

Wine Roads in Greece: A Cooperation for the Development of Local Tourism in Rural Areas

by
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Abstract

An association of Wine Roads was developed in Greece at the beginning of the 1990s in an attempt to boost rural tourism. The association was created by wine producers in the regions of Macedonia and was then extended to Epirus, Thessaly and Thrace. Its main purpose has been the promotion of wine companies and the association's regional members, while its specific targets have been the development of local tourism, the support of cultural heritage and the improvement of product quality and related services. The Wine Roads initiative has received substantial financial support from the European Union and the State of Greece, mainly through the LEADER II program. However, socioeconomic results for the participating companies and regions appear to differ. An assessment using a questionnaire showed a positive effect on the enhancement of relations among members, the increase in tourist visits, publicity for the regions and cultural events. In contrast, there have been no significant positive effects on employment. Finally, it should be noted that some of the participating districts and companies have been more active and have taken better advantage of this initiative.

Key words: Wine roads, rural tourism, cooperation, financing, LEADER program, Greece

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Introduction

In the 1990s, rural tourism appeared, as an alternative type of tourism in Greece. Wine Roads are one important form of this type of tourism. They were created in an attempt to promote wine companies and the participating regions. Particular attention was given to the development of local tourism and local culture. The Wine Roads in Greece were created by a nonprofit association, “The Association of Wine Producers of the Macedonian Vineyard” (EN.O.A.M.). The association’s membership brings together owners of vineyards, restaurants, hotels, and local tourist offices.

The Wine Roads project has received important public financial support, mainly from the LEADER II program. This support is particularly oriented towards investments in the improvement of wine factories in order to attract tourists and consequently to promote the Wine Roads and local culture. Financial and economic benefits have naturally concentrated in some regions and on companies that are more active towards the Wine Roads initiative and more ready to invest in reconstruction.

However, a main question has been the socioeconomic consequences for all companies and regions participating in the Wine Roads initiative. This issue was researched through a questionnaire addressed to participating wineries. The questionnaire was developed to assess and evaluate the effects of the Wine Roads on enhancement of member networks, company development, tourist numbers, employment in the companies and the region, promotion of the region, local culture and local tourism. Additionally, the questionnaire aimed to evaluate LEADER effects on investments realized by participants in the Wine Roads. The results showed that the Wine Roads initiative has strengthened relations among their members and helped increase tourism. Additionally, company development seems to be favored by investments supported by the LEADER program. With regard to participating regions, the Wine Roads benefited their promotion and their local culture. In contrast, there do not appear to be any significant results concerning employment, either within regions or within companies.

The next section of this paper describes the establishment of the Wine Roads network and its target audience. The issue of financing the initiative through public support is examined in the following section. The remaining two sections present the findings of the socioeconomic impact analysis of the Wine Roads initiative on participant companies and regions, as well as the conclusions of the study.

Establishment of the Greek Wine Roads

The Wine Roads as part of rural tourism

In the last decades, rural areas in Greece, especially Northern Greece, have suffered the decline of important local industries, such as textiles. The consequence has been an increase in unemployment. In parallel, a growing segment of the population in urban areas began to show interest in rural tourism, culture, mountain activities, and rural gastronomy. Therefore, rural tourism was seen to offer an answer to the economic difficulties experienced in several regions of Greece.

According to Hall and Jenkins (1998), rural tourism must contribute to the creation of local growth, employment and income, and infrastructures such as roads, water, electricity and telecommunications; it must encourage the development of other industrial sectors related to rural tourism; it must contribute to local residential amenities such as sports and recreational facilities, and to services such as shops, schools and public transport; and it must contribute to the conservation of environmental and cultural resources. A clustering of activities and attractions and the development of rural tourism routes stimulates cooperation and partnerships between local areas, contributing to local development (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004).

