence sustainability and environmental concerns do not only relate to the safeguarding and protection of the Planet, but they are deeply rooted and connected with human health and slavery conditions (Herzog, 2016). The three most endangered sectors concerning modern slavery practices are: Domestic Work, Construction, and Manufacture which, all together, account for more than half of the victims' distribution (ILO, 2017). Agriculture alone is responsible for 11% of poor and dangerous working conditions (ILO, 2017).
In recent times, the market, stakeholders, employees, and consumers have become increasingly concerned and aware of sustainable practices in many sectors (European Commission, 2022).

Sustainability was firstly defined by the United Nations Brundtland Commission as "*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*." (World Commission on Environment Development, 1987 p.41). Sustainable development and sustainability in the business world are necessary and unavoidable challenges; firms need to adapt their business model to address the demand (McKinsey, 2020), make investments to align the current technologies, or innovate (Ouvrard, Jasimuddin, & Spiga, 2020). But most importantly it is essential, despite the difficulties, to determine rational and specific measurements for sustainability practices, as well as common and shared actions within a reasonable time frame in which such assessments are to be conducted (Flores, 2018).

When talking specifically about sustainability in the wine sector, the term is often compared or misunderstood as being organic or biodynamic. That is due to the ambiguity held by the definition of sustainability itself which makes it difficult for consumers to differentiate (Santini, Cavicchi, & Casini, 2015). However, the industry is gaining interest and pressure to become greener, that is why there is a growing number of research focused on that field, at times also financed by government or institutions (Santini et al., 2015). One recent example, from which the idea around this thesis was structured, is presented in the report " *The workers behind Sweden's Italian wine. An illustrative Human Rights Impact Assessment of Systembolaget's Italian wine supply chains*." (Gore, Alestig, Barnerji, & Ceccarelli, 2021). This report focuses on the conditions of workers in the Italian wine industry conducted by Systembolaget – the wine monopoly in Sweden – and Oxfam – a nonprofit organization focused on poverty, inequality, and injustice (Oxfam, 2022). In the report, it is underlined how the role of "caporalato" is still dominant and drives against the sector's full development towards social instances. It also acts as an obstacle for the industry to be compliant with the social pillar in the sustainability definition (Gore et al., 2021).

The Italian term *caporalato* refers to an illegal system of organizing and intermediating labor, especially in the agriculture sector (Perrotta, 2014). It predominantly concerns foreign workers in uncertain and poor conditions where violence and forms of slavery are often involved (Perrotta, 2014). It is estimated that, in Italy, 42% of migrant workers perceive way less than what their salary should be; and 28% are without any contract contributing in this way to illegal practices (ETI, 2020).

According to research and estimates, in Italy, there are around 400,000 workers involved in modern slavery practice, 80% of those are immigrants (Osservatorio Fieragricola, 2021). People are enslaved and exploited, they do not benefit from minimum wages, they work for almost 12 hours a day and do not receive any form of social security nor are protected in case of injury or damages (Osservatorio Fieragricola, 2021).

When analyzing wineries and especially Italian ones, it emerges that among the three-sustainability pillar (environmental, social, and economic), the economic one is the least addressed, and concerns are attributed to greenwashing practices, together with key barriers identified in investment costs and especially *labor conditions* (De Steur, Temmerman, Gellynck, & Canavari, 2019). This data further supports the necessity to look deeper into labor conditions as investigations and studies lack in that sense.

The growing need to address sustainable issues and the incentive to promote producers to implement and adopt multiple practices depend widely on the competitiveness at a global scale together with consumers' (Fiore, Silvestri, Contò, & Pellegrini, 2017) and policy makers' awareness and requirements addressed to businesses (Nazzaro, Marotta, & Rivetti, 2016).

Sustainable issues and companies' social responsibility are known as CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility. The European Commission has defined CSR as "*a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis*" and it concerns companies' actions above their legal obligation towards the society and the environment (EU Monitor, 2001).

Most of the studies affirm that there is a positive relationship between CSR initiatives undertaken by businesses and their profitability (Muñoz, Fernández, & Salinero, 2020).

Additionally, some studies have shown a negative correlation between the perceived quality – and therefore the price premium that usually is correlated – and the indication of sustainability claims on the wine label (Delmas & Grant, 2008).

In 2015 the United Nations have presented a list of seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030 (UNDP, 2015). They are a "*universal call to action*" (UNDP, 2022) to ensure that certain targets addressing poverty, human rights, planet protection are reached to ensure future prosperity and peace (UNDP, 2022). Those indicators are globally recognized and are a result of many different certifications and attempt nations have been carried out through the years to ensure sustainable development in relation to corporate responsibility (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2021). Stakeholder engagement was one of the key elements for the development of the 17 SDGs which have been discussed for the first time on the conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012 which culminated in 2015 with the definition of the goals that are known and used now (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2021). Every single goal has specific and detailed sub-targets (generally around 10) that further develop the aim of the goal and set precise and clear guidance to businesses. In this way their adoption is facilitated, and all businesses are assessed using the same shared concepts. To better address the measurements of impact there are indicators related to each of the goals and targets to further facilitate and guide the transition and achievement of the considered goal (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2021).

Here are identified the ones that more correlate with CSR practices and the grant of human rights adoption in agriculture, including therefore wine production.

To start with SDG number one which objective is to end poverty in all its form, often associated with human right breach and labor exploitation. SDG number two is aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture practices (United Nations, 2015). SDG number eight – Decent Work and Economic Growth, which purpose is to eradicate forced labor and modern slavery and implement safe and secure working conditions targeting especially immigrants; topics that are strongly related to the practice of caporalato (United Nations, 2015). Continuing with SDG ten – Reduced Inequalities, intended to foster a more equal and fair treatment for all, despite origins, gender, age, or disabilities (United Nations, 2015).

When it comes to the involvement of customers, emphasis is placed on SDG number twelve – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns – where companies are called to provide sustainable products and include documentation on that for clear communication (United Nations, 2015). Therefore, companies are held accountable and of extreme importance to be considered SDG number seventeen. It focuses the attention on the fact that strong and fruitful partnerships are to be ensured and build to act and drive the society toward a shared and common goal (United Nations, 2015).

1.1 Thesis research framework

In light of what has been introduced until now, the thesis will start by reviewing the existing literature on the topic of wine sustainability with an eye on the social part of it, specifically addressed to the Italian market. The concept of modern slavery (in the sense of forced labor practices) that affects agriculture in Italy has contributed to rising concerns about the adoption of ethical work conditions in the country. Hence, the focus will be on the analysis of the role Italian wineries have in ensuring that human rights are respected towards the interests of vineyards workers. Underlining how the partnership and collaboration of the Italian entities with the Norwegian monopoly and its actors can contribute positively to nurturing good practices and ensuring equal and decent employee treatment.

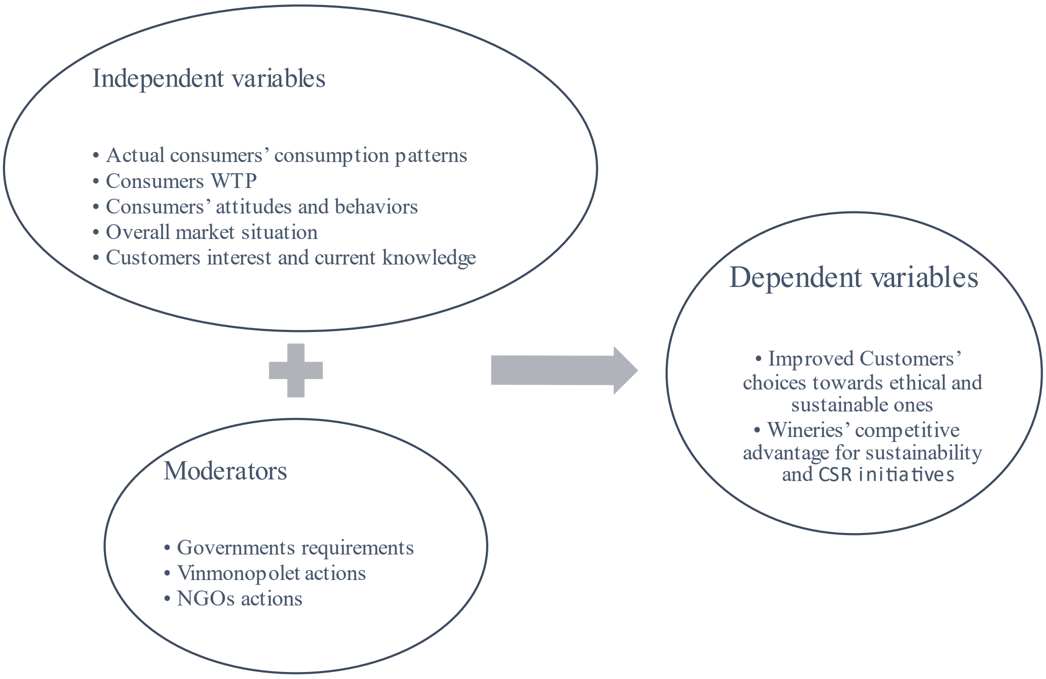
The different existing labels, certifications, and practices adopted by Italian businesses will be assessed and compared with new requirements and sensibilities.

Interviews with Norwegian customers will also be carried out to understand the knowledge, awareness, and interest of people around such issues and therefore derive their willingness to pay and adoption of socially responsible consumption patterns (or more in general of sustainable wine choices). The resulting insights will be compared with interviews to salesclerks in Vinmonopolet shop to better grasp consumer behaviors, comparing those with data and trends on the actual state of sustainable wine in Norway.

The analysis will aim to understand whether changes towards responsible consumption could be linked with individual preferences and orientations or if it could be extended to the general public and be used by companies as strategic leverage to improve brand equity, positioning, and outperform competitors (Capitello & Sirieix, 2019). This is because research has been showing that producing sustainably and marketing it correctly is a winning strategy also in terms of differentiation and quality perceptions; however, more research is to be done to better understand which of the sustainability attributes consumers are most attracted to (Pomarici & Vecchio, 2019).

Overall, efforts will be directed in order to answer the research question which involves consumers' behaviors and attitudes and how they can impact wineries' competitive advantage by leveraging and communicating sustainable strategies. Or looking it from the companies side, if their action towards more sustainable strategy can influence customers' purchase choices and lead to overall more responsible consumption. Important here to mention is that despite the intent of only addressing social and ethical issues, those are not known enough by customers nor developed in the literature and the market; hence the thesis will discuss the term sustainability in a broad way.

Figure 1: Framework for thesis and hypothesis development



2. Literature review

2.1 What do we mean by sustainability and how it has been addressed and researched in the wine sector.

2.1.1 Sustainability

Sustainability has many definitions; hence a certain degree of ambiguity is involved when addressing this topic (Warner, 2007). In the Brundtland report, as well as in following agreements and protocols, sustainability had been getting the shape of a triangular definition that includes: the clearest and common referred environmental dimension; the intertwined economic dimension that gives sense to the sustainable development as a whole and as potential growth; and the social dimension related to human rights and equal opportunities for workers and people (UN Global Compact, 2021).

The meaning of sustainability cannot be drawn without citing and looking at one of the first contributors to its definition in 1987 - Gro Harlem Brundtland - who had the precise purpose to define sustainable development. She attempted a first official definition of sustainable development at the United Nations conference. From there, the society as a whole started to raise awareness and consideration towards that topic. Even prior to that, Meadows et al. (1972) wrote a contribution in the book "*The Limits to Growth*", followed by articles and papers, and conferences culminated in the definition of the Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations in 2015 where 17 SDGs were delineated with the explicit intention to guide the world's action from there until 2030 when they are supposed to be reached (Szolnoki, 2013). SDGs are the result of several previous agreements, protocols and framework the UN have been developing to facilitate and drive change.

The *United Nation Global Compact* (UNGC) place human rights as the cornerstone on which corporate sustainability needs to be built on and where businesses should focus, contribute, and develop by partnering with other businesses to ensure healthy and sustainable business growth (UN Global Compact, 2021). Studies have shown that a lack of respect for human rights by businesses can hamper not only the growth of the business itself, but it also prevents the companies from entering new markets, restrains other businesses from collaboration, and forestall the creation of fruitful relationships. This also affects innovation and in consequence products and services, and development will suffer, attempting therefore at the company's competitiveness.

That is why companies need to ensure respect for human rights in their business as well as in the supply chain not only for the sake of the workers and the communities, but for the sake of the company itself. Good established social sustainability practices ensure good relationships with stakeholders, and communities and improve employee engagement, and, from there it follows increased productivity (Hunt, Simpson, & Yamanda, 2022). Hence the impact the company will have on communities and the society is going to be positive overall by including such instances in their mission, vision, and way of doing.

