

## EVOLUTION OF GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS IN EUROPEAN UNION BASED ON eAMBROSIA

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### *Abstract*

*The European Union is famous for its safe, nutritious and high-quality food and drinks. Trying to achieve sustainability on food production, at European level are considered also the traditional production methods which contribute together with the standard production methods to assure quality and diversity. The aim of the paper is to underline the evolution of geographical indication based on eAmbrosia. Different regulation at European level, laws, reports and data were used for the paper and the research methods included using statistical methods. The variation of geographical indications can be linked to the European Union' states agricultural potential, to the supporting measures and their cultural and gastronomic inheritance.*

**Key words:** Geographical indication, European Union, evolution, support

### INTRODUCTION

The European Union is famous for its safe, nutritious and high-quality food and drinks. Trying to achieve sustainability on food production, at European level are considered also the traditional production methods which contribute together with the standard production methods to assure quality and diversity. The aim of the paper is to underline the evolution of geographical indication based on eAmbrosia. Different regulation at European level, laws, reports and data were used for the paper and the research methods included using statistical methods. The variation of geographical indications can be linked to the European Union' states agricultural potential, to the supporting measures and their cultural and gastronomic inheritance. The quality and diversity of production, and here referring to production of agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture activities, represent a key point for European economy. These attributes can be translated into competitive advantages for EU farmers and producers, as they kept the traditions alive

while considering new production methods and materials [1, 3].

The producers' efforts to offer diverse quality products are rewarded and so they can continue in offering this type of products. So, in condition of fair competition the buyers and the consumers can be informed about the products characteristics [13].

Currently, our country is listed as having registered at European level 59 wines with a geographical indication, which include 44 Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) wines, 15 protected geographical indication (PGI) wines, 11 foods which include one protected designation of origin (PDO) product, 9 protected geographical indication (PGI) products and one product registered as a traditional specialty guaranteed (TSG) [12, 4]. Referring to the agricultural potential of our country and the cultural and gastronomic heritage, it can be said that the registration of products with geographical indications can be a solution for producers not only to recognize the value and quality of their products, but also a safety net for their activity [11, 2].

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of the paper is to highlight the evolution of geographical indications in European Union, as the number of products benefiting from geographical indications varies greatly from one state to another.

For producers, quality schemes bring clear benefits in terms of marketing and they contribute to increase the sales because of the high quality and recognition of these products, close to the consumers availability to pay for the products with proven authenticity. The different politics of European Union, starting from trade politics to Common Agricultural Politic, supported and encouraged the producers to register their products in order to obtain more profit and to gain more visibility on the market [6, 7, 10].

The articles study the evolution of the geographical indication in European Union member states for products as wines, food, spirit drinks and aromatised wines. As Romania is a member state, the study is considered necessary in order to underline the country position on a dynamic market and to predict the development potential. The article analyses four different product categories: a) wines, more exactly PDO and PGI wines; b) food, and here the focus is on PDO, PGI and TSG; c) spirit drink with geographical indications and d) aromatised wines with geographical indications. The number of geographical indications registered each year and the trend were calculated based on the date from European Union geographical register. A special attention is paid to each geographical indication category, due to the differences in the same state. The primary data collected for the paper came from various sources.

At European Union level, the releases of the European institution were used, together with the treaties, regulations, directives and other acts, while at national level they were used the agreements signed by Romania and the data from Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Various publications in the field were also used in order to have a better base for our study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Initially, products with a geographical indication were protected under national law, but this was limited to the protecting them in that State. The expansion of trade in the nineteenth century, stressed that national protection is not enough, due to the many situations in which products were imitated in other countries different that the country of origin. So, there was needed that the international cooperation to be established in order to ensure that they are protected internationally and that is reciprocity regarding the protection between states. Paris Convention for the Protection of Intellectual Property, from 1883, represents the results of the first efforts in formulating and adopting a common approach regarding intellectual propriety [14]. The Convention was not limited only to geographical indications, it included covered all aspects regarding the intellectual property (Figure 1).