Wine tourism is one of the main forms of rural tourism. It can be defined as visits to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows. The main attractive factors motivating visitors are wine-tasting and the attributes of a grapevine region (Hall and Mitchell, 2000 and Hall, 1996). Wine tourism has introduced various initiatives, including, as in the case of Italy, measures related to environmental protection, the development of Wine Routes, open cellars and the development of Wine Cities (Hall and Mitchell, 2000). As Getz and Brown (2006) have argued, cultural events and outdoor attractions seem to be determining factors for long-distance wine tourists. Quan and Wang (2004) consider some supporting components, particularly food consumption, to hold equal importance for visual-seeing tourism.

Members of the Wine Roads

In Greece, in 1993, 15 wine producers created a nonprofit, non-stock corporation, the Association of Wine Producers of the Vineyards of Macedonia (EN.O.A.M.) carrying the trade name “Wine Roads of Macedonia”. In August 2003, the association changed its name to “Association of Wine Producers of the Vineyards of Northern Greece” given its geographic expansion to Epirus, Thessaly and Thrace.

The Wine Roads were developed through eight different routes covering Northern Greece. They were designed on the basis of different wine varieties and

the historical and cultural particularities of the regions. Four routes are in the region of Central Macedonia, one route in West Macedonia, one route covering Thessaly, one route in Epirus and one route in East Macedonia and Thrace.

These routes are referred to as (Figure 1):

1. The Wine Route of the Olympian Gods, Thessaly
2. The Wine Route of Halkidiki, Central Macedonia
3. The Wine Route of Naousa, Central Macedonia
4. The Wine Route of Pella, Central Macedonia
5. The Wine Route of Thessalonica, Central Macedonia
6. The Wine Route of Dionysos, East Macedonia and Thrace
7. The Wine Route of Lakes, West Macedonia
8. The Wine Route of Ipiros, Epirus

Figure 1. Wine Routes of the Wine Roads of Northern Greece



Table 1
Wine production units on the Wine Roads, end of 2005, by district (*)

Region	Wine route	District	Vineyards/ wineries
Central Macedonia	Naousa	Naousa	7
Central Macedonia	Halkidiki	Halkidiki (**)	4
Central Macedonia	Thessalonica	Thessalonica	4
Central Macedonia	Pella	Goumenisa	3
Central Macedonia	Pella	Giannitsa	1
West Macedonia	Lakes	Amyntaion	3
West Macedonia	Lakes	Velventos	1
East Macedonia	Dionysos	Drama	2
East Macedonia	Dionysos	Kavala	1
Epirus	Ipiros	Ioannina	2
Thessaly	Olympian Gods	Larisa	1
Thessaly	Olympian Gods	Rapsani	1
Total			30

Source: Wine Roads (2005), author's calculations

(*) Some wine producers have several production units

(**) Prefecture

By 2005, the association had 24 members with 30 wineries, most of them from the region of Central Macedonia and particularly the district of Naousa located along the Wine Route of Naousa (table 1); among them, three were wine cooperatives (P.A.S.E.G.E.S. 2005).

The association had an additional 32 cooperating members, representing professionals from the restaurant, hotel, tourism, consulting, and food and beverage industries. Most of these were owners of restaurants and hotels working along the Wine Routes of Thessalonica, Naousa, Halkidiki and Lakes (table 2).

Targets of the Wine Roads

The scope of the association has been the promotion and improvement of the image of regional wines, the development and exploitation of the vineyards, and the promotion and development of the cultural heritage of the vineyards and their wines (Liatsis, 2001). Within this scope, priority is given to promoting the diffusion of cultural and environmental values in rural areas; in contrast, priority is not given to mass tourism (see, on this point, the distinction proposed by Levi,

Table 2. Cooperating members in the Wine Roads, end of 2005

Wine route	Hotel	Restaurants & Taverns	Traditional products	Services, consulting, equipment	Wine cellars	Total
Thessalonica	1	2		5	1	9
Naousa	3	1	2	1		7
Halkidiki	3	3				6
Lakes	3	4				7
Pella		1	1			2
Dionysos		1				1
Total	10	12	3	6	1	32

