



oriGIn EU manifesto

A call to value the unique contribution of Geographical Indications to European agriculture and society

Our priorities for the 2024 European elections and the next European Commission

oriGIn EU is the European branch of oriGIn, the global alliance of Geographical Indications (GIs): [website](#). Its mission is to represent its members — individual GIs groups as well as national GIs associations — before the EU institutions.



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Geographical Indications – an asset and a success of the European Union

Europe boasts an unparalleled wealth of regional specialties. To protect this unique heritage, the EU has set up a legal framework which allows for the development of these products: the Geographical Indication policy. Each product bearing a Geographical Indication carries with it a story of authenticity, savoir-faire, quality and dedication passed down through generations. European GIs not only safeguard Europe's culinary traditions but also contribute to sustainable agriculture, rural development, social cohesion and economic growth across the EU.

What are GIs?

Geographical Indications (GIs) establish intellectual property rights for specific products, whose qualities, reputation, or characteristics are specifically linked to a specific geographical origin. A number of International treaties provide for the protection of GIs, in particular the TRIPs Agreement of the WTO and the Lisbon System for the International Registration of Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications administered by WIPO.

In the European Union (EU), there are three main types of Geographical Indications:

- **Protected Designations of Origin (PDOs)**, available for wines and agricultural products: a sign which identifies a product produced, processed and prepared in a defined geographical area using recognised know-how. Such products owe their characteristics exclusively or essentially to their place of production and the know-how of local producers.
- **Protected Geographical Indications (PGIs)**, available for wines and agricultural products: a sign which identifies a product whose quality, reputation or other characteristics are essentially attributable to its geographical origin.
- **Geographical indications (GIs)**, available for spirits: a sign which identifies a product where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic is essentially attributable to its geographical origin.



Economic weight of GIs in the EU

In March 2024, the EU counted more than 3500 EU PDOs, PGIs and GIs protected under the EU law, including 1644 EU wines, 1689 agricultural products and foodstuff and 263 EU spirits.

The GI sector makes a significant contribution to the EU economy. In 2020, the estimated sales value of the GI sector was of over 75 billion euros and some 15.5% of total EU food and drink exports ([Study on economic value of EU quality schemes, geographical indications \(GIs\) and traditional specialties guaranteed \(TSGs\)](#)).



Benefits resulting from GI protection

For producers

- Protects their knowledge and know-how
- Contributes to sustainable development: producers must work on the three pillars of sustainability as the production cannot be relocated
- Protects them from unfair competition as only producers who comply with the GI specification may use the name
- Creates value for producers who benefit from premium prices in return for the quality of their products
- Improves the position of producers in the value chain
- Provides for better sharing of the added value along the chain
- Facilitates the installation of new operators and the renewal of generation

For the society

- Maintains a cultural heritage and biodiversity
- Brings value to disadvantaged or retrieved areas through an activity that cannot be relocated
- Contributes to the development of rural areas and creates jobs, including in tourism
- A tool for sustainable rural development as the production must remain in the area

For consumers

- Protects the diverse EU food culture and tastes as GIs give access to a large variety of typical products
- Guarantees the typicity of the product linked to:
 - a delimited territory,
 - a tradition,
 - know-how
- Ensures the transparency regarding production methods through the product specification



oriGIn EU priorities for the future of GIs in the EU

The EU is the world leader in quality products and sustainable rural development. To maintain its leadership, and allow GIs to continue to thrive, oriGIn EU has identified 5 priorities upon which the European institutions should focus their attention in the following years.

- 1 Call for a **strong institutional support** for GIs through a refocus on GIs as strategic products for the EU
- 2 Take into account the **specificities of GIs** in horizontal regulations
- 3 Allow for an **ambitious implementation and uptake** of the new EU GI regulation and coherence with Craft and Industrial GI regulation
- 4 Increase the **promotion** of the GI concept and logo across the EU and in third countries
- 5 Increase the **protection and market access** for GIs in trade negotiations



1. Call for a strong institutional support for GIs through a refocus on GIs as strategic products for the EU

What is at stake?

