



Short guidelines on the steps
and procedures for

REGISTRATION OF QUALITY PRODUCTS WITH GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS AND TRADITIONAL SPECIALTIES





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and procedures for

REGISTRATION OF QUALITY PRODUCTS WITH GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS AND TRADITIONAL SPECIALITIES ON EU LEVEL





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It was edited by Sonja Srbinovska and Paola Corsinovi with contribution from Vlado Kovacevic and Veli Hoti, and in cooperation with ministries of agriculture from the SEE countries/territories



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Disclaimer:

This document is designed for applicants who wish to register the name of an agricultural product or foodstuff as a PDO (protected designation of origin) or PGI (protected geographical indication) or TSG (traditional specialties guaranteed) in the EU. This document is for information only. It carries no legal or interpretative value and does not substitute, amend or otherwise modify the rules laid down by legislation. The examples here reported are for informational purposes (not advertising) and the contents have been collected from each single website.

Aims of the guidelines

The objective of these guidelines is to provide technical support to the Western Balkan (WB) countries/territories regarding the requirements for the implementation of the European (EU) schemes of geographical indications and traditional specialties.

This document should help the stakeholders who are involved in the registration, protection and development of Geographical Indications with the aim to provide support to Western Balkan countries/territories (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, N. Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia) on the implementation and registration of European quality schemes such as Geographical Indications (GIs) and Traditional Specialities.*

In particular this document represents short guidelines on the steps and procedures for registration of products with geographical indications and traditional specialties according to the European requirements. Its content highlights the main information required by the EU during the request for registration and protection of the GIs at the EU level. This also could represent a good starting point for those countries facing the alignment process during the EU accession.

In addition, with the aim of raising awareness and helping the implementation of quality schemes of geographical indications in the Western Balkans, this document provides some technical examples of implementation in some European Countries (all used examples are available on the web).

Due to the differences in the procedures of application between European countries and third countries¹, and considering the different alignment process to the EU requirements for WBs, this document takes into consideration the general procedures required for the European countries (EU Member) and provides additional notes for the third countries.

^{*}This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

¹ "third countries" refers to all non-EU countries, including WBs

1. GENERAL REMARKS on QUALITY SCHEMES

European Union (EU) quality policy aims at protecting the names of specific products to promote their unique characteristics, as well as traditional know-how. Three quality schemes are recognised with their acronyms: PDO (Protected Designation of Origin), PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) and TSG (Traditional Speciality Guaranteed). These schemes promote and protect names of quality agricultural products and foodstuffs and encourage diverse agricultural production, protect product names from, inter alia, misuse, evocation and imitation and help consumers by giving them information concerning the specific character of the products. Traditional Speciality Guaranteed highlights the traditional character of products, either in their composition or means of production, and hence, does not strictly refer to geographical origin (European Commission, 2012) (Figure 1).

PDO and PGI are known as Geographical Indications (GIs) due to the specific link to the place where they are made. The GI recognition enables consumers to trust and distinguish quality products while also helping producers to market their products better. A Geographical Indication right enables those who have the right to use the indication to prevent its use by a third party whose product does not conform to the applicable standards. The right to use a protected geographical indication belongs to producers in the geographical area defined, who comply with the specific conditions of production for the product.

Figure 1. European Union quality schemes



Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) are names used to designate a product which is also originating from a limited territory (region, locality or a country) for which its quality or characteristics are essentially or exclusively due to its origin. Natural and human factors of the territory are often responsible for that differenti-

ated quality. For a PDO, all the steps of the production of the agricultural good or foodstuff have to take place in the region. This means that the raw material for a transformed PDO product (milk for a cheese product for example), should be originating in the geographical area.



Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) are names used to designate a product originating in a territory (locality, region or a country) for which a certain quality, reputation or other characteristic can be attributable to its origin. At least one of the steps of production of the product needs to take place in the said territory, which means that raw material to make the product does not necessarily originate from the geographical area.



With the term "**Traditional Specialities Guaranteed (TSG)**" European Union highlights the traditional aspects such as the way the product is made or its composition, without being linked to a specific geographical area. The name of a product being registered as a TSG protects it against falsification and misuse.

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/food-safety-and-quality/certification/quality-labels/quality-schemes-explained_en



As part of the EU's system of intellectual property rights (IPRs), names of products registered as GIs are legally protected against imitation and misuse within the EU and in non-EU countries where a specific protection agreement has been signed². Since the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) entered into force in the mid-1990s, the terms of GIs have come into common use. The TRIPS Agreement, Article 22, paragraph 1 contains the following description on GIs:

"[...] Indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a Member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin".

In the EU, GIs are regulated by several Regulations depending on the type of product involved: agricultural products and foodstuffs, or wines, or spirits, or handicraft or industrial products. In all cases, Member States are responsible for the prevention of unlawful use within the EU of protected geographical designations.

The following EU regulations are currently in place:

- *Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs*
- *Regulation (EC) No 1308/2013 on the protection of geographical indications for wine*³
- *Regulation (EC) No 251/2014 on the protection of geographical indications for aromatised wine*⁴
- *Regulation (EC) No 787/2019 on the protection of geographical indications for spirit drinks*⁵

Additional provisions or rules of implementation in relation to Regulation 1151/2012 are stipulated in the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No. 664/2014⁶ and the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 668/2014⁷.

Regulation 1151/2012 only applies to certain agricultural products and foodstuffs, such as fruit and vegetables, fish, meat and meat products, cheese, bread, pastry or beer. The protection provided by the Regulation 1151/2012 upon registration is equally available to geographical indications of third countries that meet the corresponding criteria and that are protected in their country of origin. The classification in annex XI to the Implementing Regulation contains a comprehensive list. Table 1, provides a short list according to the EU regulation.

² Intellectual property rights (IPR) protect a firm's intangible assets, allowing enterprises to profit from their creative and broadly innovative activities. Intangible assets account for more than half the value of companies and their importance is growing. In a world where EU companies compete more on innovation, creativity and quality than on price, intellectual property is a powerful tool for EU enterprises to become more competitive. The Commission has designed a legal framework and intellectual property system that offer incentives for EU companies to invest in the provision of goods and services with high standards of quality, innovation, design and creativity.

³ Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 Of The European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) No 922/72, (EEC) No 234/79, (EC) No 1037/2001 and (EC) No 1234/2007 and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33 of 17 October 2018 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards applications for protection of designations of origin, geographical indications and traditional terms in the wine sector, the objection procedure, restrictions of use, amendments to product specifications, cancellation of protection, and labelling and presentation

⁴ Regulation (EU) No 251/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of aromatised wine products and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1601/91

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2019/787 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the definition, description, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks, the use of the names of spirit drinks in the presentation and labelling of other foodstuffs, the protection of geographical indications for spirit drinks, the use of ethyl alcohol and distillates of agricultural origin in alcoholic beverages, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 110/2008

⁶ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014 of 18 December 2013 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to the establishment of the Union symbols for protected designations of origin, protected geographical indications and traditional specialties guaranteed and with regard to certain rules on sourcing, certain procedural rules and certain additional transitional rules

⁷ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 668/2014 of 13 June 2014 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

Table 1. List and product classification

Agricultural products intended for the human consumption which can be protected	From Class 1.1. To 1.8 Fresh meat (and offal); Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.); Cheeses; Other products of animal origin (eggs, honey, various dairy products except butter, etc.); Oils and fats (butter, margarine, oil, etc.); Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed; Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom; other products listed in Annex I to the Treaty (spices etc.)
Agricultural products and foodstuffs which can be protected with PDOs/PGIs	From Class 2.1. To 2.20 beer, chocolate and derived products; bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares; beverages made from plant extracts; pasta; salt; natural gums and resins; mustard paste; hay; essential oils; cork (etc.)
Traditional specialties guaranteed	From Class 2.21. To 2.27 prepared meals; chocolate and derived products; bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares; beverages made from plant extracts; pasta; salt.

Source: Author's own elaboration based on EU Regulations 1151/2012 and 668/2014.

The Regulation on agricultural products or foodstuff GIs provides that any restriction on the origin of raw materials for a GI must be justified in relation to the link between a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the agricultural product or foodstuff and the geographical origin.

Due to the specificity and relevance of the wine sector in the EU, *Regulation (EC) No 1308/2013 provides the following specification:*

- "**Designation of origin**" means the name of a region, a specific place or a country used to describe a product that complies with the following requirements:

- Its quality and characteristics are essentially or exclusively due to a particular geographical environment with its inherent natural and human factors;
- The grapes from which it is produced come exclusively from this geographical area;
- Its production takes place in this geographical area;
- It is obtained from vine varieties belonging to *Vitis*;

- "**Geographical indication**" means an indication referring to a region, a specific place or a country, used to describe a product that complies with the following requirements:

- It possesses a specific quality, reputation or other characteristics attributable to that Geographical origin;
- At least 85 % of the grapes used for its production come exclusively from this Geographical area;
- Its production takes place in this geographical area;
- It is obtained from vine varieties belonging to *Vitis vinifera* or a cross between the *Vitis vinifera* species and other species of the genus *Vitis*.