Source: Wine Roads (2005), author's calculations

2002, and the description of Special Interest Tourism proposed by Trauer, 2006). To accomplish these goals, the following specific actions were planned and developed through the Wine Roads of Northern Greece (Wine Roads 2005):

- Development of tourist trails through the vineyards and wineries of Northern Greece, indicating all points of oenological, cultural and tourist interest, such as vineyards, wineries, archaeological and historical sites, spots of natural beauty, etc.
- Training of people in wine-related occupations, such as restaurant owners, hotel staff, waiters, special guides, etc.
- Participation in international organizations with similar or related objectives.
- Organization of gastronomic and cultural events, as well as conferences, through selected dining venues, interdisciplinary meetings and cultural activities.
- Participation in international trade fairs in Greece and abroad.
- Development of activities promoting the tourism products of the Wine Roads.

Financing of the Greek Wine Roads

Sources of public financing

The Wine Roads have benefited from public financial support through two venues: the Thessalonica Cultural Capital of Europe and the LEADER II program. In 1997, Thessalonica was the Cultural Capital of Europe and thus received considerable inward investment through the Organization of Cultural Capital of Thessalonica (O.C.C.T.). EN.O.A.M. received funding of 528,247 euros which supported its

operations during the period 1994-1997 (Liatsis, 2001). EN.O.A.M. used the largest part of this funding to support its operation and promotion costs in programs related to the O.C.C.T. A minor part, 11.8%, of this funding financed cultural events organized by other participants of the Wine Roads.

The LEADER (Liaisons Entre Actions de Développement de l' Economie Rurale) II program, intended for the development of rural economies, has been the main financial source for the Wine Roads. Three LEADER programs were launched by the European Union: LEADER I, LEADER II and LEADER +. Each LEADER program is based on the active participation of the local population, companies, associations, cooperatives and local authorities (LEADER II, 1995).¹ The strategic goals of the LEADER II program have been the diversification of economic activities, the maintenance of local economic and entrepreneurial activities related to local production, the development of rural tourism, the upgrading of local culture, promotion of the region and its products, and preservation and improvement of the environment and living conditions. The initiative's beneficiaries have been local in character, such as local government, unions, municipal enterprises, agricultural corporations and other social and professional bodies.

In the Greek case, rural tourism (based on small hotels and the reconstruction of old houses) has been the most funded area within the LEADER II program. Of a total of 3177 projects, 1068 projects have been involved in rural tourism; the second area allocated for funding has been the development of agricultural products, with a total of 741 financed projects (Ministry of Agriculture of Greece, 2003).

The Wine Roads of the LEADER II program received financial support for activities involving agro tourism development of the vineyard regions. Within the LEADER II program, the following initiatives were proposed for funding:

1. Technical support, including the operating cost of EN.O.A.M. and actions related to information about the local population.
2. Professional training of wine producers and members of the Wine Roads. This training was aimed at the promotion of local features, traditional arts and local culture.

1. Several authors have referred to the LEADER programs through regional or national experiences; see, for example, Perez (2000), Barke and Newton (1997) for Spanish experiences, Storey (1999) and Scott (2004) for Irish cases, Buller (2000) and Ray (1998) for French cases, Osti (2000) for the application of LEADER in Italy, Shucksmith(2000) for the United Kingdom. In December 2003, a report was published on ex-post evaluation of the community initiative LEADER II (Todtling-Schonhofer 2003).

3. Reinforcement of the agro-tourism by transforming the wine factories into visitor-friendly places in which seminars on wine, local products and local gastronomy could be given.
4. Exploitation of the agricultural production by supporting the biological culture of vineyards and production processes used for biological agricultural products, including those of vineyards.
5. Preservation of the cultural heritage by publishing pamphlets on monuments worth visiting, creating pathways, supporting cultural events in the Wine Road districts, and supporting international conferences and wine competitions.
6. An international cooperation through the participation of the Greek Wine Roads in European Wine Roads and other international organizations supporting agricultural development; the aim of such a cooperation would be the transfer of know-how and the development of actions with common targets.

