

## LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES IN THE PROCESS OF INTERNATIONALIZATION OF COMPANIES IN THE WINE INDUSTRY

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### *Abstract*

With the process of globalization, logistics is becoming increasingly important in business operations; it can improve the work of the company and make business more difficult and increase costs if it proves inefficient. It plays an important role in expanding the company to foreign markets. This paper observes the challenges of international exchange and presents the international logistics business of the wine industry in Croatia. The aim of this paper is to show how logistics has a role in the internationalization of companies and to bring closer the logistical challenges and problems in the internationalization in wine industry. Considering the set goal, this paper analyzes the case of the wine industry in Croatia. For Croatia, and also for its wine industry, the logistics and infrastructure are important for Croatia's inclusion in the market of economically powerful countries such as the USA, Western European countries and Japan. For this reason, the logistic efficiency index and the global competitiveness index were observed, based on which the correlation method and comparative method were used to draw conclusions about its connection. The paper proves a positive correlation between the development of logistics infrastructure and the global competitiveness of the economy, which further confirms the importance of logistics for both the company and the national economy. Furthermore, the case analysis showed that business conditions and consumer habits are constantly changing, and that companies cannot influence some elements from the environment, so they turn to internal elements that can be influenced, such as production processes, storage and distribution flows.

**Key words:** logistics, internationalization, international exchange, wine industry, Croatia

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Processes that meet customer requirements are crucial for any business. They encompass the means by which goods are produced and delivered to customers, and the notion of logistics encompasses the synthesis of these processes (Waters & Rinsler 2014). Logistics plays a key role in the process of internationalization of a particular company, especially in today's context where there is an increasing emphasis on speed and flexibility, so it is important to choose a logistics strategy that will be consistent with the company's goals for each export area (Marchet et al. 2016). Quality logistics services and infrastructures have a strong impact on facilitating the transport of goods between countries, while inefficient logistics results in increased costs in the context of time and money which negatively affects countries and businesses as well as reducing turnover (Hausman et al. 2005 according to Martí et al. 2014). From the above, it can be concluded that the internationalization of the company carries with it certain requirements and risks and it is necessary to consider all factors before making a decision to expand to a foreign market. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to show how logistics plays a role in the internationalization of companies, and to bring closer the logistical challenges and problems in the wine industry in the internationalization of business.

## **2. LOGISTICS**

According to the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP, 2013) "logistics management is that part of supply chain management that plans, implements and controls the efficient flow and storage of goods, services and related information from source to end point to meet customer requirements". Furthermore, Segetlija and Lamza-Maronić (1993) in their work define the purpose of logistics as the continuous improvement of the flow of goods and information through the company in order to achieve the company's goals. The goals can be: reduction of stocks, shortening the time of these flows, shortening the reaction time, etc.

When companies want to reorganize their way of doing business, Kim (2014) warns that if a company changes its logistics structure, this may involve high risk or additional investment in fixed assets. Furthermore, if a company is willing to change its production process structure, it may be necessary to change the product design and additional investment in research and development may be required. The consequence of such changes can be a change in the supply network, which opens the possibility of losing quality and disrupting long-term relationships with partners. Therefore, before deciding on a particular strategy, companies must decide whether they want to change their logistics structure or the structure of the production process.

### **2.1. International logistics business**

International logistics is the process of planning, implementing, and controlling the flow and storage of goods, services, and related information from a point of origin to a point of consumption located in different countries (David & Stewart 2008).

According to the same authors, the elements of international logistics include a different international environment (language, culture, infrastructure) compared to domestic logistics, more complex transport system (different transport ways, different carriers, different transport documents), more significant and higher risks, more complex international insurance, method of payment and terms of exchange, border crossings bring with them greater challenges such as customs obligations, documentation, various packaging requirements, etc. All this entails more responsibilities in decision-making and the general business of the company, but it is necessary to develop an international logistics system as efficiently as possible for the international trade to go smoothly.