According to many scientific publications, Geographical Indications may represent an important opportunity for many regions to add value to their economies and societies, not only in terms of trade and income, but in the form of cultural and environmental benefits as well. This premise is based, in part, on the extraordinary success of GIs in regions and countries such as France, Italy (ITC, 2009)⁸. GIs are much more than just a geographic name-noting system. They identify a product as originating in a delimited territory, where one or more of its characteristics and its quality, reputation, or some other unique feature – is essentially attributable to its geographical origin and the particular human or natural factors found in that region.

⁸ https://www.origin-gi.com/images/stories/PDFs/English/E-Library/geographical_indications.pdf



1.1 Protection conferred by the registration

All producers that comply with the corresponding specification may use a name registered under the EU Regulation. The EU symbols (logos) must appear on the labelling of products originating in the European Union and marketed under a registered name. The indications “protected designation of origin” or “protected geographical indication” or the respective abbreviations “PDO” or “PGI” may be used (Art. 12 (3) of the Regulation).

Control bodies of the states verify compliance with the specification. Any producer of a relevant product must adhere to the (fee-based) control system.

The use of protected names for comparable products having a different origin or other properties is not admissible. The use of a registered name for other products is likewise prohibited if by doing this the reputation of the protected name is exploited. Furthermore, the Regulation comprehensively protects registered names against any misuse, imitation or evocation even if the actual origin of the product is indicated or the protected name is translated or accompanied by an expression such as “style”, “type”, “method”, “as produced in”, “imitation” or similar, and any other misleading practices. Furthermore, protected names cannot become generic (Art. 13(1) and (2) of the Regulation).

The registration of indications of geographical origin does not affect the rights conferred by earlier trademarks acquired in good faith. However, the coexistence of the trademark and of a designation of origin or geographical indication must be tolerated. In contrast, the later trademark cannot be protected if the application has been filed in respect of comparable products and if the use of the trademark would contravene Article 13 of the Regulation (Art. 14 of the Regulation).

2. REGISTRATION PROCESS: the main procedures at EU level

2.1 How to register

To register the name of a product, EU producers or producer groups need to lay down the product’s specifications and link to the geographical area, if applicable. The application is sent to national authorities for scrutiny and then forwarded to the European Commission, which will examine the request. In order to register a GI, the product must comply with detailed specifications including, at least, the raw materials and the principal physical, chemical, microbiological or organoleptic characteristics of the product. *Evidence of the geographical area of production must be provided, together with the production method, with all of these elements demonstrating that the product originates in the defined geographical area, and that it complies with the labelling method.*

Any producer or group of producers in a geographical area relating to a PDO/PGI designation is entitled to use the registered name to market the product concerned, as long as the conditions of production set out in the product specification are respected. Applications are generally made by producer groups, which normally represent all the interested producers in a locality.

For non-EU products to be registered at EU level, producers send their applications directly, or via their national authorities, to the European Commission. That means that applications could be submitted directly by producers to the Commission – it is not obligatory to send them through national authorities.⁹

Joint applications (as referred to in the Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012) can be submitted to the Commission by a EU Member State concerned, or by an applicant group in a third country concerned, direct-

⁹ In the case of applications from third countries, it is not needed to get first protection as GI in the country of origin – EU requires a proof that the name is protected, but it could also be protected as a trade mark



ly or through the authorities of that third country. It shall include the declaration from all the Member States concerned. Requirements laid down for product specification of the Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 should be fulfilled in all EU Member States and third countries concerned.

For spirit drinks and agri-food products, the European Commission has respectively a maximum of 12 and 6 months to examine the application and decide if the product will be protected under the quality scheme requested. As for wine, there is no deadline for the application examination.

EU and non-EU producers, national authorities and the European Commission can oppose or cancel the registration of a product name under a quality scheme. The opposition can be done from the moment the product is registered, and for a period of three months. If the opposition is valid, the two parties involved (the party opposing the registration and the group of producers registering the product) should consult each other to find a solution.

If no agreement is reached, the Commission takes the final decision on cancelling or not the registration. Cancelling the registration of a product name is a possibility when compliance with the product specifications is no longer ensured. It is also possible to cancel the registration of a product name (only for food) when no registered product name (as PDO, PGI or TSG) has been put on the market for seven consecutive years.

All documents sent to the European Commission have to be in one of the official languages of the institutions of the European Union or accompanied by a certified translation into one of those languages.

2.2 Application requirements: the procedure at the national level

The application process takes place in a two-tier procedure: at the national level and at EU level. However, for non-EU countries applications could be submitted directly by producers to the Commission – it is not obligatory to send them through national authorities. The main actors involved in the procedure are *applicants (group of producers), and national and EU authorities responsible for registration.*

The procedure at national level for EU Countries contains the following steps:

- Definition by the group of producers of its product according to precise specification (see the following pages)
- Request from the producer group sent to competent national authorities
- Examination of the application by the national authority to check if it is justified and meets the legislation conditions (EU regulations and national laws)
- Objection procedure (any person having a legitimate interest and established or resident on its territory may lodge their objection to the application).

To register the name of a product, producers or producer groups need to lay down the product's specification and the application is sent to the national authorities for scrutiny. Applications should be examined by the national authorities, in compliance with the minimum common provisions, including a national opposition procedure.

The National Competent Authority (NCA) shall scrutinise the application by appropriate means in order to check that it is justified and meets the conditions of the respective scheme. If it is found not appropriate, applicants are informed of this negative decision and the application is not passed on. If the application lodged by the applicant group meets the conditions and is qualifying for the favourable decision, the application can be forwarded to the European Commission for subsequent scrutiny of the applications.

As part of the scrutiny, the national authority shall initiate a national opposition procedure that ensures adequate publication of the application and that provides for a reasonable period within which any natural or legal person having a legitimate interest and established or resident on its territory may lodge an opposition to the application. Admissibility of oppositions received should be examined and if the requirements of this Regulation are considered to be met, a favourable decision may be taken and an application dossier lodged with the Commission. In such case the Commission shall be informed of admissible oppositions received.

If, after assessment of any opposition received, the NCA considers that the requirements of the Regulation are met, it takes favourable decision. If the specification was significantly amended after the publication of the application, these amendments should be published together with the favourable decision. Each producer from the group should prove production



according to the product specification via competent national control bodies and then can be entered into the Register of producers.

If a group of producers applies for the registration of a name that designates a border geographical area, or a traditional name connected to that geographical area situated in another country, the national authorities must consult the relevant authorities of this country before transmitting the application to the Commission.

This provision is aimed at establishing whether a product is being produced elsewhere under the same name, on both sides of the border, as well as tries to find an overall solution to the problem. One solution, for example, could consist of the establishment of a common specification and a joint application with the third country or Member State concerned. In this case, producers would be able to keep their rights to use the name, even if they represent a minority of producers located in a country different from that where the majority is located.

2.3 Application requirements: the procedure at the EU level

After receiving the documents from the National Competent Authority or directly from an applicant from a third country, the Commission examines the application. The Commission shall scrutinise by appropriate means any application, in order to check that it is justified and that it meets the conditions of the respective scheme. This scrutiny should not exceed a period of six months. The Commission shall, at least each month, make public the list of names for which registration applications have been submitted to it, as well as their date of submission.

If the EU Commission considers that the conditions laid down in Regulation 1151/2012 are met, it publishes in the Official Journal of the European Union, the single document of the application and the reference to the publication of the specification (the Member States must provide for an electronic access to the publication of the specification). Where that is not the case, the Commission rejects the registration application. The publication opens an opposition period during which any Member State or third country may

object to the registration, by sending a duly substantiated statement to the Commission. If no oppositions, the name will be entered in the register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications and published in the OJEU (Official Journal of EU).

Any other member state or third country and all persons having a legitimate interest, established or resident in another member state or a third country, may lodge an opposition to the proposed registration.

Oppositions can only be based on the reasons specified in Article 10(1) of the Regulation, namely:

- a) The conditions referred to in Article 5 of the Regulation for designations of origin or geographical indications or the requirements referred to in Article 7(1) of the Regulation for specifications are not complied with
- b) The proposed name conflicts with the name of a plant variety or animal breed or with a registered name or well-known trade mark pursuant to Article 6(2), (3) or (4) of the Regulation
- c) The registration of the proposed name would jeopardise the existence of an entirely or partly homonymous name or trade mark or the existence of products which have been legally on the market for at least five years preceding the date of the publication provided for in Article 50(2)(a) of the Regulation;
- d) The name whose registration is requested is a generic name.

If the reasoned statement of opposition is admissible, the Commission will invite the parties concerned, in a first step, to reach an agreement. If no agreement is reached, the Commission will take a decision, within the scope of a committee procedure, whether or not the name shall be entered in the register of protected names.

The Commission may cancel a registration on its own initiative or upon request of a member state or of any natural or legal person with a legitimate interest, if the conditions of the specification for an agricultural product or foodstuff covered by a protected name are no longer met or no product was put on the market under the protected designation of origin or the protected geographical indication in the past seven years (Art. 54 of the Regulation).

3. CONTENT of APPLICATION for REGISTRATION of PDO and PGI

Registration is the outcome of a private voluntary initiative on the part of the producers concerned: the first step is to lodge an application for registration.

The system is voluntary and open. Any producer located in the area and respecting the conditions of production specified in the product specification is entitled to use the registered name to market its product. *Therefore, as a principle, applications are made in the name of producer groups. A group means any association of farmers, producers and/or of processors dealing with the same product.*

Other interested parties, for example consumers, may also participate in the group. Such groups prepare together the application for registration of their products. Indeed, according to Regulation, any one producer who is established in the defined geographical zone may use the name as long as all the conditions of the specifications are fulfilled. The specifications must be transparent, clearly defined and made public. This must be ensured through the precise and thorough description of the given product and its method of production.

