



# **GUIDELINES ON GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS FOR CRAFT AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS**

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## Acronyms

IP	Intellectual Property
EU	European Union
GIs	Geographical Indications
CIGI	Craft and Industrial Geographical Indications
PDO	Protected Designation of Origin
EUIPO	European Union Intellectual Property Office

# 1. Introduction

European societies have long valued local food, wines, and crafts whose characteristics stem from unique geographical conditions, cultural practices, and traditional know-how. Over time, producers and authorities recognized that these products were vulnerable to imitation, which could undermine both the reputation of established regions and consumer trust. Geographical Indications (GIs) developed in Europe as a response to the need to protect traditional products with unique qualities that are inherently linked to specific regions. Europe has a rich heritage of products linked to their origin such as Champagne, Jamon de Jabugo, Manchego cheese, Feta cheese etc.

However, until recently, GI protection was only available for agricultural products in the European Union. This changed with the introduction of [Regulation \(EU\) 2023/2411](#), which opened the door to protecting traditional crafts and industrial products, such as Murano glass (Italy), Albacete knives (Spain), Donegal tweed (Ireland), Limoges porcelain (France) and Solingen cutlery (Germany), which are European, local and authentic to their geographical origin

The [Regulation \(EU\) 2023/2411](#) aims to safeguard the quality, reputation, or other characteristics of craft and industrial products that are intrinsically linked to their geographical origin. In this sense, the Regulation seeks to protect the interests of craft and industrial Geographical Indications (CIGIs). The GI system aims to maintain quality, promote regional pride, and encourage biodiversity and sustainable agriculture by certifying authenticity and setting production standards. By certifying authenticity and setting production standards, the GI system aims to maintain quality, promote regional pride, and encourage biodiversity and sustainable agriculture.

GIs have thus become integral to preserving Europe's rich history, regional identities, and providing a guarantee of quality and origin in an increasingly globalized marketplace.

This document is intended to serve as a practical guide to this new form of protection. It aims to help stakeholders understand the opportunities offered by geographical indications for craft and industrial products, become familiar with the registration process in a clear and accessible way, and explore the benefits that such protection can bring.

## 2. Registration of a Geographical Indication for Craft and Industrial Product

The following section sets out the key aspects to be considered when seeking the protection of geographical indications. Its purpose is to serve as a clear guide to the essential elements required for submitting an application, beginning with identifying eligible applicants and the subject matter that may be protected. It further outlines the application procedure and highlights practical considerations intended to assist the various stakeholders throughout the registration process.

### 2.1. Who can apply?

Unlike other intellectual property rights, CIGIs are collective rights. In Europe, CIGI applications can be filed by groups of producers, but under certain conditions, single producers, local or regional authorities,

or designated private entities can also apply. The purpose of these rules is to ensure that the entity applying has a legitimate interest in protecting the product name while adhering to the standards of manufacture mentioned in the product specification. The following are eligible applicants for CIGIs in Europe, according to the regulation:

### Producer Groups

The standard applicants for geographical indication registration are groups or associations of producers; however, such groups do not need to take a specific legal form. What is essential is that they consist mainly of producers working with the same product and that they collectively decide to submit the application, regardless of their formal structure.

In the case of products originating from a cross-border geographical area, producers are not limited to applying individually within their own jurisdiction. Instead, a joint application may be submitted by several applicants acting together. Such applications may involve producers from different Member States, from Member States and third countries, or exclusively from third countries, provided that the product originates within the shared geographical area concerned.

### Single producer (exception)

The general principle of the GI system is that applications should be submitted collectively, reflecting the shared cultural and economic value of the product. However, as an exception, the Regulation allows a single producer to act as applicant under **strict conditions**:

