

Geographical Indications in the EU

A study on reasons for uneven distribution and
Europeanisation aspects

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Abstract

Since 1992 the European Union has been granting certificates attesting the veracity and legitimacy of products in all of the EU. Such certificates are a symbol of the importance given by the European Union to the protection of regional products against falsifications of unique foodstuff products and the maintenance of good reputation of rural producers and rural areas.

There is, however, a great discrepancy in the number of accreditations of Geographical Indication protections and recognitions among different areas of the Union. This work dedicates itself to the understanding of why such difference and unevenness in distribution exists, going through historical, technical and sometimes institutional aspects of the European Union Geographical Indications system.

In order to do so, tools from Historical Institutionalism theory and Europeanisation theory are combined with Co-Variational Analysis (COV) and Causal-Process Tracing (CPT) in an effort to understand the reasons why such unevenness exists and what is the level of Europeanisation linked to the Geographical Indications scheme in the European Union.

Key words: geographical, indications, european, union, europeanisation

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List of abbreviations

- AOC** – Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée
- CAP** – Common Agricultural Policy
- CJ** – Critical Junctions
- CJEU** – Court of Justice of the European Union
- COV** – Co-Variational Analysis
- CPT** – Causal-Process Tracing
- CVRVV** – Comissão de Viticultura da Região dos Vinhos Verdes
- DG AGRI** – Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development
- DOC** – Denominazione di Origine Controllata
- EEC** – European Economic Community
- EP** – European Parliament
- EU** – European Union
- GATT** – General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
- GI** – Geographical Indications
- HI** – Historical Institutionalism
- INAO** – Institut National des Appellations d’Origine
- IP** – Intellectual Property
- MEP** – Member of the European Parliament
- MS** – Member States
- OLP** – Ordinary Legislative Procedure
- PDO** – Protected Designation of Origin
- PGI** – Protected Geographical Indication
- TRIPS** – Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
- UN** – United Nations
- WIPO** – World Intellectual Property Organisation
- WTO** – World Trade Organisation

1 Introduction

Whenever a person walks into a cheese or cured meats section in the supermarket in any country of the European Union (EU), that person will most likely be overwhelmed by the different options of brands, types and varieties of produce available on the aisles. Tradition on relying on specific brands or producers might help consumers on choosing their preferred goods, but there are also a few other factors that might swing one's choice to one or another product.

Those reasons meet a spot that sometimes one doesn't stop to think about immediately when making a purchase, but it is arguably becoming more and more important as a deciding factor: the origin - and the confirmation of such origin - of the product. All coming down to the actual name of the product being sold.

Since 1992 the European Union has granted a few different certificates for foodstuff goods all across the Union and beyond (European Union, 1992). The most well-known ones, the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and the Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) are symbols that slowly but surely are taking over the supermarket aisles of the entire European Union with their red, yellow and blue stamps in an attempt to not only attest to the origin of some products, but also to their quality and production technique standards.

It is also true that there are some previous registers for Geographical Indications (GI) in the EU dating back to the 1970s, but those were only regarding wine and, more specifically, to the recognition of national legislation from Member States who already had a national scheme for registering and validating a geographical indication for purposes of sales within the Union. A truly European and unique system for geographical indications comprehending wine, spirits and similar products would only be fully introduced and enforced on the 2012 update of the EU Geographical Indications Regulation update (European Union, 2012).

It is not a secret to anyone that the EU is a very unique and specific system for political and societal organisation. So intricate at times that it becomes difficult to define what it even is. To determine whether it is a nation, an international organisation, an

economic union or a sum of all this is not an easy task, and the answer could span through all of those options. Apart from these considerations, which are important in defining what the EU is and how decisions are taken into effect throughout the Union, there is one area of integration in the EU that has not been researched or looked into in too much detail over the years. That area is the one comprehended by the Geographical Indications schemes and mechanisms of the EU.

1.1 - Geographical Indications - a background

This system of geographical indications and appellations of origin is not an original idea or concept from the European Union or Brussels bureaucrats. Said mechanism comes from a fairly old custom that could be traced back by decades, and sometimes for over a century, in countries such as France (INAO, 2020).

When it comes to French wine, for instance, there are a myriad of different kinds of wine that have become iconic as time has passed but one stands out: champagne. Let's use the case of Champagne and its great recognition to illustrate why the usage of the name of a region attributed to a specific product has become such an important concept for producers of foodstuff.

In order to be called champagne, white sparkling wine needs to be produced in the Champagne region of France following strict guidelines that even include the harvesting period of the grapes and how and when the grapes are to be picked from the grapevines. The same could be applied to well-known cheeses, such as Parmigiano Reggiano, Grana Padano, Gorgonzola (Italy), Brie de Meaux, Roquefort, Camembert (France), Feta (Greece), Serra da Estrela (Portugal), Manchego (Spain) and hundreds of other food-related products including fish, grains, cured meats of all sorts, olive oil, and so on and so forth.

The GI scheme that has been in place in the European Union since 1992 was based upon national GI schemes and laws from different countries that compose the European Union, notably the French *Appellation d'origine contrôlée* (AOC) (INAO, 2020). This set of laws were introduced in France in an effort to prevent the selling of falsely named products which were poorer in quality and cheaper for the buyers, often intentionally deceiving the consumer in regards to the goods being commercialised. In the 1992 GI

regulation from the European Commission, this was one of the main concerns leading to the introduction of PDOs and PGIs in Europe.

Another important document that has been linked to the current definition of what Geographical Indications are is the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), from the World Trade Organisation (WTO, 1995). This document was discussed within the context of the Uruguay round of negotiations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which ran from 1986 to 1993.

According to the timeline, the TRIPS agreement was being discussed around the same time as the European GI Scheme was. The European scheme, however, was already in full working order since 1992 when the TRIPS agreement finally entered into force in 1995. The European legislation from 1992 defined geographical indications in the following way:

“(b) geographical indication: means the name of a region, a specific place or, in exceptional cases, a country, used to describe an agricultural product or a foodstuff:

- originating in that region, specific place or country, and
- which possesses a specific quality, reputation or other characteristics attributable to that geographical origin and the production and/or processing and/or preparation of which take place in the defined geographical area.”

(Council of the European Communities, 1992)

The influence of the European definition of GI over the document put together by the WTO Uruguay round is quite clear, especially on article 22 of the TRIPS agreement. On said article, it is possible to find the following definition of what a geographical indication is, in a clear nod to its European counterpart:

“1. Geographical indications are, for the purposes of this Agreement, indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a Member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin.”

(WTO, 1995)

It is important to stress that while the European GI scheme is primarily relevant to member states of the EU, the TRIPS agreement is valid to all countries and institutions that are members of the WTO. As of 2020, the number of members of the WTO is 164 (WTO, 2020).

For the reasons assembled on both the European GI provisions and the TRIPS agreement - not to mention the French AOC -, only real champagne can be called champagne. Everything else resembling the well-known beverage should be called white sparkling wine. Parma ham can only be called as such if it comes from Parma. Feta cheese (from Greece), Swedish *Kalix Löjrom* (a variety of caviar produced in the north of Sweden), and countless other products that have been granted PDO status, if sold under these names, are guaranteed to be genuine products, no matter where someone buys them.

1. 1. 1 - The French *Appellation d'origine contrôlée* (AOC)

The historical analysis of the development of the GI concept in France, from its inception in the late 19th century to the current state of affairs is somehow different and with different purposes to how GI would be introduced to the EU in the latter half of the 20th century.