The application must state clearly whether the name is to be registered as a protected geographical indication or as a protected designation of origin.

An application for registration of a designation of origin or geographical indication shall include at least:

- The name and address of the applicant group
- The name and address of the authorities
- The name and address of the bodies verifying compliance with the provisions of the product specification;
- The product specification;

➤ Providing information for each required element and all other supporting documents. For example such documents could include the results of surveys or literary works proving the reputation of a name or maps showing the particular natural elements of a geographical zone. Additional illustrative documents such as photos, menus, recipes or invoices can be useful.

➤ A single document setting out the following:

- ❖ The main points of the product specification: the name, a description of the product, including, where appropriate, specific rules concerning packaging and labelling, and a concise definition of the geographical area;
- ❖ A description of the link between the product and the geographical environment or geographical origin, as the case may be, including, where appropriate, the specific elements of the product description or production method justifying the link.

When application is coming from EU countries the declaration by the Member State is needed, that it considers that the application lodged by the applicant group and qualifying for the favourable decision meets the conditions of this Regulation and the provisions adopted pursuant thereto;

Important note

*When a group of producers from the WBs (or other third countries) sends an application to the EC for product registration with PDO or PGI, supporting documentation must also **provide evidence that the product name is protected in its country of origin (including the date of protection in the country of origin, legal basis: legal act / ministerial order / registration recommendation, product name, etc.)***

*Additional information required when the application is sent directly by a producer group to the EU is: **the name and address and contact details of the public authority or product certification body** (if more than one, give details for all).*

The verification of compliance with the specifications before placing the product on the market shall be carried out by: one or more of the public authorities designated by the third country; and/or one or more of the product certification bodies.



In relation to control bodies/product certification bodies the proof of accreditation with the standard EN ISO/IEC 17065:2012 should be provided. The scope of accreditation should cover the controls of geographical indications. The accreditation may only be performed by a national accreditation body in the Union in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008; or an accreditation body outside the Union that is a signatory of a multilateral recognition arrangement under the auspices of the International Accreditation Forum.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'...'
EU No:
PDO () PGI ()

1. NAME(S)
.....
2. MEMBER STATE OR THIRD COUNTRY
.....
3. DESCRIPTION OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT OR FOODSTUFF
 - 3.1. Type of product
.....
 - 3.2. Description of product to which the name in (1) applies
.....
 - 3.3. Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)
.....
 - 3.4. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area
.....
 - 3.5. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to
.....
 - 3.6. Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to
.....
4. CONCISE DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA
.....
5. LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA
.....

Reference to publication of the specification
(the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of this Regulation)

3.1 Application dossier: some explanations

3.1.1 Name and Address of the Applicant Group

- ✓ **Stipulate the name and address of the applicant group**

The applicant group must have a legal status (association, cooperation, etc.) with a NAME (which can be the name of a natural or legal person) and a single address in the country (telephone, fax and e-mail are desirable).

Groups who work with the products with the name to be registered may only submit applications for registration of names under the quality schemes. In the case of a 'protected designations of origin' or 'protected geographical indications' name that designates a trans-border geographical area or in the case of a 'traditional specialties guaranteed' name, several groups from different Member States or third countries may lodge a joint application for registration.

Only an association of producers or processors of the product can file the application for registration. In exceptional cases, an individual natural or legal person may also file an application, but essentially it needs to be explained that the producer is the only one in the area; and that the characteristics of the area or product/foodstuff produced within the area differ from those produced outside.

On a separate sheet the following details of the Applicant Group should be included:

- Name, address (telephone, fax, e-mail if available),
- Legal status (according to national law),
- Size (how many members of the group), and
- Composition (role or occupation of the members: farmers; producers; distributors; finishers; packers; etc.).

LEGAL STATUS of the producers – means that all producers of the potential product from the group should have Food establishments registered or approved by the competent authority in the state/entity (**Legal Registered Number**). That means all food producers intended to protect their products should implement GHP, GMP and flexible HACCP, acquire legal status - registered by competent authority and then send application.

3.1.2 Name and address of the Authorities

- ✓ Stipulate the name and address and contact details of the public authority or product certification body (if more than one, give details for all).
- ✓ In annex - give more information about public authorities like: a statement other position, capacity and the adequacy of their functions by the national authorities addressed to the Commission.

Rationale

In the Regulation it is clear that the protection afforded, should be equally available to designations of origin and geographical indications of third countries that meet the corresponding criteria and that are protected in their country of origin.

In each country competent national authorities take the necessary measures to protect the names within their territory, for all quality schemes set in Reg. 1151/2012. They should also prevent and stop the unlawful production or marketing of products using such a name.

The national authorities of the state concerned, in compliance with minimum common provisions, including a national opposition procedure, should examine the applications from the group of producers. The Commission should subsequently scrutinise applications to ensure that there are no manifest errors and that Union law and the interests of stakeholders outside the Member State of application have been taken into account.

The competent authorities in the countries should meet a number of operational criteria in order to ensure that they are impartial and effective. NCA shall offer adequate guarantees of objectivity and impartiality, and adequate qualified staff and resources necessary to carry out their functions. Also, provisions on delegating some competences of performing specific control tasks to control bodies should be envisaged. The competent authority should also scrutinise the application by appropriate means in order to check that it is justified and meets the conditions of the respective scheme.

Member States or concerned country should take appropriate administrative and judicial steps to prevent or stop the unlawful use of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications that are produced or marketed in that state/country.

States should designate the authorities that are responsible for taking all steps in accordance with procedures determined in the Reg. 1151/2012.

These authorities should offer adequate guarantees of objectivity and impartiality and shall have at their disposal the qualified staff and resources necessary to carry out their functions.

3.1.3 Name and address of the bodies verifying compliance with the provisions of the product specification

- ✓ Stipulate the name and address and contact details of the product certification body (if more than, give details for all).
- ✓ In an annex - give more information like: their certificate of accreditation and the status of the accreditation authority as a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or in the EU.
- ✓ Specific tasks of the authorities or bodies can be also listed.

Keynote

Compliance with the specification must be subject to verification. This can either be done by public authorities or by a product certification body. If the public authorities do verification checks, they must offer guarantees of impartiality and objectivity and have at their disposal qualified staff and resources necessary to carry out the checks.

If verification checks are done by a product certification body, it must be accredited in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065 (Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services). The accreditation authority must be recognised by the IAF (International Accreditation Forum) or be an accreditation authority of a Member State of the EU.



Rationale

Each country/state should provide inspection structures in order to ensure that the requirements set out in the specifications are met. States are obliged to set up the necessary control bodies to ensure compliance with EU rules. Enforcement of the scheme is carried out by authorities designated by the state/country, acting within the rules laid down at EU level.

Member States or third country merely had to ensure that inspection structures were in place in order to guarantee that the requirements laid down in the specifications were met.

The added value of the geographical indications and traditional specialities guaranteed is based on consumer trust. It is only credible if accompanied by effective verification and controls. Those quality schemes should be subject to a monitoring system of official controls, in line with the principles set out in Regulation (EU) No 625/ 2017 on official controls¹⁰, and should include a system of checks at all stages of production, processing and distribution.

In order to help the countries to better apply provisions of Regulation (EU) No 625/ 2017 for the controls of GIs and TSG, references to the most relevant articles must be mentioned in the national regulation on the quality schemes.

Information on control activities for geographical indications and traditional specialities guaranteed should be included in the **multiannual national control plans** and annual report prepared by the Member States or third country in accordance with Regulation (EU) No **625/ 2017**.

¹⁰ Regulation (EU) No 625/ 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products

3.1.3.1 Designation of competent authority for official controls

In accordance with Regulation (EU) No 625/ 2017, States shall designate the competent authority or authorities responsible for official controls carried out to verify compliance with the legal requirements related to the quality schemes established by the Regulation 1151/2012. Procedures and requirements of Regulation (EU) No **625/ 2017** shall apply mutatis mutandis to the official controls carried out to verify compliance with the legal requirement related to the quality schemes for all products covered by Annex I to the Regulation 1151/2012.

Official controls shall cover:

- Verification that a product complies with the corresponding product specification; and
- Monitoring of the use of registered names to describe product placed on the market, in conformity with names registered as PDO, PGI or TSG.

3.1.3.2 Verification of compliance with product specification

In respect of designations of origin, geographical indications and traditional specialities guaranteed that designate products originating in a third country, the verification of compliance with the specifications before placing the product on the market shall be carried out by:

- One or more of the public authorities designated by the third country; and/or
- One or more of the product certification bodies

States should make public the name and address of the authorities and bodies, and update that information periodically. The Member States should inform the Commission of the names and addresses of the competent authorities and the Commission shall make public the name and address of the national authorities and bodies and update that information periodically.

It is important to ensure surveillance of the use of the name in the market place. Therefore each state shall carry out checks, based on a risk analysis, to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Regulation and, in the event of breaches, the states should take all necessary measures.

Competent authorities may delegate specific tasks related to official controls of the quality schemes to one or more control bodies. Such control bodies should be accredited in accordance with European Standard ISO/IEC 17065 (Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services).