2.1.2 Companies interest in CSR

In line with CSR and stakeholder theory, companies (and wineries are here included) should establish and maintain relationships with all interest groups, provide them with information and promote ethical and socially responsible initiatives (Iaia, Vrontis, Maizza, Fait, Scorrano, & Cavallo, 2019). In this way, a company can potentially exceed the market competition by building a competitive advantage based on communication, and the explicit intent to address social value (Iaia et al, 2019).

It is important to address what *stakeholder theory* is and how and why it plays a role in this context. Firstly, stakeholder theory overlaps and is intertwined – and vice versa – with CSR as both concepts underly the importance of including and addressing social issues in the business strategy as part of corporation responsibility (Freeman & Dmytriyev 2017). If CSR focuses just on responsibility companies have towards society; stakeholder theory stresses how the business essence lies in building, maintaining, and cultivating relationships with all stakeholders, and how their needs and interests should be addressed and guided towards the same direction (Freeman & Dmytriyev 2017). In this way stakeholder theory address directly customers' and employees' needs with a narrower focus that contributes to reaching the greater and extended business' goal of being virtuous for the society at a large (Freeman & Dmytriyev 2017).

Why are then companies interested in engaging in CSR and its relations with SDGs and UN initiatives?

At a global level the United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGP) were implemented in 2011 by the United Nations to define responsibility of businesses and governments on the respect and protection of human rights (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2021), and set guidelines to act on it (Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, 2022). They comprise 31 principles with additional declination for each one to address issues and guide actions (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2021); all principles are based on 3 main pillars which represent the anchor of the whole framework: (1)

state obligation, (2) businesses obligation, (3) duty to intervene in case of human rights violations (United Nations, 2012).

All of this builds upon the UNGC which is the United Nations organization accountable for sustainable businesses to align strategies and operations on universal shared principles (UNGC, 2022). Developed in 1999 (Rasche & Waddock, 2021), it has already been mentioned earlier in the thesis. During the world congress at Davos the grounding and worldwide valid principles were elaborated to address labor and environmental concerns and the related responsibility companies have in ensuring human rights and due diligence (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2021).

Both UNGC and the following UNGP together with SDGs development are of fundamental importance in the business practice since they provide guidance and checklists to guide change and improve overall market conditions at all levels (Stronger Together & Equalitas, 2022).

Additionally, the OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, is also playing a crucial role in setting practices to foster equal opportunities, well-being and prosperity (OECD, 2022) which are all key element when fighting against human rights breach and instead are supported and ensure when implementing due diligence in businesses.

Companies interests comes in when looking at the growth potential that complying and engaging with such requirements arise.

Here is important then to refer to the concept of the *triple bottom line* (Elkington, 1998) which underlines and makes it evident that companies need to account for more than just mere financial performance, but performance metrics must include social and environmental impacts (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2021). The tools mentioned above help companies choosing targets and identify areas of improvements. It is clear that companies are required and need to go above and beyond the mere economic interest concentrated on financial metrics, even this pillar is not anymore only related to that (Elkington, 2018). Growth and performance are now assessed using new method and standards and the UN is providing strong and meaningful tools to firstly address the current state and subsequently act to improve the company position on that.

2.1.3 Wine

2.1.3.1 Italian Wine

In 2020, the global wine production was around 260 million hectoliters. Forasmuch as the European continent, where Italy mainly competes, it reached 165 million hectoliters detaining an overall 63,5% of the market share and occupying the leading position (Area Studi Mediobanca, 2021). Additionally, narrowing it down to the restricted scope of Europe, 85% of

the whole sector turnover – overall around 41,3 billion euros – is detained by Italy, France, and Spain (Area Studi Mediobanca, 2021). In 2019 Italy accounted for 14% of the global production, positioning itself ahead of France and Spain (Gore et al, 2019).
Currently, Italy is the top wine producer worldwide in terms of hectoliter – forty-nine thousand in 2020 – and it positions itself fourth with reference to the areas dedicated to wine grapes cultivation – 671.139 acres (Somma & Flamini, 2022). Italy holds the primacy also in the export of wine to the world detaining between 13% and 46% market share in wine categories; only bulk wine is positioned on the third place with a slightly lower market share of around 10% (Somma & Flamini, 2022). But what does this number yields in terms of revenues? The Italian market registered around twenty million hectoliters in exports, which represent a revenue stream of 6,2 million euros (OIV, 2021).

The wine sector in Italy lies its origins back in time and it is considered a tradition in the diet of the Italian population (Pomarici, Corsi, Mazzarino, & Sandrone, 2021). It, therefore, comprises historical and established practices that are rooted in the cultural heritage of the country, where wine represents a key component of the economy (Stronger Together & Equalitas, 2022). In the past, the production was mainly devoted to inferior quality wine for the large public, with just a small percentage of more fine wines (Pomarici et al., 2021). The internationalization of wine trades and globalization of consumption, with the flourishing of exports, came after World War II (Anderson & Pinilla, 2018). Such expansion, especially after 1990, is mainly due to increased demand from countries without (or with a very poor) wine production; and despite the entry of New World wine producers, the Old World still maintains its leading position with Italy at the forefront (Pomarici et al., 2021). From 2010 up to now, the Italian exports kept on growing. In 2020, however, the wine exports shrank with a reduction of 2,3%, corresponding to a value of 6,3 billion euros (Area Studi Mediobanca, 2021).
Nonetheless, Italy's domestic market represents a weak, highly fragmented market, with few opportunities for exploiting economies of scale. Therefore, researchers focused on the paradox consisting in its international success which they relate with the fascination coming from the "Made in Italy" icon (Pomarici et al., 2021).

2.1.3.2 Wine in Norway

Italy, together with France, Germany, and Spain are the main importing countries in the Norwegian market which has the peculiarity of being administered by a Monopoly (Lai, Cavicchi, Rickertsen, Corsi, & Casini, 2013).

From a study that analyzed Norwegian consumers' trends and preferences, it emerged that people are expecting differentiation, higher quality, and expensive wines and therefore Italian wines are gaining popularity (Lai et al., 2013).

If on the international market, especially in Europe, Spain and Italy are comparably successful while France follows, when it comes to Italian consumers there is a specific and general preference for domestic wine; providing, therefore, an advantage for Italian winemakers in the national market (Pomarici et al., 2021).

The Norwegian market works in a radically different manner compared to the Italian one, and therefore neither the investments in advertising nor the one in digital and social media to promote brands could be considered to boost the exports. That is because the Monopoly, with a complex mechanism and relationship with different entities, directly and autonomously decides for quantities, qualities, and types of wines that should be imported (Lai et al., 2013).

The Norwegian Wine Monopoly is a government-owned alcohol retailer, the only one allowed to sell beverages that contains alcohol for more than 4,7% (Ridder, 2022).

The Norwegian alcohol policy is founded on four principles:

(1) private economic interests are to be eliminated, (2) a license is required in order to be allowed to sell alcohol, and (3) the municipal authorities have the power to decide whether alcohol can be sold, the type of beverages to be sold and it is also accountable for who is receiving the license to sell alcoholic beverages, (4) the price for alcohol is to remain high due to high taxation (Lai et al., 2013). From here there derive restrictions and rules on advertising – that is banned – sales hours, age limits (Lai et al., 2013).

The monopoly is held by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, and it interacts with wholesalers and importers, therefore producers from all over the world, hence including Italy, cannot deal directly with Vinmonopolet (Wine Monopoly in Norwegian) but are required to act towards intermediaries – the importers (Lai et al., 2021).

Vinmonopolet operates accordingly to the Act on the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages (*the Alcohol Act*) from 1989 aimed at limiting damages connected to alcohol consumption (Vinmonopolet, 2022). In this way, Norwegian authorities ensures lower consumption per capita (almost half compared to more liberal countries) which is then reflected in improved health conditions and

lower costs in terms of social damages related to greater usage of alcohol (Vinmonopolet, 2022).
This is the reason why the decision undertaken by the monopoly directly influences the winemakers in Italy, as if they result in not being compliant with regulations, they will be excluded from the exports by the importers which are required to comply with established decisions and strictly controls the supply chain.
In any case, trends and needs from the customer side are to be taken into consideration by Italian wineries to continue thriving in the domestic market, and at the same time to keep being compelling and competitive in the international channels.
This is particularly true for the case of Norway since Italian wine accounts for one third of the whole market share of wine with 19,4 million liters in 2019 (ITA, 2020).

2.1.4 Wine and Sustainability

The concept of sustainability has been gaining attention in the agricultural field up to becoming a principle integrated into the objectives of the *CAP* namely the *European Union Common Agricultural Policy* (Latruffe, Diazabakana, Bockstalle, Desjeux, Finn, Kelly, Ryan, & Uthes, 2016). It is stated – in the rules for the period 2020/2021 to help to transition towards the new and renovated CAP valid for the strategic plan of 2023 – that 55% of the *EURI* resources (coming from the *Next-generation EU* recovery instrument) should be allocated to promoting the economic and social development of rural areas to support and sustain agriculture to be aligned with the *European Green Deal* (European Commission, 2021).
However, when referring to the wine sector, although indicators are similar and derived from the existing ones in the agricultural field, some additional specifications and differences are to be considered.
Raising concerns on sustainability have been expressed in regard to the grape and wine industry because of the risk associated mainly with climate change (Gbejewoh, Keesstra, & Blancquaert, 2021). From a study that focused on the review of papers and research conducted alongside the topics of sustainability and wine, overall, the majority (around 47%) addressed environmental sustainability alone, followed by a restricted number of studies on economic sustainability, and lastly only a few (around 13%) focused on the social pillar (Gbejewoh et al., 2021). It is concerning how only a negligible percentage of all the studies addressed the three-sustainability pillar together.

Therefore, based on the scarcity of research together with the growing concern around these issues it could emerge a need to further research into that.

What is happening today? And why should social sustainability interest wine producers and the wine sector in general?

As the focus will be on the Italian market here is some evidence to further support the analysis in this sense:

(1) On Thursday 21st October 2021, the Italian interior minister Luciana Lamorgese nominated Roberto Maroni, an active Italian politician, as the president of the Council to contrast illegal hiring and working practices – known as caporalato – in Italian agriculture (Arachi, 2021). (2) In the conference organized by Gambero Rosso in Rome happened between 17th and 19th October 2021 – the main message that passes was that Italian wineries can leverage on the markets by implementing sustainable labeling focusing not only on the environmental sphere of sustainability, but on its 3 pillars – including and especially on social sustainability and respect of human rights, and already 17% of wineries adopted Equalitas (Latessa, 2021).

This comes in handy when considering that (3) in July a new law – the Transparency Act – will be published in Norway. Such regulation streams from the proposition from the Ministry of Children and Families that presented a Proposal to act on enterprises' transparency on the working conditions and respect of human rights (Prop. 150 L, 2020).

Given the vastity of the topic and the small research done, it is more efficient to narrow down and deep dive the current analysis with a specific focus on human rights.

Data and estimates are quite concerning when it comes to Italian agriculture. Despite the aura of quality and being the country with the greatest number of *Protected Designation of Origin* (PDO) and *Protected Geographical Indication* (PGI) food products recognized by the European Union, where for example it is included a type of wine: Chianti, the excellence of agri-food products in Italy hides a dark side of crime and forced labor condition that derives from the phenomena of *latifundism* emerged after World War II and developed into a modern form of slavery (Scaturro, 2021). The root causes of this issue, lays in the structure of the sector itself, employment in the Italian agri-food sector, as already mentioned in relation to wine, is highly fragmented and depends widely on seasonality hence workers (Scaturro, 2021) under such conditions are less safeguarded and employers can easily make use of criminal practices (Stronger Together & Equalitas, 2022).

Between 2013 and 2019 over 1.500 workers have died because of the conditions they are exposed to due to the presence of caporalato, which reflects and has profound consequences on the health and life of people (Gore, Alestig, Banerji and Ceccarelli, 2021). Despite the fact that

such practices are historically most spread in the southern regions of Italy and mainly correlated with practices of tomato picking and similar, the phenomenon has been tracked down also in the northern territories and in relation with wineries (Gore et al, 2021). There are some shared elements that violates human rights: extremely low wages below the minimum wage applicable to agriculture work, non-existing structure, and protection to report abuses, gender, and migrant discrimination (Gore et al, 2021).
Those alarming data support the necessity of addressing and researching ways to raise the problem and act to solve it. Caporalato issues are of extreme importance in the whole Italian agricultural sector as this represents 2,1% of the Italian economy accounting for 3,9% of the national GDP (Scaturro, 2021).