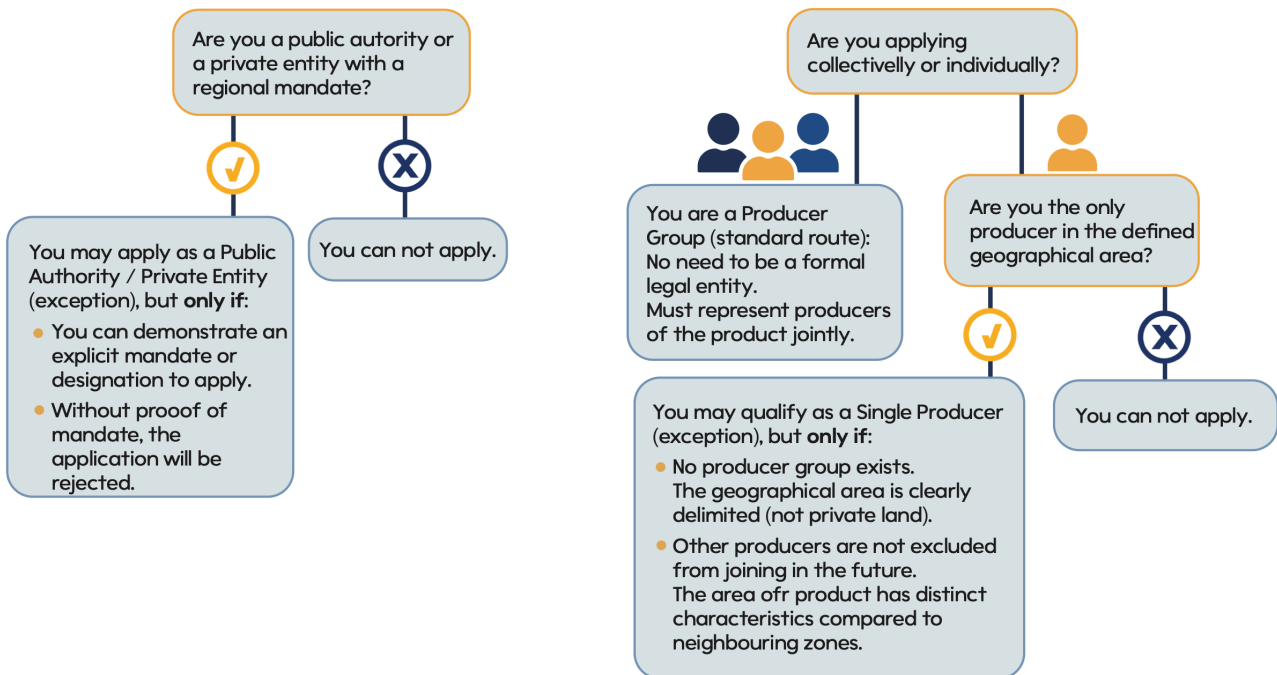
- The producer is the only **sole producer or willing individual** to apply for CIGI registration in the defined geographical area.
- The geographical area mentioned is **objectively defined**, presenting its clear uniqueness from neighbouring areas and/or the products made have noticeably different qualities from products made in the nearby area. It should be noted that the geographical area should not be defined based on the private property boundaries of the producer, such as her estate or workshop.

### Public authorities or private entities (exception)

In exceptional circumstances, the regulation also permits applications from public bodies, such as municipalities and regional administrations, as well as other entities with a legitimate regional interest. However, it should be noted that, in such cases, these applicants must demonstrate that they have been explicitly designated or mandated to apply. The justification must clearly identify the reasons for this designation and indicate the national law or administrative decision on the designation. If they fail to submit the requested evidence, their application will be deemed inadmissible.

Building on the above, the following flowchart is provided to facilitate understanding of who may submit an application, depending on the characteristics of the applicant. Its purpose is to guide stakeholders in determining and identifying the most appropriate applicant category that best aligns with their specific circumstances.

## Flowchart: Identifying the Right Type of Applicant for a CIGI Application



## 2.2. What can be registered?

For a long time, GIs in the European Union were restricted to agricultural products, wines, and spirits. In contrast, there was no equivalent protection for craft or industrial goods. However, the EU's accession to the Geneva Act, which extends international protection to both agricultural and non-agricultural products, meant that the EU framework needed to be broadened. Consequently, Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 was adopted, establishing a legal system dedicated to the protection of craft and industrial products across the Union for the first time.

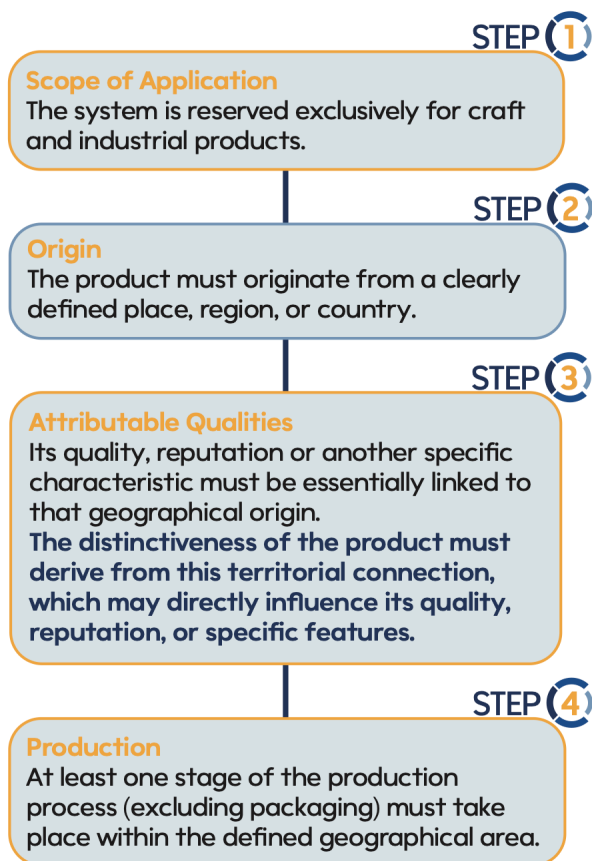
This framework defines *craft products* as goods that are entirely hand-made or produced with the help of manual, digital or mechanical tools, as long as manual skill and human input are crucial components of the final product. On the other hand, the term *industrial products* refers to goods that are produced using standardised manufacturing processes. This includes mass production and the extensive use of machinery. To qualify for CIGI protection, a product must meet a **series of cumulative requirements**:

1. Firstly, the product must originate from a clearly defined place, region, or country.
2. Secondly, the quality, reputation, or another distinctive characteristic must be essentially linked to that geographical origin.
3. Thirdly, at least one stage of the production process must take place within the defined geographical area, and this requirement explicitly excludes packaging; moreover, the packaging and storage of the final product for commercial purposes are not considered part of the production steps.