Competent authorities should be able to delegate some of their tasks to other bodies.

Appropriate conditions should be laid down to ensure that the impartiality, quality and consistency of the official controls and of the other official activities are preserved. The delegated body should in particular be accredited according to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standard for performance of inspections.

The delegated body should operate and be accredited in accordance with the standards relevant to the delegated tasks in question, including the standard EN ISO/IEC 17020 'Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection'.

Planning and reporting of control activities - each country should ensure that activities for the control are specifically included in a separate section within the multi-annual national control plans. The annual reports concerning the control of the obligations established by the Regulation shall include a separate section comprising the information laid down in Article 113 of Regulation (EU) No 625/ 2017¹¹.

¹¹ Regulation (EU) No 625/ 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products

4. PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

In order to benefit from the protection given to a Geographical Indication (and (to be eligible for registration), EU regulations establish that an agricultural product, a foodstuff, a wine or a spirit must comply with a "production specification".

The product specification is a key document, which contains information about the product, its specific qualities, its area of production, and explains the link between the geographical environment and the product in question. The specification must clearly state whether the name is to be registered as a protected geographical indication or as a protected designation of origin.

The specification is therefore *the product's identification document, prepared and presented (during the application process) that lays down the detailed rules and conditions for the production of the product to be designated as a PDO or PGI*.

According to Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 Art. 7 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs on the protection of Geographical Indications and Designations of Origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs, replacing the Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006, a product specification should be included at least the following elements:

1. *Product Designation (the name of the product)*
2. *Product Description (raw materials, main characteristics)*
3. *Definition of the geographical area*
4. *Evidence of product origin within the geographical area*
5. *Description of the production methods*
6. *Evidence of the link with the geographical area or geographical origin*
7. *Mention of quality control body*
8. *Specific rules concerning labelling in regard to the acronyms PDO or PGI*
9. *Regulations and conditions in compliance with national/EU provisions*

Each country should determine the basic criteria to establish a code of conduct, according to its own idea of GIs and the needs of local producers. Those elements justifying the link between the qualities, the characteristics or reputation of a product and the geographical environment are crucial to identify a Geographical Indication.



4.1 Product designation (the name of the product)

It includes the name to be protected as a geographical indication (GI), as it is used, whether in trade or in common language, and only in the languages, which are or were historically used to describe the specific product in the defined geographical area.

A name may not be registered as a designation of origin or geographical indication where it conflicts with a name of a plant variety or an animal breed and is likely to mislead the consumer as to the true origin of the product. A name proposed for registration that is wholly or partially homonymous with a name already entered in the register established under Article 11 of the EU Regulation may not be registered unless there is sufficient distinction in practice between the conditions of local and traditional usage and presentation of the homonym registered subsequently and the name already entered in the register, taking into account the need to ensure equitable treatment of the producers concerned and that consumers are not misled.

A homonymous name which misleads the consumer into believing that products come from another territory shall not be registered even if the name is accurate as far as the actual territory, region or place of origin of the products in question is concerned.

A name proposed for registration as a designation of origin or geographical indication shall not be registered where, in the light of a trade mark's reputation and renown and the length of time it has been used, registration of the name proposed as the designation of origin or geographical indication would be liable to mislead the consumer as to the true identity of the product.

Words having particular descriptive meanings, such as 'original', 'traditional', 'farmhouse', 'natural', etc., should normally be avoided, unless this is an intrinsic part of the name used to describe the product.

Box 1. Example of Product Designation - Italian PDO Asiago Cheese

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION PDO "ASIAGO"

(Ministerial Decree 03/08/2006 Official Gazette no. 190, 17/08/06)

Article 1: Name

The protected designation of origin "Asiago" is reserved for the semi-cooked cheese, produced with cow's milk, obtained in accordance with this specification. Production is divided into two different types of cheese, pressed Asiago and fostered Asiago, whose characteristics are described below.

Source: downloaded from web <https://www.asiagochese.it/en/consortium/production-rules>

Box 2. Example of Product Geographical Indication - Italian PGI Toscano Extra Virgin Olive Oil

PRODUCTION SPECIFICATIONS OF "TOSCANO" EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL, PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

1. Denomination

"Toscano" Protected Geographical Indication, eventually accompanied by one of the following additional geographical references: "Seggiano", "Colline Lucchesi", "Colline della Lunigiana", "Colline di Arezzo", "Colline Senesi", "Colline di Firenze", "Montalbano", "Monti Pisani" is reserved to the olive oil that meets the conditions and the requirements established in the production specifications within this document.

Source: downloaded from web <https://www.oliotoscanoigp.it/cms/doc/DisciplinareOlioToscanoIGPen.pdf>

According to the second example (Box 2), the Extra Virgin Olive Oil Toscano PGI can be produced in the Italian region called Tuscany and it could be eventually accompanied by additional geographical references (within the same administrative Region "Tuscany") (see the following points).

Box 3. Example of Product Designation - Parma Ham PDO

PRODUCT NAME: PROSCIUTTO DI PARMA

Since 1970 the designation of origin "Prosciutto di Parma" has been legally protected at a national level by Law No. 506 dated 4 July 1970 and was subsequently recognised as a PDO with EC Regulation No. 1107 dated 12 June 1996 pursuant to EEC Regulation no. 2081/92

Source: downloaded from web: https://www.prosciuttodiparma.com/pdf/en_UK/Parma_Ham_Specifications_Disciplinare_Consolidato_Nov_13.pdf

4.2 Product description (raw materials and main characteristics)

The description essentially establishes the ways in which a product is specific, and details how it is to be differentiated from other products in the same category. Specification of processing, packaging and presentation may also be important, because methods of cutting, slicing, grating or packaging may be essential in maintaining the characteristics and value of the product.

A description of the product, including the raw materials, if appropriate, as well as the principal physical, chemical, microbiological or organoleptic characteristics of the product, but can also include the sizes or the minimum weight. Give details of the production steps that take place within the specified geographical area for PDO and what is external for PGI.

Highlighting the influence of the geographical environment and/or the savoir-faire of the local producers in the final product.

- Physical attributes (shape, colour, weight etc.)
- Chemical features (minimum fat content, maximum water content etc.)
- Microbiological information (e. g. any bacteria present)
- Biological details (race, variety etc.)
- Organoleptic characteristics (taste, flavour, colour, odour etc.)

Box 4. Example of product description - Asiago PDO cheese

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION - PDO "ASIAGO"

(Ministerial Decree 03/08/2006 Official Gazette no. 190, 17/08/06)

Article 3: Animal feed

The cattle whose milk is intended for processing into PDO "Asiago" cheese should not be fed with the fodder and feed as indicated below:

Forages:

- Crops of canola, rapeseed, mustard, Greek hay; Leaves of fruit trees, leaves of chard and collars; silo grass of clover, pea, and by-products; Fruits and their by-products from industrial processing, fresh and kept moist; vegetables and related products, fresh and kept moist; By-products of fermentation industries, fresh and kept moist (brewers grains, distillery etc.);

(... etc.)

Fees:

- meat, fish and feather meals; rapeseed meal, citrus seeds, grape seeds; vegetables and dried fruit; - industrial processing of dried vegetables and fruit by-products (beans and peas peels, artichokes, chestnuts, pods, husks, seeds, dregs); sugar by-products: protein concentrate from molasses, various dried pulps, and others; industrial fermentation dried products; stillage fermentation, fermentation residues and others.

If the milk is intended for the production of PDO Asiago cheese which bears the term "mountain product" it is also forbidden to be fed with any type of silage.

Source: downloaded from web: https://www.asiagocheese.it/uploads/files_pagina_190920171437_Disciplinare-di-produzione_EN.pdf



Box 5. Example of product description - Tuscan PGI Extra Virgin Olive Oil

**PRODUCTION SPECIFICATION OF "TOSCANO" EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL,
PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION**

2. Olive Varieties:

1) "Toscano" Protected Geographical Indication, without any additional geographical references, must be obtained by the following olive varieties present, alone, or in combination, within the following olive groves: Americano, Arancino, Ciliegino, Frantoio, Grappolo, Gremignolo, Grossolana, Larcianese, Lazzero, Leccino, Leccio del Corno, Leccione, Madonna dell'Impruneta, Marzio, Maurino, Melaiolo, Mignolo, Moraiolo, Morchiaio, Olivastra Seggianese, Pendolino, Pesciatino, Piangente, Punteruolo, Razzoia, Rossellino, Rossello, San Francesco, Santa Caterina, Scarlinese, Tondello and their synonyms. There can also be other varieties for a maximum of 5%.

2) The additional geographical reference "Seggiano" is reserved to the "Toscano" Extra Virgin Olive Oil obtained by the olives coming from olive groves composed by the variety Olivastra Seggianese. Also other olive varieties can be admitted as pollinators present in the olive groves for a maximum of 5%.

3) The additional geographical reference "Colline Lucchesi" is reserved to the "Toscano" Extra Virgin Olive Oil obtained by the olives of the following varieties: Frantoio or Frantioiana until 90%, Leccino until 20%. Also other olive varieties can be admitted in the olive groves for a maximum of 15%.

4) The additional geographical reference "Colline della Lunigiana" is reserved to the "Toscano" Extra Virgin Olive Oil obtained by the olives of the following varieties: Frantoio or Frantioiana until 90%, Leccino until 20%. Also other olive varieties can be admitted in the olive groves for a maximum of 15%.