Beneficiaries of LEADER II financial support included members of the Wine Roads, cooperating members and local communities. The total budget amounted to 3,587,702 euros (see table 3). Public financing (provided by the European Union and the State of Greece) for most of the funded projects reached 60% of the proposed budget, while EN.O.A.M.'s operating costs were completely covered. Table 3 shows the distribution of the total budget by category. Agro-tourism emerged as the most significant category, receiving 65% of the total budget. Human capital aspects seem to be underestimated, even if a category concerning professional training is adopted. Activities involving the improvement of human capital received only 1.3% of the total budget of the LEADER II program (see Liu

Table 3. LEADER II program financing of the Wine Roads in Greece: number of financed proposals and total budget, by category/measure

Category/Measure	Number of proposals	Total budget (in euros)	Part of total budget (%)
Agrotourism	31	2,332,055	65.0
Technical support	5	504,286	14.1
Developing agricultural products	6	407,852	11.4
Preservation of the cultural heritage	6	283,608	7.9
Professional training	1	47,789	1.3
International cooperation	1	12,112	0.3
Total	50	3,587,702	100.0

Source: EN.O.A.M. (2005), author's calculations

and Wall, 2006, for the necessity of greater attention to this aspect). A breakdown of expense categories reveals that the category “Investments in wine factories” received 69.4% of the total financing (table 4). The aim of these investments was to transform the wine factories into attractive places for tourists to visit. To achieve this goal, significant investments were made in infrastructure.

Table 4. LEADER II program financing of the Wine Roads in Greece: total budget by category of expenses

Expenses category	Total budget (in euros)	Part of total (%)
Operating expenses of EN.O.A.M.	480,808	13.4
Investment in wine factories	2,491,376	69.4
Promotion-publicity	615,518	17.2
Total	3,587,702	100.0

Source: Idem. Table 3

Non homogeneous participation

Interest in investing in the Wine Roads has been characterized by non-homogeneous participation within members and localities. Some members have been more active and some others have avoided investing. On the other hand, some districts have benefited much more than others. The district of Naousa received a larger part of the investments, 21.4% of the total, since 11 proposals had been financed, followed by the districts of Thessalonica and Amyntaio (table 5).

EN.O.A.M. had 14 proposals approved in the LEADER II program, covering actions designed to generate interest in the Wine Roads. EN.O.A.M.’s proposals were entirely publicly financed and covered 25.1% of the total budget. Among the members who were funded but were asked to contribute personal funds, three categories can be distinguished. In the first category there are two producers, contributing 9.9 and 7.7%, respectively, to the total budget; in the second there are five wine producers each contributing between 6.1% and 5.5% of the total budget, while the third category has the majority (17 participants) with each one contributing less than 3.5% of the total budget. Investments have been oriented to creating an infrastructure for the vineyards, wine cellars and wineries designed to receive visitors.

Table 5. LEADER II program financing of the Wine Roads in Greece: proposals and total budget by district

District	Wine route	Proposals	Total budget (in euros)	Part of total (%)
Naousa	Naousa	11	768,140	21.4
Thessalonica	Thessalonica	3	319,003	8.9
Amyntaio	Lakes	4	304,623	8.5
Ossa Lagada	Thessalonica	2	201,029	5.6
Larisa	Olympian Gods	2	196,625	5.5
Halkidiki(*)	Halkidiki	2	186,117	5.2
Rapsani	Olympian Gods	2	169,803	4.7
Drama	Dionysos	2	148,584	4.1
Giannitsa	Pella	2	114,454	3.2
Goumenisa	Pella	1	88,775	2.5
Maroneia	Halkidiki	1	84,199	2.3
Kozani	Lakes	2	79,864	2.2
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>2,661,216</i>	<i>74.2</i>
<i>No specific district (**)</i>			<i>926,486</i>	<i>25.8</i>
Total			3,587,702	100.0