Having stated the above, the uniqueness of the product derives from this territorial connection, which can directly influence its qualities, reputation, or defining features. The core of the system lies in the existence of this causal relationship between the product and its place of origin. Such a connection may stem from human factors, such as the use of locally sourced materials, traditional expertise, artisanal techniques or unique production methods, or from environmental factors, including the natural properties of specific stones, minerals or other resources found in the region.

Additionally, it should be noted that the name under which the product is to be protected must correspond to the term by which it is commonly known in the market and cannot be arbitrary. Such names can be described using standard definitions or commonly used terms and, where relevant, can include references to the raw materials used. It is also important to note that this name must not contravene public policy.

For clarity, the scheme below illustrates the cumulative requirements that must be met for a product to benefit from geographical indication protection.



In light of the above, the following checklist is provided to help determine whether the product meets the necessary characteristics to qualify for protection.

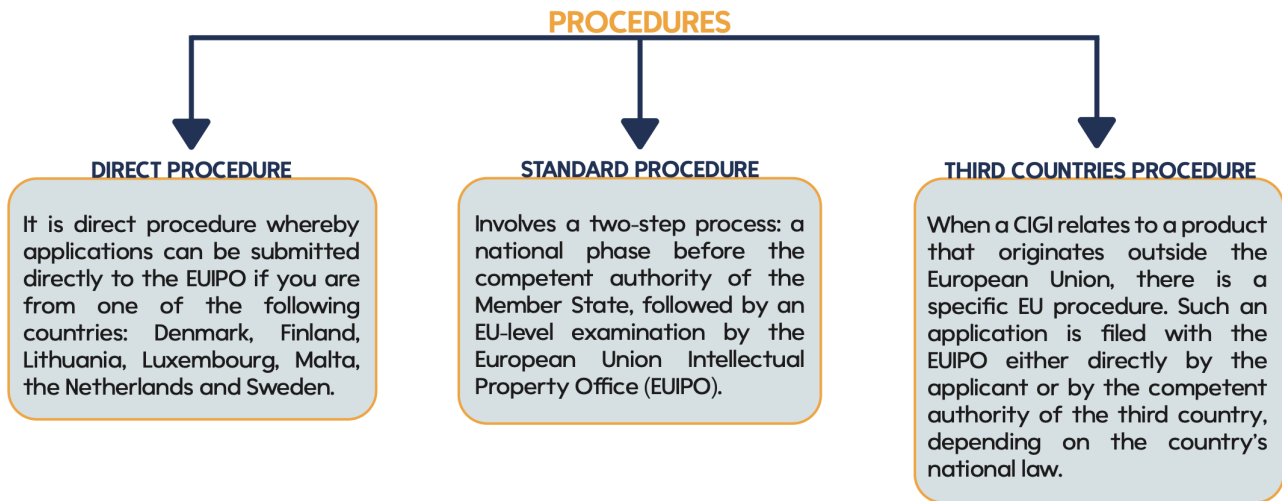
**Checklist – Key Elements of a Geographical Indication**

- Does your product come from a specific place, region, or country?
- Does the product have a name that is commonly used in trade or everyday language to identify it?
- Does your product have a quality, reputation, or characteristic that is essentially attributable to its geographical origin?
- Are these characteristics linked to natural factors (e.g. raw materials, environment) and/or human factors (e.g. skills, traditional know-how)?

Can at least one stage of the production process (excluding packaging) be proven to take place in that area?