In France it all began with champagne. In the latter half of the 1800s, the French wine producing region was badly hit by a phylloxera infestation that killed nearly all of its vines. It was an enormous catastrophe that nearly put to an end the production of wine in the region. In order to fight the infestation and save the vines, the local producers got together and set up a cooperative (the *Association Viticole Champenoise*) which's aim was to preserve the plants, do research on protection methods, and on different techniques of cultivation. Even though the producers were successful, the cultivated area would suffer again during the First World War (1914-1919). By 1919 the remaining cultivated area had dropped from 60,000 hectares to 12,000 (Comité Champagne, 2020).

The association legally battled to retain primacy on the usage of the term champagne to define its beverages because other producers, taking advantage of the shortage of wine caused by the phylloxera infestation in the region started to sell their products as though they were from Champagne. In 1891 the name was protected under the Treaty of Madrid and the region of Champagne was delimited by a law from 22 July 1927 which also established quality standards on the production of the champagne beverage itself (Ibid).

From the champagne case and the different laws passed because of it in France, spanning from the 1891 Treaty of Madrid, to the Versailles Treaty (1919), to national laws defining the Champagne wine producing region and the standards of production of the wine a new concept was idealised in France: An association that would attest to all those aspects in other wine producing regions of France (Comité Champagne, 2020).

In 1935 the *Institut National des Appellations d'Origine* (INAO), now known as the *Institut National de l'Origine et de la Qualité*, which is France's organisation responsible for the granting of AOC status certifications to all beverages made in France was created and it is to this day the organisation responsible for accrediting products with AOC status (for wine and beverages), *Label Rouge* (for foodstuff and flowers excluding beverages), and *Agriculture Biologique* (for organic products). The INAO also recognises the validity and usage of all PDO/PGI products in France (INAO, 2020).

In detail, it is interesting to realise that the French AOC originally was designed to deal only with alcoholic beverages, in contrast with the original EU quality scheme introduced in 1992 that would deal with all foodstuff but alcoholic beverages, leaving Member States with sole authority on those (European Union, 1992).

1.1.2 - The European Quality Scheme

When the EU decided to introduce its quality scheme, the AOC was clearly its greatest inspiration. The French system had already established the ways on which a region could register its name and associate it to a product for a few decades. Product names like Champagne, Burgundy, Côte-du-Rhône, Mâcon, and so many others were instantly linked to exclusive, top-tier produce.

Italians, following the success of their neighbour's initiative, came up with their own designations of origin legislation in the 1960s, the *Denominazione di Origine Controllata* (DOC), and other European countries such as Portugal and Spain did the same. But only with the EU GI certifications in the 1990s would all products that are non-alcoholic have protection in the entirety of the Union, expanding the number of certified products tremendously, in a number that continues to grow to this day as this work is being carried out.

The differences among EU countries begin to show when analysing the distribution of the GI certificates through different regions of the EU. Countries that already enjoyed a more advanced use of national-level certifications have enormous

numbers of registered products in contrast to those who didn't have the custom of doing so before its introduction by the EU in 1992.

Historical Institutionalism (HI) is the perfect tool to analyse the reasons behind the discrepancies present in the numbers that we can assess. It allows the researcher to go through the development of each national legislation and then compare it to the broader European mechanism currently put into place, showcasing how different mechanisms and traditions have helped shape the standard rules and the current distribution of EU GI recognitions as of today

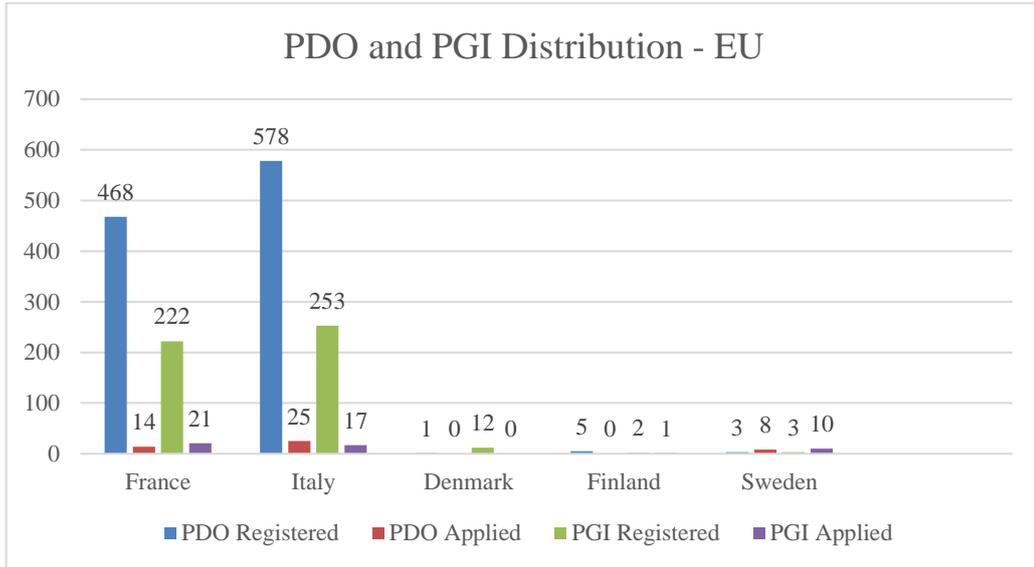
The guarantees brought by the usage of the European Union Geographical Indications mechanism are, thus, perceived as a quality attester by the people who are on the receiving point of the commodity chain. This is true for the national mechanisms used elsewhere as well.

Several upsides can be traced and analysed due to the use of the GI mechanisms throughout the EU. Such upsides could be the guarantee that one is buying exactly what was intended on the first place, could be the attested quality given by the combination of the location of production, and also the expertise and tradition put into the manufacturing process by producers and regions that have mastered the art of making specific products throughout the years. Funnily enough, there is great unevenness in the distribution of PDO and PGI certifications across Europe.

While countries from what is commonly referred to as Southern Europe, including France and Italy, have vastly made use of the EU GI scheme, countries in Scandinavia, for comparison, have barely made use of such attributes. Italy and France alone in November 2020 have 1598 PDO and PGI registered products contrasting to 45 from Sweden, Denmark and Finland combined (European Union, 2020).

This discrepancy is extremely noticeable and difficult to understand at first glance, but there are different traditions followed by different countries in the EU when it comes to attesting to the quality and region of origin of their products. Sometimes attesting to the region of production is not even an area of concern, leaving all scrutiny regarding quality of products to extremely subjective factors such as personal preference (Sparf, 2010, p. 35).

Graph 1: PDO and PGI distribution in the EU



Source: European Union, 2020

In the European Union, another aspect that should be taken into consideration is the effect that a provision such as the GI schemes have on the acclimatisation of some Member States to the practises that sometimes are more current and common on other Member States. Such process is called Europeanisation, that is, the process of being influenced as a Member State or potential Member State by practises and all institutional arrangements provided by the EU (Jones et al. 2012, p. 825). Over time, countries should be more used to European practises, and that includes the usage of GI registers, recognitions, and certifications overall.

Through the theoretical framework provided by Historical Institutionalism (Fioretos et al. 2016) it will be possible to understand why such uneven distribution exists throughout the European Union. This theory will be used to break down the introduction of the GI scheme in 1992, its latest update in 2014 and, most importantly, its inception based on the national legislation for geographical indications and appellations of origin mainly in France and Italy with contributions from considerations of international organisations on intellectual property and naming rights such as the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the TRIPS agreement.

The introduction and maintenance of the GI scheme in the EU since the early 1990s has come not only to differentiate products available for purchase, but also to cement market integration aspects in the European Single Market when it comes to fair trade. In addition, the usage of GI labels on produce has made it possible for countries to fight in the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) whenever products are being

sold under misleading names or false attributes, in an effort to reverse damages inflicted by the untrue usage of protected GI on different foodstuff products.