### ***2.2.1. Interrelationship of logistics performance index and global competitiveness index***

Globalization has played a major role in increasing the importance of logistics in business operations. Zelenika and Pupavac (2008) emphasize that logistics is especially useful for countries from the economic periphery to join the network of mutual relations and connect with the markets of the economic triad, that is, the USA, Europe and Japan. To better explain the importance of logistics in business, it is important to understand the meaning of the *logistics performance index* (LPI) and *global competitiveness index* (GCI) and their interrelationship.

Logistical efficiency speaks about how efficiently supply chains connect companies with domestic and international opportunities (The World Bank, 2018). Celebi et al., (2015) in their study found the existence of a mediating effect of foreign direct investment on the relationship between the logistics performance index and economic development, that is, the logistics performance index through foreign direct investment has a strong impact on GDP. Namely, foreign investors consider the logistics performance of a country as a significant factor for the decision to invest in that country, which means that countries with a higher logistics performance index attract more foreign investment. Nikolić et al. (2016) state that countries with high GDP generally have a high level of logistics efficiency, however there are opposite examples, for example oil exporting countries have high GDP per capita, while the logistics performance index is lower than expected. The high LPI index indicates that this is a country with a highly developed logistics infrastructure and is therefore more suitable for use and business. Conversely, a low LPI index indicates higher transport costs, long delivery times, delivery delays and can ultimately lead to negative economic consequences. However, the opposite approach is also possible, according to which economic development dictates the development of transport and logistics infrastructure (Čavrak 2003).

The methods used in the next part of the paper are comparative analysis and correlation analysis. The authors used the correlation analysis to find out the relationship between logistics performance index and global competitiveness index. With the comparative analysis, it shows the results of the relationship between these two indexes in nine countries.

According to the World Bank (2018), non-EU countries have the worst logistics performance index. Table 1 shows a comparison of data from 2016 and 2018 for all

EU countries, countries in the geographical neighborhood of Croatia with which it is often compared, the USA, the Russian Federation and Switzerland. It can be concluded that in that two-year period, Croatia advanced by 2 places with a slightly weaker LPI index. Such data are not suitable for a country that, geographically speaking, is standing on many international routes.

**Table 1.** LPI index by country

Country	Position 2018	LPI 2018	Position 2016	LPI 2016	Reverse
GERMANY	1	4,2	1	4,23	0
SWEDEN	2	4,05	3	4,2	1
BELGIUM	3	4,04	6	4,11	3
AUSTRIA	4	4,03	7	4,1	3
NETHERLANDS	6	4,02	4	4,19	-2
DENMARK	8	3,99	17	3,82	9
FINLAND	10	3,97	15	3,92	5
SWITZERLAND*	13	3,9	11	3,99	-2
USA*	14	3,89	10	3,99	-4
FRANCE	16	3,84	16	3,9	0
SPAIN	17	3,83	23	3,73	6
ITALY	19	3,74	21	3,76	2
CZECH REPUBLIC	22	3,68	26	3,67	4
PORTUGAL	23	3,64	36	3,41	13
LUXEMBURG	24	3,63	2	4,22	-22
POLAND	28	3,54	33	3,43	5
IRELAND	29	3,51	18	3,79	-11
HUNGARY	31	3,42	31	3,43	0
SLOVENIA	35	3,31	50	3,18	15
ESTONIA	36	3,31	38	3,36	2
GREECE	42	3,2	47	3,24	5
CIPAR	45	3,15	59	3	14
ROMANIA	48	3,12	60	2,99	12
CROATIA	49	3,1	51	3,16	2
BULGARIA	52	3,03	72	2,81	20
SLOVAKIA	53	3,03	41	3,34	-12
LITHUANIA	54	3,02	29	3,63	-25
SRBIA*	65	2,84	76	2,76	11
MALTA	69	2,81	56	3,07	-13
LATVIA	70	2,81	43	3,33	-27
BIH*	72	2,81	97	2,6	25
RUSSIA*	75	2,76	99	2,57	24
MONTENEGRO*	77	2,75	123	2,38	46
MACEDONIA*	81	2,7	106	2,51	25

\*Non EU-countries

Source: The World Bank, 2008

On the other hand, data on the global competitiveness index are important. Civelek et al. (2015) confirmed the mediating effect of the logistics performance index on the relationship between the global competitiveness index and GDP, and D'Aleo

(2015) concludes that improving the logistics system has a positive impact on national wealth growth and that the logistics performance index is a good predictor of GDP trends. Table 2 shows the data of the World Economic Forum (2018), which indicates the GCI index for all EU countries, countries in the geographical neighborhood of Croatia, the USA, the Russian Federation and Switzerland for 2018. The data are devastating for Croatia, which is ranked 68th in global competitiveness with an index of 60.1 and as such ranks last among EU member states.