Source: Idem. Table 3

(*) Prefecture

(**) Proposals realized by EN.O.A.M. and LYST S.A. covering program function and not applied to a specific district

Results Regarding Economic and Social Processes

The function of the Wine Roads of Northern Greece and the beneficial role of the LEADER II program for the participating members and the local communities were the focus of a questionnaire addressed to 30 participant-member wineries. Some of these are owned by the same parent company, as in the case of the parent companies Babatzimopoulos, Boutaris, KyrGianni and Tsantalis, owners of wineries in the regions of Central Macedonia, West Macedonia and Thessaly. Altogether 26 wineries responded to the questionnaire, which targeted three main issues related to the effects of participation in the program. In particular, it asked whether participation in the Wine Roads permitted the strengthening of relations

among participants as well as nonparticipants; had any positive impact on the wineries with regard to tourism, company growth and employment growth (a specific examination consisted of the impact of the LEADER program on company growth); had any positive socioeconomic impact on the local community, especially on culture development, tourism growth, employment and promotion of the region's image. Wineries were asked to answer each questionnaire target area separately and to assess, on a scale ranging from very positive to no impact at all, the effect participation in the Wine Roads had had on them and on the local community. The answers were classified geographically on the basis of the eight Wine Routes of the Northern Greece Wine Roads.

Enhancement of relations

The wineries' answers indicated that relations among members of the Wine Roads had been strengthened: 20 of the 26 answers indicated a strong or quite strong development of relations among winery members of the Wine Roads (table 6); five other answers indicated a lower level of relationship development. Answers on relations with wineries which are not members of the Wine Roads showed a significantly lower level of development. Relations with cooperating Wine Road members (non-wine producers) were not as developed as in the case of wine producers.

It seems, therefore, that there has been a positive impact of the Wine Roads on the development of relations among member wine producers. Within the existing Wine Routes, it appears that the development of relations is much more significant in the case of the Naousa and Lakes routes, indicating a more active role for those wine producers than for the rest of the routes' producers (table 6).

Company growth

Questions addressed to the wineries regarding the Wine Roads fell into four categories: the first three categories explored aspects of company participation in the Wine Roads. For instance, did company participation lead to increases in: a) the number of visits by tourists to the company's winery or vineyard; b) the number of company employees; and c) company sales and profits? The fourth category inquired about the impact of the LEADER program on the company. Did company participation in the LEADER II program result in that company's development? Results show that the Wine Roads has had a rather positive impact on visitor growth. Twenty wineries answered that the impact on visitors' growth had been positive (table 7).

For the year 2005, the average number of visitors to a total of 16 wineries was 1946 (one winery received 12,000 visitors). These findings are similar to those found in a study carried out on the basis of a questionnaire addressed to 48 Greek

Table 6. Enhancement of networks of the Wine Roads' members (Answers received per wine route)

6a) Enhancement of relations between member wine producers

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thessalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Very	1	2				2			5
Quite	4	2	2	1	3		2	1	15
A little	2			2				1	5
None						1			1

6b) Enhancement of relations between member and nonmembers wine producers

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thessalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Very		2			1				3
Quite	5	2	1			2	2	1	13
A little	2		1	3	2	1		1	10
None									0

6c) Enhancement of relations between members and Wine Roads cooperates (hotels, restaurants, tourist office)

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thessalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Very					1				1
Quite	5	4				2		1	12
A little	2		2	3	2	1	1	1	12
None							1		1