Whenever buying a bottle of champagne and a block of parmigiano reggiano for a dinner party, ask yourself why to make that choice. It could have been because both terms champagne and parmigiano reggiano instantly equal to quality. Somewhere in the bottle label and on the packaging for the cheese the PDO or PGI emblem will also be visible, attesting the EU's concern with fair trade of goods within the single market and also to standards of quality for its products.

1.2 - Research Questions

This piece of work will cover the development of the GI scheme in the EU as an evolution of the already established mechanisms already available from Member States of the Union, mainly the French system, in an effort to enhance the structures of the EU Single Market and also the free trade and competition conditions of the block. All this in an effort to answer the following research questions:

- **Why is it that there is great unevenness in the distribution of products with protected Geographical Indications throughout Member States of the Union?**
- **Are the GI schemes a form of Europeanisation?**

For the first question of this research, regarding the uneven distribution of the GI recognitions and protection across the EU, a few considerations should be made beforehand regarding possible answers and also on the choices behind the cases that will be looked into in the text.

When it comes to the regions of Europe that are going to be looked at, the natural choice for purposes of comparison were regions on which the dependent variables (effects) were on polar opposites. As such, southern European countries such as Italy and France were the chosen ones to make a poignant contrast with the Nordic EU countries (Denmark, Finland and Sweden), which showcase some of the lowest numbers of GI recognitions in the whole of the EU.

The clear discrepancy on the numbers of GI recognitions available are due to independent variables (causes) and control variables that are further going to be discussed in detail, but those include the availability of previous national schemes of GI recognition before the 1992 EU regulation, the agricultural tradition of each of those nations, the

availability of products that would fit the criteria to be considered for GI protection, and EU membership. This will be done through the comparison methods provided by Co-Variational Analysis (COV).

As for the second proposed question, regarding the process of the development of the levels of usage of the GI schemes by countries joining the EU without a proper previous national system for the protection of Geographical Indications, what will be looked at is whether or not being acquainted to the European norms and concepts regarding GI leads to an increase of certifications over time.

It is believed by the results that will be discussed throughout the text that while the usage of the GI certificates can, indeed, be understood as a form of Europeanisation, it is to be understood solely as being influenced by a European praxis that at first needs to be understood and recognised by the new MS introduced to a practise until then unknown to both producers and consumers of foodstuff. After all, if nobody is aware of what Geographical Indications are, it makes absolutely no difference if, for instance, a local cheese is protected or not.

The process of Europeanisation of the EU GI scheme is a path that has to be crossed by both the EU Agricultural officials and MS of the EU in order to be successful. And the way on which both parties of this matter work is what will be looked at through the tools provided by the Causal-Process Tracing methodological approach. Through it the case of Sweden will mainly be looked upon. The choice of Sweden was made not only due to the fact that this researcher currently lives in Sweden and has access to its local market of foodstuff to be inspired by but mostly because in the year of 2020 a surge in applications for GI protections occurred. In 2020 alone Sweden filed protection applications for 10 different products, 7 PGI and 3 PDO.

It could be that Sweden has entered a phase of Europeanisation that will result in more and more products being protected from now on. Should that be the case, which is to be seen in the future, then the Europeanisation case for Swedish foodstuff products could be considered a very successful one.

The purpose of this line of research question is to initiate a debate on the effects of the GI scheme, in light of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the EU, on the importance given to the protection of regional products in the institutionalisation of this particular area of the European Single Market dedicated to the commercialisation of foodstuff.

In this study a point will be made favouring the idea that the more MS countries use the mechanisms made available by the EU, the more institutionalised the protection system becomes, making the protection of regional products not only a way of acknowledging quality and authenticity of products, but also of ensuring that the system is well-known and recognisable across the entirety of the EU. In other words, should the EU be able to correct the uneven distribution of its GI certificates, a surge in Europeanisation levels should follow with the standardisation of the usage of protections being applied in the whole of the EU.

1.2.1 - Limitations to the research project

The proposed research area has, so far, not been looked into in depth by researchers of European Politics or Integration. The foodstuff and agricultural produce area are not typically considered as a go-to area for political scientists. There are other areas, related to security or other hard-politics subjects that understandably are more attractive to researchers as a whole.

I would argue nevertheless that the Geographical Indications schemes and all its historical connotations are of interest not only for political scientists, but for citizens across the EU as a whole because such area is integral to not only the obvious and direct realm of food, but also to standardisation of norms in the EU Single Market.

The lack of a vast arsenal of written analysis on this topic puts me as a researcher in a difficult but also privileged position when deciding what focus to give my research topic. I have worked towards building an analysis that will benefit future researchers on trying to continue such analysis from this time on, perhaps even expand it to different prisms and areas of interest related to the Geographical Indications concept, pinpointing some potential topics for development of this work.

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has also played its part on the limitations to this project. In an ideal landscape, in loco visits and interviews to different producers of different foodstuff would have taken place in an effort to build an even more personal and close relationship to the data gathered for this research. Alternate methods were applied in order to come up with sufficient data and inspiration.

2 Theoretical Framework

The two research questions selected for this work are related and sometimes the answer to them rely on concepts that can be drawn from the following two theoretical frameworks. Even though Historical Institutionalism might be the best tool to explain the first question, that doesn't mean that Europeanisation doesn't play its part in the explanation. The same thinking process applies to the second question proposed. On the following pages I make the case for why such theories are best suited for this research effort.

2.1 - Historical Institutionalism

History has, in many ways, always shaped political decisions from leaders in all countries. There are different ways, however, to how it is that history has made its way into the political sphere. Sometimes, historical events are so striking that they are unequivocally unmissable for the decisions that need to be taken. Moments like the attack on Pearl Harbour (1941), the Atomic Bombs in Japan (1945), the death of an incumbent political leader, the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989), and many others are moments to grave to be missed from political debate. Those moments, precise in time and easily identifiable with lasting consequences, are named Critical Junctures (CJ) (Fioretos et al. 2016, p. 77).

The concept of Geographical Indications is not, however, suitable for the CJ approach. The process of establishing the current EU scheme did not come from one specific event or occurrence in time. It is not related to a big shock in the world of naming rights or a big scandal. The evolution of the EU GI scheme was slow and very comprehensive, taking previously settled GI mechanisms already in use in countries of the Union such as France as a starting point. This is where the framework brought by Historical Institutionalism comes into play.

Historical Institutionalism, just as the name suggests, is a theoretical landscape on which “temporal processes and events influence the origin and transformation of

institutions that govern political and economic relations” (Fioretos et al. 2016, p. 3). Applied to the context of the European Union’s GI scheme, this theory can be used to understand a lot of how the mechanism came to be a reality in the EU itself, after having been not only a reality but also a norm in countries such as France and Italy for decades before it was even considered to become an EU level policy.

The contributions of HI on this matter can only increase once it is understood how much significance it gives to historical facts when considering institutional developments as a whole. For the purposes of this work, which is extremely empirical and based on one specific policy area of the EU, other theoretical models would hardly be applicable. This work does not have the ambition to have results that would be transplanted to other policy areas of the EU, and this is a luxury that Historical Institutionalism can afford to have. Historical Institutionalists, in contrast to other political scientists, including other institutionalists, are focused on specific cases and on their explanations, not on predictions (Della Porta & Keating, 2013).

This fact will be of extreme importance as we go along the historical tracing of the systems used by the European Union as their basis when designing its own Geographical Indications system. The contributions of the AOC, the Treaty of Madrid (1891), the Treaty of Versailles (1919), WIPO, the TRIPS Agreement and several other national European legislations when it comes to GI are to be seen as formative to the current state of affairs in the EU GI Scheme.