**Table 2.** GCI index

Country	GCI Index	Position
USA*	85,6	1
GERMANY	82,8	3
SWITZERLAND *	82,6	4
NETHERLANDS	82,4	6
SWEDEN	81,7	9
DENMARK	80,6	10
FINLAND	80,3	11
FRANCE	78	17
LUXEMBURG	76,6	19
BELGIUM	76,6	21
AUSTRIA	76,3	22
IRELAND	75,7	23
SPAIN	74,2	26
CZECH REPUBLIC	71,2	29
ITALY	70,8	31
ESTONIA	70,8	32
PORTUGAL	70,2	34
SLOVENIA	69,6	35
MALTA	68,8	36
POLAND	68,2	37
LITHUANIA	67,1	40
SLOVAKIA	66,8	41
LATVIA	66,2	42
RUSSIA*	65,6	43
CIPAR	65,6	44
HUNGARY	64,3	48
BULGARIA	63,6	51
ROMANIA	63,5	52
GREECE	62,1	57

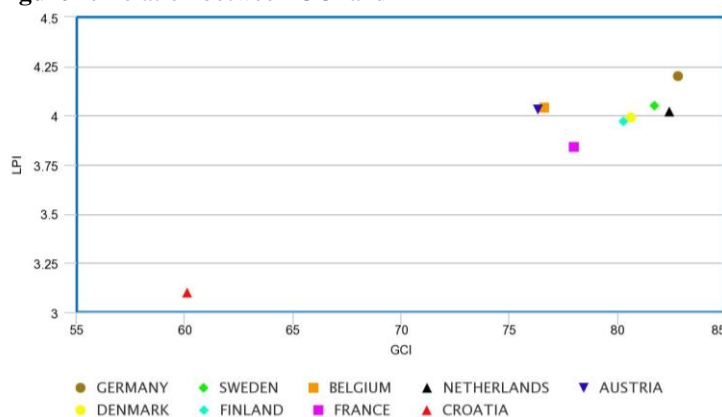
Country	GCI Index	Position
SRBIA*	60,9	65
CROATIA	60,1	68
MONTENEGRO *	59,6	71
MACEDONIA*	56,6	84
BiH*	54,2	91

\*Non EU-countries

Source: The World Economic Forum, 2018

When both tables are analyzed together, a certain connection can be noticed. Namely, the leading countries according to the LPI index appear in the leading places of the GCI index with some minimal changes in the ranking. This is even more evident at the EU level, and this can be seen in Figure 1, where the values of LPI and GCI indices for the leading EU countries and Croatia, which lags behind them, are compared. It is impossible to draw a cause-and-effect conclusion, but the existence of a connection between these variables can be examined. To determine the connection between the logistics performance index and the global competitiveness index, the Pearson's  $r$  correlation coefficient was calculated. The results show that a statistically significant high positive correlation of LPI index and GCI index in 2018 was found for these countries ( $r = 0.88$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), that is, those countries that have a high LPI index generally have a high GCI index. Globally, Croatia's logistics performance index is at the level of the world average. However, Croatia should raise this result at least to the level of the EU average in order to improve competitiveness. It can be concluded, from the results of the research, that it is necessary to improve the logistics performance index in Croatia, which can be a way to greater development of competitiveness in Europe and globally.