My focus is then on human rights within the Italian supply chain in wine production, related not only to the initiative undertaken by the Italian ministry. Vinmonopolet has taken action to ensure the most loved wine in Norway comes to the consumer only if ethical behavior and human rights are respected in the producing country (Vinmonopolet, 2022). As Italy accounts for about twenty-seven million liters of imported wine in Norway (Vinmonopolet, 2021), hence being Norwegians' most favorite wine, "*the monopoly works actively to ensure good working conditions in the Italian wine industry, where the biggest challenge is related to migrant workers. […] We have therefore chosen other measures to ensure decent working conditions in Italy*." (Vinmonopolet, 2021)
As mentioned, the analysis will also include reference to the environmental pillar because of the interdependency existing between the concepts.

2.2 Sustainable certifications in the wine industry – state of the art.

Research has shown that the presence of certification ensuring good sustainable practices in the agricultural field enhances the WTP (willingness to pay) between 4% and 8% (Moscovici & Reed, 2018). Those data are important because the same benefits can be transferred to viticulture and enology, with some differentiation as in this case certifications would refer to the winery, the vineyard, or both (Moscovici & Reed, 2018). Environmental/eco-certification could address different areas and the various terminology used, together with a missing shared collective agreement and understanding of sustainability definition for wine, create a complex scenario.

There are *organic* wines where antibiotics, synthetic fertilizers, and pesticides are avoided, however, the typology of chemicals and whether they are approved even for organic wine depends widely on the country of origin and therefore such certification does not give finite and precise information to consumers (Moscovici et al., 2020).
Another ubiquitous certification refers to the term *sustainability* in general. Wines certified by such labels are those that achieve balance between social, environmental, and economic pillars, usually, that certification refers to the business model of the wine producer (Moscovici et al., 2020).
Biodynamic is a term that refers to the creation of organic wine in a holistic and healthy environment focusing for example on crop rotation, seasonality, animal life, and plant diversity (ibidem).
When speaking of *natural* wine, also known as raw wine, it implies no additives, nor any additional chemical processes are undertaken during harvesting and production (Legeron, 2022). Wine experts do not fully agree on the definition of natural wine and there is no label or certification for it. However, due to the fact, that the process of making natural wine involves leaving the product freely to ferment, and no additional processes are made, such practice is often chosen by customers who suffer (for example with headaches or other symptoms) from the addition of sulfites in the product (Moscovici et al., 2020).
Finally, the *fair-trade* movement interests also the wine sector, the certification focuses on social, economic, and environmental indicators. The fair-trade label ensures customers that the wine has been produced following safe labor conditions, ensuring a base payment for laborers and using environmentally friendly practices (Moscovici et al., 2020), it has therefore a meaning in the ethical production process for wine.

Nevertheless, herein I will concentrate my efforts on certifications and labels connected to the topic of Human Rights and Working Conditions of laborers in the vineyards. Research has shown a gap in the sustainability field since, as presented and discussed before, most of the previous studies and papers direct their focus on environmental protection and not on the social aspect of sustainability.
And since the core topic is observed in regard to the Italian wine supply chain, it will be here better developed the state of the art in relation to this country and its interaction with European regulations but especially Norway's. Therefore, here below is an overview of existing certifications employed in the wine sector, particularly used in Italy, and a reflection upon those.

2.2.1 Role and characteristics of existing certifications

In relation to the Italian market, there are mainly three certifications to be taken into consideration that are recognized, regulated, and include workers' rights into the spectrum of requirements wineries have to have to be accredited with those authentications.

They are: *Equalitas* and *VIVA* (Vinrà, 2022), *SQNPI* is still to be comprehended but is rather a quality standard than a proper certification. However, there are also local indicators such as *SOStain* ((Vinrà, 2022) or *LiberaTerra*, both operate in southern Italian territories (mainly Sicily and Apulia) where traditionally the phenomena of caporalato and forced labor are more common (Fazzi & Elsen, 2020). Other similar indicators can be found at individual business levels or regional as the certification *CasaClima Wine* in the Valle d'Aosta region in partnership with the Agency for Energy (Cinquemani, 2022).

As local indicators are not clearly regulated, only legally recognized and established certification will be considered for research purposes and the easiness of analysis, hence Equalitas and VIVA together with *SQNPI* – System of National Quality of Integrated Production.

Table 1: summary of certifications adopted at a national level in Italy

Name	Sustainability pillar			Certification
	Environmental	economic	Social	
VIVA	✓	✓	✗	✓
Equalitas	✓	✓	✓	✓
SQNPI	✓	✗	✗	✗

Source: Own interpretation of the certifications

SQNPI protocol is extended to all agribusiness and ensures companies to position, differentiate, and promote their certified products in a correct and compliant way (Ceviq, 2022). Meaning there is a law that ensures hygienic and sanitary safety as well as the restricted or non-existing use of pesticides (Ceviq, 2022). What is important to notice here is that all typologies of products that are certified via SQNPI are aligned with the rules and regulations and consumers can be safe and sure about what to expect (DNV.it, 2022).

Nonetheless, the individual initiatives are a concrete and tangible indicator of changing attitudes and behaviors. For a long time, corporations have been responding passively to demand from the market and customers, relying mainly on government initiatives (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2022). However direct inputs from companies are actually acting as accelerators since most of the

times single entities and businesses are able to implement changes quicker and more efficiently than what it takes from governments (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2022). Once again partnerships, collaboration, and intent sharing (SDG 17) is what actually turns out to be most valuable in implementing change.
An important and extremely worth mentioning news is that Italy as a whole country will be soon certified sustainable for the wine throughout the whole supply chain (Fabela, 2021). Filippo Giannella, president of the Agricultural Commission in the Italian Parliament, announced that soon after the decree approval from the ministry of the agricultural policies and the *CoSVi* (Committee of Wine Sustainability), a norm would be promoted where all the work that has been done throughout the supply chain will be recognized at a European level as well (EFA news, 2022). There will be a specific logo that will indicate and ensure the whole supply chain follows precise practices consistent with the CAP as well as the Green Deal directing businesses to new standards where quality is ensured by protecting the environment, society and workers while being economically sustainable, rules will be aligned with the already existing certification and standards of SQNPI (EFA news, 2022).

It is a piece of startling news even at a European level, the explicit intent of the CoSVi, responsible for delineating and approving common accepted standards compliant with the three sustainability pillars (Ceccarelli, 2021), is to provide the Italian wine industry with a mean to sustain and booster sustainable development in the sector trying to create order among the countless already existing labels (Ceccarelli, 2021).
Hence, it can be noticed that both Equalitas as part of the roundtable, and SQNPI as the founding base for the national certification, are two of the most important certifications. They work like many others but gained more importance and recognition.

Moving back to the certifications, here below presented their definitions and as it could be observed, only Equalitas – inspired by Federdoc (Cinquemani, 2022) – has taken into account workers' rights, whereas VIVA accounts for innovative and technological practices to benefit and protect the environment and ensures a safe product to be consumed (Vinrà, 2022).

Table 2: summary of indicator to obtain VIVA and Equalitas certifications

	Indicators										
	Biodiversity	Carbon footprint (GHG & CO_2)	Water footprint	Chemicals, pesticides	Safety	Packaging	Workers protection	Suppliers relations	Heritage protection	Certification standards	ESG
VIVA	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**				**X**	**X**	
Equalitas	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**

Source: Own interpretation of the certification entities

Again, certifications and initiatives to certify wine as sustainable focuses more often and extensively on the environmental aspect, whereas the ethical part related to due diligence and human rights is less communicated and used.

Wine has been certified with fair trade labeling in 2003 for the first time (Fairtrade International, 2022). As just analyzed, there is a lack of a collective and universal definition of sustainability and when considering certifications and initiatives a large and important absent aspect is the social one. Workers' rights are not often the focus of business and consumers', notwithstanding that, human rights are at the basis of a good functioning of a company (Stronger Together conference, 2022) and hence the emerging trend and this current research focus.

2.2.1.1 Closer look to Italian certifications at national level

The Equalitas certification is a label that ensures products respond to specific social, environmental, and economic pillars to launch and consolidate a model of sustainable quality (Equalitas, 2021). Equalitas was intentionally structured and established to address wine practices (Equalitas, 2022). In 2014, "*Forum per la Sostenibilità del vino*" started to census and track the sustainable existing programs and, since most of them were only partially compliant with international standards and regulations, the newly Equalitas certification came into place in 2016 to solve for this (Equalitas, 2022). That was done through the Equalitas–Sustainable Wine standard. Such standards provided the certification with a shared and international recognition, especially in Northern European countries (Wine News, 2021). Growers adopt an international management system with the aim of having an annual sustainability report to be transparent towards clients and stakeholders and, at the same time, inform them about practices

and rules they have been implementing (Equalitas, 2021). Each of the pillars on which the Equalitas certification is based is characterized by specific and measurable indicators verifiable by everyone and that must be met in order to be accredited with such standard (Equalitas, 2021). Starting from the environmental sustainability indicators, they refer to the biodiversity of the vineyard and the area, the carbon footprint, and the water footprint (Equalitas, 2021). Moving on to social and environmental pillars, the indicators the certification monitors are related to agricultural as well as wineries and bottling practices (ibidem). As for economic sustainability, the Equalitas label is connected to good business practices, good economic practices for employees, and for suppliers, too (Equalitas, 2021).
Finally, specifically looking at the organization and therefore the social aspect of sustainability within wineries, this area is characterized by indicators pertaining to the overall employees' conditions within the company, training policies, and relations within the community (Equalitas, 2021). Equalitas focuses on communication practices as well as looking at the policies in place, the sustainability reports distributed, and the correct declaration of conformity with the certification standards (Equalitas, 2021).
Being able to display and communicate the belonging to such standards and labels is becoming everyday more important, especially in the wine sector of the so-called "old world wine countries" including here for example Italy, France, and Spain (Stanco & Lerro, 2020). That is because consumers overall are evolving and so are their wine preferences as greater attention is given to social and environmental clauses (Stanco & Lerro, 2020). The concept of quality and its costs incorporates social costs as well (ibidem).

Considering VIVA, this standard of certification is promoted by the Ministry for Ecological Transition together with the Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea (Cinquemani, 2022). To measure the sustainability in the production chain from the vineyard to the final product – wine – VIVA comprehends four clusters aimed at regulating and guiding producers in their activities and certification entities to verify compliance (Ministero della Transizione Ecologica, 2011). Such indicators are (1) Aria (air) – considers how and on which scale the single company's activities influences climate change; (2) Acqua (water) – which calculates the amount of water waste for each bottle produced; (3) Vigneto (vineyard) – considers chemicals and substances used in the production area; (4) Territorio (territory) – considers traditions and culture to be preserved and protected (Ministero della Transizione Ecologica, 2011).

The scope of the analysis and verification of activities within the abovementioned clusters is based on sustainability evaluations that need to benefit and involve the agricultural phase in the vinery, the production in the cellar, distribution with also consumption and waste (Ministero dell'Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio e del Mare & Opera Research Center, 2016). Within those indicators and their links to sustainability pillars, the social one related to human rights and decent working conditions is taken into account, however, when looking specifically at indicators and requirements the focus is entirely shifted to all the other aspects of sustainability. Therein VIVA is not directly focused and explanatory for the purpose of the thesis.

2.2.2 Role of government and authorities

Essential in the whole discourse is the role that government, authorities, or NGOs have on both consumer behavior but also on pressuring and partnering up with actors in the wine industry to determine better working conditions or act on sustainability in general. As it is underlined in study from the book "*Science based activism*" by Stoknes, Eliassen, & Ditlev-Simonsen (2015), people are willing to be influenced and guided by institutions' actions to pursue more ethical and environmentally friendly attitudes and therefore it is essential to also get an overview in this field (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2011).

Europe and Italy do not have a shared and common definition for sustainable wine, but there are general supranational indications combined with national regulatory bodies and initiatives to ensure compliance with mandatory basic requirements from governments, the EU, the market, and customers (Cinquemani, 2022). This void is filled by individual initiatives to establish national certifications, such as the abovementioned SQNPI, VIVA, and Equalitas.

Some of the European initiatives have already been mentioned but a broader and more exhaustive picture is to be addressed and presented, together with emerging initiatives and actions from national governments and ministers both in Italy and Norway. The scenario becomes complex as wineries need to comply and invest in order to be able to tackle and respond to all different requests and hence the multifaceted situation does not ease the communication efforts directed to customers'.

Starting with the more general and broad picture EU regulations can provide, the European Union represents a key actor in setting and defining shared and supranational regulations when it comes to wine supply chain. There are mainly two policies that affects this industry: the already mentioned EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and with it the EU wine policy

(Pomarici & Sardone, 2020). The *EU wine policy*, as part of the CAP measures applicable to the wine sector (European Commission, COM (2020), 233) is a structured attempt to guide sustainable transition of the industry and innovation and respond to increasing demand for quality and sustainability in a growing competitiveness (European Commission, 2020). EU rules on oenological production are both transversal and applicable to all sectors, with some deep and specifical requirements that affects the whole supply chain (Pomarici & Sardone, 2020) to ensure quality, safety, and improved overall market conditions (European Commission, 2020).