Another area on which Historical Institutionalism can be fully applied to on this theme is the notion that the GI scheme has come to further enhance the internal market of the EU, by making sure that the usage of the EU certifications harmonises categories and statuses that otherwise, if left only to national MS legislation, could at times be considered as obstacles to a fully functional internal market. CJEU cases over the years that challenged the selling of products in the EU under specific names protected by national laws are plenty, and the usage of a GI certificate has already been used as the answer to settling disputes of the kind, as notable cases such as the joined cases C-465/02 and C-466/02, disputing the sales of cheese produced outside of Greece under the denomination of feta (CJEU, 2002), can vouch for.

Historical Institutionalism will, therefore, be the basis for the understanding of the current institutional landscape on GI in the EU, spanning from its inception in 1992 based on previously available protection systems from individual Member States to the current state of the mechanism, going through the 2014 enlargement that included alcoholic

beverages and spirits to the pool of foodstuff products that can enjoy regional protection in the EU.

2.2 – Europeanisation

Europeanisation is a concept that is quite straightforward to explain once one comes across the term itself. In a nutshell, Europeanisation means getting accustomed and familiar with practises and habits of the European Union. It is the measurement of the impact that the EU has on different topics to different nations, being those MS of the EU or not (Jones et al. 2012, p. 825).

One of the interesting aspects of the study of Europeanisation which completely falls within the scope of this research is the idea that the domestic impact of EU concepts is great within nations both within or outside of the EU. (Jones et al. 2012, p. 825). For the countries within the EU that did not have a previous GI scheme in place, the 1992 and 2014 frameworks provided for foodstuff and alcoholic beverages are a perfect way to envisage how the domestic policies of such countries are influenced and affected by the EU norms.

Whenever a specific regional product begins its journey towards being protected in the EU, one of the very first steps to recognition is the establishment of national authorities and monitoring agencies that will be able to attest the quality of the product, the adequacies to production standards, and will also be responsible for filing the application for protection of GI to the EU officials. This is only one of the aspects of Europeanisation that can be traced within the realm of GI.

Once again, we come into the concept of the impact of EU legislation and norms in different nations, being those MS of the EU or not. The GI scheme, prior to being a form of quality measurement and intellectual property, is also an official policy area of the Common Agricultural Policy of the EU to which Member States of the EU have to abide by, in a clear nod to a Europeanisation process.

The Europeanisation process is not to be taken simply as a matter that either happens or not. That would be a simplistic approach to it. More interesting than assessing if it happened or not is to understand how it happened, and literature available usually classifies Europeanisation in three different ways: a continuation from inertia, absorption or transformation (Sedelmeier 2012, p. 827). Inertia assumes that there was a starting

point to the Europeanisation process. Absorption means that the new concepts and practises were adopted by nations but did not inflict greater institutional change or development in a domestic level, whereas transformation is the form of Europeanization that really stands out. It is through transformation that some of the EU new concepts and habits become effective after causing some real changes domestically in the nations that are affected by Europeanisation.

Another aspect that needs to be considered when thinking of Europeanisation is the fact that countries that are applying for EU membership must abide by some rules in order to join the bloc. Those rules include stable institutions protecting democratic principles, the rule of law, human rights, respect and protection of minorities and also having a free and competitive market. Not to mention having the ability to comply and enforce all of the above. Those are the criteria set for countries that envision EU membership, the so-known Copenhagen Criteria (European Council, 1993). Having to comply with those agreements and practises of the EU is another clear sign of Europeanisation.

In fact, one could even say that in here there are clear examples of inertia and transformation. Transformation because if those countries are not in conformity with those criteria, they need to put forward domestic reforms that make it so; inertia because it is a process that should be continuous and not simply a measure for the sole purpose of EU accession. Being able to conform to those criteria continuously, along with all other treaties and pieces of legislation that make the EU what it is something known as the *acquis communautaire*. The GI scheme, and all of the free market and single market configurations entailed to it are empirical examples of not only Europeanisation, but also of the *acquis communautaire* of nations in the EU.

Europeanisation is a theory/research area that can be applied to concepts regarding both actors who are trying to gain access to the EU, and to concepts of the EU that are eventually assimilated by different MS. In the case of the EU GI scheme, it touches both new nations in the Union and nations within the Union that did not have a proper mechanism for the protection of regional products. The way on which different nations within the EU enjoy those possibilities is the purpose of understanding Europeanisation within the scope of this work.

3 Methodology

There is plenty to be said about the methodological choices made for this study on the Geographical Indications scheme of the European Union. For this study, two main methodological approaches were used and will be discussed in further detail on this chapter. Those are the Co-Variational Analysis and the Causal-Process Tracing approaches. Both are small-N research mechanisms that fit well into the topic being discussed in the text. Another methodological approach that was approached, even if to a lesser extent, was the use of interviews. Those were not fundamental to the research or analysis, but were useful in order to get an idea of how the people involved with the GI world deal with such issues on a daily basis.

3.1 - Co-Variational Analysis (COV)

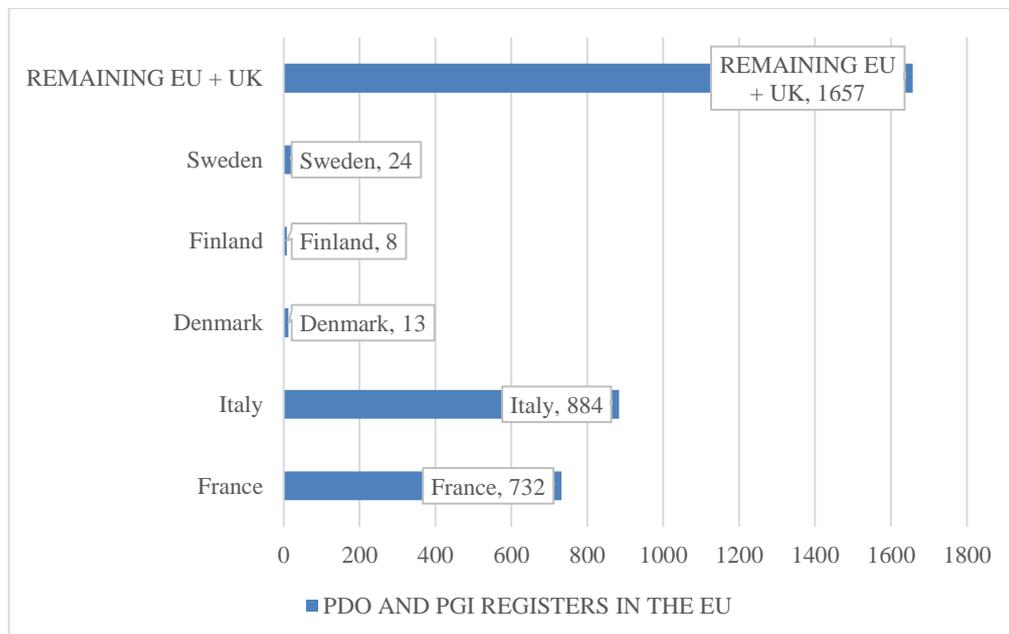
The research field presented by the European Union Geographical Indications scheme is vastly understudied by political scientists, especially when it comes to topics related to the integration of different countries' regional products to the single marker of the EU and the distribution of the protections covering different areas of the Union.

In order to understand, as the first question to the thesis suggests, that there is great unevenness in the distribution of products with protected Geographical Indications throughout Member States of the Union, the most adequate choice is through comparing areas on which the usage of the GI scheme is overwhelmingly used in contrast to those areas on which it is used to a much smaller extent.

Such areas are striking because of the great difference in the numbers of GI protections and are very easy to recognise once one looks at some of the data available from the official EU portals and journals. For the purposes of this research, the region of the EU for the analysis of a successful case for GI certifications is the one composed mainly by two countries: France and Italy. With data last collected in December 2020, out of a total universe of 3316 PDO and PGI products in the whole of the EU, France and

Italy alone are responsible for 1616 (48,73%), nearly half of all the registers available. On the other hand, the EU Nordic Countries (Denmark, Finland, and Sweden) combined have 45 PDO and PGI entries (1,35%) (European Union, 2020).