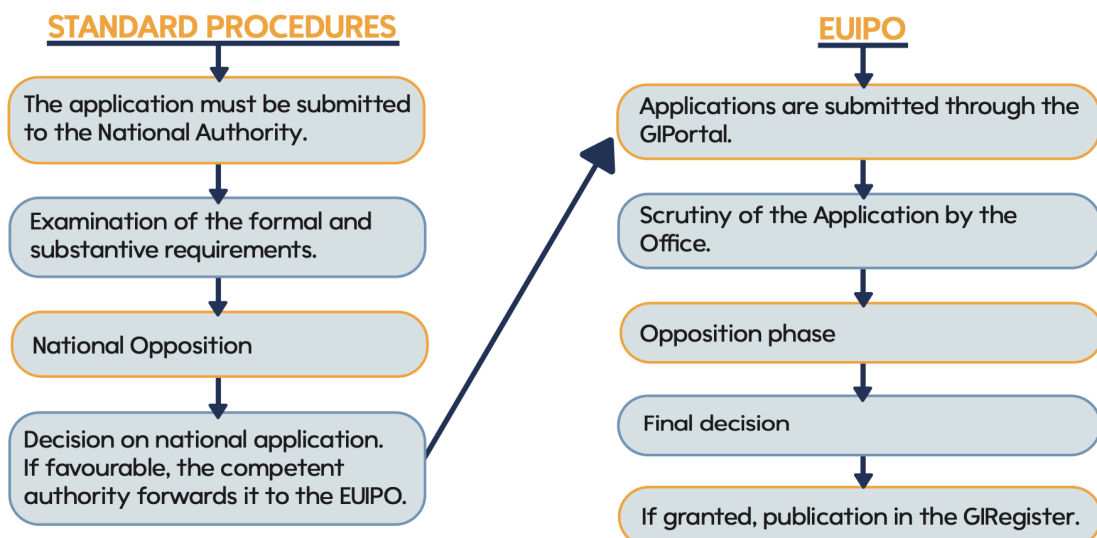
## 2.3. How to apply?

The Regulation provides for three different procedures to register CIGIs:



### 2.3.1 The Standard Procedure

The **standard procedure** represents the principal route for the registration of CIGIs within the European Union. This mechanism is modelled on the well-established framework for agricultural products and is structured around two successive phases. The **first phase** takes place at the national level, where the competent authorities play a decisive role. Their responsibilities include receiving applications submitted by producers, assessing their admissibility and compliance with substantive requirements, and administering the national opposition procedure. If the outcome of this assessment is favourable, the application is subsequently transmitted to the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) for examination **at the European Union level.**



Having established the foregoing, the following sections will provide a detailed analysis of each phase. This analysis aims to clarify the specific steps involved in the process and to facilitate a clearer understanding of the application procedure.

## National phase

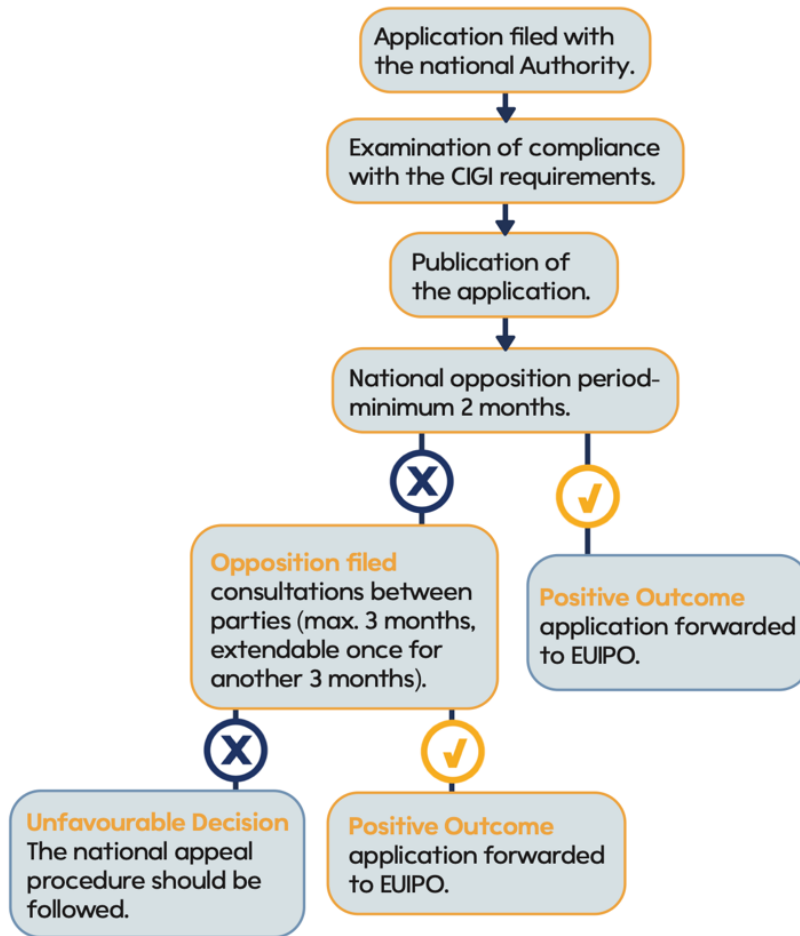
The national phase consists of a series of steps, which are set out below. It is important to bear in mind that the right is not established once this process has been completed, as it is necessary to move on to the European phase in order to obtain the registration.