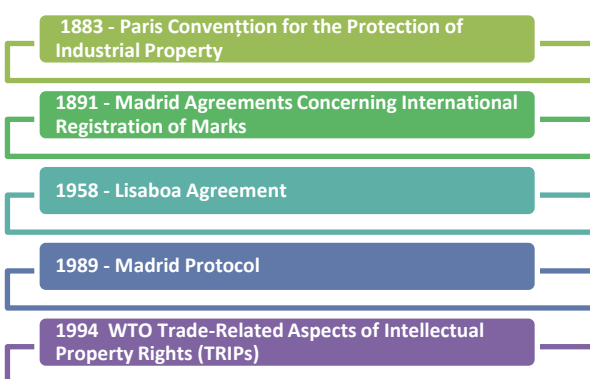


Fig. 1. The most important treaties related to geographical indication  
Source: Authors representation.

In 1920, Romania acceded the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and Madrid Agreements Concerning International Registration of Marks, and almost one century later the Lisboa Agreement, in 2015 [17]. In 1998 was adopted in our country the Madrid protocol and WTO TRIPs in 2001 [15, 16, 18].

Over the time, the number of products registered in the European Geographical Indication Register varied a lot (Figure 3) [8]. This fact is due principally to the economic

context, to the support for the producers to register their products but also to trade agreements signed with other countries [5].

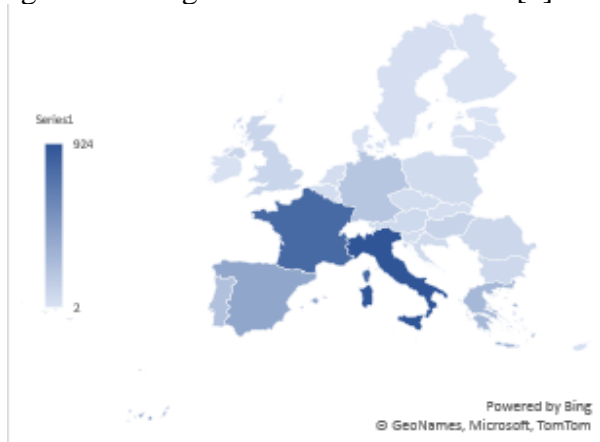


Fig. 2. GI distribution in European Union  
 Source: Authors' calculation based on eAmbrosia, 2020 [8].

In European Union, Italy has the largest number of products with geographical indication, followed by France, Spain, Greece and Portugal (Figure 2). Together, these five countries have 71.64% from the EU total number of GI from European Union (even the UK left the European Union this year, we consider properly to consider it for our study to the economical bounds) (Figure 4 and 5). Romania has only 79 products with geographical indication, more precisely only 2.14% from European Union total number of GI (Table 1). Considering the agricultural potential of our country we may affirm that our country can be a better player on this market.

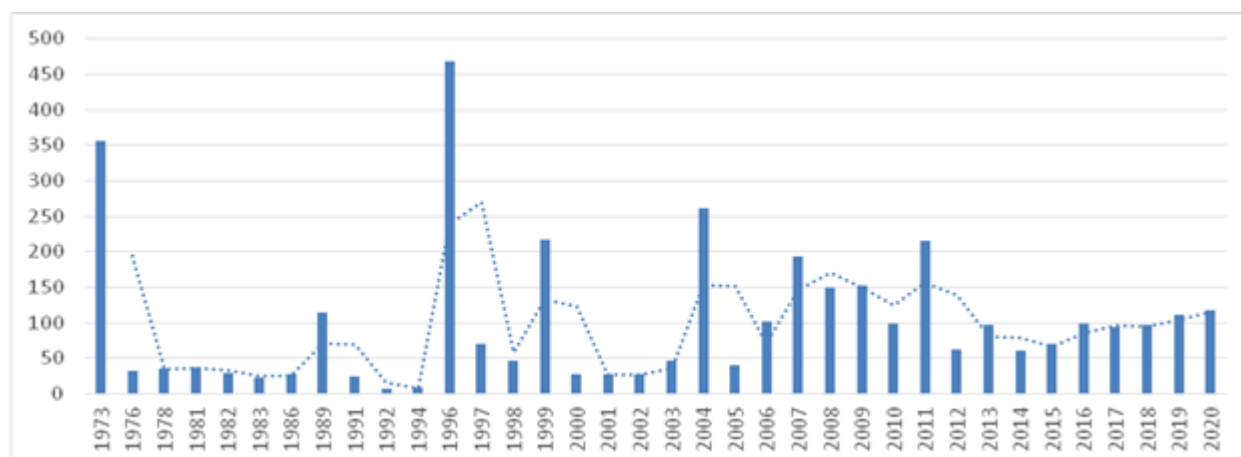


Fig. 3. Evolution of GI in European Union, 1973-2020  
 Source: Authors' calculation based on eAmbrosia, 2020 [8]