Graph 2: Distribution of PDO and PGI registers in the EU



Source: European Union, 2020

These two areas of the EU, the area comprising both Italy and France and the area comprehended by the Nordic EU countries, are two very specific ones. And the case study for this research shall mention those two areas only. For this, a small-N research mechanism is the most appropriate one. Through COV, the study of few specific and specialized cases allows for a more multidimensional approach to the research questions and to their answers in a way that a large-N study would not (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 34).

The use of COV also allows for a historical approach on the development itself of the GI scheme in the EU, spanning from its inception in national schemes in France to the development of the EU system as it is. In fact, the mere existence or not of a previous GI scheme in the countries chosen for this analysis is going to be one of the two independent variables (causes) for the dependent variable (effect) of the first research question proposed.

Which brings us to an important consideration regarding the choice of COV for this study. As pointed by Blatter & Haverland, “[...] in the COV approach, cases are

selected based on the score of the independent variable and not based on the score of the dependent variable.” (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 43). That is because the outcome (dependent variable) is already on the question itself. In this case it is the great unevenness of the distribution of the GI registers across the EU, the discrepancy of the numbers that can be traced. That is not the interest of the researcher for it is a reality already given. Much more interesting is how it got to the current state. And for that we need to go through the independent variables chosen for this study.

The independent variables, and also the control variables, have to be chosen with care and consideration because under COV it is understood that the outcome present would not be possible had it not been for the existence of such independent variables. The causal effect of the independent variables is essential in producing an outcome, and this should be verifiable by the empirical evidence gathered for the study (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 37).

Control variables are also important. They make sure that the environment on which the study is to be carried out is a possible one. It makes the study more believable and trustworthy. The role of the control variables in the study is to make sure that the researcher is not *comparing pears and bananas*, that is comparing outcomes that are completely unrelatable in the cases being compared due to differences in the areas that would make the comparison unreasonable. This also sheds a light on the number of controls and independent variables chosen for the study. The more independent variables or controls, the less likely it will be to find cases that are appropriate for comparison, thus the necessity of few cases on small-N researches using the COV approach (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 54).

The main criteria for the choices of controls and variables can be checked on the following table, taken from the 2012 work from Blatter and Haverland. Using the example of productivity of staff, three different controls were picked on for two different companies. The controls are the same on both companies, making sure that the results are comparable. The only thing that stands out as a difference is the independent variable (cause), which on COV is considered the most important cause for a given outcome (dependent variable), which in this case is staff performance. The same principle will be applied to the distribution of GI schemes in the EU.

Table 1: Criteria for case selection: A hypothetical example

Variable	Case	Agency 1	Agency 2
Control variable 1	<i>Resource endowment</i>	Generous	Generous
Control variable 2	<i>Education level of staff</i>	High	High
Control variable	<i>Information technology</i>	Advanced	Advanced
Independent variable of interest	<i>Performance-related pay</i>	Yes	Noo
Dependent variable	<i>Staff performance</i>	?	?

Source: Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 43

The comparison itself of the cases should be made respecting a few other guidelines when it comes to the timeline of the cases. A choice has been made to analyse both the Italian and French cases in the same chronological timeline as the Nordic EU case. That is because it would not make sense to go through results in, for instance, the 1960s France compared to current data from 2020. Some of the reasons why it would not make sense are the facts that back in the 1960s the EU GI scheme did not exist, the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland and Sweden) were not part of the European Economic Community (EEC), and the concept of GI was still very much unique to France and Italy at the time. The choice, therefore, is to go through data from the year of 1995 on, making sure that all control variables would be in place, including the fact that the Nordic Countries would all be MS of the EU and the EU GI scheme was already up and running. The analysis of the cases will be done according to this principle.

3.2 - Causal-Process Tracing (CPT)

This theoretical framework will be used to explain mainly the second research question proposed on this work. Coming back to the concept of Europeanisation, we will try to understand how it came to be that the Nordic EU countries started to get acquainted to the concept of Geographical Indications once they joined the EU and realised what the

concept would be all about and the advantages it could bring to their producers and agricultural sectors.

On the same approach we will try to understand why is it that some of the countries analysed have benefited or enjoyed more of the scheme than others. The answer might be on some of the treatment that the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) gives to specific countries. It might also be on how interested producers and government officials from different MS are in the topic. It may even be that the answer to the first question, related to the uneven distribution of the GI protections, is a start to the answer to the levels of Europeanisation resulted by the use of the GI certifications.

What is unique to CPT though is that unlike COV where the answer to the questions asked relied on the absence or not of specific independent variables, in this methodological approach the answers to the question asked might be a combination of several different elements that have to be considered. In other words, there is no simple or straightforward answer to questions analysed through CPT because there are several layers and conditions that have to be considered before reaching any sort of conclusions (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 80).

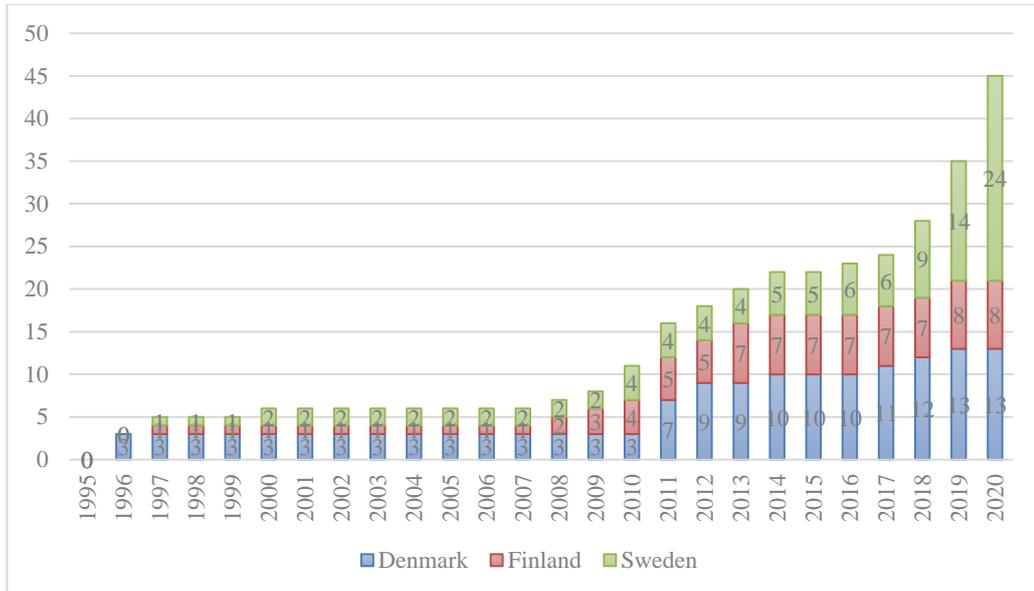
An illustration of the complexity of such affairs could be the way on which the Nordic EU countries have responded to the usage of GI certificates over time. Not all of the Nordic EU have responded in the same way to the possibility of having their products protected even though they have been granted the same pool of opportunities. In fact, Denmark, which has been an EU MS since 1973, only got its first PDO register in 1996, four years after the mechanism was put in place for all of the European Union (European Union, 2020).

Those figures and data might seem a bit shocking for one who is not in contact with such sort of information beforehand, but a person who has been careful enough to analyse the many different aspects of how the Nordic EU countries have been influenced by the usage of GI schemes over the years might have one take or two on why it is so. The CPT approach and its method of analyses that covers different aspects and conditions necessary for one given outcome may suggest that some results are sometimes so specific that they cannot be replicated without the proper encounter of causal factors, contexts and combinations (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 80).