- The application is first submitted to a national authority or registration office (depending on the Member State). This request can be submitted either via the GI Portal, the EUIPO tool, or through other mechanisms offered by the Member State. Bear in mind that countries such as Spain only accept applications submitted via this web portal. It is important to see each country's regulations in order to apply, and this can be done by checking the relevant sources.
- Once the application is submitted, the national authority examines whether the application meets the formal and substantive requirements for CIGI registration.
- If the application passes the formal and substantive examinations, a national opposition procedure will be initiated. This procedure will be as follows:
  1. The application is published.
  2. A period of at **least two months** is granted for objections.
  3. Any person with a legitimate interest, residing or established in the Member State (or in another Member State of origin of the product), may file an opposition.
  4. If an opposition is admissible, the national authority invites both parties (applicant and opponent) to consultations. These may last up to three months, extendable by an additional three months if both sides agree.
  5. The applicant must report the outcome of the consultations to the national authority, including any amendments made to the application.
  6. Once the opposition phase has been completed, the competent authority will make a decision, which may be favourable or unfavourable. If the decision is favourable, the pre-EU phase will begin.

If the decision is unfavourable, the Member State must have an appeal system in place before the competent authority. On the other hand, if a favourable decision is made at the national level, the competent authority must then send the application to the EUIPO.

For ease of understanding, a flowchart is provided. This summarises the main stages of the national phase in a simplified form.

## National phase



## EU Phase

Once the national phase has been successfully completed, the application is forwarded by the national authority to the **European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)**, which is the competent authority for examining CIGI applications at EU level.

As has been seen at the national level, the EU phase comprises a series of steps, which are indicated as follows:

### STEP 1 Reception of the application

- The national authority submits applications via the GI Portal.
- Once the application has been received or the form completed, the EUIPO checks for compliance with formal requirements and verifies that no manifest errors are present.

### STEP 2 Publication in the Union Register

After the initial examination, the application is published in the Union Register of Geographical Indications for Craft and Industrial Products.

### STEP 3 Opposition Period

Once an application has been published in the Union Register, a **three-month opposition period begins**. During this time, certain parties may contest the registration before the EUIPO. Those entitled to oppose include the competent authority of a Member State or of a third country, as well as any natural or legal person with a legitimate interest who is established or resident in another Member State or in a third country. Bear in mind that the opponents must not be from the same country as the applicant.

If an opposition is filed, the EUIPO first examines its admissibility. Where the opposition is deemed admissible, both the opponent and the applicant are invited to enter into consultations within two months of the filing of the opposition. These consultations are intended to promote dialogue and the possibility of reaching an amicable solution. The consultation period cannot exceed three months, although it may be extended by an additional three months if both parties jointly request it.

Throughout this stage, the EUIPO may also facilitate alternative dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, to support the parties in resolving their differences. During the consultations, both the applicant and the opponent are expected to exchange the necessary information to assess whether the application complies with the requirements of the Regulation.

### STEP 4 Decision-Making Process

After the opposition period, the EUIPO evaluates all available information, including the outcome of any communications with the applicant.

If the requirements are not met and issues cannot be resolved, the application may be rejected.

Otherwise, the CIGI will be registered and granted protection at Union level.

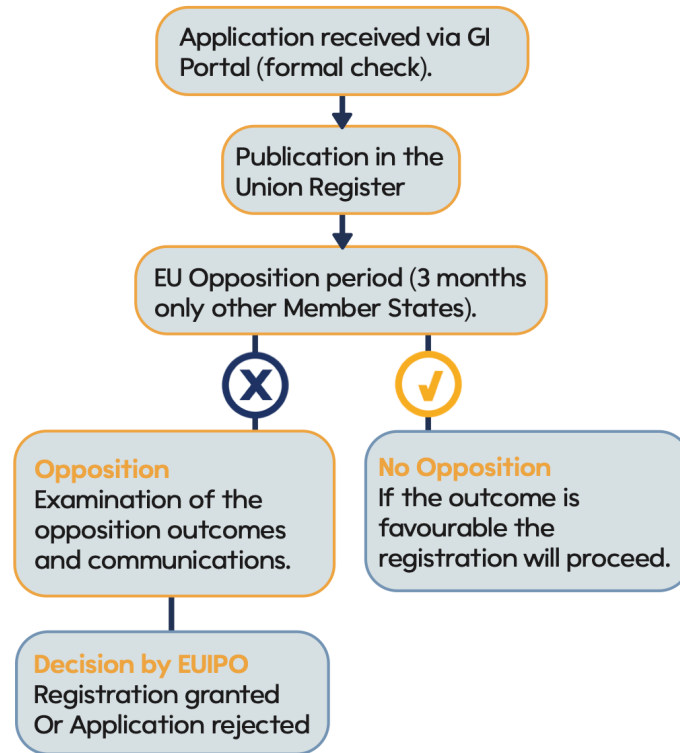
### STEP 5 Advisory Board Involvement

During both examination and opposition, the EUIPO's **GI Division** may consult the Advisory Board to support the decision-making process.