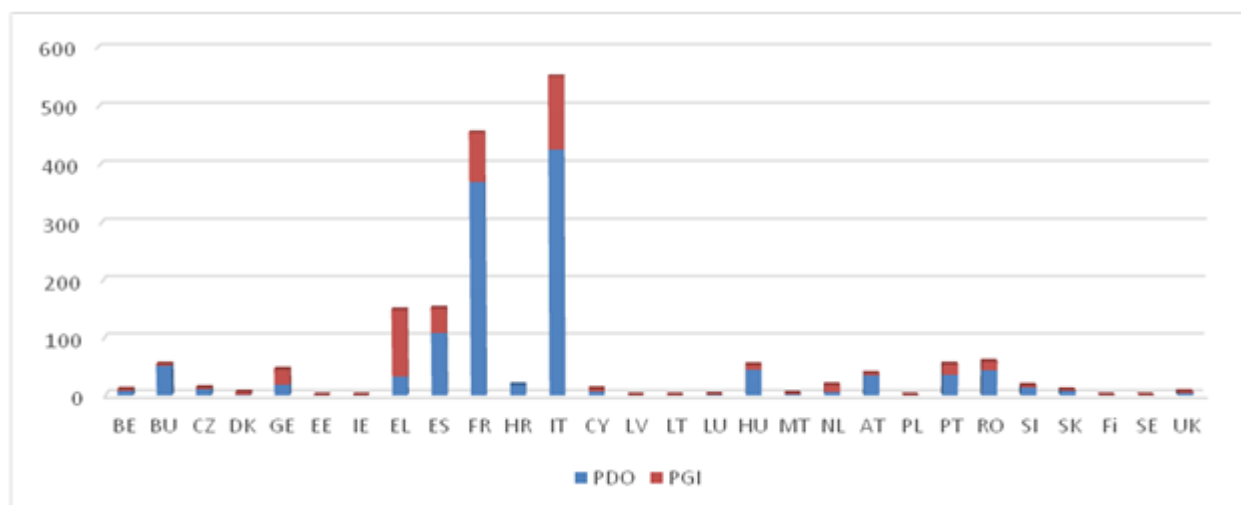


Fig. 4. PDO and PGI for wine in European Union  
 Source: Authors' calculation based on eAmbrosia, 2020 [8].

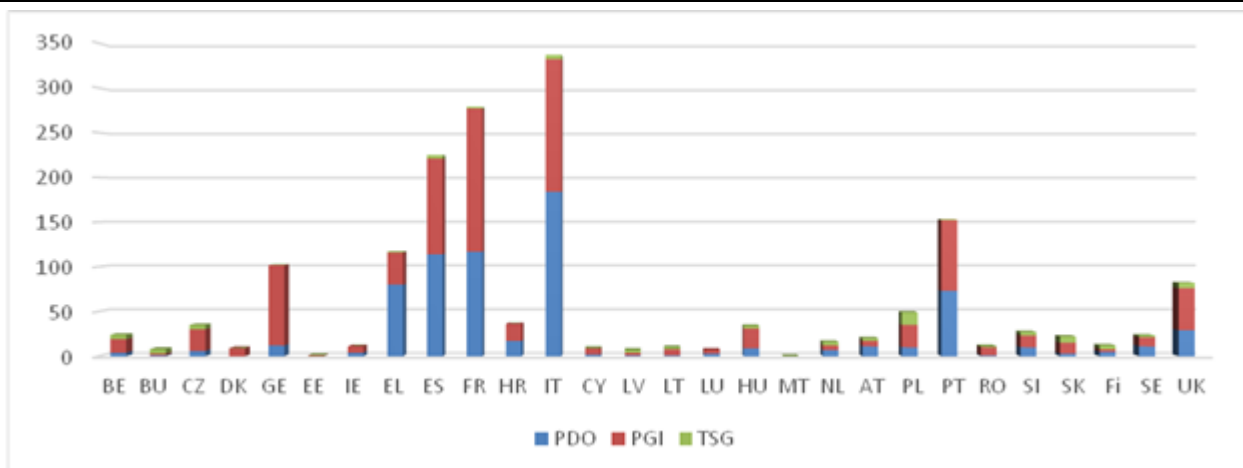


Fig. 5. PDO, PGI and TSG for food in European Union  
 Source: Authors' calculation based on eAmbrosia, 2020 [8].