Those different combinations of different contexts and conditions come by the name of contingencies. Sandra Mitchell, one of the developers of such concept breaks

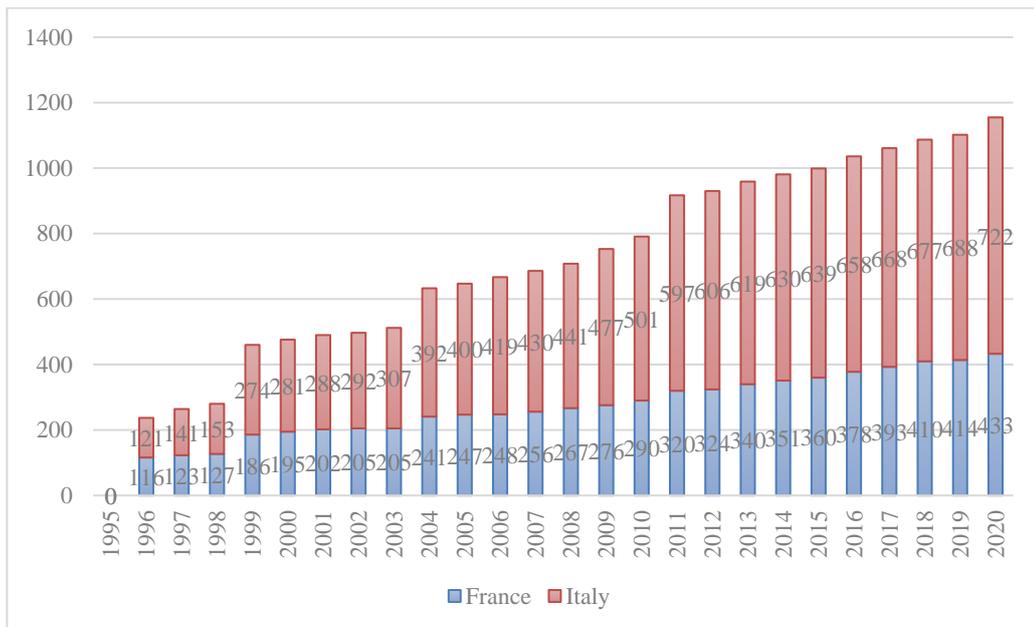
down such contingencies into four models, the space-time contingency, the evolutionary contingency, the multicomponent contingency, and the multilevel contingency.

Graph 3: PDO and PGI in the Nordic EU countries over time



Source: European Union, 2020

Graph 4: PDO and PGI in Italy and France over time



Source: European Union, 2020

For this study, the evolutionary contingency is the best suited one because it draws a parallel to how the outcomes of a situation cannot be predicted in its entirety in the

natural biological world due simply to the existence or availability of certain tools. Other explanations and reasonings are needed to understand each specific case. The precise words of Mitchell are:

“The diversity of life on the planet attests to the prevalence of strong evolutionary contingency, different »solutions« to evolutionary »problems« suggest there is no strongly determined outcome for a given evolutionary scenario.”

(Sandra Mitchell, 2002, p. 185)

This is only to stress, once again, that the CPT methodological framework is always trying to study research questions and phenomena by going through different combinations of causality, which can be either individually necessary, but not sufficient, or sufficient on its own, given that a set of conditions are met for a specific outcome (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 93).

Necessary conditions, sufficient conditions, necessary configurations, and sufficient configurations are another set of factors that have to be considered when running a CPT analysis. By necessary condition one should understand a factor (X) that is necessary for an outcome (Y) to happen and Y will only happen if X exists. However, the occurrence of X does not guarantee Y. By sufficient condition, on the other hand, one should consider that whenever Y happens, X will be present but Y could also happen without X (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 92/93).

Another thing happens when more than one factor is to be taken into consideration, a causal configuration ($W = X \text{ AND } Z$). A causal configuration is a necessary configuration when Y only happens if W exists. A sufficient configuration, alternately, is a sufficient condition if Y always happens whenever W appears (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 93).

For the study of the Europeanisation of the Nordic EU countries, for instance, some of the factors that could be used to design a necessary configuration (W) would be factors such as the agricultural history and tradition of the MS, EU membership, knowledge of the GI scheme, meetings of the DG AGRI team with MS, familiarity with EU provisions, and so on and so forth.

Which brings us to another interesting concept of the CPT approach that could be quite useful for this analysis is the causal chain:

A 'causal chain' is a causal configuration in which specific causal conditions form the necessary and (usually together with other conditions) sufficient preconditions for triggering other necessary and sufficient causal conditions or configurations at a later point in time, and this causal chain leads at the end of the process to the outcome of interest.

(Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 94)

The causal chain is also a way to organise and analyse how the different causes and conditions necessary for an outcome came together in a specific timeline, meaning that the order in which the different elements take place are determinant to whether or not an outcome will be possible. There is a causal chain around the usage of the GI protections and certificates in the Nordic EU countries, which starts with the MS joining the EU and culminating with a greater level of Europeanisation.

For the CPT approach the researcher also needs to be aware of some of the word choices made for the studies. A common word elsewhere could lead to imprecisions and confusion on the analysis level, and one of such words is 'context'. One should be mindful that 'context' should always be perceived as one of the necessary conditions for the research being carried out and should not be used to simply define the concepts and ideas surrounding a topic. The 'context' should only be associated with the specific conditions and chains leading to the results envisioned, leading to the avoidance of both confusion and generalisation (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 98-99).

The combination of all necessary conditions along with all the different tools which one could consider as the 'context' for the research on a CTP analysis are what sets CTP apart from COV. On COV, the mere presence of such elements (called variables for COV purposes) would be determinant to whether or not an outcome would be achieved. On CTP, those elements are to be considered necessary, but they may not be sufficient on their own. CTP is here to bring a broader picture to the case analysed and also to make it more unique.

Case selection for the CTP approach is much more relaxed than for COV. That is because the research is not necessarily about comparing different cases. What matters on the CPT idea is the process, the journey, taken by one case towards reaching a goal, going through the different contingencies, specific conditions, causal chains and other elements necessary for reaching the answers to the questions (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 99-100).

That is why, for instance, we are looking at the Europeanisation levels and history of the Nordic EU countries when it comes to the GI schemes only. Of course, some data from other regions will be looked at, but the focus will be on the case of the Nordic EU MS. Future research could be conducted using the CPT approach for different areas of the EU and their own levels of Europeanisation.

Cases should, nevertheless, be chosen with care and not randomly. One of the most important things to an effective analysis under CPT is the proper and easy access to different sets of data for the study (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 102). On what concerns this topic, most of the data used is made available by the European Union, either from statements, legislation from the CJEU, documents made available through the official online platforms and even the occasional use of interviews with EU officials, and journalistic material.

There are still another few aspects that are extremely helpful when it comes to building a convincing and comprehensive CPT answer to a research question. Those come by the name of *storylines*, *smoking guns*, and *confessions*. They are the basis for the reflections of the conditions for the ultimate outcomes expected on the study (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 111).

For *storylines* one should understand that “A major goal of these comprehensive storylines is to differentiate the major sequences of the overall process and identify the critical moments that further shape the process.” (Ibid), meaning that the correct order and the details of an action are essential to the proper assessment of the situation being looked at.

Smoking guns should be taken as “[...] an observation that presents a central piece of evidence within a cluster of observations, which together provide a high level of certainty for a causal inference.” (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 115). That means that a smoking gun observation should not be considered on its own only. All the surrounding details of a smoking gun - including the timeline, location, etc - should be taken into account so that a smoking gun is valid. Otherwise, it could be misleading and circumstantial, just as it would be in a criminal trial.

