



Food and Agriculture
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Country Report on national GIs system in the Republic of Croatia

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Introduction - about Croatia...

- **28th EU Member State (since 1st of July 2013)**
- State area: 56.594 km² (land),
87.661 km² (land and sea)
- Population: 4.284.889
- **Central European and Mediterranean country**, bordering Slovenia, Hungary, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Italy (sea border)
- **rich tradition** of production and preparation of **various agricultural products and foodstuffs**, which are characterized by a special quality and traditional manner of production
- local autochthonous product protection and branding project gained momentum once Croatia joined EU in 2013, and once the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Croatia decided to actively support all producer associations aiming to obtain one of the EU quality schemes labels



GIs system in the Republic of Croatia

Regulatory framework



EUROPEAN REGULATIONS:

- **Agri-food products: 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** + Delegated and Implementing Regulations
- **Wine: 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 + Delegated and Implementing Regulations
- **Aromatised wine: 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 + Implementing Regulation
- **Spirit drinks: 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 (EU) No 110/2008 + Delegated and Implementing Regulations

NATIONAL LEGISLATION:

- **Agri-food products and spirit drinks: Law on Agriculture** and corresponding Ordinances
- **Wine and aromatised wine: Wine law** and corresponding Ordinances

National legislation:

- defines the **competent authority** for the establishment and implementation of the systems in Croatia; prescribes the **national protection procedure** and **national oppositional procedure**, defines **official controls** and contains **misdemeanor provisions**
- contains provisions on **delegation of control bodies** for verification of compliance with the specifications before placing the product on the market and **obligations of control bodies** regarding delegated tasks
- prescribes **contents and forms** of applications



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Regulatory framework

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE:

- Competent Authority: **Ministry of Agriculture**
- carried out **in accordance with European and national legislation**
- carried out in **two phases**:
 - 1. transitional national protection (Ministry of Agriculture)**
 - submitting an application
 - determination of compliance with the prescribed requirements by the Expert Commissions
 - opposition procedure (30 days (af) / 60 days (w,s))
 - decision on the transitional national protection of the name as PDO, PGI, TSG or TT
 - 2. registration of the name at EU level (European Commission)**
 - submitting an application for the registration of the name to the MA which then lodges an application dossier with the EC
 - scrutinise by EC
 - opposition procedure (3 months (af, sd) / 2 months (w))
 - implementing act registering the name

PROTECTION:

Registered names shall be **protected against**:

- **any direct or indirect commercial use of a registered name** in respect of products not covered by the registration where those products are comparable to the products registered under that name or where using the name exploits the reputation of the protected name, including when those products are used as an ingredient
- **any misuse, imitation or evocation**, even if the true origin of the products or services is indicated or if the protected name is translated or accompanied by an expression such as 'style', 'type', 'method', 'as produced in', 'imitation' or similar, including when those products are used as an ingredient;
- **any other false or misleading indication** as to the provenance, origin, nature or essential qualities of the product that is used on the inner or outer packaging, advertising material or documents relating to the product concerned, and the packing of the product in a container liable to convey a false impression as to its origin;
- **any other practice liable to mislead the consumer** as to the true origin of the product

Product names protected by transitional national protection have the same scope of protection as names registered at the EU level.