Here we can move on to the specific situation in Italy.

The Italian Republic has been addressing the sustainability issue with a multistakeholder approach, thus including wine growers, researchers, policy makers, trade associations, wineries and customers in addressing challenges and trying to find compelling and collective solutions (Alentejo Wine Symposium, 2016). At a national level, all initiatives need to be compliant not only with requirements coming from the EU, but also created and integrated with instances from the *Strategia Nazionale di Sviluppo Sostenibile* (SNSvS) and specific programs such as *Programma Nazionale di Riforma* (PNR) e *Documento di Economia e Finanza* (DEF) (SNSvS, 2017).

On the matter of the national certification, the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Forestry has promoted the national certification specification of sustainability in the wine supply chain ensuring a national sustainability certification from the grape harvest of 2022 onwards (Dell'Orefice, 2022). The certification will follow the standards proposed by SQNPI with the aim of integrating all efforts coming from different schemes by 2023 (Federvini, 2022).

Alongside the upcoming normative for a single certification for wine sustainability standards, and the already established certifications, the "*Sustainable Wine Roundtable*" has been established with the desire to make wine the leading sector in sustainable manners (Wine News, 2022). This roundtable represents an international, nonprofit initiative that gathers producers, distributors, retailers, and environmental organizations from around the world with the goals of protecting and regenerating the ecosystem, protecting human rights, promoting at the same time equality and inclusion as well as ensuring prosperity by focusing on excellence (Wine News, 2022).

Finally, when it comes to Norway, from July 2022, Scandinavian authorities have made it compulsory the identification of human rights risks and the undertaking of actions on possible

deriving issues with the introduction of the Transparency Act – in Norwegian *Åpenhetsloven* (Lov om virksomheters åpenhet og arbeid med grunnleggende menneskerettigheter og anstendige arbeidsforhold). The law is also called "Human Rights Act for Business" as it represents a reinforcement of due diligence and legal requirements already in place in the Norwegian landscape (Etisk Handel Norge, 2022). The implementation will take place as of July 2022 and will affects all products and goods produced or imported after that date.
As for the wine sector, Norway imports over thirty thousand products from around 88 countries in the world, and those imports are controlled by less than 500 national wholesalers (Etisk Handel Norge & Elvik, 2021). It becomes clear how with the implementation of this Transparency act Norway can firstly control actively all subcontractors and manage dangerous situations all around. But it can even act as a driver leveraging on the global market as a pioneer for chance towards more ethically and sustainable responsible businesses (Etisk Handel Norge, 2022).

As it can be observed, all certifications, as well as initiatives, derive from collaborations and partnerships of governmental entities, businesses, and NGOs. This underlines once more how the whole market and stakeholders are to be taken into consideration and held accountable to promote and support a more sustainable and ethical transition.

2.2.3 NGOs actions

In a landscape of regulators and policy makers, there are external entities that have power to effectively influence and collaborate with governments – those are NGOs which is the acronym for Non-Governmental Organizations.
Two established examples when it comes to human rights in wine supply chain that have been involved in the Norwegian case for Italian imports are Stronger Together and &Wider.
Stronger Together is a multi-stakeholder business-led organization that provides support and help in guiding companies towards a positive change on the matter of Human Rights and Workers Exploitation (Stronger Together, 2018). They engage in activities such as trainings, seminars, research to address labor issues to tackle modern slavery (Stronger Together, 2018).
&Wider provides monitoring, surveys, due diligence and other services to companies in order to gain insights on supply chains conditions and improve those latter by setting best practices (&Wider, 2022).

Why are efforts in the direction of due diligence and human right so crucial in the todays' circumstances?
In research from Nielsen (2015) it has been seen that brands that demonstrate to be committed towards sustainability outperformed in the market compared to those who did not; additionally, consumers have stated they are willing to pay more for sustainable brands.
Following from that, more and more companies have been engaging in sustainability practices, and it is now a trend that is transforming this into a business leverage (Corbo, 2016).
Being sustainable and engaging in sustainability practices does not only improve competitiveness, but more importantly it improves stakeholder relationship which in turn benefits the whole supply chain (Corbo, 2016).
When it comes to human rights and working conditions, the situation is rather complex and negative. The Corporate Human Rights Benchmark has woefully failed to show evidence of human rights mitigation in corporations' supply chain (World Benchmarking Alliance, 2021). Aware of this unstable situation, the EU has been working on a legislation that will include rules for mandatory corporate environmental sustainability and human rights due diligence as part of the Sustainable Corporate Governance (Business & Human Rights Resource Center, 2022).
It has been proven that the EU sustainable corporate governance initiative and requirements should be mandatory and applied to all workers in all ties of the supply chain, especially where the subcontracting issues which makes it harder to control and impose the same regulation along all production (von Broembsen & WIEGO, 2022). That applies to the Italian situation where often grape picking is subcontracted to agencies and third parties not directly controlled by the canteen or winery, which could imply a breach of human rights (Stronger Together & Equalitas, 2022).

2.3 Norwegian action towards' human rights: wine supply chain

2.3.1 Vinmonopolet

Recently all monopolies in the Nordic countries, therefore including Vinmonopolet – the Norwegian monopoly for wine and spirits, are joining forces to align with the UN guiding principle for Business on Human Rights.

This leads down to the implementation of activities throughout the supply chain in the countries they engage with – special emphasis has already been addressed to countries such as South Africa and other sourcing countries, now greater attention is directed towards Italy.
Such actions are double folded, they look at procedures to be implemented in the Italian system, but also in the processes in place within the monopoly as well.
One of the primary intentions is to ensure that the prevention of human rights infringements is ensured, communicated, and implemented all the way down in the supply chain. Vinmonopolet has a code of conduct that compile strict and detailed requirements addressing human rights and working conditions for all producers, subcontractors independently of the relationship existing among wineries and suppliers (Vinmonopolet, 2022).
Vinmonopolet is acting in accordance with the new upcoming Åpenhetsloven law, set to ensure due diligence anchored in management boards, perform assessment, and control for human rights violation and ensure transparency and decent working conditions in supply chains (Etisk Handel Norge, 2022).
Intentions and requirements are deriving from this law, but also to Vinmonopolet own vision and mission, worried about Italian vineyard workers' rights highlighted in the Oxfam and Systembolaget report cited previously (Gore et al., 2021).
Vinmonopolet is setting new and more severe requisites with emphasis on safe working conditions and responsible recruitment (Vinmonopolet, 2021).
Additionally, moving from SDG 8, Vinmonopolet defined several actions and initiatives to contribute to a positive shift in society improving workers' conditions (ibidem). Specifically in relation to SDG 8.7 on abolishment of force labor and SDG 8.8 on decent work and economic growth (UN, 2015).
Other correlated activities that show the proactive attitude of the Wine Monopoly are: indirect training of wine producers through the help of third parties (the abovementioned Equalitas, Stronger Together, &Wider) showing once more the importance of SDG 17 in this matter. Direct and close work is made with individual wineries that need extra support to address human rights violation emerged from the reporting about working conditions required now by the Monopoly (Vinmonopolet, 2022). Additionally, Vinomnopolet set up a direct worker reporting system which ensures anonymity through which issues and suspects of human rights violation are directly addressed to the laborer – tool already used and tested in the case of South Africa (Vinmonpopolet, 2022). Extra focus is also asked to importers which the Monopoly works in conjunction with to carry out additional reporting. (Vinmonopolet, 2022).

2.3.2 Importers

In this ecosystem, an important role is covered by importers that need to manage and supervise the relationship between the monopoly and producing countries. In fact, in order to be compliant with Norwegian requirements to import alcoholic beverages, one needs to be given approval upon the registration with the Directorate of Customs and Excise as liable for excise duty or have a license to produce alcoholic beverages (Vinmonopolet, 2022). Hence, most of producers actually entertain relationships with already registered Norwegian wholesalers that act as importers (Vinmonopolet, 2022).

The panorama of importing companies is variegated and differentiated also depending on the type of alcohol imported. ArcusGroup AS for example deals mainly with spirits and aquavits, however the group's subsidiary Vingruppen AS is in turn a holding company for other brands, responsible for the import of wines in Norway (Vingruppen, 2022). Other Norwegian players in the market are Fondberg, and Engelstad founded in 1924 after the establishment of Vinmonoplet.

Solera Beverage Group and Amka are not Norwegian companies but operates largely in the Nordics (Jacobsen, Andersen & Norberg, 2015).

Overall, around 450 Norwegian importers and wholesalers interacts with Vinmonopolet handling over five thousand suppliers and subcontractors which contributes to their portfolios worldwide (Vinmonopolet, 2022).

2.4 Premium or penalty – does the introduction of sustainability certification improve brand equity? The knowledge and interest among consumers.

The multitude of certifications, labels, and regulations on wine – and more – contributes to creating confusion and uncertainty among customers. They are not able to understand and differentiate as there is a lack of integrity and information to clearly and effectively communicate to customers the characteristics and meanings of certifications applied to wine. There has been a growing research trend aimed at understanding exactly if customers are aware and interested, and most importantly care and understand what certifications aim to communicate to them. This has been considered also together with the analysis of the impact on the price that the presence of wine eco-labeling has compared to non-certified or non-explicitly communicated actions.

There exists a mismatch between what customers claim about their attitudes toward sustainable consumption compared to what their actual purchase behaviors are (Moscovici, Rezwanul, Mihailescu, Gow, Ugaglia, Valenzuela, & Rinaldi, 2020).

On top of the already confusing and multifaceted reality, wine consumption choices are considered to be the most complex among food choices. That is due to the quality of the wine that is composed and formed by multiple factors (region of origins, vintages, wine producers) and that implies customers have additional effort to sustain when having to deal with such numerous informational cues (Schäufele & Hamm, 2017). In the wine market, the concept of sustainability results from producers' motivation, business models, internal and external stimuli and the degree of responsiveness businesses have referred to those (Capitello & Sirieix, 2019). Despite the recognized importance accredited also by the *International Organization of Vine and Wine* (OIV) that included sustainability practices and research in their strategic plan (OIV.int, 2022), and the increasing concerns and demands from customers for sustainable options (Remaud, Chabin, & Mueller, 2010) still the concept of sustainability does not seem to yield a certain ROI (Return on Investment) that would enable to recover from investment needed to be compliant (Capitello & Sirieix, 2019). This might be due to the fact that the introduction and increased demand for sustainable wines comes from the supply side with drivers coming from retailers and distributors (Remaud et al., 2010). This results in increasing customers' preferences for eco-friendly labeled wines in stores (ibidem), although without an actual background work to provide information to customers informing about benefits and characteristics of certifications. Eco-labels are conceived to reduce asymmetry between producers' and consumers' information and knowledge. However, certifications are several and do not recall anything in particular in consumer's minds, which in many cases lead to a flop and huge unrecovered sunk costs compared to the expected increase in profitability (Delmas & Lessem, 2016).

Nonetheless for consumers to improve buying behavior and move towards sustainable choices, labels and logos are fundamental. Once again given the coexistence of many different certifications with the related eco-labels, there are raising concerns around the possibility that messages and information are not clearly conveyed to consumers and therefore the willingness to purchase such products and the potential price premium related are not successfully exploited, or to better frame it, not captured by wine companies (Ginon, Ares, Laboissière, Brouard, Issanchou, & Deliza, 2014).

Intrinsic benefits and characteristics of sustainable wines will lead to rationally assume that consumers should prefer products that promise the use of fewer pesticides that preserve the environment and the workers' health and work conditions (Lim & Reed, 2020). Moreover, eco-friendly wines will last longer and those wines which are sustainably produced have a less negative impact on consumers health (Lim & Reed, 2020). In fact, grapes tend to retain chemicals used through the whole production process which are then transferred to the final product – wine. Studies have generally proven that, despite the high-cost barrier for other product categories, when it comes to wine consumers are willing to bear a premium price for a product that followed sustainable practices (Ouvrard et al., 2020). Nevertheless, many studies show conflicting results when it comes to consumers' attitudes and behaviors. Some have found that eco-labels generate a price penalty instead of the wished and predicted premium (Lim & Reed, 2020) for which producers make efforts to ensure a better quality compared to wine produced without caring of any sustainable practice (Ouvrard et al., 2020).

Therefore, looking at the relation growth and performance have with CSR and sustainability matters (triple bottom line) it emerges that the underlying motives that push wineries to adopt sustainability certifications and standards voluntarily and individually are to be found in the evidence of improved efficiency (Corsinovi & Gaeta, 2017, cited by Muñoz, Fernández, & Salinero, 2019). Not only, but also in external business factors such as governmental requirements, NGOs actions, but even as a response to explicit customers' requirements (ibidem).