The positive role played by the EU food quality scheme, and in particular GIs, is widely demonstrated at the producer, consumer, and societal levels. For decades, the EU GI policy has been the highlight of European agricultural policy, with geographical indication products serving as ambassadors of European gastronomy and agricultural know-how worldwide. The EU agricultural product promotion policy and the EU trade policy have helped globalise the European GI system. The current agricultural crisis has brought to light the strengths of the GI model: its ability to create and share value, guarantee of production in specific EU regions where GIs contribute to the development of rural areas and facilitate the renewal of generations in agriculture, promotion of the specific quality and diversity of European food and drinks.

However, this could be put in jeopardy if the Commission continues to set aside GIs under its Green Deal strategy. In the last few years, the EC looked at sustainability through the focal of environment and health – and ignored the economic and social pillars. In doing so, it concluded that GIs were not sustainable products and, hence, should no longer be a priority for the EU. The EC failed to consider the fact that GI producers are naturally attentive to the protection of the area where they produce; the only way for GIs to survive over time is to take care of their environment as they can't relocate their production. Moreover, the EC considered many GIs "bad" for consumers' health, since most GI products contain high levels of salt, sugar, fat or alcohol. This approach ignored the contribution of GIs in balanced and traditional diets and put GIs in a very difficult place. The EC also put pressure on producers to reformulate their recipes, something that GIs cannot do as their uniqueness comes from traditional methods of production. This EC approach led to GIs being penalised with a huge cut in the budget allocated to EU promotional programmes for GIs and a certain disengagement of EC services in support of GIs.

GIs can thrive in the coming years providing that the EU legal and political framework takes into account their specificities and needs. To tackle the challenges ahead, GI producers need clear signals from the future European Commission and European Parliament. The European GI policy must be repositioned as one of the cornerstones of European agriculture to ensure the continuity of the success story of the EU GI policy at the EU and global level.

We call on the future European Parliament and the EU institutions to:

- Ask DG Agriculture of the EC to launch a European Action Plan for GIs
- At the political level, reposition GIs as one of the cornerstones of European agricultural policy
- At the technical level, dedicate sufficient resources to the management, protection and promotion of GIs, in particular within DG Agriculture of the EC
- Regularly collect data on GIs to measure their impact and contribution at the local, regional, national and international level
- Reinforce the role to the Commissioner for Agriculture.
- Ensure the renewal of the Wine, Spirits and Quality Products Intergroup, the oldest intergroup in the European Parliament and a very important forum for exchange for the GI sector.



2. Take into account the specificities of GIs in horizontal regulations

What is at stake?

Under EU law, GI products benefit from several specific provisions. This is the case notably of the extensive intellectual property protection granted by the EU GI regulations. In addition, the regulation on the common market organisation (CMO) of the common agricultural policy (CAP) provides for specific regulation tools for GIs, in particular the ability for PDO and PGI products to regulate the supply. This provision which has been extended to all GI products in the last CAP reform has been beneficiary to the GI producer groups that have implemented it.

The specificities of GIs have also been considered in the context of horizontal regulations, such as the packaging and packaging waste regulation. Further to protests from GI producers, traditional packaging has been exempted from reuse or recycling obligations, although some of them for a limited time. Similarly, GIs will benefit from a derogation when it comes to the minimisation of packaging as it is important for them to continue using traditional and tailored packaging.

Looking ahead, a reform of the food labelling rules is expected with changes to origin labelling and the possible introduction of front-of-pack nutritional labelling. It is essential that such reform does not undermine GIs and that relevant limits and derogations are granted to protect GIs' specificities. The application of the Nutri-score to GI products, for example, would have a very negative impact on GIs; an exemption should be granted. Similarly, the EC should look into national initiatives that can impact GIs and fragment the internal market, such as the recently established Origin'info system by the French government established which will undermine the GI concept.

We call on the future European Parliament and the EU institutions to:

- Maintain the regulation of supply provided for under the CMO regulation in the future CAP (post 2027)
- Acknowledge the specificity of GIs under future regulations



3. Allow for an ambitious implementation and uptake of the new EU GI regulation and coherence with Craft and Industrial GI regulation

What is at stake?