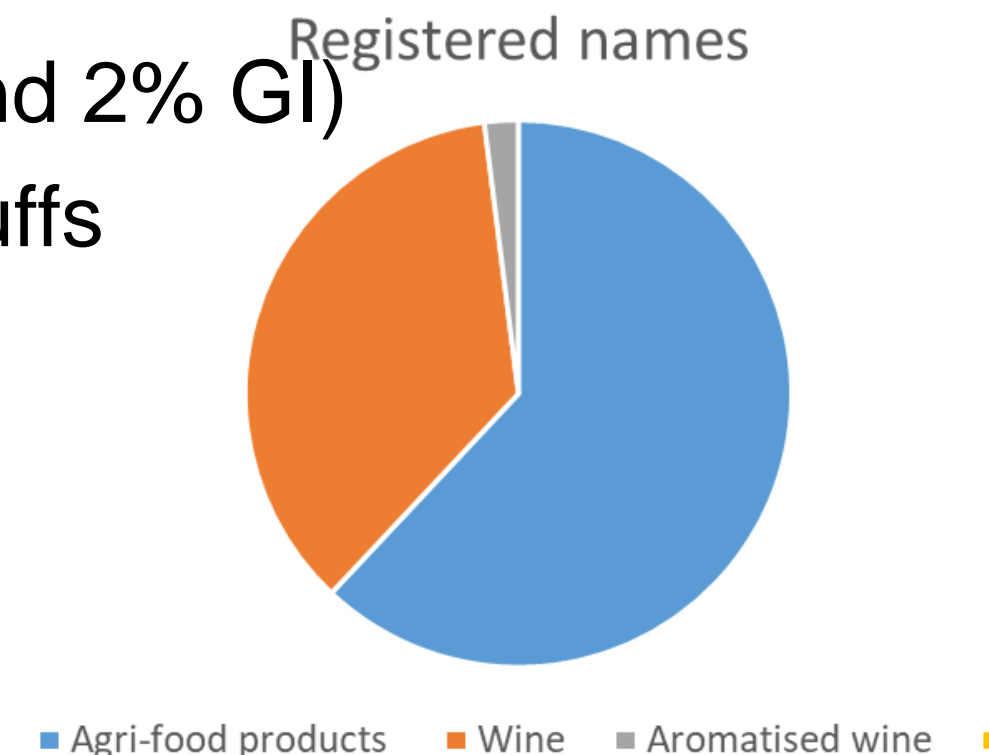


GIs system in the Republic of Croatia

Registered names

50 names registered in the EU (64% PDO, 34% PGI and 2% GI)

- **31 (62%)** agricultural product and foodstuffs
- **18 (36%)** wines
- **1 (2%)** aromatised wine



Producer groups administering GIs

- mainly **constituted of producers** and one or few members with a consultant role; in some cases raw material suppliers are also group members
- the most **significant role in the initial phase** of preparing the documentation required for the registration
- **agri-food** products: **27 producer groups** in charge of administering 29 GIs and 2 GIs are administered by **2 single producers**
- **wine and aromatised wine: 4 regional organisations** and **Association of Winemakers**
- **spirit drinks: one organization** (Association of drink producers)
- **successful groups** are those that **have administrative and financial support** of regional counties and local administration
- groups are **not completely aware of their role**, especially in contributing to ensure that the authenticity of their products is guaranteed on the market by monitoring the use of the name in trade and, if necessary, by informing competent authorities on irregularities



GIs system in the Republic of Croatia

Registered names



International protection of GIs

- **EU bilateral** and under negotiation **agreements** covering national GIs: in most of the cases **some Croatian products are included**, and in those where not Croatia is putting efforts to have the products included.
- **Geneva Act** of the Lisbon Agreement: **at the moment not planned to apply** for the protection (still produced in limited quantities and sold locally)

Control system of GIs- before placing on the market

- **Agri- food products: verification of compliance** with the product specification - carried **by delegated bodies** authorised by the Ministry of Agriculture; **costs covered by the food business operators** which are the subject of control (costs depend on product type, production steps and methods and produced quantities)
- **Wine and spirit drinks: verification of compliance** with the product specification - carried **by Croatian Agency for Agriculture and Food** authorized by the Ministry of Agriculture; **for wines the costs are covered by the producers** which are the subject of control; for **spirit drinks** are covered from the **State budget** of the Republic of Croatia

Official controls by State Inspectorate

- Control of GIs at the level of food production and processing, at the retail level and at import, in customs warehouses or at the place of destination, regardless of origin, e-commerce control - Agricultural Inspection
- The documentation and identification inspection upon import of consignments is performed by officials of the Customs Administration