3. Hypothesis development and data collection

To expand the knowledge related to social sustainable practices in the Italian wine production, my research will both focus on insights from the Norwegian market and customers. Research in relation to the wine sector in Italy will be compared to trends and analysis of the counterpart in Norway, namely the Vinmonopolet and the importers ensure a more complete overview of the current relationship between Italian companies, Norwegian alcohol monopoly and the importers who have a direct contact with the Italian market.

Such information will be compared with insights from Norwegian customers. This will allow understanding of whether companies' initiatives are welcomed, understood, and wanted by customers. It will also contribute by diving into customers' preferences and also knowledge on such themes.

The literature on that specific sector is scarce, since it is a relatively new topic that is now gaining importance within the wine industry, as explained earlier. Therefore, the hypotheses are delineated thanks to studies executed on other products and sectors, but the same conclusion could potentially be observed in this field.

Devinney, Auger, Eckhardt, & Birtchnell, in their paper from 2006 "*The Other CSR: Consumer Social Responsibility*", underline how companies and societies can become more socially responsible only if such instances are shared and understood by the average consumer and their behavior and attitude reflect and are consistent with those beliefs.

Therefore, the interviews that will be conducted will extract information on consumers with the aim of exploring *Consumer Social Responsibility*. This is a concept related to the issues of evaluating consumers' actual behavior in the face of what consumers affirm in polls, surveys, or interviews and whether their attitudes actually reflect such noble intents or otherwise, as they most commonly do, if they just opt for the cheapest alternative (Devinney et al., 2006).

There exist two opposite approaches, in one case – the *reactive approach* – companies react to consumers' demand in regard to social needs by creating product or services to fulfill such wants (Devinney et al., 2006). The other strategy – *proactive* – implies firms to create buying occasions for latent wants and needs or nudge customers in that direction working on what such wants and needs should be and push compliant products or services into the market (Devinney et al., 2006). Hence, the interest will stress the definition of CSR as a company's commitment to eliminate, or at least reduce, negative effects and influences on the society by focusing on long-term beneficial impact on society they can implement (Mhor, Webb, & Harris, 2001), and with that safeguarding the rights and treatment of employees.

Therefore, an ecological wine buyer profile will be outlined, and his/her current buying behavior will be investigated to ultimately evaluate the link between CSR and its influence on people's consumption patterns.

The analysis will help answering six main hypotheses that will be presented here below. They are divided into three main topic areas which have served as guiding cues to structure the interviews and the subsequent analysis of results.

3.1 Sustainable consumption patterns

Literature and studies show that workers and consumers do not act always in consistency with microeconomic theory. There are some additional elements to consider in the interaction with a company, for example, inequality aversion (Becchetti & Rosati, 2007). One study from 2007 by Becchetti and Rosati investigated and showed how consumers, due to globalization, can feel more virtually close to distant countries and therefore worry about the poor conditions of producers in other parts of the world.

From here stems the first question related to the extent to which consumers might be interested and concerned with respect to caporalato conditions or disrespect of human rights for the product wine. And of course, if those problems were addressed, would there be an actual willingness to purchase virtuous products which guarantee that slavery conditions have been avoided and workers have been protected and respected?

Additionally, evidence from experiments has shown that, if correctly designed and signaled by marketers, green products generate a higher willingness to pay when compared to a non-green choice; however, it is important to design and showcase green products in a way that distinctively differentiates them from other products – e.g., by using labels (Berger, 2019). Evidence from previous studies in more explored and researched sectors, such as food, apparel, and green products, suggests that there subsists a positive correlation between the value consumers attribute to a product and the purchase decision (Leszczyńska, 2015). Moreover, consumers are willing to pay a premium price to make an eco-friendly choice (Leszczyńska, 2015). Thus, questions regarding values and beliefs will be assessed as this current research is willing to lead to the same results. This could confirm that, similarly to green and eco-friendly products, ethical wines, correctly labeled and communicated, lead to a premium pricing opportunity.

However, there are conflicting results when it comes to establishing whether or not customers are in general willing to pay higher prices for green products, varying in relation to the country and the typology of products ranging from around 35% (Millock, Hansen, Wier, Anderson, 2002) up to 65% (Leszczyńska, 2015). The food market registers the highest percentages of people willing to pay a premium: Canavari et al. found 65,8% of Italian consumers willing to pay higher prices and in Spain (Gil, Garcia, Sanchez, 2000) people are keen on spending 15% to 25% more for ecological products (Leszczyńska, 2015).

Hence the first related hypotheses:

***HP 1**: people are more willing to buy sustainable products and in particular sustainable wine.*

***HP 2**: companies' efforts to signal ethical cues lead to customers' socially responsible consumption*

3.2 Customer needs on sustainability

Consumers' demand for socially responsible products is constantly increasing, and therefore businesses need to consider the trend of changing needs while balancing at the same time costs, quality, brand image, and other decision-making factors (Ha-Brookshire & Norum, 2011). Nevertheless, a consistent gap between consumers' claimed purchase intentions and their actual spending and purchase behaviors has been identified. Insofar as ethical and fair-trade are concerned, this gap is even greater (De Pelsmacker, Driesen, & Rayp, 2005). This so-called "attitude-behavior" gap proves and shows that environmental knowledge and consciousness do not directly lead to pro-environmental behavior in practice (Nguyen, Nguyen, & Hoang, 2018). It has been shown that although people recognize the importance to prefer environmentally friendly products, they tend not to voluntarily take the initiative and bear negative consequences such as costs increase (Ditlev-Simosen, 2011). Therefore, it is the exact role of authorities and governments to nudge and influence people and, in this way, facilitate a sustainable development with their interventions (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2011).

Other studies have proven that if consumers are already involved in ecological buying behavior for example in the food industry, they are willing to be true with such pattern also when they move to other product categories such as apparel (Ellis, McCracken, & Skuza, 2012). This would support the thesis that people are willing to purchase organic wine as well. It could be evaluated if there is a positive correlation between customer behavior of people already

purchasing other ecological products or if the wine industry represents an exception. Findings are anyway supportive in order to test the first hypothesis.
When considering CSR in relation to customers, it is important to address and develop responsibility, among others, product quality and safety (Ferreira & Ribeiro, 2017).
Despite some divergencies on the actual influence customers have in addressing labor issues carried on by companies, generally people are interested and engaged in improving corporations' ethical behaviors as a powerful outcome of customers' activism (Kang & Hustvedt, 2013). If a company is consistent with such practices and delivers what is promised in the area of human rights in the supply chain, customers will positively reward it in terms of customer loyalty, retention, product choices, and purchase intention (Kang & Hustvedt, 2013). Therefore, if companies respond to customers' interest of seeing the brand engaged in CSR, this will pay off by also increasing brand equity (Green & Peloza, 2014).

HP 3*: initiatives and regulations leading towards socially sustainable practices by companies derive from customers, and encounter their needs.*

HP 4*: wine companies' initiatives on human rights protection are not an imposition on customers' purchase patterns.*

3.3 Sustainable certification and implications

Taking the case of coffee as a guiding example, this sector worked as a pioneer in the field establishing the first fair trade labeling (Pierrot, Giovannucci, & Kasterine, 2011). Further, the acceptance of labeling and indication by consumers is accompanied in that industry by a premium price people correspond in order to be ensured with a product that actually safeguards workers' rights and human rights (Abdu & Mutuku, 2021). Fairtrade is no longer seen than as a niche market, it has the potential to appeal to consumers – and not only those who are considered to be socially aware (Cailleba & Casteran, 2010). Nonetheless, studies have also shown that despite the growth, people do not show loyalty nor repeated purchases for fair trade products, and the price premium corresponding to the safeguarding of human rights acts as the main purchase barrier (Cailleba & Casteran, 2010; and Shaw, Hogg, Wilson, Shiu, & Hassan 2006).
In a study from 2011 by Michaud and Llerena "*Green Consumer Behaviour: an Experimental Analysis of Willingness to Pay for Remanufactured Products*" it emerges that people are not

willing to pay a premium price for environmental products unless there are some economic benefits for them as well.

Additionally, the willingness to pay for ethically sourced products is supported and correlated with the fact that this still has some impact on the environment (Bartels & Onwezen, 2013), as it improves not only working conditions, but it also has a cascade positive effect on the planet and its degradation (ILO, 2018). In this way, the results already tested in previous studies for eco-friendly products can be translated to goods with ethical claims which is the subject of this current research.

Moreover, on average, people are willing to pay a premium – 25% for organic cotton clothing (Ellis et al., 2012) – and therefore if the hypotheses are confirmed it is likely that there will be a premium also related to ethically made wines, object of this thesis.

Eco-labels are seen as a powerful mean to reduce and address the problem of information asymmetry which on one hand have companies that increasingly make use of green marketing advertising, on the other hand, there are consumers that often believe such claims are not reliable and therefore shifting the attention away from green products (Testa, Iraldo, Vaccari, & Ferrari, 2015).

However, eco-labels are more powerful in communicating and reducing such discrepancies in information to assess the sustainability of a product, if the consumer is already informed about the superior quality and ecological performance of a product (Testa et al., 2015). Hence the hypothesis is partially confirmed since there is an urgent need for a well-designed communication and certification scheme (Testa et al., 2015) such as the analyzed national certification for sustainable wine in Italy.

***HP 5**: the indication of social sustainability and ethical production on wine labels increases customers' willingness to purchase*

***HP 6**: customers are willing to pay a premium price for ethically produced wines*

However, when it comes to agricultural practices, of which the wine production is part of, customers are often not able to make properly informed decisions on eco-friendly products as procedures and information related to such sector are not properly conveyed nor are the benefits deriving from a more sustainable consumption (Mauracher, Procidano, & Valentini, 2019). Notwithstanding that, if targeted correctly, younger people show a positive attitude towards sustainable claims for wine resulting in a higher WTP for organic wines (Mauracher et al., 2019) therefore it could be inferred that, if correctly communicated, these results could be true for ethically produced wines. This would potentially support and confirm the formulated hypotheses.

The interviews will therefore be held among younger and older Norwegian participants in order to establish if age, wage or education might be influencing factors in customer behaviors and attitudes. Their affirmation will be backed up and compared with interviews to clerks in Vinmonopolet shops to capture the actual situation. This will allow to eventually address the gap existing in relation to attitudes and behaviors highlighted in previous studies and different sectors by Caroline Dale Ditlev-Simonsen in the book "*Science-Based Activism*" (chapter 6, p. 128 – 141).

4. Methodology

The aim of this study is to understand how the issues of modern slavery and breach of human rights in wine supply chain is approached by different actors in the market and involved in it. Relating it with the more general topic of sustainability practices, the certification and signal of those can influence customers behavior. This has been done thought literature review and information on current situation. For what concerns consumer behavior, to better grasp if their consumption patterns could be influenced by improved condition signaled by labelling, a qualitative approach has been followed. Semi-structured in-depth interviews (Voutsina, 2017) have been conducted among Norwegian consumers in different age groups (considered above 18 years old as the legal minimum age to consume alcohol in Norway).

The interviews (see Appendix 1) questions were grouped by theme to provide answer and test the developed hypotheses.

First, respondents were asked general screening questions in order to understand their habits, their background and to start the conversation. Then, general questions on environmental attitudes were addressed to understand if the consumers fall under the category of "environmentally conscious" or else. Since, as underlined in the hypotheses section, there are studies that show if a consumer is already involved in ecological buying behaviors, interviewees will most likely adhere to their values independently of the products in hand (Ellis et al, 2012). Hence, here it will be tested whether having interests in sustainability and ethics topics in purchase decisions leads to the same outcome when it comes to wine.

Subsequently, the focus moves on to the wine industry in particular and on consumers' overall attitude towards sustainable wine. Also, questions on the exact topic of human rights and of caporalato were included to test and understand the general knowledge of the phenomena and the interest. In this way it can be tested if the initiatives from Norwegian or European authorities and actors in general are a reactive or proactive approach on the matter as explained by Devinney et al. in their research paper from 2006.

At this point it is important to mention that the results and insights gained from consumers' interviews have been also compared with interviews made to clerks in various Vinmonopolet shops around the city of Oslo. In this way, an attempt to verify the truthfulness of consumers behaviors and purchase patters in the real market has been made.

Finally, a general understanding of the how the problem is perceived and an assess of current companies' actions or future possible improvements suggestions has been asked.