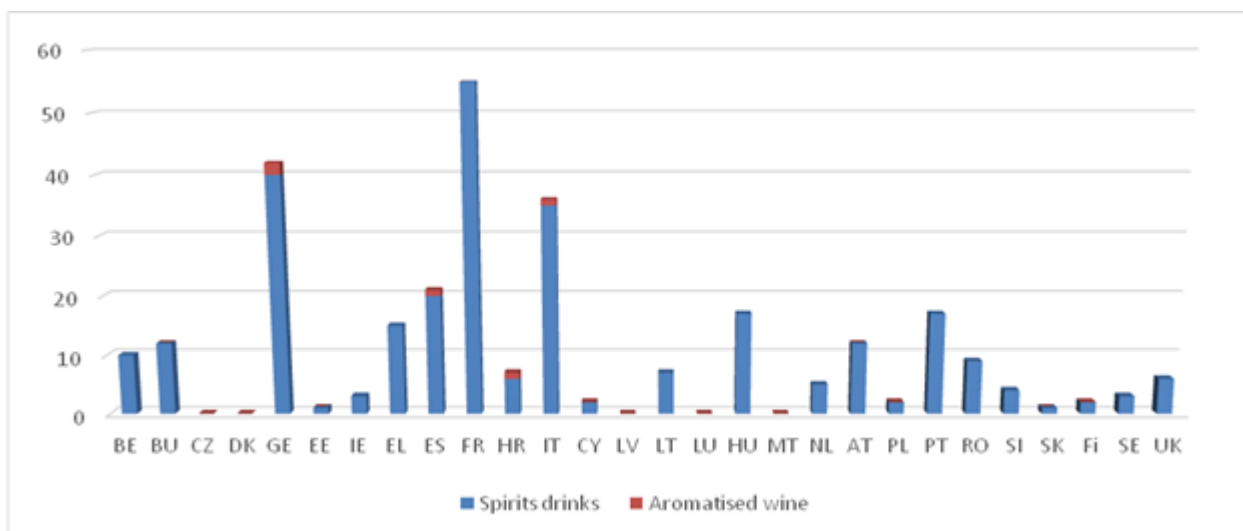


Fig. 6. GI for spirit drinks and aromatised wines in European Union  
 Source: Authors' calculation based on eAmbrosia, 2020 [8].