**Figure 1.** Relation between GCI and LPI



Source: The World Bank, World Economic Forum

### **3. BUSINESS INTERNATIONALIZATION**

Modern business enterprises are exposed to the growing impact of globalization and the high involvement of information technologies in business. Rugman et al. (2006) define internationalization as the processes by which a company enters the international market. When operating in a foreign country, companies must be willing to operate under various environmental influences such as competitors, customers, suppliers, financial institutions and governments. Sometimes there are situations where some environmental factors are the same both in the domestic market and in a foreign country.

The fact is that the domestic market cannot meet the needs for business development and expansion, so many companies strive for internationalization, and each company has its own motives for entering the international market. The most important factors, that is, motives for export and involvement in international trade are (Marković 1994, according to Malenica and Dorbić, 2014: 70): profit making, growth and development of the company, better utilization of production capacities, possibility of higher employment, marketing ability of the company, entrepreneurial motives of the company, product innovation, saturation of the domestic market and the advantage of the foreign over the domestic market.

The primary goal of any national economy is to engage in international exchange as successfully as possible. The internationalization of the business of a national economy is determined by the degree of internationalization of its companies, especially those that mostly participate in total export and import, or in the international trade of a country (Kovač 2012b). According to Statista (2019), total international trade has shown growth in all years with two exceptions. The decline in foreign trade occurred in 2009, when the crisis hit the world economy and resulted in a decline in international trade, and in 2015. According to available information from 2019 (Statista 2020), China is the world's leading exporter with a value of about 2.5 trillion US dollars. China is followed by the United States (\$ 1.64 trillion) and Germany (\$ 1.49 trillion). On the other hand, the leading country in terms of imports is the United States with the value of imported goods and services amounting to 2.61 trillion US dollars, while China and Germany hold 2nd and 3rd place (2.14 and 1.29 trillion US dollars).

#### **3.1. International exchange of Croatia**

Involvement in the flows of international trade of capital and goods is a process that even in the short term, and especially in the long term, brings enormous benefits to the country, and this is especially important for a small country like Croatia. Kovač (2012b) gives an example of how developed countries, which are classified as smaller countries in terms of population (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Ireland, Austria, Slovenia), have recognized the importance of the SME sector as a carrier of export activities and a key factor in raising competitiveness of the entire economy, which is currently not the case in Croatia because a large part of exports refers to large companies. In Croatia, the reasons for weak competitiveness can be found in over-indebtedness, unfavorable foreign exchange balance, uncompetitive economy and too

expensive public sector (Vurnek et al. 2019). Furthermore, the presence of corruption at all levels of society consequently entails a slow and inefficient judiciary. The existence of too many tax rates and as many as 256 parafiscal levies are just some of the elements of a poor tax system. The labor market and conservative labor legislation represent another weight on the progress of the economy. The products that Croatia exports have mostly low added value and cannot be compared with the products of technologically developed countries in which much more knowledge and technology has been invested. Furthermore, Turčić (2015) cites fragmented production, insufficient production capacity, lack of a clear national export strategy, difficult access to world capital, problems related to the transfer of new technologies and knowledge, etc. as lack of Croatian economy in terms of export. The same author concludes that Croatia's main competitive strength should be its natural and socially heterogeneous resource base, that is, the key comparative advantages of Croatia are tourism, economy, social development, unique and well-preserved environment, high degree of biodiversity, huge supplies of fresh water and, last but not least, skilled labor and population of Croatia.

According to the Croatian Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2020b), Croatia's total export in 2019 amounted to around HRK 113 billion, and total import amounted to around HRK 185 billion (an increase of 5% in both cases compared to 2018). With a share in total export of about 90% in 2019, the manufacturing industry achieved a 5% increase in export and thus had the greatest impact on the growth of total Croatian export. The increase in import in 2019 was also mostly contributed by the manufacturing industry, with a share in total import of about 89% and an increase in import of about 8% compared to 2018. Croatia's most important foreign trade partners are EU member states. Croatia's trade with the EU market in 2019 accounts for about 68% of total export, which increased by about 4% compared to the year before, and about 80% of total imports, which increased by about 8% compared to 2018. The largest EU foreign trade partners in 2019. were Italy, Germany and Slovenia. Trade with third countries in 2019 accounts for about 32% of total export, which increased by about 6%, and about 20% of total import, which decreased by about 6% compared to 2018. The largest foreign trade partners outside the EU with which Croatia realized trade in 2019 are still the neighboring countries Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.