GIs system in the Republic of Croatia

Sector potential



Sustainable Agriculture

- no conducted targeted consultation with GIs producer groups regarding GIs and sustainability - difficult to assume their position
- the introduction of additional **sustainability requirements** may represent another additional **financial burden** for GIs producers in Croatia, so in parallel with the introduction of sustainability requirements, **financial support measures** for producers are **more than welcome**

Potential GIs

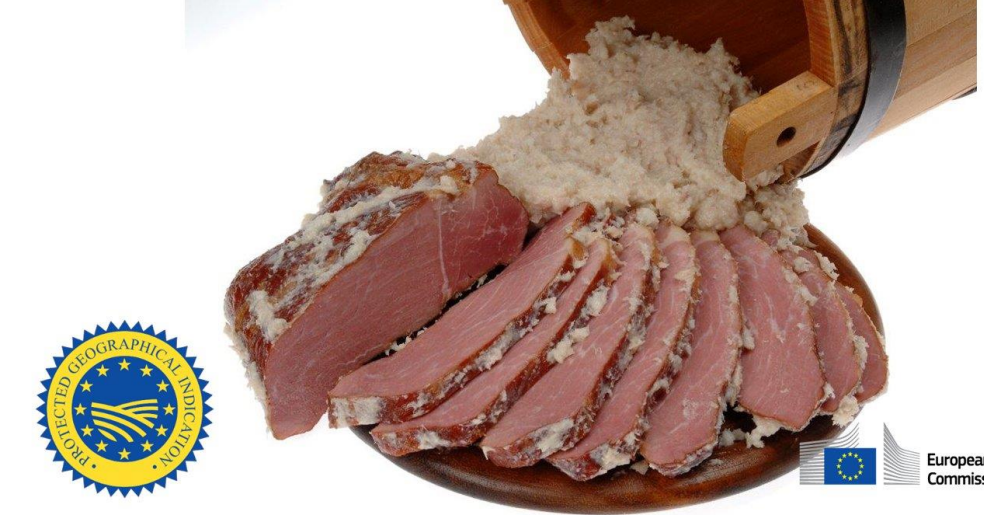
- Ministry of Agriculture captures a **List of potential GIs** - the data collected most commonly in collaboration with county offices for economy and agriculture
- mainly traditionally produced meat products and traditional meals as well as autochthonous varieties of fruits and vegetables

Obstacles

- **non-existence of registered producers** of traditional products (**no preconditions for the legalization** of production facilities)
- the **solution** could be the **construction of new, modern facilities**, however there is **no interest** in such an investment
- Ministry of Agriculture as a competent authority is ready to provide maximum professional support in finding the best and easiest solution, but there is low interest of producers

GIs system in the Republic of Croatia

Market situation



- national GIs are **mainly sold on local/** national market - small quantities produced, produced mainly by small producers
- few of the GIs are sold on the market outside Croatia, with modest quantities.
- main distribution channels - **direct sales and local markets**
- some are distributed through big retailers - mainly the case for big producers (such as meat industries)

Covid 19 crisis

- **challenges:** the **procurement of raw materials** and feed; forming a **higher price of final product** which would still be acceptable for consumer; risk of **Covid 19 break through** in the production facility and **temporary closing of production**
- **opportunities:** consumers began to **buy food online direct from producers**, especially primary products, i.e. fresh fruits and vegetables; rising of producers **awareness of investing in online sales and online advertising**; demand for **traditional products** is constantly **growing**.