The [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1143](#) on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products introduces for the first time in EU law a definition of sustainability based on the three pillars: environmental, economic, and social. GIs will be able to build on that definition to strengthen their sustainable development which is at the heart of their existence. The new regulation provides for a reinforcement of GI producer groups allowing them to play a stronger role in the development, protection, and promotion of GIs. It also grants better protection to GIs, particularly online. This is key to protect both producers' right and reputation and consumers against counterfeiting. The future looks bright for GIs if they can make the most of the new GI legal framework. However, coherence is needed between the different Geographical Indication (GI) systems. This is why it is crucial to provide the same level of control for agricultural and craft, and industrial GIs, something that the recently adopted craft and industrial GI EU regulation fails to do. Until then, industrial and craft GIs should not be allowed to bear the PGI logo and rather have a different logo.

It is of the utmost importance to remain vigilant against those who wish to capitalize on our successes, particularly the threats posed to GIs by the development of system of regional quality brands. Our GIs are unique; they are not brands but collective tools for economic and rural dynamism that we need to preserve together in a collective approach.

We call on the future European Parliament and the EU institutions to:

- Ensure the smooth implementation of the new regulation
- Promote GIs towards producers, especially in Member States where there is a lot of potential for GIs, and provide the necessary technical and financial support to help them build and develop their GIs
- Recognize the contribution of GIs to sustainability, notably by facilitating the introduction of sustainability practices, under one or more of the 3 pillars, in product specifications
- Grant powers to recognised producer groups in the definition and implementation of rules to develop their GIs
- Deliver on the increase protection of GIs provided for in the new regulation



4. Increase the promotion of GIs concept and logo across the EU and in third countries

What is at stake?

Quality policy is an EU success story. For decades, it has been the flagship of European agricultural policy, and GI products have been ambassadors for European gastronomy and agricultural know-how throughout the world. This success has been possible thanks to the promotion of the GI concept in the EU and in third countries. Unfortunately, in recent years, the Commission has massively reduced the budget allocated to the promotion of agricultural products and GIs, despite strong interest from GI producers and consumers and great market potential (see the EC February 2021 [report on the implementation of EU promotion policy for agri-food products](#)).

Given the current challenges facing the EU agricultural sector and the increasing anti-EU sentiments, the EC should increase support and funding for the promotion of EU agricultural products, particularly GIs. The EC must show to the agricultural sector that the EU stands by its farmers and promotes EU quality products to consumers. The support given to GI promotion is crucial for many small and medium-sized producers who do not have the means to promote their products individually but can benefit from an EU program under the banner of the GI they produce.

We call on the future European Parliament and the EU institutions to:

- Provide more budget for the promotion of GIs in the EU and in third countries
- Reject any discrimination vis-à-vis the promotion of certain categories of agricultural products
- Launch a promotional campaign to raise European consumers' awareness of the PDO and PGI logos



5. Increase the protection and market access for GIs in trade negotiations

What is at stake?

In recent years, the EU has concluded numerous free trade agreements with third countries, which include a chapter on the protection of GIs. This has proven to be extremely important to ensure access to these new markets as well as to develop the export of European GIs outside the EU. GIs remain one of the most controversial issues in many negotiations, with strong opposition from some countries, including the United States. Faced with this difficulty, the EC has, on several occasions, made concessions by accepting exceptions to the full protection of important European GI names in third countries. In the future, the EC should remain committed to ensuring a high level of protection for GIs in trade agreements. Furthermore, it is of the utmost importance to ensure the full implementation of the rules in third countries.

We call on the future European Parliament and the EU institutions to:

- Continue negotiating trade agreements with a view to improve market access and intellectual property protection for GIs
- Seek a high level of protection for GIs in third countries equivalent to that granted under the European legal framework and open to all GIs
- Involve GI producer groups in the negotiations and consult them on compromise concerning their GI name
- Increase the dialogue with oriGIn EU members to facilitate the development and protection of GIs in third countries.