



Mr. Matteo Renzi
Italy's Prime Minister

Palazzo Chigi
Piazza Colonna 370
Rome - Italy

Geneva, 25 September 2014

**RE: Informal European Council on Internet Governance (Milan, 2/3 October 2014):
“.wine” and “.vin” strings and overall GI protection on gTLDs**

Dear President Renzi,

The Organization for an International Geographical Indications Network (oriGIn) is the global alliance of Geographical Indications (GIs), representing today some 400 groups and over three-million producers. oriGIn – which counts among its members Assodistil in representation of the GI Grappa, the Consorzio di tutela dell'Aceto Balsamico di Modena, the Consorzio di tutela del Formaggio Asiago, the Consorzio di tutela del Formaggio Grana Padano, the Consorzio di tutela della Mozzarella di Bufala Campana, the Consorzio di tutela del Prosciutto di Parma, the Consorzio di tutela del Formaggio Parmigiano Reggiano and the Istituto Salumi Italiani Tutelati – advocates for effective mechanisms of GIs protection and enforcement at the national, regional and international level.

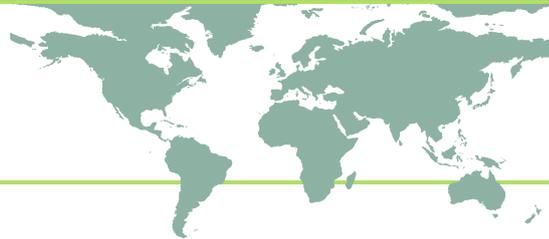


Over the last 2 years, oriGIn has been closely following the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) process for the attribution of new generic top-level domains (gTLDs) and has raised concerns as to the serious risks it poses to GIs.

With specific reference to the “.wine” and “.vin” strings, oriGIn welcomes the initiatives undertaken by the European Commission and by several European Union Members States, including Italy, to prevent ICANN from delegating the “.wine” and “.vin” strings without adequate protection for GIs. In this respect, we believe that the “Cooperative Engagement Procedure” proved to be effective, as it has put on hold the delegation of the above-mentioned strings and has provided the GI wine sector with additional time to negotiate an acceptable solution with the ICANN.

Meanwhile, in view of the challenges that the ongoing “Cooperative Engagement Procedure” poses as well as the next ICANN meeting – to be held in Los Angeles on 12-16 October 2014 – we believe that the attention on this matter should remain high. In this respect, we encourage the Italian Presidency of the European Union to include the “.wine” and “.vin” in the agenda of the Informal European Council on Internet Governance and to discuss at the meeting potential actions, such as the “Independent Review”, to be undertaken should the “Cooperative Engagement Procedure” fail.

For the GI sector it is crucial to secure a satisfactory solution with respect to the “.wine” and “.vin” strings. Furthermore, beyond the “.wine” and “.vin” issue, we believe that the overall ICANN process of attribution of new gTLDs has dramatically increased the challenges in terms of counterfeiting and misappropriation for GIs (let’s think of new delegated strings such as “.bio”, “.food”, “.pizza” and “.coffee” just to name a few). In light of this, we believe that the European Union should take the lead in ensuring that – in the context of the Internet governance debate – a thorough discussion on the most effective ways to ensure an effective protection for GIs in gTLDs is undertaken. In this respect, it is crucial to recall that GIs is mainly a system of small and medium sized enterprises, in the vast majority of cases small rural producers that play a crucial role in the sustainable development of their communities.



We thank you in advance for the kind attention you will give to this crucial issue for oriGIn and the millions of GI producers it represents in Italy, in the European Union and around the world. Meanwhile, we remain at your disposal for any further information you might require in this respect.

Yours Sincerely,

Massimo Vittori

Managing Director,
oriGIn

Dominique Chambon

President,
Conseil National des
Appellations d'Origine Laitières
(CNAOL),
Vice President of oriGIn for Europe

Riccardo Deserti

Director,
Consorzio di tutela del
Formaggio Parmigiano Reggiano,
Vice-President of oriGIn for Europe

José Enrique Garrigós Ibañez

President,
Asociación española de denominaciones de
origen (ORIGEN España),
Vice-President of oriGIn for Europe

c.c: Mrs. Federica Guidi, Minister for Economic Development; **Mr. Maurizio Martina**,
Minister of Agriculture