### ***3.1.1. International wine exchange***

According to the data of the Croatia Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2020a), the production of wine with a protected designation of origin in the wine-growing year 2017/2018 amounts to 470,290 hectoliters, and they are the most represented in the total amount of 64.8%. Varietal wines in the total production are represented with 4.1%, and other wines with 31.1%. Wine production involves the process of vinification (removal of berries from the stalk, fermentation, pressing, clarification, maturation, etc.) and includes all wines, but also all must (concentrated and non-concentrated).

When it comes to wine consumption related to human consumption, industrial consumption, processing and losses, the situation is slightly different because other wines have the largest share in total domestic consumption, with 47.6% (slightly more



than 468,000 hectoliters). The total domestic consumption of wine in Croatia in the wine year 2017/2018 is about 984,730 hectoliters. The average consumption per capita is around 22 liters of wine, while the degree of self-sufficiency, which indicates the extent to which production in one country covers domestic consumption, is around 74%. Consumption of wine per capita is calculated by dividing the amount of wine produced for human consumption by the number of inhabitants. To calculate per capita consumption, the average number of inhabitants as of December 31, 2018 was taken as 4,076,246 (CBS 2020a).

Global wine production has had an upward trajectory in the past two years, and this trend has reversed in 2019 as there has been a decline in world wine production compared to 2018 (Statista 2020). A total of 260 million hectoliters of wine were produced compared to 294 million in 2018. The world's leading exporter of wine by volume is Italy with 21.6 million hectoliters, followed by Spain with a slightly smaller exported volume. When it comes to the value of exports, the leading countries are France (9.8 billion euros), Italy (6.4 billion euros) and Spain with 2.7 billion euros. According to the OIV (2020), these three countries account for 60% of the total value of exported wine in 2019.

According to the OIV (2020), in terms of import in 2019 in terms of quantities expressed in millions of hectoliters, the leading three countries were Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States, which together imported 40.4 mhl, or 38% of the world's total import. The first importer in the world in 2019 was Germany with 14.6 mhl, although the amount of imported wine decreased by 0.6% compared to 2018 when it was also in the leading position. Interestingly, these three countries are also in the leading position in terms of the value of imported wine and represent 39% of the total value of world wine import, reaching 11.9 billion euros. Table 3 shows the leading wine-importing countries in terms of quantities expressed in millions of hectoliters and in terms of the value of imported wine expressed in billions of euros.

**Table 3.** Leading importers of wine by quantity and value

	QUANTITY (mhl)	VALUE (mlrd EUR)
GERMANY	14,6	2,6
UNITED KINGDOM	13,5	3,8
USA	12,3	5,5
FRANCE	7,2	0,9
CHINA	6,1	2,2
RUSSIA	4,5	1,0
NETHERLANDS	4,2	1,2
CANADA	4,2	1,7
BELGIUM	3,1	1,0
PORTUGAL	2,9	0,2

Source: OIV, 2020

### ***3.1.2. Challenges of the Croatian wine industry in the internationalization of business***

The Croatian wine industry boasts a large number of wine varieties that are competitive on the international market. The legal - political environment affects the wine industry through strict and rigorous laws. It must be emphasized that the state, that is, the Ministry of Agriculture seeks to create a positive environment for work in agriculture by paying subsidies and incentives. Furthermore, when exporting to foreign countries, the laws of the foreign country and possible tariff quotas must be taken into account. In this regard, the export for Croatian companies was significantly facilitated in 2013, when Croatia joined the EU. Some of the wine industry stakeholders have not taken advantage of this and most of their exports still do not go to EU countries. When Croatia joined the EU on the issue of wine, several things happened:

- a) Administration for wine export to EU member states has been facilitated, and with reduced costs
- b) Restrictions have been introduced by CEFTA members, quota for maximum import, customs duties, levies, analyzes
- c) It is possible to use funds for investment in marketing in third countries from the "Wine Envelope" with a return of 80% of the funds.