As for the so-called *confessions*, those are “[...] explicit statements of actors in which they reveal why they acted the way they did.” (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 117). Reposts from MS government, EU officials, foodstuff producers and associations could be considered as such.

The CPT approach is, after considering all of the above, ideal for the question regarding Europeanisation and its relation to the EU GI scheme because it allows one to go through as many angles as one wishes in order to reach a conclusion. This theoretical framework is both comprehensive in its approach and unique in its results, leading to a highly specialised analysis of the topic chosen.

3.3 – Interviews

Apart from the main discussions of this body of work that shall be performed under both the Co-Variational Analysis and Causal-Process Tracing, there are contributions that are worth taking from the usage of interviews as well. Interviews shall be conducted with the intent of complementing the data with personal intakes from people who are working with the GI schemes themselves.

The format of such interviews had to be adapted due to the situation presented as a result of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic that has swept the Earth for most of the year. Initially, the interviews envisioned for this study included visits to producing facilities across Sweden, with the possibility of also going to France and Italy - to talk to producers in their own working environment -, and to Belgium - to see first-hand how the GI structure is discussed in the heart of EU bureaucracy. During the time this study was carried out, a second wave of infections hit Europe quite strongly, making such plans extremely risky to go through with.

Nevertheless, two interviews were secured for this project, one of them with a Member of the European Parliament (MEP), Mr. Iuliu Winkler, and another one with an EU official who wishes to remain anonymous, not even allowing a recording of the conversation engaged, leaving this researcher with only notes and impressions from the talk available to use on the analysis.

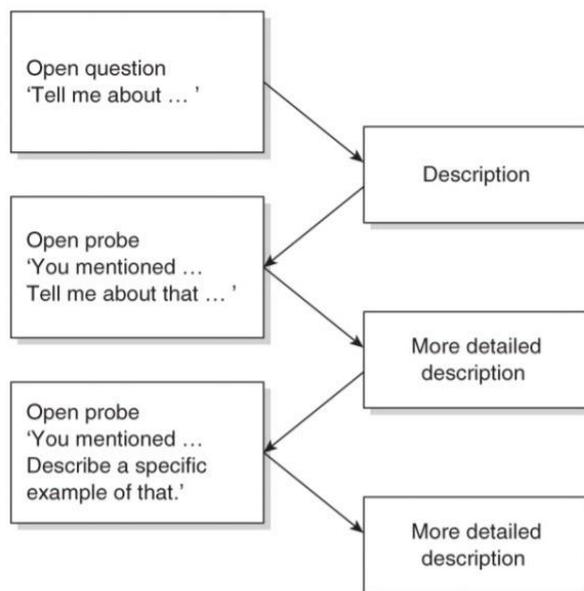
An interview is, in a way, a conversation and interaction between at least two people, one interviewer and one interviewee. The way on which the interview itself is carried out is not really relevant, given that it could be in person, through a telephone call, or through other digital means. What really is important in an interview, though, is the questions and answers method and how the questions are thought of and organised by the interviewer (Roulston, 2020, p. 10).

In order to achieve a more comprehensive and far fetching pool of answers from an interviewee, the interviewer should attempt to focus on what is known as open questions instead of closed questions. Closed questions are those that could result in a simple yes or no answers, leading to simplistic and not very explanatory results to what is being asked (Roulston, 2010, p. 11/12).

Open questions, on the other hand, are the ones that are unlikely to give the person being interviewed a chance to allow simplistic answers to the questions being asked. Such questions are made in a way that forces the interviewee to elaborate on their answers through the building of stories, and those are filled with details related to the questions asked (Roulston, 2010, p. 12).

The researcher should also be mindful of the formulation of the questions so that they are not so open leading the interviewer to a position where he or she doesn't know how to even begin to answer it. Questions should be open but also specific enough so that the answer to a question leads to even another question, setting the pace and motion of the interview (Roulston, 2010, p. 13)

Figure 1 - An open question and possible ways of responding



Source: Roulston, 2010

Which in turn brings us to the structure itself of the interviews being conducted. There three ways on which the structure of the interviews can be organised related to the way on which the interviewee will receive on his end the questions being asked. The first way is through what is understood as a structured interview. On this approach the

questions will be asked in a predetermined way and order, the questions will have been designed before the interview takes place and even the answers are to be pre offered to the interviewee so he can make a choice on which ones to pick (Roulston, 2010, p. 14).

Semi-structured interviews, alternately, follow a more interactive structure, allowing for the researcher to plan ahead the questions to be presented to the interviewee but also allowing for the possibility of coming up with other questions during the exercise of the interview itself. The order on the questions considered by the interviewer might also change depending on the dynamics of the exercise of the interview. It is up for the interviewer to decide when to introduce different topics, change the subject, insist on a topic and so on and so forth (Ibid).

The last sort of interview structure mentioned by Roulston is the unstructured one. On this, there is really no proper guideline whatsoever. Both interviewers and interviewees might ask questions, the topics will change depending on the conversation that is being followed and the subjects discussed might change during the interview. A person witnessing the interview from a distance could even consider it to simply be a free-flowing conversation between two people. The biggest problem of unstructured interviews is that they might, more often than not, prove to be less effective in the purpose of obtaining specific information from the person being interviewed due mostly to the unstructured nature of the interview (Ibid).

For the purposes of this research project, both interviews were planned following the semi-structured approach. Questions related to the EU GI scheme were prepared beforehand and introduced to the interviewees when appropriate, given the pace of the interviews being conducted.

One final consideration needed towards the interview method is related to the style of content that will be looked into on the interview. As for this project, the interviews were envisioned as a way to understand the way in which the people involved with the GI scheme do so in their daily lives. It was a way to get a personal touch on the aspects one can otherwise only visualise under a theoretical and pragmatic point of view. As such, the phenomenological approach seems to be the most well-fitted for it. Under this style of interviewing, researchers “[...] want to understand the participants’ feelings, perceptions and understandings [...]” of the interviewees experiences while working with the topic under scrutiny (Roulston, 2010, p. 16), and that is exactly the point of having interviews on this project after all.

4 Results and analysis

4.1 - The evolution of the French and Italian systems into the European Geographical Indications scheme

The current usage of Geographical Indications protections throughout the European Union is a process that has its roots and inceptions in an infestation of a parasite that nearly destroyed the French wine producing regions in the late 19th century. From that moment on, after numerous attempts to revive the traditional wine-producing region once the parasite had been dealt with, the biggest threat to the recovering of not only the industry itself, but also the wine culture of the region was the sales of cheaper and of lesser quality products claiming to be from the region affected by the phylloxera infestation (Comité Champagne, 2020).

As it has already been presented in the introduction of this work, a long process began in France setting up mechanisms that would protect under national law the name of products associated with the region on which they are produced, respecting delimited areas of protection, production methods and, consequently, the reputation of the areas concerned.

The French system initiated in the region of Champagne thrived on its purpose and soon other regions of France began setting up their own agricultural associations of producers of particular foodstuff products and it was not long before the system was spread all around France. In 1935 it was turned into national French law and the AOC system was a reality that lingers on to this day (INAO, 2020).

Following the timeline of developments in Europe, beginning in France and then expanding to its neighbour country Italy, in the 1960s, one can see how the system expanded from France, to Italy, to other countries in Europe such as Portugal, and eventually to the European level in the 1990s, finally reaching all of the EU MS through the European Commission and Council regulations from 1992 - introducing the scheme - and 2012 - updating and expanding the same system (European Union, 1992/2012).