The sample consisted of Norwegian people mainly coming from my network, hence colleagues in the university. The *snow balling sampling* technique (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981) has been used to recruit older generation consumers to be identified then with relatives of the selected participants. The snow balling technique, also known as *chain-referral* sampling is a method in which the sample of observation is built thanks to connection existing between the first interviewees and the latter (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). For me this has been particularly useful since it would have been otherwise challenging finding Norwegian customers. Also, some participants were asked to engage in the same sort of conversation with their acquaintances and come back with some additional information in order to enrich my findings. Therefore, the sample consisted of 3 university student which are still enrolled in, 3 young professionals who just finished their master's degree and therefore enjoy an improved economic and financial situation, and finally 4 older people to represent a different generation. In proportion, my sample presented the following characteristic.

Table 3: respondents' distribution

Category	percentage
Male	60%
Females	40%
Students	33%
Professionals	67%
Younger generation (between 22-27 years old)	60%
Older generation (above 50 years old)	40%

The interviews results have been coded and analyzed using a codebook where for each hypothesis – and relative questions asked – quotes have been marked creating therefore an overview of the findings and contribution by each participant. This allowing also for comparisons and to draw conclusions or identify common trend and characteristics.

However, additional information shared in my findings are also coming from the interviewees' later updates, made possible by their confrontation with friends and relatives.
When it comes to the clerks in Vinmonopolet shops, the interviews just happened to be rather informal and spontaneous. I visited five shops in different locations across the city. This allowed me to capture a diverse array of opinions from employees in retailing positions.

5. Analysis

In this chapter, hypothesis testing coming from the analysis of the interviews is conducted. However, before entering the proper analysis of the results, an overview of the observed customers persona is here presented.

I have identified, among my 10 interviews, some common elements that allowed me to extract three profiles:
(1) *uninterested to sustainability and price sensitive*. Only young people belong to this category. They are not interested in engaging in more sustainable choices, are not fully aware of alternatives and are not really concerned about consequences their consumption choices have on both environment and workers. They mainly care about personal interests and benefits, as well as economic savings, when making purchases. Hence, they look for the best deal at the lowest price that satisfies their own specific needs.
(2) *sustainability concerned*. This category comprehends the majority of the respondents both from the older and younger generation. They are generally concerned about their purchase choices; they search goods that are sustainable and do no harm to the environment. However, as the other two customer groups, they are not fully aware or interested in ethical issues or human rights breach. They perceive it as a distanced and remote problem and are not always able to directly relate it to their consumption habits. Nevertheless, they are a good target group for ethical or sustainable claims as, if correctly cued, such certification capture their attention , thereby rewarding virtuous companies.
(3) *health freak*. This final group consists of those who base their choices on health concerns. Especially when related to food and drinks they are almost obsessed in health consequences some chemicals or ingredients might have. In the case of wine, their sustainability purchases are driven by elements such as the avoidance of chemicals. These, for example, represent a potential threat to their health. On the other hand however, they do not really consider the environmental or social relations linked to pesticides usage.

5.1 Emerged consumption trends

To better understand consumers' attitude towards sustainability purchases, general questions on their normal behavior and subsequently wine-related behavior have been posed.
A trend emerges which sees most people partially interested in the topic, even though the responses are partly contradictory. "*I rather do action that impact my day-to-day life, as*

recycling, using less plastic bottles, [...] but I do not really look or seek for more sustainable options when I shopping" – respondent 4; or "*I am more concerned when it comes to food, I try to buy organic or locally sourced, try to avoid eating much meat, but overall I am not actively looking for more sustainable choices*" – respondent 10.

Overall, among younger consumers, the attention is higher with respect to those topics. Out of the six younger interviewees, 66% are paying close attention to how the products are sources and produced. However, for many of them – 5 out of 6 – price is still a big determinant of their choices, independently of their working or financial status (full-time workers or students).

When it comes to the older group, they are aware of sustainability claims and threats, however as stated above, they correlate it with everyday situations and not much with purchase choices. Interestingly a couple of young respondents affirmed they invest part of their savings in sustainable businesses.

Looking at wine consumption, price, quality and origin are the main determinants for purchase choices. For younger consumers it emerged that bottle design is an element of attractiveness "*I don't know much about wine, I tend to buy something I already know, which is relatively cheap, and if the bottle has a nice design or label then I would rather buy that*" – respondent 3.

For older consumers price signal quality and therefore it does not represent anymore the main discriminant of choice "*I normally choose a good quality wine, I won't go under certain prices as I would be concerned about ingredients, [...] I also normally ask to people in the Vinmonopolet for advice*" – respondent 9.

Also, natural wine and raw wine are of big interest since they don't contain sulphites or other added chemicals which are causes of health-related issues. Additionally, sustainability in packaging is sought after and lighter glass bottles or plastic bottles are preferred (referring to the *Klimasmart emballasje* at Vinmonopolet). The main driver for such choice is not necessarily sustainability per se "*if I need to carry wine with me, then I prefer to have it in a lighter or even plastic bottle. I help the environment and also it's easier for me*" – respondent 8.

5.2 Customer responses to sustainability cues

Closely related to the previous hypothesis, people here show interesting contributions.

Although they affirmed not being interested or seeking for more sustainable product option, if asked directly or when addressed about the role and knowledge on sustainable and ethical labels they all showed familiarity "*I look mainly at price, if it is too low my concerns raise, but also* *if I see it is labelled as ethical or sustainable, I will most likely choose this over another one without any certification*." – respondent 5. "*I am not aware of all certifications, but I must admit that if I see two similar products and one has a certification for sustainability, even though it's slightly more expensive I will choose the labeled one since it means it respects the planet and the people, I mean the employees*" – respondent 1.

However, customers share confusion and skepticism from time to time when considering choices claimed to be more sustainable, both in the younger and older generation "*when I search for products and I see those claimed to be sustainable, often I don't really understand what they mean, and you know greenwashing is huge topic I am also concerned about*" – respondent 2. "*I see sometimes all those label display virtuous action, I must admit I am equally concerned if I see too much for the environment but even more for people, working conditions in some part of the world are really too bad*" – respondent 10.

5.3 Reactive approach

People are definitely showing a growing interest in ethical matters, some of the respondents – around 40% of the examined sample – expect companies to offer them more sustainable alternatives and actively act to ensure good and healthy working conditions.

However, they also admit this might not be the case for the overall population "*I am extremely concerned with the topic of social sustainability, I actively seek for good alternative and potentially also change my habits. But I come from a family where we all are involved and concerned*" – respondent 6; "*speaking with friends about fair trade or modern slavery, I realized this is not shared by everyone in the choice of products to buy*" – respondent 1.

"*I would say younger generation are requiring more and companies need to adapt, but generally they are not promoters of change, the change is still rather coming from regulations and similar*" – respondent 9. The older representatives among the interviewees shared that the trend of being more sustainable is now an imperative and it might stream from requirements from younger generations, but customers' needs are also being shaped by regulators, law, market competition.

The response and actions of companies in social sustainability and CSR is therefore more reactive than proactive and imposed from above and by external entities "*the public is not really aware or interested in CSR, political and regulatory power is influencing and pushing companies to act in certain ways*" – respondent 3.

Generally, when buying wine, the focus on sustainability is lower than what participants here shared in relation to food or other categories like clothing. Nevertheless, they all agreed on the importance of signaling sustainable choices and communicate them clearly and in the most transparent way. Some people also were reassured by the actions of Vinmonopolet itself in ensuring good and viable offerings to Norwegian customers "*in Norway with the monopoly our choices are within their shops, everyone expects Vinmonopolet to be ethical and respect human rights, we don't ask for it but we assume it*" – respondent 10.

"*The new transparency law will be a good initiative to ensure all customers that the products will be ethically sources, companies need to have due diligence and good practices or it will be hard for them to be sustainable in the economical sense*" – respondent 6.

The majority did not know about caporalato, nor about the existence of modern slavery forms in Italy. Two out of the three young people and three of the older interviewees believed these terms to be mostly related to "*Latin American agriculture*", "*Asian or African countries*", "*other sectors like coffee or diamonds*". One respondent, who followed closely stories about human rights violation in the wine sector, recalled similar processes in the wine supply chain in South Africa.

5.4 Willingness to purchase and willingness to pay

It seems like the main trend and certifications consumers know, in the Norwegian context, are **Klimasmart emballasje** – climate smart packaging – (Vinmonopolet, 2022) and **Miljøsertifisert produksjon** – environmental certified product – (Vinmonopolet, 2022) together with raw and natural wine that, as explained before, do not hold any kind of certification.

However only for a few of them those represent an important element in the purchase decision "*sometimes I see sustainability labels, but they never influence my decision which is mainly based on the price and the type of wine I like*" – respondent 2.

Nevertheless for some consumers ethical and sustainable cues becomes the main and foremost important signal "*if I have already decided on the type and I need to choose, then I am happy to pay a bit more for an organic wine*" – respondent 6; "*when I realize a wine has a biodynamic certification for example, then I have made my choice and I also know I will need to pay more but I am sure this is ethical and sustainable*" – respondent 1.

Also, as highlighted before, in the older generation, sustainability claims and the security of having chemicals-free and ethical-made products is a huge advantage. They are ready to correspond with additional spending. If we consider students, despite them having a part time job, they appeared as more cautious and concerned about their budgets. Therefore, they allocate less money on wine and in general alcohol consumption, and price is their predominant driver of choice.

Other observations can be done if we consider all the rest of the participants. Here, we observed that other characteristics are taken into account for wine choices, and price becomes the discriminant between what is considered to be of good quality and sustainable in some case. Moreover, there subsists a price threshold under which concerns about production practices and quality start to arise.

Research has also shown that sustainable certifications relate to a price premium, which is around 10-15% more compared to non–certified wines; consumers are willing to undertake to be ensured with an ethical or sustainable wine (Cinquemani, 2022). Nonetheless there is a gap between customers saying they want to purchase more sustainable products – 26%– compared to the number of people that actually did that – 10% (Nielsen, 2015). Hence the expressed willingness to pay more does not always translate into concrete purchase choices (Calselli, 2022 cited in Cinquemani, 2022).

Moreover, a younger respondent shared part of a study he has been part of which stated that studies have shown that, in many cases, there is not a strong enough correlation between implementing CSR practices and premium price paid by consumers or incremented value of the company in the market.

As expressed by many consumers in the interviews, there are a number of other criteria that are employed to decide on the wine choice and that does not relate to sustainability.

Table 4: frequencies of variables determinant for wine choices

Variable determinant of wine choice	Frequencies
PRICE	3
WOM (friends recommendations, research, apps)	4
DESIGN	4
CLERKS ADVICE (expert suggestion)	5
GRAPE TYPE	5
TASTE	7
QUALITY (perceived or known)	8
HABIT	9

SUSTAINABILITY	3

Source: elaboration from interviews findings

The variable price refers to the affirmation from the interviewee that the main and almost only criterion of choice is dependent on budget and "search for good deals for small amount of money" – respondent 3, those group only contains young student.
It has not here been taken into account in the variable price all the cases in which price becomes a signal of quality since in those latter case it does not represent an obstacle or determinant of choice. It is rather intended to reinforce the perception of quality and consumers are not concerned of that "*I don't really have a budget nor look at the price for my choice*" – respondent 5 "*[...] if it is more expensive I know it's better quality and production*" – respondent 8.
The variable WOM refers to all practices that involve taking into account friends recommendations, app to guide the choice which influence the choice of consumers "*I care and remember what friends told me about the wine I might want to buy*" – respondent 2.
Design as the word suggest indicates that a determinant of choice involves the design of the bottle or the label, it is quite an important discriminant for the younger group which has low knowledge on wine and it is captured by how the packaging looks "*I normally also look how the bottle is, if it looks pretty or the label has a nice font*" – respondent 1. Design in terms of packaging choices such as plastic for easiness of transportation and sustainability has not been taken here into account for this variable determination as it is more directly and indirectly related to the topic of sustainability, customers are conscious or less to purchase a sustainable *emballasje* and hence contributes to the share of sustainable wine purchases.
Clerks advice is an indicator that refers to habits, mainly in the older generation as only one younger respondent mentioned it, to ask for advice on wine in Vinmonopolet shops. For the older group it is often a critical variable "*I almost all the time ask a person that works there to guide me [...] I don't know much but I want to have always a good quality option*" – respondent 10.
Grape type has been addressed as one of the main element, however in most cases this was a result of knowing from past purchases and habits where to direct the choices in order to facilitate the whole decision process "*maybe sometimes it is also the grape type I look at, [...] from the wine I already bought [...] I know I like because someone suggested*" – respondent 8. Hence it has been here included because mentioned by half of the respondents, but it can be considered as a reinforcement of other more important elements such as quality or habits that have far more

significant frequencies and are mentioned as the foremost single and first detail in the purchase funnel.
Taste has been also mentioned by 70% of the respondents in the sample for being one of the key elements to direct their choices. However, in analyzing further, it emerges that also in this case taste is an additional quid that contributes to the choice, but it is mainly intended in personal preference for stronger red wine, lighter rosé, or sweet white wines. Hence it cannot be controlled and therefore it is here presented for a better complete picture but couldn't be included or extended to the overall population since it is dependent on oneself particular and individual preferences.
Finally, the two most important attributes, shared by 80% and 90% respectively are quality and habits. Both variables can act as an umbrella definition that comprehends most of the other variable described since in all cases those were mentioned as first elements, and when asked to elaborate further they were then decomposed in the more granular range of variables.
For example, under habits (mentioned by 9/10 of the respondents) interviewees included WOM, taste, price – intended as a range they normally allocate to this type of purchases. With quality they instead meant the various described variables which as grape type, bottle design, price, taste; additionally, quality can be signaled by price or bottle design, or influenced by expert advice or research and knowledge hold by the customers themselves.
It can be therefore assumed that quality and habits are the most incisive drivers of choice and that all other elements can act as a reinforcement or single for these main variables. Also, studies have identified that customers are not willing to exchange quality over ethical and sustainability concerns in wine choices and that although they are willing to pay more for a sustainable choice signal of quality, in reality many do not directly associate ethical and environmental cues with quality itself (Lockshin & Corsi, 2012).