### STEP 6 Monetization and Free Access Options

It should be noted that, within this procedure, there is a possibility to lodge an appeal. Any party adversely affected by a decision of the Office has the right to appeal before the Boards of Appeal. Appeals must be filed in writing within two months of the publication of the contested decision and become effective only upon payment of the appeal fee. The appeal has suspensive effect, and the Boards of Appeal will examine both its admissibility and its merits. They may either exercise the powers of the GI Division that issued the contested decision or remit the case back to it, and they may also seek advice from the Consultative Body or offer alternative dispute resolution tools, such as mediation. Decisions of the Boards of Appeal may themselves be challenged before the General Court within two months, on grounds such as infringement of an essential procedural requirement, infringement of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, infringement of this Regulation or of any rule of law relating to its application, or of misuse of power.

## EU Phase



### 2.3.2. Direct Procedure

The Regulation provides for a direct procedure applicable to certain Member States, namely Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, and Sweden. This alternative route allows these countries to submit applications directly to the EUIPO. The mechanism was introduced in recognition of the fact that not all Member States were in a position to establish the necessary national authorities or procedures to handle the initial stage of the process. Member States were invited to indicate whether they were able to implement a national phase, and these seven countries reported that they could not. Consequently, for these jurisdictions, applications are submitted directly to the EUIPO.

Having said the above, in exceptional circumstances, the European Commission may itself assume competence over an application. This occurs when the registration or refusal of a GI is deemed capable of affecting public order, trade, or the Union's external relations. In such cases, the Commission becomes the decision-making authority, ensuring that broader political or economic considerations are taken into account.

#### Application process

Applications under this direct procedure will be submitted electronically through the **GIportal**, which will be available from **December 1, 2025**.

It is important to note that the same provisions governing the standard procedure, examination, publication, opposition, and registration, apply *mutatis mutandis* in the direct procedure. However, certain specific features of the direct procedure should be noted:

1. **First**, unlike the standard procedure, the EUIPO communicates not only with the applicant but also with the single contact point designated by the relevant Member State. This coordination ensures proper oversight and facilitates the exchange of technical information throughout the process.

2. **Second**, Member States are required to provide assistance to the EUIPO, particularly in relation to the examination of direct requests. Such assistance must be provided within two months of the Office’s request, through the designated single contact point. At the Member State’s request, this period may be extended by an additional two months. The assistance may include verifying data, reviewing technical elements of the file, or responding to specific queries raised by the EUIPO. If the required assistance is not provided within the prescribed timeframe, the procedure will be suspended for up to six months. Should the difficulties persist, the EUIPO’s GI Division may seek the advice of the Advisory Board before issuing a final decision.
3. **Third**, it should be noted that, unlike in the standard procedure, national opponents may participate in this direct process.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the direct procedure is reserved exclusively for applications concerning products originating in the EU. It cannot be used for geographical indications from third countries, which must follow a different route.

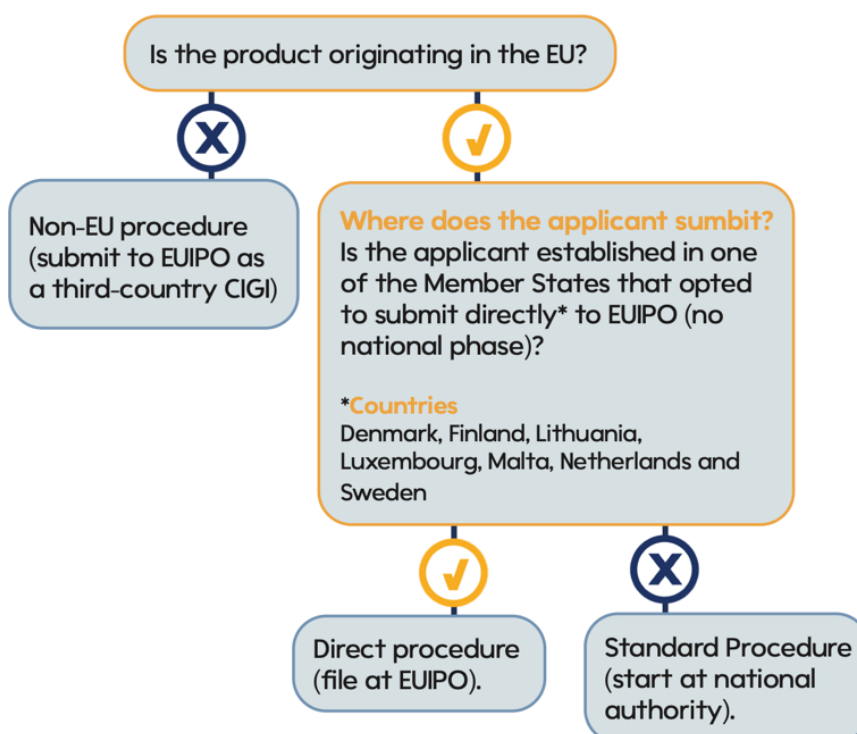
### 2.3.3. Third Countries Procedure

When a CIGI relates to a product that originates outside the European Union, there is a specific EU procedure. Such an application is filed with the EUIPO either directly by the applicant (producer or rights-holder) or by the competent authority of the third country, depending on that country’s national law.

