



Step-by-Step Guide to Registering a Geographical Indication in the European Union

This guide is based on the [video materials](#) provided by the European Commission and on the legal framework established by [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1143](#) as implemented by [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2025/26](#).

Before submitting a GI application, applicants must carefully prepare both the type of product denomination and the representation of producers.

1) Determining the Denomination Type¹

The first step is to decide which GI category fits your product:

- PDO (Protected Designation of Origin)—for food, agricultural products and wines.
- PGI (Protected Geographical Indication)—for food, agricultural products, and wines.
- GI (Geographical Indication)—for spirit drinks.

Each category is associated with different specification requirements, depending on the strength and nature of the link with the geographical area.

Additional information on the specification requirements of each category is available on the European Commission’s webpage: [Geographical indications and quality schemes explained](#).

2) Establishing Producer Representation²

The next step is to determine who will submit the application. Applications are generally submitted by a producer group. This could be a cooperative, consortium, farm union, or another type of association. There are no strict requirements for the group structure; national legislation may influence how it is formed. Alternatively, a single producer may submit the application alone.³

¹ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 6

² Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 9(1)

³ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 9(3)

GI registration follows a two-tier process: an initial review at the national level, followed by assessment at the EU level.

3) Application Requirements at the National Level⁴

To start the registration process at the national level, the application must include the following elements:

- Product specification—a detailed description of the product, showing its unique characteristics and the link to its geographical area.
- Single document—a concise summary of the product specification in a standard format.
- Supporting documentation—information about the applicant group (name and address) and the authorities or bodies responsible for checking compliance with the product specification.⁵

For applicants from non-EU countries, additional documents may be required, including legal evidence that the geographical indication is protected in the country of origin, and, when an agent is acting on behalf of the applicant, a power of attorney.⁶

Once the application is complete, it should be submitted to the national authorities responsible for geographical indications. These authorities will review the application and begin the national-level examination process.

- For EU applicants:
 - After submission, the national authority reviews the application to verify that all legal criteria are met.
 - If it does, the authority publishes the product specification and opens a period for national-level opposition, allowing third-parties to raise objections.⁷
 - After the opposition period ends, the national authority forwards the application dossier to the European Commission for EU-level review.
- For non-EU applicants:
 - The EU legislation does not require national authorities to review applications from outside the EU; therefore, there may be no national-level assessment or opposition period.
 - Non-EU applications are generally submitted directly to the European Commission, which carries out the full examination at the EU level.⁸

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 10

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 12(1)

⁶ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 13(2)

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 10(4)

⁸ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 14(2)

4) Application Requirements at the EU Level⁹

At the EU level, the European Commission reviews the application and may request clarifications or additional information.¹⁰ The scrutiny period should not exceed six months from the date on which the application is received.¹¹

Following this review, the single document is translated into all official EU languages and published in the Official Journal of the European Union, providing third parties three months to raise objections.¹² If no objections prevent registration, the Commission adopts an implementing regulation, formally recording the GI name in the Union GI Register.¹³

Understanding the structure and content of the product specification and single document is essential for a complete and successful GI application.

1) The Product Specification¹⁴

The product specification is a central document that describes the essential attributes and characteristics of a product seeking GI protection. It defines the standards that producers must meet to use the GI name, and therefore, all members of the producer group must agree on its contents.

a. Establishing the name of the product

The specification document must first set out the name used for the product, which defines its identity and reflects its link to the geographical origin.

- GI names often contain a geographical element, referencing a region, locality, or country (e.g., *Azafrán de La Mancha*, a saffron from central Spain).
- In some cases, names may be traditional terms used in a particular geographical area but without explicit geographic wording (e.g., *Feta* cheese)
- GI names must be written in the language used in the place of origin, which may be a national language, dialect, or minority language. If the name is not written in the Latin alphabet, a transcription or transliteration must be provided.
- If multiple names exist for the same product, they should be written together, separated by a slash (e.g., *Nocciola Piemonte / Nocciola del Piemonte*) and this combined form must be used consistently.

⁹ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 13, 14, and 15

¹⁰ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 15(2)

¹¹ Id.

¹² Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 15(4), 17(1)

¹³ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 22(1)

¹⁴ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 49

- Names containing descriptive or qualitative terms (e.g., “original,” “traditional,” “farmhouse”) should be avoided.
- Invented names created solely for the purpose of registration are not eligible.

b. Describing the Product

The specification document must provide a clear description of the product and identify the traits that set it apart from comparable products. This includes:

- The category of the product
 - Technical or scientific data, including:
 - Physical characteristics (e.g., color, shape, dimension)
 - Chemical characteristics
 - Organoleptic characteristics (e.g., aroma, taste, texture)
 - Any other distinctive features that differentiate the product from similar goods.
- This section establishes what the product is, objectively and measurably.

c. Production Method

The specification document must explain how the product is made and identify any relevant production rules. Depending on the product, this may include:

- Raw materials used
- Plant varieties or animal breeds
- Farming practices, including feed requirements for animals
- Specific processing techniques.

Specifically, for agri-food products:

- Evidence of origin in the geographical area
- Procedures ensuring traceability

Specifically, for wine:

- Permitted grape varieties
- Winemaking practices
- Maximum yields

This section allows verification bodies to assess whether production consistently follows the approved method.

d. Defining the Geographical Area

Applicants must clearly delimit the geographical area in which production takes place. This may involve:

- Physical or administrative boundaries (e.g., rivers, roads, municipalities, land parcels, etc.)
- Maps or other visual references (often provided as annexes)

Clear boundaries help determine who is eligible to produce the product and where compliance must occur.

e. Demonstrating the Link with the Geographical Area

A core element of the specification is the explanation of how the natural and/or human factors of the geographical area influence the characteristics or reputation of the product.

This includes defining:

- Relevant natural factors, such as:
 - Soil type
 - Climate
 - Topography

Only factors with a measurable effect—e.g., “a beautiful landscape” is insufficient.

- Relevant human factors, such as:
 - Local know-how
 - Traditional practices
 - Specific skills beyond generic production methods

The specification must show how these factors contribute to the product’s qualities or reputation.

f. Other Specific Provisions

The specification document may also include additional rules considered important by producers or required by legislation. These can include:

- Sustainability or environmental practices
- Packaging or bottling requirements
- Labeling obligations (e.g., use of logos, traditional terms, vintage year for wines, etc.)
- For spirit drinks, identification of control bodies, including name and address.

2) The Single Document¹⁵

The single document is a concise summary of the product specification, prepared in a standardized format for review at the EU level. Its purpose is to present the essential

¹⁵ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, Art. 50

information about the product, its characteristics, and its link to the geographical area in a clear and accessible manner. Because it will be used both for assessment and for subsequent publication, the single document must be brief, factual, and self-contained.

To comply with EU requirements, the single document must respect defined word limits:

- Up to 2,500 words for agri-food products and spirit drinks.
- Up to 5,000 words for wines.

It should not include external references or annexes, and must focus on the main elements of the product specification.

In preparing the document, applicants should ensure that it contains:

- The name of the product and the applicable type of GI (PDO, PGI, or GI)
- The country or EU Member State of origin
- A short description of the product's main characteristics and the essential production steps.
- A clear and concise explanation of the link between the product's qualities and its geographical origin.

For submission, the single document must be uploaded through [eAmbrosia](#), the EU digital system for GI applications.

For applicants from non-EU countries, a specific template is available in the applicable EU regulation; it is set out in [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2025/26, Annex I](#), and serves as a reference for structuring the submission to meet EU requirements.

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