As it can be noticed, also sustainability has been mentioned by 30% of participants. However, it is never the first determinant of choice, it acts, together with the related certification, as an additional prompt in the choice for two identical quality wine, as quality represent the core element of choice (Calselli, 2022 cited in Cinquemani, 2022). "*I usually make research beforehand, [...] if I see a good quality wine and one bottle has a sustainability certificate, then I am buying the sustainable one*" – respondent 1. "*If for the same type of wine, one bottle is natural or biological or organic, then my choice goes to that sustainable one*" – respondent 7.

5.5 Clerks' interviews

To try to reduce limitations that this research comes with, such as the contradiction and also social desirability bias customers often shows, I also asked what the main questions clerks in Vimonopolet are asked by customers. This to test whether the actual intention and affirmations of being influenced and being ready to pay more for sustainable wines actually is reflected in the reality.

To also being able to capture diverse clientele, I also asked in five different Vinmonopolet PoS (Point of Sales) across the city of Oslo.

It emerged that normally people do not pose sustainability questions to vendors. When the latter are approached, it usually is for questions related to practical suggestions, such as wine for a special occasion or the best pairing for a certain type of food.

Also, it can be observed that questions mainly depend on the type of store and the location of it. If it is smaller size Vinmonopolet or it is placed in specific areas, it can also happen that no questions are asked. However, when it starts to become a bigger store and in certain area where people gather for specific interests, then sustainability questions are framed by the larger clientele that approaches the PoS. However, a clerk shared that on around hypothetical 500 clients question, only 10/15 of those are sustainability related, the rest falls back into general advice.

Moreover, most of customers appreciate sustainable packaging such as lighter bottles and plastic ones that reduces emissions from transportation and production, which, in turn, benefits the environment. This refers to the fact that Vinmonopolet plastic shopping bags are made of 50% recycled plastic and 50% sugar cane and that by employing plastic over paper emissions are also reduced (to transport the same quantity of paper bags there is a need of 10 times more pallet compared to plastic ones). All of those are definitely improving customers perception of Vinmonopolet and building trust, however none of those is directly related to ethical aspects nor wine production per se.

Finally, considering wine and vineyards, the most common requests revolve around the trend of raw and natural wine, which however does not imply any certification and does not relate to the issue of modern slavery and human rights in the supply chain.

5.6 Customer profiles and purchase patterns

At this stage it is also interesting to draw customers profiles and see how and if those profiles actually influence in any way also wine purchases and concern in relation to CSR practices.

Some research focused on the aim of understanding and developing consumers groups based on wine preferences, leveraging attributes that are relevant to meet customers' needs and demand.

In a study from Stanco, Lerro and Marotta (2020) on Italian wine it emerges that, as shared by the respondents in this thesis, the main attributes that drive customers' choices are, among others, "quality", "price" and also "sustainability certifications", as well as "canned wine" which is related to sustainable and innovative packaging.

Studies have shown that often times consumers associate the wine sector with being already sustainable, creating therefore barriers to the development and to the competitive advantage actual sustainable initiatives can have in this regard (Capitello & Siriex, 2019).

Additionally, the whole idea of "*sustainable winemaking*" (Sogari, Corbo, Macconi, Menozzi & Mora, 2015, p. 314) is still a vague concept and still much is to be done to reduce information asymmetry in this sector in order to transform positive perception and interest of customers' for ethical and sustainable wine into action ad profits streaming from customer demand (Sogari et al, 2015).

The abovementioned study, in line with other research, underlines how sustainability certifications in wine are determinant in consumers choices only in the cases where the consumer is already conscious and involved in sustainable and ethical consumption and if he/she understands the related ethical and sustainable wine consumption to environmental protection and self-sacrifice (Sogari et al, 2015).

All in all, several studies showed that people need to be involved in sustainability and in wine consumption topics to relate positive feelings and purchase pattern towards sustainable wine (Olsen, Thach & Hemphill, 2012; Pomarici & Vecchio 2014).

The same trend can be identified in the current study. 70% of participants' showed interest and involvement in sustainability which reflected an intention of purchasing more sustainable wine but only in the previously addressed situation of parity of quality and only if information and communication were clearer. "*the communication from companies is not always effective or transparent, reports are so long and specific and no one has the time to read all of it*" – respondent 2, "*it is hard to be sustainable if you don't know what it exists and how you can get information"* – respondent 8.

Age also has been addressed as a discriminant for purchase choice and sustainability involvement (Pomarici & Vecchio, 2014). Studies are contradictory in this regard; even so younger people are believed to be more interested in that and it is also partially shown in my study.
Collectively, my research involved participants which form a small and not entirely representative sample, not necessarily highly involved in wine consumption and coming from a shared network (show balling sampling). Hence, results from previous research and study are to be considered more consistent and reliable.

5.7 Companies responsibility

In line with participants' response, White, Hardisty and Habib (2019) reported how many companies are "*facing a frustrating paradox: Most consumers report positive attitudes toward eco-friendly products and services, but they often seem unwilling to follow through with their wallets.*"
Companies can play a crucial role in pushing sustainable consumption: "*Humans are creatures of habits*" (White et al., 2019), hence companies can trigger familiarity by designing features that can substitute negative with more positive habits (ibidem).
Among respondents it emerged how communication, transparency and information are often lacking when it comes to sustainability issues on the topic of wine. It must be said that Vinmonopolet's role is rather complex in this sense because explicit advertisement and communication about alcohol is not allowed. Nevertheless, many respondents share that in the same way responsible consumption is communicated to Norwegians, in the same way there must initiatives to be undertaken to engage the public in ethical wine choices (De Salvo, Capitello & Begalli, 2018). "*if I knew about those issues I will be more focused and aware of what wine I choose*" – respondent 6.

6. Discussion

The hypotheses, in this current thesis, were structured around findings and discoveries from previous studies, mainly coming from other sectors and declinable to the segment and market at issue. Or coming directly from results observed in comparable studies that shared similarity in the aim of the research. Assumptions were drawn from these finding duly adapted to the current topic: attitudes of Norwegian consumers towards ethical and sustainable wine and level of influence companies can leverage and translate potentially into profits; but more importantly shaping new more responsible consumption choices.
Here it will follow discussion of personal findings in light of the secondary data gathered in the previous sections; reflection will be then made, and conclusions will be drawn.

From the sample analyzed, a trend that clearly supports the hypothesis number one does not emerge: people are not always willing to buy sustainable wine. Also, the differentiation between older and younger consumers, highlighted by Pomarici et al. (2014) and Maruracher et al. (2019) is rather blurry. Apart from a couple of the respondents, people are not actively engaging and looking for more sustainable product choices. And when it comes to wine there are more important factors that they consider and that shape their decisions – quality, taste, habits above all.
Nonetheless, several studies have proven a direct and positive correlation between the implementation and subsequent incisive promotion of innovative sustainable practices and the influence on consumption pattern moving towards more sustainable choices (Fiore et al, 2017). Certainly, the fact this thesis has been conducted in the Norwegian market, represent an important element to be underlined. Contrary to other countries, the specific conditions of the Monopoly for alcohol consumption makes it harder for single companies to leverage on communication in order to scale competition and influence consumer behaviors.

One important fact that comes forth is the ambiguity and confusion related to sustainable certification, in general, but especially in relation to the product concerned: wine. People are not fully grasping what companies wish to communicate with sustainability and ethical labels. Often times they don't know them, nor recall having seen in a connection to wine (results from personal interview analysis). These results are in line with research on Customer Social Responsibility stating that attitudes and behaviors towards more ethical consumption are observed only in the case companies' actions are shared and especially understood by the customers (Devinney et al, 2006). Additionally, as mentioned, Mauracher et al. in an examined paper from 2019 "*How Product Attributes and Consumer Characteristics Influence the WTP, Resulting in a Higher Price Premium for Organic Wine*" highlighted that the agricultural field and in particular wine are exceptional categories and people are less educate and prone to draw links and conclusion on benefits deriving from buying sustainable labeled wines. Therefore, this represents and additional element that, together with the interviews results, drives against hypothesis two (correlation between sustainability labels and Customers Social Responsibility) that applied to wine is also contradictory of hypothesis five (ethical production cues lead to increased WTP).

Furthermore, as underlined by previous literature, the additional value associated with ethical products only arise if cues create differentiation from standard products in a clear way (Berger, 2019). And since what emerges from interviews are mixed feelings and not clear understanding of certifications information, this might be a good reason driving against the added desirability for certified wines. Finally, companies need to take into account to balance costs, quality, image when creating a value proposition to respond to customers' need (Ha-Brookshire, 2011), and in this specific context it seems that people are demanding for other factors and their focus is not directed towards ethical claims.

Greenwashing concerns are not in place when talking specifically of wine, but a latent feeling of mistrust streaming from experiences in other sectors could be potentially a damaging factor for the missed opportunity on sustainable wine choices, as emerged in the interviews.

People, also in the interviewed sample, are showing a greater interest in ethical matters and require companies to adopt due diligence practices and be transparent when it comes to supply chain and working conditions (Becchetti et al., 2008).

However, it seems that those interests and feelings are not widely shared among customers. Even respondents realized that in most cases it depends on the education or the context they are coming from "*I actively seek for good alternative, [...] change my habits, [...] I come from a family where we are all involved and concerned*" (respondent 1 from personal interviews).

Additionally, it seems younger generations are more likely to actively require improved standards and practices, but in relation to this the respondent sample is not representative of the general population as 60% of participants fall under the definition of "younger generation" which does not reflect the reality of customers in this sector.

Notwithstanding that, it cannot be confidentially argued that CSR practices and due diligence are demanded and need to be implemented because customers are requiring so; "*political and regulatory power is influencing and pushing companies*" (respondent 3 from personal interviews). Hence, it is not confirmed what supported by Kang & Hustvedt (2013) who asserted consumers' ethical behaviors are partially result of customers' activism and requests; nor for the results of Green and Peloza (2014) stating brand equity is increased when companies engage in CSR due to demand from customers. The direction is rather towards the findings of Shaw et al. (2006) highlighting that fair trade and ethical products do not result in enhanced loyalty and price premium for virtuous products, which relates to the hypothesis six (customers are willing to pay a price premium for ethically produced wines) and neglects it.
Nevertheless, by looking at the problem in terms of market competitiveness and regulations, due diligence and CSR practices are actually fundamental to create added value and strive and stand out from the competition. In some circumstances, this would be the case even to simply operate, as in the case for Norwegian relations with the introduction of the Transparency Law in July 2022. This also applies to the new imposition and controls Vinmonopolet will carry out, through third parties, in the Italian wine supply chain.
This is especially true for Italy, since the data collected by the International Organization of Vine and Wine suggest Italy has over 20 million hectoliters in exports representing 6,2 million revenues, of which 19,4 million liters are sold in Norway, occupying the leading position in the Norwegian landscape (ITA, 2020).
Therefore, by not complying with the EU and even Norwegian requirements, Italy would be losing huge business opportunities.
In addition to that, tools such as the UNGP or SDGs provide the businesses with frameworks, proved to represent a strong incentive for businesses performance and competitiveness (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2021). There are several studies that support evidence of improved customer loyalty, increased companies competitive advantage and boost in profits, corroborated by actual practical cases in both bigger and smaller enterprises (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2021).