Awareness of consumers

- **awareness** of protected products and EU GIs logos in Croatia is still **assessed as low**, but some **progress** can be seen
- **large number of products** entering the quality scheme, and thus the **faster transfer of knowledge** about the meaning and appearance of EU GIs logos
- Ministry of Agriculture is making significant **efforts to promote** all the aspects of quality systems, logos and Croatian protected products as well

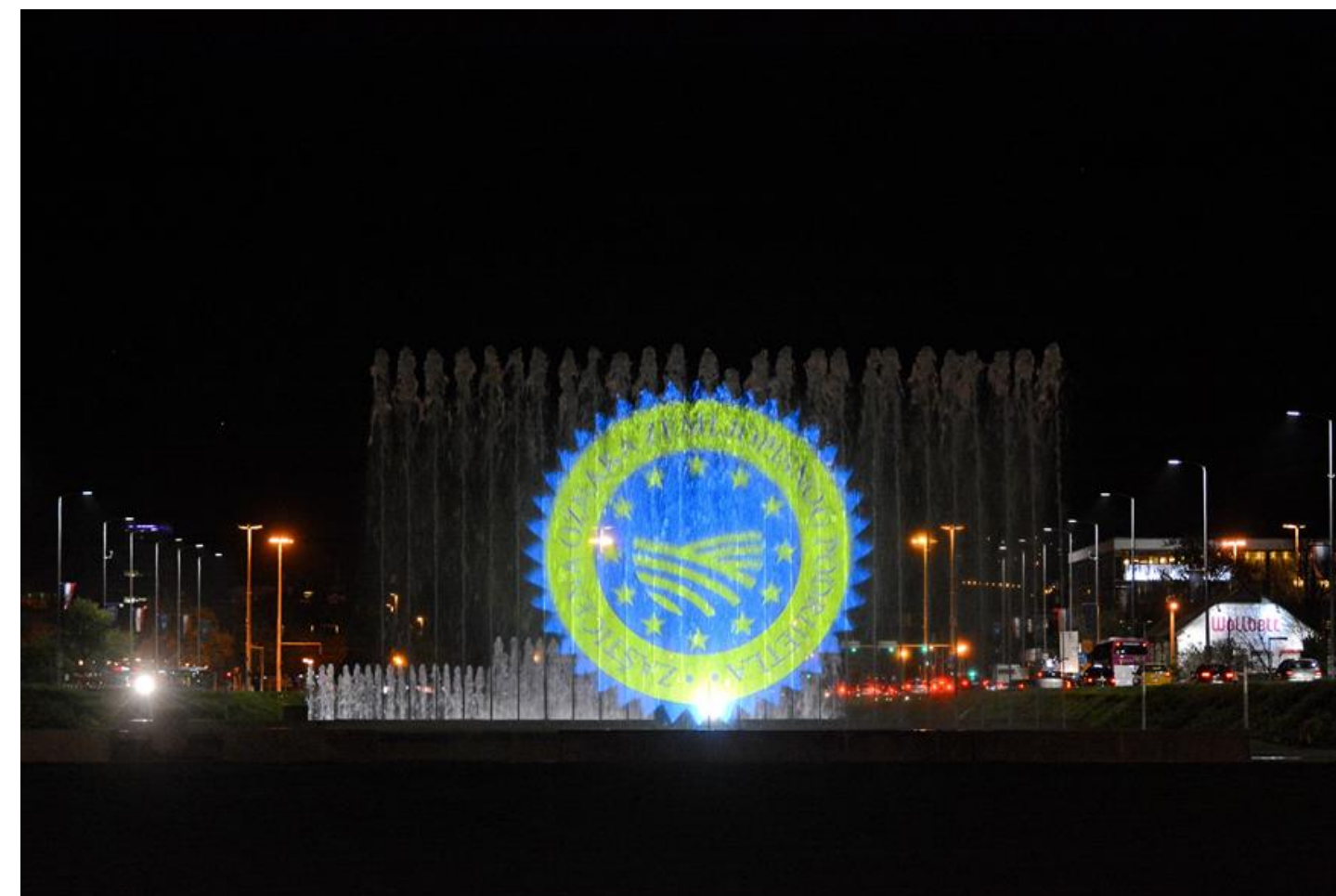
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14th April



14th April - The Day of Croatian Protected Indigenous Products – declared by the Croatian Parliament

14th April 2015 - first Croatian GI product registered at the EU level (**PGI Krčki pršut**)



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