5) (..etc.)

Source: downloaded from web <https://www.oliotoscanoigp.it/cms/doc/DisciplinareOlioToscanoIGPEN.pdf>

4.3 Definition of the geographical area delimited

The geographical area represents the key element of the GIs purposes. The process of defining the physical boundaries for the production area of a local product is an essential and crucial step. The geographical area corresponds to the territory where the GI product is elaborated (or can be elaborated) according to the stages defining the GI product (raw material, processing, etc.).

The product specification has to set out precisely the limits of the geographic area, using supporting documents including maps. The delimitation should be based on the link between the product and its geographical origin. Each delimitation process requires a collective approach among the stakeholders involved in the registration steps. However, there is no standard EU approach towards the delimitation of the GI area. Each country has its own method and procedures to define the area. However, as a general rule, the geographical area is defined in a detailed, precise way based on evidence relating to historical, geological, agronomical or climatic conditions.

Geographical limits are defined by natural or human factors, but not necessarily by administrative boundaries. Sometimes, specialists such as historians, geologists, economists, etc. are called in to help define the area. The process of delimitation should take into account different criteria:

- Physical criteria, such as soil, climate, topography, water supply, etc.
- Local practices, such as conditions of cultivation, varieties, harvesting, processing practices, etc.
- Local production history and the GI reputation: historical data and documented sources (literature, laws, recipes but also oral sources such as stories and narrations) mentioning the product and the geographical origin in the past can be considered and presented with the aim to demonstrate the historical production. Where a GIs application is based on reputation, explain what that reputation consists of and how the reputation relates to product from the geographical area.

When the GI area covers regions from two Member States, the EU GI system provides for the registration of cross-border GIs¹².

Box 6. *Description of production area: Example of Asiago PDO cheese*

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION PDO "ASIAGO"

(Ministerial Decree 03/08/2006 Official Gazette no. 190, 17/08/06)

Article 2 Production Area

PDO "Asiago" cheese is produced with milk from herds located in the defined area and in dairies located within the protection zone that is stated below: Province of Vicenza: the whole territory; Province of Trento: the whole territory; Province of Padova: the municipalities of Carmignano di Brenta, S. Pietro in Gù, Grantorto, Gazzo, Piazzola sul Brenta, Villafranca Padovana, Campodoro, Mestrino, Veggiano, Cervarese S. Croce and Rovolon; Province of Treviso: the territory thus delimited: taking as a reference point the town of Rossano Veneto, near Vicenza, the limit follows the road Rossano - Castelfranco Veneto until its junction with state road no. 53 "Postumia". Along this road, crossing the ring road south of Treviso, to its intersection with the Alemagna highway. The boundary continues north along the path of said highway to the river Piave.

Then turns west along the right bank of said river to the border of Treviso and Belluno. From this point the limit is identified with the boundary of the province of Treviso to the point of this *meeting with the boundary of the province of Vicenza*.

The production areas indicated above, which are located at a height not less than 600 metres, are identified as mountainous territory.

Source: https://www.asiagocheese.it/uploads/files_pagina_190920171437_Disciplinare-di-produzione_EN.pdf

¹² A cross-border GI is a GI which comes from an area that covers regions from two countries. There are specific provisions with regard to the protection of cross-border GIs for agricultural products and foodstuffs and for wines. Examples of GIs registered as cross-border are PGI Rosée des Pyrénées Catalanes France and Spain (for meat); Slovenia-Croatian (PGI) for Extra Virgin Olive Oil under the name Istria Olive Oil, Maasvallei Limburg (wine), is a Belgian and Dutch protected designation of origin (PDO), Istarski pršut / Istrski pršut »(ham) is a Croatian and Slovenian PDO. Miód z Sejneńszczyzny / Łódzkiej szczyzny »/« Seinų / Lazdijų krašto medus »(honey) is a Polish and Lithuanian PDO, Genièvre / Jenever / Genever »(spirit drink) is a geographical indication in Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Germany.

Box 6 shows the article 2 of Production Specification of Asiago PDO cheese in referring to the production area. It is defined in detail, by reference to administrative boundaries (province and municipalities), physical boundaries (e.g. rivers, roads).

According to the product specification of Toscano PGI Extra Virgin Olive Oil the product with the PGI recognition can be produced with the olives within the administrative boundaries of Tuscany region. However, the product specification allowed the use of additional geographical references under the designation of "Toscano PGI" (within the same administrative Region of "Tuscany") such as "Toscano" of Colline di Firenze. In that case any additional boundaries are described in the production rules.

4.4 Evidence that the product originates in the defined geographical area

The aim of this point is to highlight the main effects provided by the interaction with the geographical area. This section generally describes the natural factors involved, and particular attention should be drawn to the soil characteristics of the land within the defined geographical area in combination with the climate conditions, which have direct effects on both the composition of raw material and processing (an/ or ageing).

The main requirement here is for applicants to show full traceability of their product. A clear path must be identified between the area of production and the final product on the market. The specification must demonstrate what measures have been put in place to ensure traceability (for example, by keeping a register), i. e. that the product and its raw material, where appropriate, originate from the area¹³.

Avoid unsubstantiated general statements. Statements should be precise: e.g. give average rainfall in mm (provided this is relevant to the specific product); explain which aspects of the climate give rise to the effects on the product, etc.

¹³ https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/publi/fact/quality/2007_en.pdf



Box 7. Example of evidence that the product originates in the defined geographical area Asiago PDO cheese

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION PDO "ASIAGO"

(Ministerial Decree 03/08/2006 Official Gazette no. 190, 17/08/06)

Article 4: Origin of the product

Each stage of the production process is monitored, for every input and output. In this way, product traceability is ensured by registration in specific lists, managed by the control structure, by milk producers, gatherers, processors, packers and maturers of cheese without the crust, and timely declaration of the quantities produced to the control structures. The verification of process and product non-compliance carries prohibition of marketing the product under the name Asiago.

Source: downloaded from web https://www.asiagocheese.it/uploads/files_pagina_190920171437_Disciplinare-di-produzione_EN.pdf

Box 8. Example of evidence for Italian PDO Parma Ham

SECTION D EVIDENCE OF PRODUCT ORIGIN WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

INTRODUCTION

(Etc.)...This series of relationships has pervaded and evolved with the history of the people and places that have generated them. For this reason, a historical, cultural and legislative description of the birth and history of a food product is definitely the best and perhaps the only way to illustrate its distinctive characteristics.

The indication of the elements proving that the product originates in the geographical area referred to in the designation shall necessarily include all the elements dealt with about the area as established in Section C above. Specifically:

- Parma Ham certainly originates in the geographical area referred to in Section C above and its characteristics are essentially due to the geographical environment, including the relevant natural and human factors. Furthermore, as indicated in point C.2, its processing takes place exclusively inside the defined geographical area;

- At the same time, the raw material that is used in the preparation of Parma Ham originates in the defined geographical area indicated in Section C, where the production takes place, and its characteristics are essentially due to the environment, including the relevant natural and human factors.

HISTORY OF THE PO VALLEY PIG

The pig is an omnivore that is easy to feed and relatively easy to domesticate. Hence its transition from a wild pig to a domesticated one has taken place many times and in many different areas, starting from various pig breeds and sub-breeds. This is why each "cultural region" has its "own pig" and the Po Valley is no exception.

For centuries and in every cultural area or region, the pig had only been partially domesticated. Only in fairly recent times has the pig become a true "domestic pig", meaning completely dependent on humans. Lately, this dependency has been emphasized through improved breeding techniques that have led to an animal called the "technological pig" or "industrial pig".

(..etc.)

Source: downloaded from web https://www.prosciuttodiparma.com/pdf/en_UK/Parma_Ham_Specifications_Disciplinare_Consolidato_Nov_13.pdf

4.5 Description of the method of obtaining the product

The description of the product includes should be made considering the entire supply process with regard to the processing methods (for processed products), for all the stages that are taking place in the territory concerned and as relevant, the description would include:

- Ingredients and raw materials;
- Production processes, techniques and technical criteria;
- For animal products: species, breeding practices, age at slaughter, etc.;
- For vegetal products: varieties, harvesting (method and period), storage, etc.;
- Physical characteristics (shape, appearance, etc.) and presentations (fresh, preserved, etc.); chemical (additives, etc.);
- Microbiological (use of ferments, presence of germs, etc.);
- Organoleptic (flavour, texture, colour, sensory profile, aromas, taste, etc.).

To provide this definition, different complementary means can be used: literature research, interviews with other inhabitants (especially the elderly) and with some traditions specialists, carrying out physicochemical analysis, etc. The following boxes 8 and 9 show some examples of how the methods of production can be described in the product specifications.

Box 9. Asiago Cheese: production method

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION PDO "ASIAGO"

(Ministerial Decree 03/08/2006 Official Gazette no. 190, 17/08/06)

Article 5: Production Method

The "Asiago" cheese, both in the type of pressed and in that of fostered, is produced by milk complying with health regulations. However, production of fostered "Asiago" in huts during the pastures period of milk is allowed. Notwithstanding the health regulations in force, the milk must be stored at temperatures between 4 and 11 degrees Celsius and should be processed within a maximum time of 60 hours of first or optional second milking. In the case where the "Asiago" cheese is manufactured with raw milk, the transformation must be obtained within 36-48 hours in the plant, according to existing provisions.