Interestingly some people in the interviews underlined how, companies' initiatives in the direction of human rights and the signaling of those with labels or certificates, might sometimes result in some sort of imposition on their consumption patterns. They feel bad for not purchasing ethical products – coffee above all – but the price premium that often is associated with those virtuous products is already a discriminant that cut out most of customers that value more price in terms of "good deals", compared to support an ethical choice. Hence, the results addressing

the existence of a so-called "attitude-behavior" gap (Ha-Brookshire et al., 2011) confirmed also in the book "Science Based Activism" applied to the Norwegian context (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2015) are here reinforced.
Interviewees feel most of the time customers were not to demand such standards, however in today's society there is an expectation and pressure on companies to engage in CSR activities that subsequently dictates and influence consumption.
Moreover, people often are not aware CSR initiatives actually prevent threats to employees and workers.
When directly asked about their knowledge on modern slavery practice, most of the respondents had a vague and distance perception of it and had sometimes showed struggles in relating and connecting it back to their purchase choices. This somehow represents a contradiction to the evidence supportive of the increased concern of human rights breach in distant part of the world that now are felt closer due to globalization and contribute to increased demand for ethically righteous companies and punish poorly performing ones (Becchetti & Rosati, 2007).
However, this might be the case due to the focus on specifically the Norwegian context. Customers feel like companies, governments and regulators are doing a very good job in protecting workers and customers and addressing those topics. They don't feel the urge to question or research more (findings from personal interviews).

Among interviewees it appeared that they recognize an added value to companies in order to be ensured with more sustainable and ethical products – here wine. However, for the majority of respondents, it is clearer the link and the recognition existing for sustainability cues compared to the ethical subject of this thesis. Communication seems to be the lacking linking element in their experience that would increase the value and positive perception associated with wineries efforts to produce ethically and adopting due diligence practices. Additionally, when asked about ethic certificates, coffee or other goods were the main product this element recalled in customers' mind.
Again, clear and precise information are to be directed to customers in order to enhance value perceptions and created common and shared values. This however might be especially difficult in the field of wine sustainability due to the fact there is not a common and therefore clearly transmittable definition of sustainable wine. Nevertheless, it cannot be excluded, but rather hoped, that thanks to current efforts of EU regulations and national initiative a clear and shared framework will be delineated. Here therefore in the context of the current research, crucial role

is played both from the action of Vinmonopolet and the Norwegian Åpenhetsloven, together with the Italian national unique wine certification.

Customers generally agreed upon corresponding an additional price premium to companies – and therefore their products – that shown CSR engagement and involve themselves and set due diligence in their supply chain.
Nevertheless, when looking at statistics and also insights from clerks, this is not always the case, especially for wine. Hence, despite studies shown that food accounts for the highest price premium corresponded when products in this category are certified sustainable (Leszczyńska, 2015; Gil et al., 2000); this is not the case for wine and especially for ethical-labeled wines.
In here it is clear how the attitude-gap behavior (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2015; Nguyen et al., 2018) in relation to sustainable, or in this case ethically made products is confirmed by the interviewees. In fact, people firstly shared their active intent of corresponding a price premium for sustainable or ethical certified wine (and also for general goods), however soon after they admitted in most cases price is the main discriminant of the choice, and if the sustainable option is more expensive but equal in terms of quality than the less expensive and not certified wine would be chosen.
This behavior is also confirmed by clerks interviews where sustainability issues are never or hardly ever address and asked by customers.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Thesis contribution

The purpose of this thesis is to understand how and if companies' actions can lead to more sustainable consumption patterns in the context of wine in Norway.

Hence, general consumer behaviors and responses have been analyzed, though support of secondary data coming from previous studies and tested and adapted it thought interviews conducted among Norwegian customers.

The literature has provided with evidence that supports the added value and competitive advantage that wineries involved in sustainability efforts signaled by certification have on the willingness to purchase from customers, as well as a premium price customer are willing to correspond to virtuous wineries (Remaud et al., 2010).

Nevertheless, most researchers have been focusing on the environmental side of the three-pillar definition of sustainability. This research gap together with the new awareness in relation to ethical and societal matter have inspired the topic of this thesis. Additionally, the recent initiatives Vinmonopolet extended to the Italian wine sector on more stringent requirements for human rights respect in the supply chain, streaming from the alarming data on modern slavery condition registered in Italy and appointed by the report of Oxfam and Systembolaget have narrowed down the scope of the thesis. Hence, from here, the research question asks if better-informed customers engage in more conscious consumption. This is investigated with a precise focus on the Norwegian context and with inputs from Italian wineries for two main reasons: firstly for the necessity of addressing caporalato conditions in Italy, and secondly because Norway as a whole will introduce a new law that imply full transparency on supply chain to be communicated to customers. Are therefore customers aware and interested in human rights issues in the wine sector?

What has emerged is that Norwegian customers are quite attentive when it comes to sustainability issues, but mainly if there are also tangent and clear benefits they can take advantage of – avoiding using pesticides which are retained by grapes or sulphites, practices that improve consumption and effect on people's life, which are also related to environmental protection. However, this last correlation is often ignored by customers. This is in line with some research such as the paper from Lim and Reed (2020) on intrinsic benefits and from Ouvrard et al. (2020) when it comes to the corresponding increased WTP for better performing wine on sustainability topics.

Moreover, the known attitude-behavior gap (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2015; Ha-Brookshire et al., 2011) observed on many occasions when it comes to sustainable consumption is here confirmed. Customers claims to be engaged and interested in sustainability issues and are willing to purchase in a more conscious way and even to pay slightly more for a better or equal quality but certified option (Remaud et al., 2010).

However, when analyzing the elements customers base their wine choices and purchases on, together with data from the market and interviews with Vinmonopolet vendors, it emerges that their claimed intentions are not reflected in the actual state of reality. This is in line with also findings from some of the previous research in the field (Moscovicit et at., 2020).

People are interested in quality, they purchase based on previous experience, WOM or based on advice they get which hardly ever includes questions on the sustainability aspects and never on the ethical matters involving workers in wineries. In the wine market there are many internal and external stimuli (Capitello et al., 2019) that customers need to consider that increases the difficulty of choice (Schäufele et al., 2017).

Wine is not perceived of being hazardous towards human rights nor are people aware of these problems. There is a problem of communication and information sharing. That involves not only the topic of caporalato and ethically produced wine, but to all the spheres. The reason for this can be drawn back to the fact it does not exist a shared, common and clear definition of sustainable wine. Labels and certifications are numerous and therefore the intent on what they are based on – reduce information asymmetry between companies and customers (Testa et al., 2015) – is here jeopardized.

7.2 Implications for managers

What emerges is therefore the fact that customers are not ready, they need more information, education, and time to understand the current situation and the undertaken initiatives.

Nevertheless, the growing interest and involvement of governments, NGOs and nation on the topic of sustainability and CSR (Iaia et al., 2019) requires managers to engage in those topics and make investments in order to be compliant with all the requirements and keep being competitive (OIV.int, 2022). Above all, when it comes to Italy and its export relations with Norway, ensuring due diligence through the supply chain is the only and best way to keep the business going. Vinmonopolet, by engaging with all parties in the discourse, is trying to make sure the transition and the application of instances can occur in the most natural way.

Leveraging once more on the necessity of joint forces and interest to impact and shift towards a more ethical world – SDG 17.
That applies to the current case as of from July 2022 in Norway the Åpenhetsloven will require full transparency from all parties on supply chain of goods sold, therefore again joint efforts that includes and go beyond Vinmonopolet's action alone.
Hence it is here stressed and underlined how CSR initiatives are intertwined with a good stakeholder management strategy (Freeman, 2017), needed to correctly address, invest and communicate actions undertaken to improve workers' conditions (Corsinovi et al., 2017).
As mentioned, the UN is boosting the change and shift in the market and in the world. Corporations needs to adopt sustainability practices and due diligence in order to thrive and improve their competitive advantage, to attract and retain customers (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2021).

7.3 Limitation

Naturally, this research encounters some limitations. They are related to the scope of the research and the sample mainly, which in turn affects the findings.
Starting with the research question, initially this was circumscribed to the social pillar in the sustainability definition, related to the topic of ethical wine production as concerns are emerging in relation to the practice of caporalato – modern slavery practice – in the Italian peninsula. Nevertheless, with time and research, and even with evidence from my qualitative interviews, it clearly emerged how the environmental sustainability is not only more researched, but also better understood and known by the market and the customers. Therefore, a precise and narrow focus on human rights only and related certifications has not been made possible. Moreover, the sustainability definition is a triangular one, where each of the cornerstone is closely intertwined and interdependent. Therefore, a more holistic approach to the issues has been adopted, although more complicated and multifaceted.
Moving onto the interview sample, the fact that respondents were recruited among my network and using the snowballing technique meant that they all come from the same backgrounds and might not fully represent the population. The majority of them are younger customers under the age of 30, all of the respondents had a university degree which does not properly mirror the Norwegian population. The statistics register around 35% of the Norwegian population with a higher educational diploma of either five or three years (Statista, 2022), therefore my sample is to be found within this limited amount of people. Also given that there are around 5.43 million people in Norway (Statista, 2022) of which 79% are over 18, within this 4.34 million people

that could potentially purchase alcohol as being legally allowed to (World Population Review, 2022), the main age group is represented by 45-69 years-old, which in my sample only consists of 40%. Additionally, studies support the fact that with increased wine familiarity and experience, as well as financial possibilities, which are likely to increase with time, people tend to consume more wine than at a younger age (Gustavsen & Rickertsen, 2018), which is confirmed by my sample but can constitute an additional limitation to the findings.

Additionally, there was a specific intent to compare age groups and their attitude towards wine. This also because the younger customers of today are more concerned about forced labor practices and purchases of ethical products. Therefore, the selected sample was in line with the intent of the thesis.

Another limitation, which however confirmed the subsistence of the attitude-behavior gap, is the so-called social desirability bias (Auger and Devinney, 2007) which has been addressed by comparing interviewees affirmation with data and clerks interviews.

Finally, as the research focuses on the social pillar which is a trend that is starting to emerge only recently, there are only a few already established studies and future research cold focus more on the supply chain itself to be compliant with European regulations and other international requirements.

Lastly, the existence of the Monopoly has made it complicated to research on that topic as wineries cannot advertise nor inform customer in a direct way regarding their practices. Nevertheless, as it has emerged a necessity of clearer communication and sharing of information, that is an issue that needs to be taken into consideration by both parties, to align with customers' requirements.

7.4 Further and future research

The aforementioned limitations together with the emerging demand and interest of customers on ethical matters, creates the basis for further research in the field.

In the first place, researchers should focus specifically on issues about human rights along the whole supply chain, trying to better isolate for this specific topic, despite the difficulties I have found on unbinding ethical and social sustainability from the overall theme of environmentally conscious consumption.

Subsequently scholars could analyze the topic in another nation, for example Finland or Sweden, that are also contributing with Vinmonopolet on mobilizing Italian wineries and improve workers' right along supply chains of wine exporting countries. Nevertheless, those are both nations with monopolies, it could be also interesting to investigate consumers' responses and interest in ethical matters on more liberal countries. In those contexts, experiments could be conducted on the types of communication and marketing messages wineries can direct to clients and assess the response and use feedbacks and information to improve loyalty, competitive advantage and increase profits.

Additionally, for the Norwegian case, further research could be done once the Åpenhetsloven is in place and can demonstrate consequences it has on the market. Additionally, attention could be focused on the importers' role or even on the reaction and difficulties or opportunities that arise for wineries – in this case Italian wineries. In general, the proactive approach of wine producers in different nations could improve their positioning.

A whole branch of research could address the relationships and ties existing in the supply chain.

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9. Appendix

Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Brief explanation of the study and purpose of the interview, followed by initial screening questions on the person.

1. Describe sustainability and the meaning it has for you.
2. How important is sustainability to you?
3. What is your behavior towards sustainable consumption?
4. Are you aware of any specific certification of sustainability/fair trade for wine?
5. Can you describe to me the steps you normally go through when deciding which wine to buy?
   2.1. do you check for any specific certification? Do you normally search for it?
   2.2. what is the final element that make you decide for which wine to go?
6. Do you believe corporations have any responsibility towards society and customers? If so, what is the nature of such responsibility?
7. How much knowledge do you believe customers have towards the level of firms' CSR and their practices? And in the wine sector?
8. How much do you believe firms' actions can influence the investment and purchase decisions of customers? (also with wine)
9. Do you believe customers really care about such initiatives in the wine sector?
10. What are customer beliefs on motives why companies engage in CSR practices? Do they have any influence on them? How does the relationship work from your perspective?

Appendix 2: table of respondents

Number	Age	Gender	Education	Occupation
1	26	Male	Master degree	Student – part time worker
2	23	Male	Master degree	Student – part time worker
3	22	Female	Master degree	Student – part time worker
4	27	Male	Master degree	Full time worker
5	25	Male	Master degree	Full time worker
6	24	Female	Master degree	Full time worker
7	58	Female	University degree	Full time worker
8	54	Female	University degree	Full time worker
9	56	Male	University degree	Full time worker
10	50	Male	University degree	Full time worker