Source: Wineries' answers to author's questionnaire

wineries, eight of which were members of the Wine Roads of Northern Greece (Triantafillou-Pitsaki, 2005). The Wine Route of Naousa was the most attractive, given that more than 22,500 people paid visits to six of the wineries there. Other Wine Routes did not experience the same number of tourists. Two wineries of the Wine Route of Lakes were visited by 1000 tourists, one winery of the Wine Route of Thessalonica was visited by 4500 visitors, two wineries of the Wine Route of Pella were visited by 1900 tourists, three wineries of the Wine Route of Dionysos were visited by 1900 tourists, while one winery of the Wine Route of Ipiros was visited by 400 tourists and one winery of the Wine Route of the Olympian Gods was visited by 300 tourists. Answers to the remaining two questions do not indicate a real positive impact: 18 wine units indicated a small impact on the company's growth and eight others a quite positive impact (Table 7). With regards to employment growth, 16 wineries mentioned a limited positive impact while nine others did not observe any positive impact on employment. The results obtained on employment growth have to be examined in light of the local economic environment, characterized by high unemployment and deindustrialization in most of the examined regions. For 2004, unemployment reached 16.6% in East Macedonia-Thrace, 13.2% in West Macedonia and 12.2% in Central Macedonia (Bank of Greece, 2005). In all of these regions, the recorded figures were higher than the national average recorded for the same year, 10.2% (National Statistical Service of Greece, 2005). The situation has worsened in the last decade due to the transfer of industries from Northern Greece abroad, particularly to the Balkan countries.

The LEADER program was examined in two ways. Wine producers were asked if they would undertake their investment even without the LEADER's financial support, and if the investment had contributed to their company's growth. It appears that the LEADER program was not a determining factor for the companies' decision to proceed with the investment. Out of 22 companies which incurred investments, only three answered that they would not have invested without LEADER support (table 8). However, the support did have a positive impact given that 15 companies rated the investment's impact on company growth from positive to very positive.

Socioeconomic consequences to the local community

Another questionnaire concerning the impact of the Wine Roads on local tourism, local culture, publicity for the region and local employment, was addressed to the wineries. The impact can be considered positive when the region benefits from: a) an increase in the number of scheduled exceptional cultural events; b) a rise in the number of visitors, and c) an employment increase attributed to the Wine Roads initiatives. Regional promotion seems to have enjoyed the most positive influence.

Table 7. Positive impact of the Wine Roads on company development (Answers received per wine route)

7a) Positive impact of Wine Roads on growth of visitors to the company

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thessalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Very		1							1
Quite	7	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	19
A little		1		1	1	1	1	1	6
None									0

7b) Positive impact of Wine Roads on company's development

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thessalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Very									0
Quite	2	2	1	1		2			8
A little	5	2	1	2	3	1	2	2	18
None									0

7c) Positive impact of Wine Roads on employment growth in the company

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thessalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Important	1								1
Medium	5	3	2	1	2	3			16
None	1	1		2	1		2	2	9

Source: Idem. Table 6

Of a total 26 answers, 22 wine producers indicated a very positive or quite positive impact of the Wine Roads on publicity for the region (table 9). A positive impact also appeared to be related to local culture, especially through cultural events held by the Wine Roads programs: 17 out of 26 answers indicated a very positive or quite positive impact of the Wine Roads on the local culture. A positive impact was also evident on local tourism given that 16 out of 26 answers characterized the impact as very or quite positive.

It is worth noting that positive answers were provided by wine producers of the Wine Routes of Naousa and Lakes, and to a lesser degree by those of Halkidiki and Thessalonica. This may be due to the active involvement of local wine producers in the Wine Roads, taking into account the number of participant members as well as the investments realized. However, local employment does not seem to have received a positive influence. Only five wine producers considered the Wine Roads as having had a significant positive impact on local employment. Nevertheless, the existence of activities creating even a marginal number of jobs should count as a positive effect, considering the overall negative economic climate in most regions of Northern Greece.