For the production of pressed "Asiago" cheese, milk may be used that is obtained by one or two milkings, raw or pasteurized at 72 degrees Celsius for 15 seconds, according to current regulations.

For the production of fostered "Asiago" cheese, milk can be used from two milkings partially skimmed to separate the cream, or from two milkings partially skimmed, or from a single milking even partially skimmed.

It may be raw milk or thermised to 57/68 degrees Celsius for 15 seconds with positive analytical phosphatase parameter. Further milk treatments than those expressly set forth in this specification are not allowed. For the production of PDO Asiago cheese which bear the words "mountain product", it is allowed to use milk from 2 or 4 milkings, but the processing of the milk must occur within 18 hours of receipt, in the case of use of milk of 2 milkings, within 24 hours of receipt in the case of use of milk of 4 milkings.

Milk production in place for the production of pressed "Asiago" must be whole milk and the mixture in the boiler is milk, lactic acid or starter, bovine rennet and possibly small amounts of sodium chloride. During processing, for technological requirements, an amount of drinking water may also be added.





In the case of production of fostered "Asiago" the milk used in processing is partially skimmed, possibly with the addition of lysozyme (E 1105) within the legal limits, the mixture is thus formed from partially skimmed milk, lactic acid or starter, bovine rennet, any small amounts of sodium chloride and lysozyme. (Etc.) ... The milk for processing into Asiago must derive from one or two milkings. The milk for the transformation of fostered Asiago must result from two milkings partially skimmed, from two milkings, one of which is skimmed, or from a single milking even partially skimmed.

In the processing of milk into pressed "Asiago", the following technological parameters are met:

- Coagulation temperature 35/40 ° C
- Cutting the curd at 15/25 minutes by the addition of rennet the size of walnut / hazelnut;
- Semi cooked temperature: 44 ° + / - 2 ° C;
- Pressing for up to 12 hours;

(. Etc.)

Source: downloaded from web: https://www.asiagocheese.it/uploads/files_pagina_190920171437_Disciplinare-di-produzione_EN.pdf

Box 10. *ToscanoExtra Virgin Olive Oil: example of method of production*

PRODUCTION SPECIFICATION OF "TOSCANO" EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL, PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

Article 5: Oil making modes

1) The area of extraction of extra virgin olive oil with Protected Geographical Indication "Toscano" includes the whole territory administered by the Region of Tuscany.

1a) The area of extraction of extra virgin olive oil with Protected Geographical Indication "Toscano" of Seggiano includes the entire administrative territory of the areas listed in paragraph 2, section. 3 of the province of Grosseto.

1b) The area of extraction of extra virgin olive oil with Protected Geographical Indication "Toscano" of Colline Lucchesi includes the entire administrative area listed in paragraph 3 of Section 3.

Etc.

2) The Region Tuscany has the faculty, after consultation with the Consortium, to allow that the above operations of oil extraction are carried out also in establishments situated nearby the territories listed in the previous-subsections 1a), 1b) 1c), 1d), 1e), 1f), 1d), 1h), provided within the administrative territory of the Region of Tuscany.

3) The harvesting of olives for the production of extra virgin olive oil with Protected Geographical Indication "Toscano" is directly from the plant with mechanical means or by picking.

4) The olives for the production of extra virgin olive with Protected Geographical Indication (section 1) must be washed at room temperature; any other treatment is prohibited.

5) For the extraction of extra virgin olive oil described in section 1 only mechanical and physical process are allowed, to ensure the achievement of oils without alterations of the qualitative characteristics of the fruit.

6) The holders of oil batches that have to be analysed (physic-chemical and organoleptic analysis) for the use of Protected Geographical Indication must apply for their product certification. ▶

7) The Region of Tuscany establishes a register of milling plants authorized for the olives processing for the oil. Production (section 1), and defines the operations' areas referred to additional geographical mentions.

8) Milling plants, members of the regional register and authorized for the oil production (sec.1), must comply with the rules to maintain the characteristics of the fruit and keep the best organoleptic quality of the product. Moreover they have to observe the rules of production as established by the Region of Tuscany on a proposal of the Consortium.

9) According to the correspondence of the established parameters, the Region of Tuscany updates every year the register of milling and packaging plants.

Source: downloaded from web: <https://www.oliotoscanoigp.it/cms/doc/DisciplinareOlioToscanolGPEn.pdf>

4.6 Mention of quality control body

The product specification shall include the name and address of the authorities or, if available, the name and address of bodies verifying compliance with the provisions of the product specification pursuant to Article 37 of the Reg. 1151/2012 and their specific tasks.

If the public authorities do verification checks, they must offer guarantees of impartiality and objectivity and have at their disposal qualified staff and resources necessary to carry out the checks.

All GI operators must be covered by a system of official controls. States will ensure that any operator complying with this Regulation is entitled to be covered by a system of official controls. The list of bodies in charge of the controls will be published and periodically updated by the Commission.

The cost of the verification of compliance with the specifications, in respect of the geographical indications and designations of origin relating to a geographical area within the Community, will be borne by the operators subject to those controls.

Product certification bodies should be accredited in accordance with European Standard ISO/IEC 17065 (Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services).

4.7 Specific rules concerning labelling in regard to the acronyms PDO/PGI

Provides any specific labelling rule and packaging for the agricultural product or foodstuff in question.

'Packaging' is any activity that takes place after the product/foodstuff to which the name applies has been created in a final form; it does not apply to 'slaughter' for meat, nor to 'harvest' and 'washing' for crops. Product has to be packed into something appropriate in order for it to be transported and sold. A requirement on producers to pack in certain bags of certain weights.

Restrictions on slicing, bottling, grating etc. or packaging can only be included at the request of the Applicant Group. Such requirements should not be encouraged as they restrict the freedom to provide services in the Internal Market and may have the effect of discriminating against small producers who do not have ready access to the packaging facilities, and who wish to sell in bulk form.

Box 11. *Specific rules concerning labelling*

PRODUCTION SPECIFICATION OF "TOSCANO" EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL, PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

Article 7: Description and Presentation

1) It is forbidden to add to label that includes Protected Geographical Indication "Toscano", any description not expressly provided in this document of product specifications, including adjectives such as: "fine", "chosen", "selected", "superior". Truthful and documented references may be included, provided they design to highlight the work of individual producers, such as, "varietal", "hand-picked", etc. That is previously authorized by the Consortium.

2) You may use true names, company names, private brand; they must not have laudatory meaning and must not mislead the consumer.

3) The use of company names, estates, farms and their geographical location, and the reference to the packaging in the olive farm or in the association of olive farms or in industry located in the production area are allowed only if the product has been obtained only with olives picked in the olive groves belonging to the company and if the packaging occurred in the company itself. ▶



4) The packaging operations of extra virgin olive with Protected Geographical Indication of Section 1 must take place in the Region of Tuscany.

5) Each additional geographical indication, as authorized by Section 1 of this specification, must be stated on the label with no bigger size than the characters indicating the Protected Geographical Indication "Toscana".

6) The use of other geographical indications related to other districts, villages, estates, and farms from which the oil actually comes must be expressed in characters not exceeding half of those used to describe the P.G.I. "Toscana".

7) The name of the Protected Geographical Indication "Toscana" must appear on the label with clear and indelible characters, so that it can be distinguished from the complex indications that may appear on it.

8) The bottler manufacturer must submit the draft of the label for approval to the Consortium. The Consortium must respond within 30 days of any changes that need to be made.

9) The designation shall comply with the labelling rules established by the legislation in force.

10) The extra virgin olive oil with Protected Geographical Indication "Toscana" must be released to consumption in suitable containers of a capacity not exceeding 10 litres.

11) The extra virgin olive oil with Protected Geographical Indication "Toscana" accompanied by one of the additional geographical indications listed in Section 1 must be released to consumption in suitable containers of a capacity not exceeding 5 litres.

12) It is compulsory to indicate on the label the year of production of olives from which the oil is obtained.

Source: downloaded from web: <https://www.oliotoscanoigp.it/cms/doc/DisCIPLINAREOlioToscanoIGPEN.pdf>

4.8 Regulations and conditions in compliance with national/EU provisions

In this section EU recommended to describe any additional requirements under national laws affecting the production and marketing of the product that have not been described above.

5. SINGLE DOCUMENT

General points:

The single document for an application for registration of a protected designation of origin or a protected geographical indication should identify the product by using definitions and standards commonly used for that product.

The description shall focus on the specificity of the product bearing the name to be registered, using measurement units and common or technical terms of comparison, without including technical characteristics inherent to all products of that type and related mandatory legal requirements applicable to all products of that type.

The Single Document is sufficient in itself. Do not make any reference to annexes, national legislation and rules, EU legislation, the specification, or any other document. Do not provide an extensive bibliography. The Single Document does not need to be very long (a maximum of 3 to 5 pages and not more than 2 500 words, except in duly justified cases), but it does have to be precise and concrete.

Please avoid subjective and imprecise descriptions such as 'delicious', 'perfect', 'tasty', 'beautiful', 'housewives' favourite', etc., and avoid exaggerations and unscientific superlatives: 'best', 'most sought after', etc.

