

Activities Report



2014/2015

Thank You Ramón!

In June 2009, at the General Assembly of Teruel, Ramón González Figueroa – Director General of the Tequila Regulatory Council (CRT) – was elected President of oriGIn. Since then, he has been reelected for two additional terms in Guadalajara (2011) and Bordeaux (2013).

After six years during which, under his leadership, oriGIn experienced a tremendous growth in terms of resources and impact, Ramón has decided not to run again for the post. On behalf of the oriGIn membership and staff, we sincerely thank you – Licenciado Ramón – for the great job you have done as President of oriGIn! Your leadership has been instrumental for our Organization to grow and consolidate as well as to attract several new prestigious members! We look forward to celebrating with you in Fortaleza.

New Members Strengthen our International Network

New prestigious members have joined our international network in the last biennium: The “Consorzio di Tutela del Prosecco DOC”, the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA), the “Istituto Salumi Italiani Tutelati” (ISIT), the “Consorzio per la Tutela del Formaggio Asiago”, the “Consorzio di Tutela Pecorino Romano”, the “Asociación de Empresas de Complemento de Moda y Piel” (EMPIEL), the “Association pour la Défense du café Ziama Macenta” and the “Consejo Regulador de la Denominación de Origen Café de Valdesia”. **Through oriGIn, more and more GI groups from different countries and sectors join forces to ensure that GIs are recognised and effectively protected internationally.** Together with GI groups, several Intellectual Property Offices in charge of GIs and other public and private institutions have also joined oriGIn in the last biennium to benefit from, and enrich, the knowledge and experience of our international network.

Lobby Campaigns: oriGIn at the Centre Stage of International Negotiations

At the multilateral level, the biennium 2014/2015 saw the conclusion of the process of reform of the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellation of Origin and Their International Registration. Since its establishment in 2009, oriGIn has been actively involved in the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) Working Group on the Development of the Lisbon Agreement. The Diplomatic Conference for the Adoption of a New Act of the Lisbon Agreement took place in Geneva, from the 11th to the 21st of May of 2015. In the plenary session of 20 May, the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications was adopted. **The Geneva Act formally introduces GIs under its scope of application and provides a solid level of protection for both GIs and Appellations of Origin. This reflects an ongoing trend in national legislations increasingly providing such level of protection. By providing adequate legal means to fight against GIs misappropriations, the Geneva Act will improve legal certainty and predictability for producers and consumers of origin goods around the world. Meanwhile, the Geneva Act introduces a number of flexibilities compared to the previous version of the Lisbon Agreement, which makes the new international system for the registration and the protection of GIs and Appellations of oriGIn attractive for a variety of legal systems.**

At the bilateral level, oriGIn followed the major negotiations undertaken during the biennium, in particular the Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership (TTIP) Agreement between the EU and the U.S. By participating directly, as well as through its American and European members, in six out of eight TTIP stakeholders meetings which took place in 2014/2015, oriGIn called for an ambitious GI chapter, which must tackle the major problems affecting GIs in the US, in particular the costs for GI groups associated with the trademark system. American and European GI producers have a lot in common in terms of challenges they are facing in today's global market. As a result, both see the TTIP as a tremendous opportunity for the agricultural sector,

in terms of job creation and sustainable development. With respect to the US, moreover, in March 2015 Ivan Butina – an expert on strategic communication and communities of practice – was appointed **as oriGIn U.S.-based representative. This move represents the first step towards establishing an oriGIn permanent presence in the U.S.**

With respect to GIs and trademarks, in 2014/2015 oriGIn continued successfully with its campaigns and support to members, with the objective to ensure that the relevant rules on the management of trademark applications conflicting with existing GIs was correctly implemented by national and regional trademark offices around the world.

Services & Partnerships

Launching new innovative services for our members and establishing strategic partnership have always been priorities for oriGIn.

In 2014, oriGIn launched **a new service on GI Specialized Law Firms**. On top of providing members with information concerning the laws and procedures to recognize GIs in foreign jurisdictions, as well as our advocacy support with national, regional and international authorities in case an infringement of the right deriving from GIs is detected, oriGIn established a list of law firms which distinguished themselves for their knowledge of GI laws and practice. The listed law firms are available to offer 8% discount on their tariffs to oriGIn members requesting their services. The expertise in the field of GIs of each listed law firm has been confirmed by at least one member of oriGIn, which benefited from its services.

Likewise, following the launch of the new oriGIn website, we changed the way we keep our members informed about GIs and our activities. At the beginning of 2014, our monthly Reports were replaced by the **“oriGIn Alerts”**, a more dynamic and interactive service which is sent to you several times per month.

In 2014/2015, oriGIn in partnership with Development Solutions implemented the **EU-sponsored project “Training Programme on Quality Schemes: PDO/PGI/TSG”**. The project aimed at providing EU Member States national authorities in charge the PDO/PGI ex officio protection (as well as the authorities responsible of supervising PDO/PGI compliance controls’ systems) a comprehensive training on the EU Legal Framework on PDO/PGI, thereby contributing to ensure a more uniform and coherent implementation of the ex officio protection of PDO/PGI for agricultural products within the EU. oriGIn has selected among its network 5 experts and developed the training material, focusing mainly on concrete cases of PDO/PGI infringements and best practices in the application of the ex officio protection. For each training, in partnership with the national GI associations of Portugal, Italy and France, oriGIn organised a “GI evening” to give the competent authorities’ staff the opportunity to discover the uniqueness of local PDO/PGI.

The network of oriGIn national antennas continued to expand in the biennium. **In June 2015, the Portuguese Association of agro-food GIs (QUALIFICA) became the Portuguese section of oriGIn.** After France and China, this is the third example of an oriGIn national section. Moreover, in 2015 oriGIn received requests from Georgia and Turkey to replicates such model.

Following the General Assembly of Fortaleza, in December 2015, **oriGIn will partner with the International Trademark Association (INTA) in the Geographical Names Conference to be held in Rome.** oriGIn has been invited to deliver opening remarks as well as to participate with INTA in the panel “A Shared Vision”. This has the objective to provide participants with INTA and oriGIn’s vision and position on GIs, in particular in the context of the current international trade agreements on GIs, as well as to promote further dialogue between the two Associations. oriGIn and INTA are both interested in having clear and not-conflicting relationship between GIs and trademarks.

Accounts (CHF)

	Budget 15	Execution 14	Execution 13	Execution 12
Revenues				
Member fees	240'000	240'166.26	216'284.05	230'800.50
Contributions	190'000	239'305.37	235'321.01	225'924.30
Total revenues	430'000	479'471.63	451'605.06	456'742.80
Costs				
Salaries	270'000	270'208.05	312'354.99	247'843.56
Consultants	55'000	83'552.80	42'040.13	66'321.58
Travel	15'000	31'656.53	23'009.15	15'775.99
Projects	60'000	59'532.21	58'266.24	80'986.97
	400'000	444'949.59	435'670.51	410'928.10
Other costs	30'000	33'193.82	31'479.10	43'155.75
Total costs	430'000	478'143.41	467'149.61	454'083.85
Result	-	1'328.22	- 15'562.55	2'658.95