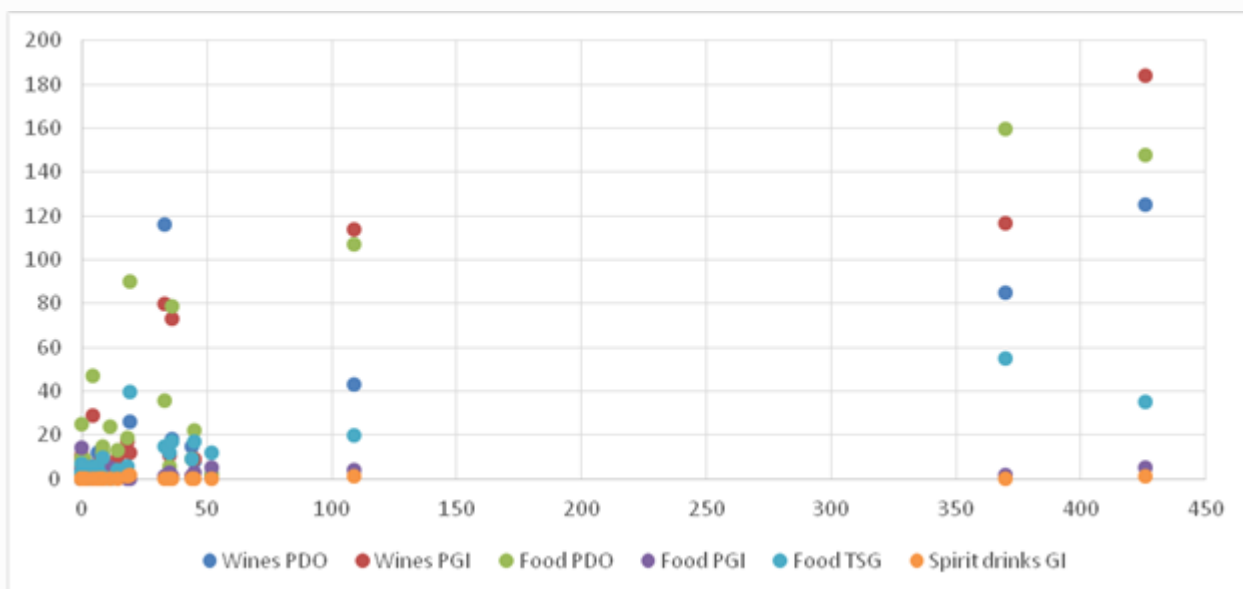


Fig. 7. GI frequency in European Union  
 Source: Authors' calculation based on eAmbrosia, 2020 [8].

Table 1. Geographical indication by Member States

	Member states	Gi no.	% from total	max no.	min no.
1.	Belgium	44	1.20	F PGI/15	0
2.	Bulgaria	74	2.01	W PDI/52	0
3.	Czechia	48	1.31	F PGI/ 24	0
4.	Denmark	14	0.38	F PGI/ 9	0
5.	Germany	189	5.14	F PGI/ 90	0
6.	Estonia	2	0.05	F PGI/ 1	0
7.	Ireland	14	0.38	F PGI/7	0
8.	Greece	281	7.64	W PGI/116	0
9.	Spain	398	10.83	F PDO/114	AW1
10.	France	789	21.46	WPDO/370	0
11.	Croatia	61	1.66	F PGI/19	0
12.	Italia	924	25.14	WPDO/426	AW1
13.	Cyprus	22	0.60	WPDO/TG/7	0
14.	Latvia	7	0.19	F PGI/ 3	0
15.	Lithuania	17	0.46	F PGI/ 7	0
16.	Luxembourg	8	0.22	F PGI/ 4	0
17.	Hungary	104	2.83	WPDO/ 45	0
18.	Malta	3	0.08	WPDO/ 2	0
19.	Netherlands	39	1.06	WPDI/12	0
20.	Austria	70	1.90	WPDO /35	0
21.	Poland	51	1.39	F PGI/25	0
22.	Portugal	224	6.09	F PGI/ 79	0
23.	Romania	79	2.15	WPDO/ 44	0
24.	Slovenia	48	1.31	WPDO/ 14	0
25.	Slovakia	32	0.87	F PGI/12	0
26.	Finland	14	0.38	FPDO/5	0
27.	Sweden	26	0.71	FPDO/11	0
28.	UK	94	2.56	FPGI/47	0
	Total UE 28	3,676	100.00	-	-

Source: EC, 2020 [9].

We need to have more products register in order to be able to offer a better protection for our producers in search of stability in the economic global background. Over half of the products registered from our countries are wines from the category protected designation of origin, more precisely 55.70% from the total Romanian products.

At European level, the group of aromatised wines is the one with the lowest entries. There are countries in which not even a product is registered in this category (Figure 6 and 7).

The Italian protected designation of origin represents the category with the highest value, 426 wines registered. The French wines are following with 370 entries and the Greece wines with protected geographical indication. Spain is on the top with protected designation of origin food category with 114.

From the product categories analysed, Italy is leading at PDO and PGI wines, at PDO food and at PGI food, France exceed Italy.

Only four member states have registered over 100 products for at least one category. Italy has over 100 products for 4 categories, followed by France and Spain with three categories, and Greece with one category.

Only 25% from members states have over 100 products with registered GI, the rest have under 100 products varying from 94 product (United Kingdom) to only 2 products (Estonia). Near Estonia, Latvia, Malta and Luxembourg represents the states with the lowest number of GI, under 10 GI/state. Spain and Italy are the only states having geographical indication to all seven categories.

## CONCLUSIONS

Reporting to European Union level, products with a geographical indication or traditional specialties guaranteed are important. Geographical indication products and can be an opportunity for the development of local economies, and especially in areas where agricultural production is more important in rural areas, but also in disadvantaged areas.

Quality schemes have benefits both for the manufacturer and consumer. The manufacturers can sell the products at a higher price than the rest of the products sold on the market. The consumer has a guarantee of the quality of the buyer products and of them authenticity.

The variation of the products number in European Number states can be related to their agricultural potential, the cultural and gastronomic inheritance, but also the supporting measures for the producers.

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