In compiling the Single Document, please use the templates (available in all EU languages) provided on the Commission's website. The templates have the correct format for publication in the Official Journal of the EU (OJ), should your application be successful.

For the content, please refer to Single Documents already approved by the Commission and published in the OJ (available on the DOOR database)¹⁴.

In the case of amendments, producer groups different from the one that submitted the original application can also submit applications for changes. However, these producers must work with the product named in the amendment.

¹⁴ Site for templates: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/schemes/legislation/index_en.htm

Box 12: Single document: key points

SINGLE DOCUMENT'...'	
EU No: PDO ()	PGI ()
NAME (S)	
KEY POINT: The name must be used to designate the specific product. Made-up names are not accepted. Names that describe a general product and do not refer directly to the specific product are not accepted.	
Proof of use: the name must be in use in commerce or in common language to designate the specific product before the application is made. It would be useful to include elements describing the commercial or linguistic use.	
Language and script:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The name must be written in the language used in the region of origin, which may be a national language or a lesser-used language or a dialect or a language historically used in that region to describe the product;- If the name is not in Latin letters, provide a Latin transcription of the name. Note that a 'transcription' is neither a translation nor a transliteration: a transcription in Latin letters gives (approximately) the same sound as the word read in its original script.	
If more than one name is used for the same product (e.g. where national and regional languages are used):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The applicant can choose to register one or all names;- the names must be separated by '/'; (do not use 'or'): 'Lorem-Ipsum' / 'Lorus-Ipsus'- if the names in fact refer to different products, file a separate application for each product with a different name. Every time it is quoted as such, this double name must be repeated. The text can be made more readable by using terms such as 'the cheese' and 'the apple' where the meaning is clear.	
If one name covers more than one distinct product (e.g. the raw and prepared form of the product) note that the name must be used to denominate each form of the product. Both products must be described and all the conditions of registration must be fulfilled for both products, e.g. a raw and a prepared fish. If all the conditions are fulfilled for registration, one application is enough.	
Be precise: the name must be exactly the same (same words, same characters) in all instances throughout the text of the Single Document.	
A justification must be provided in case of a name that refers to or includes the name of a country.	
If you use a name which includes or constitutes names of varieties or breeds, please provide evidence that the conditions set out in Article 42 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 are met.	
MEMBER STATE OR THIRD COUNTRY	
Name the country in which the product is produced. If more than one country is involved, i.e. where the geographical area straddles a border, list all countries.	



DESCRIPTION OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT OR FOODSTUFF

3.1. Type of product

Use the product classifications in Annex XI to Regulation (EU) No 668/2014 (part 2.5)

3.2. Description of the product to which the name in (1) applies

KEY POINT: The product must be specific: it cannot be a generic product, with no characteristics distinguishing it from others. Ask yourself: What makes this product special?

In what ways is it different from another product in the same category? We do not insist on unique products, but if there is nothing to distinguish the product from a commodity product then it cannot be accepted as a PDO or PGI.

Please begin the description with the detailed type product, even if it looks repetitive in the original. A good way to begin is: 'The 'Lorem-Ipsum apple' is an apple of the variety...' In the Official Journal publications, the name 'Lorem-Ipsum apple' will not be translated, enabling the reader to see immediately in his/her own language what the product is: 'La 'Lorem-Ipsum apple' est une pomme ...'

KEY POINT: The description must give technical, scientific data to describe the specific product. Include the product's specific physical, microbiological, chemical, and organoleptic data. If this data is already intrinsic to the type, variety or breed to which the product belongs, however, it should not be included. Use precision and the kind of language that an agronomic scientist or food technologist would use to describe the product. Use the definitions and standards commonly used for this product. Use commonly used measurement units, comparative and technical elements.

KEY POINT: This Section must be consistent with Section 5 as regards the specificities of the product. For livestock products from grass-fed animals, the minimum grazing period should be mentioned (months or total period in the year).

3.3. Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)

For non-processed products, leave this section blank.

For PDOs: All feed must be sourced from within the geographical area (Article 5(1)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012). Please therefore provide confirmation that all feed has been sourced from within that area.

However, if this is not technically possible, derogation is allowed (Article 1 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014). Under this Article, feed sourced from outside that area can be added, provided that the product quality or characteristic essentially due to the geographical environment are not affected. In addition, added feed must in no case exceed 50% (of dry matter on annual basis) of total feed. If feed from outside the area has to be added to the animal feed rations, please provide a detailed description of these exceptions and justify them in accordance with Article 1 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014. Indicate the percentage of feed (dry matter on an annual basis) sourced from outside the geographical area, explain why it is not possible for 100% of feed to be sourced from within the area, and demonstrate that the product quality or characteristic essentially due to the geographical environment are not affected.

All raw materials must be sourced from within the geographical area (Article 5(1) (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012). Please therefore confirm that all raw materials have been sourced from within that area.

If raw material from outside the area has to be used, please provide a detailed description of these exceptions and justify them in accordance with Article 5(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

State the feed and raw material used and any qualitative conditions, such as a grade, carcass class, variety or breed, fat content etc.

For PGIs:

Describe and justify any restrictions on the sourcing of the raw material, as they may represent obstacles to the single market. They must be justified as regards the link (e.g. by qualitative criteria linked to the specificity of the product). It is difficult to justify a restriction on the national supply of raw material. Restrictions on the supply of raw material to the geographical area can be justifiable.

State the raw material used and any qualitative conditions, such as a grade, carcass class, variety or breed, fat content etc.

3.4. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area**For PDOs:**

All production steps must take place within the geographical area (Article 5(1)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012). Please therefore confirm that all steps take place within that area.

The only possible exception concerns the origin of raw material (see section 3.3). In certain well-justified circumstances, for designations recognised in the country of origin prior to 1 May 2004, raw material may be sourced from a larger or different geographical area (Article 5(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012). In this case production steps may legally take place outside the identified geographical area. The description of and justification for this derogation must be included in section 3.3, and therefore a simple reference to this section is sufficient.

For PGIs:

At least one production step must take place within the geographical area (Article 5(2)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012).

Without going into too much detail, list all steps, from sourcing the raw material through to the final product, which must take place within the geographical area. For example, for meat, the stage of slaughter and cutting is part of the production process. Slicing, grating, packaging is not part of the production process and should be described under section 3.6.

Please describe and justify any restrictions and derogations; if the restrictions concern cases already covered in section 3.3, insert a simple reference to this section.

3.5. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product to which the registered name refers

This section is optional. State any rules and restrictions on these activities; that is, the steps that occur after the final product is made, and give their justification.

KEY POINT: Any geographical restriction must be backed up by a strong product-specific justification.

The prohibition of packaging outside the area should be the exception, since it is a restriction on the freedoms of the Single Market. Make it clear if the restriction prevents a buyer (e.g. a supermarket in another Member State) from re-packing or slicing etc. the product and provide justification for such limitations.

3.6 Specific rules concerning labelling of the product to which the registered name refers

This item is optional. You may state here any particular labelling requirements, such as a product logo that must appear on the product label. A logo in black-and-white can be reproduced in the Single Document. This can be useful for inspectors in other Member States upholding your rights. If a logo has to be reproduced on the label, it must be accessible to all producers.

Do not repeat any labelling required by national or EU rules: these rules apply irrespective of the PDO or PGI registration and if the rules are amended, the PDO/PGI producers may have to file for an amendment.

It is not necessary to include optional labelling.



CONCISE DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

Be precise. In the Specification, describe the geographical area by referring as far as possible to physical boundaries (e.g. rivers, roads) or administrative boundaries. It must be clear to a farmer and to an inspector whether each individual field is within or outside the area. Avoid general terms.

In the Single Document, if the area comprises 50 counties within a province of 55 counties, do not list the 50, but state: 'The province of Lorem-Ipsum, excluding the counties of Dolor, Sit, Amet, Magna and Adipiscing.'

KEY POINT: The geographical area must be delimited with regard to the link between the place and the product.

- State if the area is limited to particular zones (e.g. fish ponds) or soil types within the area. A continuous and homogeneous area is preferable, also in the particular characteristics of the environment, which is essential to prove the link.

We recommend including a map of the area.

LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

KEY POINT: The link with the geographical area is the essential part of the Single

Document. It should demonstrate in what way the product's characteristics are due to the geographical area and what the natural, human and other elements are which give its specificity to the product.

This section must describe the specificities of the product and of the geographical area, which produces or influences these factors, and how these two are linked. This is the 'link' between the geographical area and the quality of the product.

The description must also underline in what way the methods of production for the product are superior to others and contribute to its specific and distinctive character.

PGI application: State clearly whether the application is based on a specific quality or reputation or on other characteristics attributable to its geographical origin.

Specificities of the product

This section must be coherent with section 3.2. And as far as possible avoid repetitions. Identify and describe what makes this product special compared to similar products. State only the particular characteristics of the product that are due to (or caused by) the elements described in section 5.1.

KEY POINT: Do not include features of the product that have no relation to the geographical area or the producers' expert knowledge, or have no bearing on the reputation of the product.

Give concrete and precise elements justifying this expert knowledge.

Give concrete examples of the effective use of the name, in both the past and the present, preferably using elements drawn from the marketing of the product.

Specificities of the geographical area:

KEY POINT: Identify and describe the characteristics of the defined geographical area relevant to the link. These may include the pedo-climatic features; topography, climate, soil, rainfall, exposure, altitude, etc. Do not include features of the geographical area that have no influence on the specificity of the product. Avoid using general terminology, e.g. 'beautiful landscape'.