Wine Roads findings: a comparison to other LEADER programs

The contribution of the Wine Roads is due in large part to the public financial support offered mainly through the LEADER II program, the main philosophy and objective of which is the development of rural areas. Findings similar to those found in the Greek Wine Roads have been observed in other countries as well following application of the LEADER program. In the case of Germany (Seibert, 2003) and Ireland (Scott, 2004), the cooperation between members proved to be a major success of the LEADER program. A positive effect of LEADER on tourism growth is mentioned in several countries, namely Germany (Seibert, 2003), Italy (Ricci, 2003) and Spain (Esparcia, 2003). Local culture has benefited from the program in most of the participating countries, as testified by France (Buller, 2000), Germany (Seibert, 2003), Ireland (Kearney, 2003) and Spain (Esparcia, 2003). Positive results on employment growth were recorded in the case of Ireland (Kearney 2003), while in Italy, the corresponding results were not considered significant (Ricci, 2003). Turning to the role of infrastructure in facilitating the accrual of LEADER benefits by the regions, the experiences of the United Kingdom (McDowell, 2003) and France (Bontron, 2003) point out that regions with better infrastructure benefit much more from the program. In contrast, the case of Ireland indicates that infrastructure does not make a difference in a region's ability to benefit from the program (Kearney, 2003). In the Greek case, LEADER program benefits (through the Wine Roads initiative) are related more to the actions of wine producers and regional policies than to regional infrastructure.

**Table 8. Consequences of LEADER program to the company
(Answers received per wine route)**

8a) Would you proceed with the investment without LEADER program financial support?

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thessalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Yes	3	3	2			1			9
Maybe	3	1		2	2			2	10
Not					1	1	1		3

8b) Did the investment (supported by the LEADER program) help with the company's development?

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thessalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Very		2	1						3
Quite	5	1	1		3		1	1	12
A little	1	1		2		1		1	6
None						1			1

Source: Idem. Table 6

Table 9. Consequences of the Wine Roads to the local community (Answers received per wine route)

9a) Positive impact of Wine Roads on promotion of the region

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thesalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Very	3	4	2						9
Quite	4			2	1	2	2	2	13
A little				1	2	1			4
None									0

9b) Positive impact of Wine Roads on local culture

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thesalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Very	1	2			1				4
Quite	5	1	2	2		1	1	1	13
A little	1	1		1	2	2		1	8
None							1		1

9c) Positive impact of Wine Roads on local tourism

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thesalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Very		1	1		1				3
Quite	7	2	1	2				1	13
A little		1		1	2	3	2	1	10
None									0

9d) Positive impact of Wine Roads on local employment

	Route of Naousa	Route of Lakes	Route of Thessalonica	Route of Halkidiki	Route of Pella	Route of Dionysos	Route of Ipiros	Route of Olympian Gods	Total
Very									0
Quite	2	2	1						5
A little	5	2	1	3	2	2		2	17
None					1	1	2		4

Source: Idem. Table 6

Summary and Conclusions

In the Greek case, the Wine Roads constitute a form of rural tourism that appeared in Greece through a public non-profit association created by wine producers. These roads were created in order to promote wine tourism and to support Greece's cultural heritage. The association was first set up as the "Wine Roads of Macedonia" and later as the "Wine Roads of Northern Greece". Wine Roads have received significant public funding, mostly through the LEADER II program. Investments have focused on the reconstruction of wineries and vineyards in order to attract wine tourism. Part of the financial support covered the operating costs of the association, and promotion and advertising of the Wine Roads and the local culture. Not only did the Wine Roads initiative enhance tourist interest in the region, but it also promoted the preservation of local culture through the holding of local events and attractions (see Getz and Brown, 2006, for similar results found in other cases). However, the Wine Roads had no significant impact on either the infrastructure or the local employment growth, referred to as main goals by Hall and Jenkins (1998). The distinction in the Greek case may be explained by reasons such as the already-existing infrastructure, the rather limited magnitude of the Greek Wine Roads and the fact that employment had not been a priority of this initiative. On the other hand, the Greek Wine Roads stimulated cooperation and partnership, as reported in other cases (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004; Quan and Wang, 2004). A major result of this study is that all participant regions do not benefit in the same way. Benefits derived from the development of the Greek Wine Roads appeared more pronounced in a number of districts where members were actively involved, particularly in the case of the Wine Route of Naousa. This distinction is not related to different levels of infrastructure as the same level of infrastructure is found in all participant districts.

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