The EU procedure for third-country CIGIs requires the submission of the same core technical documents as previously mentioned procedures, plus legal proof that the name is protected in the country of origin. The EUIPO may request further information from relevant national authorities or from the applicant/third-country authority during examination.

#### Which registration procedure fits your case? — Decision flow and quick guide

Below is a concise decision schema you can use to determine which GI registration route is appropriate for a given product and applicant. Start at **1** and follow the questions.



## 2.3. What should I submit?

To obtain protection for a CIGI, applicants must submit a complete set of documents that clearly define the product, establish its geographical link, and demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Regulation. These documents form the legal and technical foundation of the application.

At the procedural level, the majority of the applications are submitted through the **GI Portal**, an electronic system managed by the EUIPO. This portal provides a structured web form that guides applicants through the process, ensuring that all required information is presented in a coherent manner. Later sections of this guide will provide more detail on how the GI Portal operates, as well as other resources available to support applicants.

The documentation package typically consists of three main components: the **Product Specification**, the **Single Document**, and **Other Supporting Documentation** that may be required:

- **Product Specification:** the core document setting out all the requirements for protection.
- **Single Document:** a summary of the product specification prepared in a standardised format.
- **Other Supporting Documents:** e.g. proof of the applicant's legitimacy, additional certifications, or relevant evidence.

For further clarification, please refer to the below document descriptions, which outline the contents of each document.

### The Product Specification

The product specification is the central element of any CIGI application. It defines the rules that the product must meet in order to qualify for protection, and once approved, it becomes binding for all producers within the defined geographical area. The specification must be drafted in clear, objective, and non-discriminatory terms, and it should set out precisely which stages of production occur within the defined area.

The content of the product specification must cover the following elements:

- **Product name:** The designation under which the product is marketed. This may be a geographical name or another commonly used designation. Only names expressed in words may be registered; logos, figurative signs, or graphic elements are excluded. The product specification must also include the name to be protected as a CIGI and the type of product.
- **Product description:** A concise but sufficiently detailed description of the product, highlighting its essential characteristics and, where relevant, the raw materials used. The product specification must provide evidence that the product originates in the defined geographical area, including the production steps, and a description of the production methods, including traditional methods and practices where applicable.
- **Geographical area:** A clear and precise definition of the territory of origin, supported by a map when appropriate.
- **Description of the link:** A decisive section of the specification, explaining the causal relationship between the product's quality, reputation, or other specific characteristics and its geographical origin.
- **Factors involved:** The link may be justified by natural factors (e.g. raw materials, environmental conditions, or climate) and/or human factors (e.g. traditional craftsmanship, specific production methods, or technical know-how).

- **Additional elements required in the product specification:**

- Information on packaging, if packaging must occur within the defined geographical area, accompanied by a justification.
- Specific labelling rules for the product.
- An indication of any production steps carried out in other Member States or third countries, together with verification provisions.
- Any other requirements established by Member States or producer groups, provided they are objective, non-discriminatory, and compatible with EU and national law.

It is important to underline that once a CIGI is registered, **any producer who complies with the specification will be entitled to use the protected name.**

## The Single Document

The single document is a summary of the product specification. It is intended to make the essential features of the product and its link to the geographical area easily accessible to the public and to potential opponents. The single document must include:

- The name to be protected as a geographical indication;
- The type of product concerned;
- A description of the product, including, where applicable, information on packaging and labelling;
- A concise definition of the geographical area;
- A summary of the link between the product and the geographical area, including specific elements of the product description or production method that justify the link.

## Supporting Documentation

In addition to the specification and single document, applicants must also provide supporting documentation. This includes:

- The name and contact details of the applicant;
- The name and contact details of the competent authority and, where relevant, the designated certification body or independent verifier of compliance with the specification;
- Information on any proposed restrictions on the use or protection of the CIGI, as well as transitional measures, particularly those resulting from the national examination or opposition process;
- Any additional information considered relevant by the applicant or the Member State.

## Direct Applications

In the case of applications submitted directly to the EUIPO, whether from Member States that do not have a national phase or from third countries, the same core documentation must be provided. However, additional evidence may be required, such as proof of protection of the CIGI in the country of origin, or confirmation of the applicant's mandate where the application is filed by a public body or competent authority.

## GI Portal- Filing Platform

The **GI Portal** is the official online platform developed by the EUIPO for the registration of geographical indications for craft and industrial products. It provides a harmonised and user-friendly interface that guides applicants step by step through the preparation and submission of their applications, ensuring that all required information and documents are correctly presented.

The portal may be used by applicants from Member States that do not have a national phase, by applicants from third countries, and by applicants from Member States with a national phase who choose to rely on the portal as part of their national procedure. However, Member States that maintain their own national phase may also allow applications to be submitted directly to their competent authorities, with the portal serving as an information point to indicate where such applications should be addressed.