The know-how of the local producers can also be described here. This must be a specific and particular skill - normal production skills are not sufficient.

How the specificities of the geographical area influence those of the product (causal link):

KEY POINT: Show how the features of the product are produced by the factors present in the area. Give an objective reasoning that links the specificities of the area and of the product.

In the case of PGI applications based on reputation, state here the reasons why the specific product is associated with the geographical area.

Indicate the specific reputation and provide information and precise elements to justify it.

Press cuttings can be one of the best ways to illustrate this link.

Show that the reputation of the product is linked to the name and attributable to the geographical area. You can prove reputation with elements like awards, references in professional books or press, special mentions in cooking publications, etc.

Reference to publication of the specification.

Please describe and justify any restrictions and derogations; if the restrictions concern cases already covered in section 3.3, insert a simple reference to this section.



6. TRADITIONAL SPECIALITY GUARANTEED (TSG)

Traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG) highlights the traditional aspects such as the way the product is made or its composition, without being linked to a specific geographical area. The name of a product being registered as a TSG protects it against falsification and misuse. The specific objective of the scheme for traditional specialities guaranteed is to help the producers of traditional products to communicate to consumers the value-adding attributes of their product.

The traditional specialities guaranteed (TSG) scheme is established to safeguard traditional methods of production and recipes by helping producers of traditional product in marketing and communicating the value-adding attributes of their traditional recipes and products to consumers.

Example: Gueuze TSG is a traditional beer obtained by spontaneous fermentation. It is generally produced in and around Brussels, Belgium. Nonetheless, being a TSG, its production method is protected but could be produced somewhere else.

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF A TRADITIONAL SPECIALITY GUARANTEED	
	[Insert name, as in 1 below] "..."
	EC No: [for EU use only]
	Member State or Third Country "..."
1.	NAME(S) TO BE REGISTERED
	"..."
2.	TYPE OF PRODUCT [AS IN ANNEX XI]

3.	 GROUNDS FOR REGISTRATION
3.1.	Whether the product:
	<input type="checkbox"/> results from a mode of production, processing or composition corresponding to traditional practice for that product or foodstuff
	<input type="checkbox"/> is produced from raw materials or ingredients that are those traditionally used. [Provide explanation]
	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2.	Whether the name:
	<input type="checkbox"/> has been traditionally used to refer to the specific product
	<input type="checkbox"/> identifies the traditional character or specific character of the product [Provide explanation]
	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	DESCRIPTION
4.1.	Description of the product to which the name under point 1 applies, including its main physical, chemical, microbiological or organoleptic characteristics showing the product's specific character (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)

4.2.	Description of the production method of the product to which the name under point 1 applies that the producers must follow including, where appropriate, the nature and characteristics of the raw materials or ingredients used, and the method by which the product is prepared (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)

4.3.	Description of the key elements establishing the product's traditional character (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)

Source: Author's own elaboration based on EU official guidelines

6.1 Content of application for registration of TSG

An application for registration of a name as a traditional speciality guaranteed shall comprise:

- the name and address of the applicant group;
- the product specification;
- Declaration by the Member State that it considers that the application lodged by the group and qualifying for the favourable decision meets the conditions of this Regulation and the provisions adopted pursuant thereto. From third countries proof of protection is needed.

6.2 Main criteria for TSG registration

To ensure that names of genuine traditional products are registered under the scheme, the criteria and conditions for registration of a name should be adapted, in particular those concerning the definition of 'traditional', which should cover products that have been produced for a significant period of time (Whereas 36 of the Reg. 1151/2012).

A name shall be eligible for registration as a traditional speciality guaranteed where it describes a specific product or foodstuff that:

- ✓ results from a mode of production, processing or composition corresponding to traditional practice for that product or foodstuff; or
- ✓ is produced from raw materials or ingredients that are those traditionally used

For a name to be registered as a traditional speciality guaranteed, it shall have been traditionally used to refer to the specific product; or identify the traditional character or specific character of the product.

The name of traditional speciality guaranteed shall be registered in its original script. Where the original script is not in Latin characters, a transcription in Latin characters shall be registered together with the name in its original script.

If it is demonstrated in the opposition procedure that the name is also used in another Member State or in a third country, in order to distinguish comparable products or products that share an identical or similar name, the decision on registration taken in accordance with Article 52(3) may provide that the name of the traditional speciality guaranteed is to be accompanied by the claim 'made following the tradition of' immediately followed by the name of a country or a region. Thereof a name may not be registered if it refers only to claims of a general nature used for a set of products, or to claims provided for by particular Union legislation.

6.3 Product specification (TSG)

To ensure that traditional specialities guaranteed comply with their specification and are consistent, producers organised into groups should themselves define the product in a specification. The option of registering a name as a traditional speciality guaranteed is open to third-country producers (Whereas 37 of the Reg. 1151/2012).

Product specification for traditional speciality guaranteed shall comprise:

- the name proposed for registration, in the appropriate language versions;
- a description of the product including its main physical, chemical, microbiological or organoleptic characteristics, showing the product's specific character;
- a description of the production method that the producers must follow, including, where appropriate, the nature and characteristics of the raw materials or ingredients used, and
- the method by which the product is prepared; and the key elements establishing the product's traditional character.

7. ADDITIONAL QUALITY SCHEMES

The European Commission has adopted a regulation on the optional quality terms. These schemes were established to facilitate communication with the European market on the added value of agricultural products made in difficult conditions such as mountainous areas or outermost regions.

The quality term 'mountain product'¹⁵ highlights the specificities of a product, made in mountain areas, with difficult natural conditions. Recognizing this is an advantage for farmers as well as consumers as it enables to market the product better but also ensures certain characteristics to the consumer.

Specifications: Raw materials and animal feed come from mountain areas. For processed products, production should take place in such areas as well.

Product of EU's outermost regions - Agriculture in the EU's outermost regions faces difficulties due to the remoteness and insularity, including difficult geographical and meteorological conditions. To ensure greater awareness of agricultural products from the EU's outermost regions (the French Overseas Departments - Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion and Martinique - and the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands) a dedicated logo has been created.

Specifications - Agricultural and food products produced in outermost regions.

¹⁵ Regulations on mountain products: (COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) No 665/2014 of 11 March 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to conditions of use of the optional quality term 'mountain product')



CONCLUSION and FINAL REMARKS

At this stage, one of the most important steps for those who decide to establish a GIs system is to first of all determine whether a product has sufficient level of differentiation and whether the stakeholders are interested in the long-term commitment required in terms of both, cooperation and resources.

GI must be carefully considered and structured with broad participation, and leadership to permit optimal benefits to the diverse stakeholders of the region. At the national level this means: securing recognition and demarcation; determining the quality or process standards that will apply; supporting associative processes at the level of supply chains and organizations; and securing development or promotional funds to meet basic costs that can add up to hundreds of thousands of dollars before any GI products are sold (ITC, 2009)

The importance of traditional foods for each country is relevant, because local food production affects regional culture, preserves biodiversity and contributes to social and economic stability.

Implementation of food quality schemes can bring many benefits not only to producers, but also to consumers and local communities. They create added value, improve market access, protect local know-how and protect national resources.

As part of the EU's system of IPRs, names of products registered as GIs are legally protected against imitation and misuse within the EU and in non-EU countries where a specific protection agreement has been signed.

For all quality schemes, each EU country's competent national authorities take the necessary measures to protect the registered names within their territory. They should also prevent and stop the unlawful production or marketing of products using such a name¹⁶.

In order to develop a long-term sustainable food policy and successfully implement quality schemes, the Western Balkan countries/territories should address possible actions/guidelines in the future:

¹⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/food-safety-and-quality/certification/quality-labels/quality-schemes-explained_en#howareproductsprotected

1. Establish national institutional framework (infrastructure) and efficient system for the enforcement of GIs in practice.

- States should designate authorities that are responsible to take appropriate administrative and judicial steps in the process of registration of traditional products
- Authorities should offer adequate guarantees of objectivity and impartiality, and should have the qualified staff and resources necessary to carry out their functions
- *Certification control enforcement*

2. Support the "bottom-up" approach and increase awareness of producers.

The role of producers and the creation of groups/organisations should be recognised and highlighted. Groups play an essential role in the application process for the registration. The group of producers must define the product according to precise specifications to be included in a document called "product specification". The specifications are an essential element of the application and of the system of protection. They contain the product characteristics and details, the production process and the origin of the raw material used for production. Producers should ensure standard production and quality of the product and could manage the product specification as a group.

The group can develop activities related to the surveillance of the enforcement of the protection of the registered names, the compliance of the production with the product specification, the information and promotion of the registered name as well as, in general, any activity aimed at improving the value of the registered names and effectiveness of the quality schemes and the development of local-promotional strategies.

3. Support products registered as GIs (or potential candidates)

- *Support potential groups in getting legal status (registration the establishments) with implementation of derogations and flexibility for small farmer producers and additional support by local governments*
- *Improve the RDPs in order to strengthen the implementation of food policy*
- *Support to and promotion of national logos for PDO and PGI products*
- *Training sessions on Geographical Indications and basic quality standard requirements*
- *Increase the visibility of GIs on the regional market and awareness of the consumers*

