



## SOMMELIER SCHOOL OF LITHUANIA

The Sommelier School of Lithuania (SSL) is an educational institution supplying wine, spirit courses, setting professional, social and ethical standards of sommelier, staff of wine trade and wine production companies in Lithuania since 2006. The Sommelier School of Lithuania works in close cooperation with the Lithuanian wine exhibition "Vyno dienos", the Lithuanian wine journal "Vyno žurnalas", and with the Lithuanian Sommelier Association. It is the organiser of national blind tasting competition "Nosis", as well as the wine and dessert best match competition "Wine+dessert".



### Why did you decide to join the Wine in Moderation movement?

We originally joined the Wine in Moderation movement as WiM Supporter in the beginning of 2017. Our decision was based on our internal motivation to formalise our social responsibility. Nonetheless, in November of the same year, we decided to spread the ideas of Wine in Moderation to the whole Lithuanian market, and therefore applied to become national coordinators, marking the beginning of our Wine in Moderation adventure. In the same year, the Lithuanian government started its anti-alcohol campaign based of prohibitions and penalties. We believe that our way of education and changing of habits will be more effective to our audience.

### What would you say is your most appreciated and impactful Wine in Moderation activity?

One of our very first activities has been to involve the Lithuanian wine exhibition "Vyno Dienos". The 2018 edition welcomed the first Wine in Moderation actions in Lithuania where a campaign "How to taste wine during an expo" was developed throughout the venue, reminding both amateurs and professionals visiting the fair to drink water, spit, avoid drinking when driving, etc.

### What would you consider as your main achievement?

One of our main challenges has been to unite national competitive players around one common programme: the Wine in Moderation programme. We are happy to have achieved this important goal and we look forward to taking the programme to the next step.

### Do you think that your "Wine in Moderation" actions helped to change the wine value chain in your country? If so, how did it make a difference?

As we are just launching Wine in Moderation in Lithuania, it is difficult to answer this question at the moment. However, we strongly believe in the programme and its power to make a difference.

### Do you think that "Wine in Moderation" passed the message to the wine drinkers? If so, how did it make a difference?

Wine in Moderation is only entering the initial phase in Lithuania. Independent communication actions are forming, and we will be launching the Lithuanian version of the Wine in Moderation website shortly. We will also introduce Standard Alcohol Unit concept on the back labels of wine sold in Lithuania, and certification of retailers. We hope all this will change wine drinkers' habits.

### According to you, what was the key/critical point in time for Wine in Moderation in your country and for the international programme overall?

The cost of self-funding such programme is high. Getting the business together and agreeing on the principles of participation and contribution, including financial investment, was one of the most challenging topics.

### Have your expectations been met?

Yes. But we feel that everything is in our hands and we look forward to continuing developing Wine in Moderation in Lithuania.



“Recognising that excessive and irresponsible drinking are indeed a major problem, the Sommelier School of Lithuania has taken the initiative to increase social responsibility in the industry. We believe that education is key in changing behaviours and we will work to change the culture of drinking by implementing the Wine in Moderation programme and using its principles and tools to contribute to the reduction of harmful drinking and the resulting social problems.”

Arūnas Starkus, Chairman of  
— Sommelier School of Lithuania



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