The GI Portal will become fully operational on **1 December 2025**, coinciding with the entry into application of the new EU framework on CIGIs.

### Practical Aspects of the Application

The following practical tips should be taken into account when submitting applications for CIGIs online through the GI Portal, the electronic platform developed by the EUIPO.

- The applicant completes a **web form** with basic details (such as the product name, applicant information, and contact details).
- As part of the process, the system generates the **product specification** and the **single document**, based on the information entered into the form.
- The applicant must carefully ensure that the data provided in the online form corresponds to the requirements of the Regulation, as the content submitted through GI Portal becomes the official application dossier.
- Additional supporting documentation (such as proof of legitimacy or compliance arrangements) can also be uploaded directly within the platform.

This practical approach allows applicants to prepare their files step by step, while the portal itself assembles the official documents required for submission.

#### Checklist- GI Application

Before submitting your application through **GI Portal**, make sure you have:

1. Access the official **GI Portal of the EUIPO**.
2. Complete all required fields in the online form as they appear.
3. If in doubt, consult the relevant official authorities or competent bodies.
4. Collect and upload any **supporting documents** (if necessary).
5. Verify that the description of the link between the product and the geographical area is **clear, detailed, and well justified**.

## Case Study: Belgium (Walloon Region<sup>1</sup>)

Some EU Member States have developed **national or regional systems** to protect craft and industrial geographical indications (CIs) before the entry into force of the new EU framework. For example, Belgium, specifically the Walloon Region, has enacted a *sui generis* system since 1989 to safeguard products closely tied to regional identity.

The Walloon system provides:

- A **quality label** certifying that a product manufactured in Wallonia meets specific established standards.
- A **local designation of origin** for products whose qualities or characteristics are essentially attributable to a geographical environment in Wallonia.
- A **Walloon designation of origin**, ensuring that a product is indeed produced or processed in the region.

Once a product receives recognition under this system, it becomes enforceable nationwide and published in the *Moniteur belge* (Belgian Official Gazette). Protection is valid for 10 years and can be renewed.

### Transition Procedure

While national systems like the Walloon model have been valuable for safeguarding regional interests, these protections will cease to have effect at EU level once the new Regulation on CIGIs becomes fully applicable.

To manage this transition:

- **Member States with national protection systems** (e.g. Belgium) must submit a **list of established names** that are consolidated by long-standing use.
- These names will be eligible for a simple procedure at EU level to ensure continuity of protection.
- This transitional mechanism will remain available **until 2 December 2026**. After this date, only names registered under the EU system will enjoy protection across the Union.

<sup>1</sup> STUDY ON EU MEMBER STATES' POTENTIAL FOR PROTECTING CRAFT AND INDUSTRIAL GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS Catalogue number: TB-09-24-689-EN-N ISBN: 978-92-9156-362-3 DOI: 10.2814/764838 European Union Intellectual Property Office, 2024 [https://euipo.europa.eu/tunnel-web/secure/webdav/guest/document\\_library/observatory/documents/reports/2024\\_Protection\\_of\\_craft\\_and\\_industrial\\_GIs%20/2024\\_CIGI\\_%20Study\\_FullR\\_en.pdf](https://euipo.europa.eu/tunnel-web/secure/webdav/guest/document_library/observatory/documents/reports/2024_Protection_of_craft_and_industrial_GIs%20/2024_CIGI_%20Study_FullR_en.pdf)

## 3. Annex: Useful Resources

To support the new system of protection for craft and industrial geographical indications, the EUIPO manages several key databases and tools. Each serves a specific function and together they form the digital backbone of the GI framework.

### GI Portal – Filing Platform

The **GI Portal** is the official online gateway for submitting applications for the registration of craft and industrial GIs.

### Glview – Global Search Tool

**Glview** is an official EU database that integrates with the *eAmbrosia* system and provides access to a wide range of information on geographical indications (GIs). It includes:

- GIs registered directly in the EU.
- GIs from third countries that are protected in the EU through bilateral and multilateral agreements.
- EU GIs are protected in third countries under those same agreements.

In addition to registration data, Glview offers extended product information and serves as a useful tool for producers.

### GIRegister

From **1 December 2025**, the EUIPO will maintain a **dedicated Union Register** for craft and industrial GIs.

- This register will contain the names of all applied-for and registered craft and industrial products protected as GIs.
- It will be **publicly accessible online**, ensuring transparency and easy access for producers, authorities, and consumers alike.

### eAmbrosia

Another valuable resource is [eAmbrosia](#), the official public register of geographical indications within the European Union. The database was originally designed for agricultural products, wines and spirits. It provides direct access to information on all registered GIs, including the legal instruments granting protection and the corresponding product specifications.

**[info@impac3tip.eu](mailto:info@impac3tip.eu)**

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