"Wine Envelope" is a program within the Paying Agency for Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, which regularly announces a tender for direct measures to co-finance projects. The goals are manifested through the desire to "increase the production of quality wines and increase the competitiveness of producers through the modernization of wine production, through new investments in winery infrastructure and processing facilities, in order to reduce production costs taking into account food safety requirements and high environmental standards in the production process (Paying Agency for Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, according to Lesar 2018: 37).

There are several problems that Croatian companies face in the wine industry in internationalizing their products: wine is often considered a luxury, that is, a product that is not essential for life, great competition, cheaper substitutes in the category of wine, and substitutes in the category of alcoholic beverages such as various spirits, the yield of grapes, or the main raw material for wine production, largely depends on weather conditions, the outflow of quality labor (which can be solved by quality and constant education of workers). Therefore, it is necessary to monitor trends in the maintenance of vineyards and machinery, through the process of wine maturation, to storage, transport and ultimately sales, and computerization of the entire system. Also, there is noticeable progress in the use of modern methods of promotion, and above all it means the presence on social networks.

Croatia is a country where alcohol consumption is relatively socially acceptable. However, when entering foreign markets, a company must consider the cultural and religious habits of foreign consumers.

The sales plan, and thus production in the wine industry, is based on several factors:

- a) Data from last year

- b) Agreements concluded for the following year
- c) Market trends
- d) Company strategy related to the development targets of individual items
- e) Yield and quality of grapes.

The production process takes place without delay, even though wine production is a relatively long process. It is important to emphasize that all production activities are performed before the product is relocated to decentralized warehouses. Likewise, to observe the logistics strategy it is necessary to say that the order comes at the end of the supply chain.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Doing business in the domestic market requires great efforts to make the business successful. By entering the international market, the company is exposed to a more complex and riskier environment. However, the internationalization of business opens the possibility of marketing products to a larger number of potential consumers and thus opens the possibility of better business results. Therefore, it is not surprising that international trade has been on a steady rise since the second half of the 20th century. International logistics business is becoming an increasingly complex process every day as it is exposed to pressures that require ever faster changes. Partly these pressures are coming from the environment, and partly they are coming from the company itself, which strives to solve obstacles faster and more efficiently. In addition to constantly changing business conditions, consumer habits are also changing, and companies must be ready to adequately recognize and respond to these changes. However, some elements from the environment cannot be affected, so companies turn to internal elements that they can influence, such as production processes, storage, distribution flows and the like.

The wine industry in Croatia is successful, but there are still problems that hinder the internationalization of business. In the observed case, the characteristic of the raw material that requires rapid post-harvest production limits the choice of logistics strategy. Nevertheless, such companies base their strategy on the transport and storage of finished products.

This paper proves the correlation between the development of logistics infrastructure and the global competitiveness of the economy. According to the countries covered by this study, it was observed that the leading countries on the global competitiveness index scale are also leading on the logistics performance index scale. It is a devastating fact that Croatia, the EU's lowest-ranked member according to the global competitiveness index, has reduced its investment in transport infrastructure. The problem is that Croatia still does not know enough about the elements from the environment that favor and hinder it in creating a logistics strategy, to improve its logistics infrastructure and global competitiveness. There is a fear among Croatian companies that if they change the logistics structure, they will produce higher costs, additional investments and higher risk. Moreover, the consequence may be a change in the supply network, which will affect the loss of quality and relationships with partners. However, in the long term, we need to think

about how to improve the internationalization of companies through the challenges that logistics brings.

Suggestions for future research are in the direction of additional research, as the results showed that Croatia is the EU's lowest-ranked member, when comparing the two indexes. It is necessary to see what the problem is, what are the challenges and problems that affect logistics in the internationalization of business.

Liberalization of the market and reduction of transport costs have enabled the increase of international trade in the last few decades, and thus the international exchange of wine. In the production, storage and transport of wine, there are certain specifics that must be further considered when deciding on international business, such as the impossibility of delaying wine production, storage in special containers for proper maturation of wine and special packaging during transport (especially air transport) so that the wine is not exposed to external influences. Also, companies must timely and adequately recognize and respond to any change in the market.

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