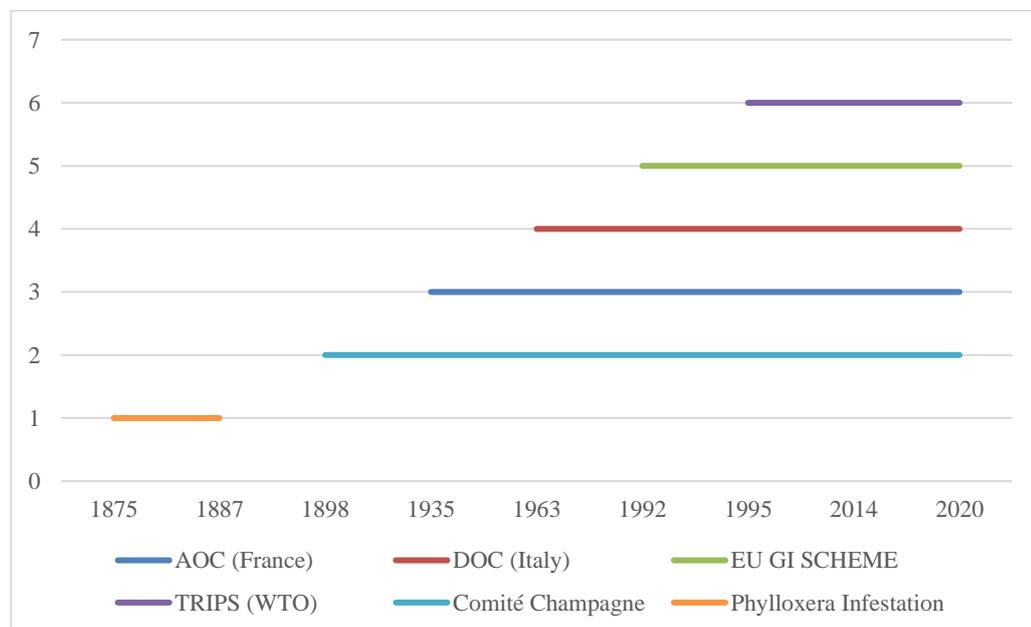
It is also true, however, that some other regions in Europe already had schemes of regional delimitation attached to specific products even before the French AOC was

introduced. In Portugal, for instance, a national scheme for the recognition of the wines from the Douro region was idealised in 1908 for the *vinho verde* wine variety, but that instrument was envisioned for the *vinho verde* only, not applicable to other products in the rest of the country, which would have to come up with their own systems independently (CVRVV, 2020).

And that is where the French system, the AOC, sets itself apart from other mechanisms. It was the AOC that introduced a national scheme that would apply not to one specific product, but to any foodstuff that could make its case on why the designation of origin should be respected and protected for. From the 1905 French law that started the procedures to develop a national regional protection mechanism to the 1935 introduction of the AOC, the modern concept of protection of origin had just had its breakthrough and institutional development (INAO, 2020).

Other European countries soon followed the French example in the decades to come, including Portugal and Italy, on their national schemes based on the French model. But it was in 1992, with the model brought forward by the European Commission, that the harmonisation process of all EU Member States would begin, prompting alterations and adequations to the few previously existing national schemes so that they would be equivalent to the European legislation and also introducing the concept to countries that did not have it beforehand (European Union, 1992).

Graph 5: Timeline of the Geographical Indications systems in Europe



Source: European Union, 2020

The introduction of the European Union Geographical Indications scheme would also benefit from the consolidation of some of the provisions that would be put into place by the European internal market with the Maastricht Treaty from 1993 onwards. That is because among the many provisions of the treaty, one of the concerns presented in the document was that the previous barriers to the free movement of goods should fall, leading to full integration of the internal markets of all MS creating a true European single market (European Union, 1993, Art. 3). This would lead to a greater possibility of sales of different and new products in the whole of the EU.

The contribution of the GI scheme to such integration is the fact that once a standard method of accreditation was available to the entirety of the EU, regional products that previously were known only to specific regions of some MS could now be advertised as unique and special in all of the EU. This could also be considered a great encouragement for producers of different products across the bloc because as all PDO and PGI products carry on their packaging a seal attesting to the legitimacy of the products, whoever decided to buy PDO products - not mattering if coming from countries that already traditionally used such methods of accreditation or a new nation to the scheme - could be certain of the precedence, attention to manufacturing standards and an inherent quality level on the goods (European Union, 1992/2014). Examples of regions that started to use PDOs and PGIs can easily be found across the EU, but there is one case that is considered a pillar of success on this idea.

Upon Austria's accession to the EU in 1995, 13 different producers of *Gailtaler Almkäse* cheese from the valley of Gailtal got together to form a cooperative and present an application for PDO status for said cheese. Not only the project was successful, but ever since the PDO status was acquired the valley of Gailtal has introduced different events throughout the region to promote the cheese and the cheesemakers of the region, creating a tourism cycle that has increased visitors to the area, generating revenue for hotels, city authorities and, of course, to the cheesemakers themselves (Borg and Gratzner, 2013).

The process line of events that lead to the development of the current state of the EU GI scheme, as a result, can be traced through a series of events that have been taking place in Europe since the latter half of the 19th Century.

It begins with the phylloxera infestation of the French vines and vineyards around the year of 1875. Following the infestation and the discovery of production methods that would allow the producers to plant new vines and restart the production of wine, in an

attempt to fight the sales of fake products being advertised as if from the regions that were affected by the infestation, cooperative associations began to form in France. Those would set the rules for production and initiate the process of securing the legal rights to use the name of the region in their products. This led to the creation of the AOC in 1935.

The creation of the AOC and its success in France then would lead neighbouring countries of the French nation to develop their own systems of protection of GI throughout the following years. Such development eventually got to the supranational level when the European Union decided to introduce its own scheme of geographical indications in the early 1990s, making the system of Geographical Indications a possibility for all members of the EU. The countries that already had a national scheme of protection and updated its rules to the ones determined by the EU regulation 2081/92 quickly managed to have their products granted a EU GI certification. Those that did not would have to begin the unknown and new process from the beginning should they want to have a certified product (Interviewee 1, 2020).

4.1.1 - The World Intellectual Property Organisation and the TRIPS agreement

The European system for the protections of Geographical Indications is a system that protects specific products from specific regions according to guidelines brought forward by associations of producers and cooperatives thought of for each different product granted protection by the EU. Such protection is guaranteed in all of the EU countries but the EU is not the only area or institution in the world that deals with the protection of Geographical Indications.

That is because the GI concept has to be expanded in order to be able to fully understand the implications that the concept has in different contexts, and that includes looking at Geographical Indications as expressions of Intellectual Property (IP), which “refers to creations of the mind – everything from works of art to inventions, computer programs to trademarks and other commercial signs.” (WIPO, 2020). After all, the GI are undeniably creations of the mind. Foodstuffs that are granted GI certifications are products that have been crafted by their producers after years and generations of craftsmen and women resulting in the products that are available nowadays.

The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), founded in 1967 as one of the agencies of the United Nations (UN) is one of the international organisations

dedicated to the defense and protection of IP in the world, and the protection of Geographical Indications is one of the scopes of action that the organisation pursues. For countries outside of the EU, the WIPO system for protection of Geographical Indications is a valid choice, as long as the interested party is also a signatory of the Geneva Act of 2015, that updated and regulated its system. The recognition of the products under the WIPO Lisbon System - the name given to the WIPO scheme - is also dependent on the existence of national mechanisms for the management of the GI that are seeking international recognition (Geneva Act, 2015, Art. 9).

The WIPO guidelines for the protection of Geographical Indications through the prism of Intellectual Properties embraces not only the EU definitions of GI and the GI scheme of the European Union itself, but it also recognises the efforts of several different treaties that have been made over history protecting products as such. Among the documents listed by WIPO as documents that constitute the basis for IP protection on GI one can identify, among others, the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, the TRIPS agreement (WIPO, 2020).

The TRIPS agreement, or the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, is a modern document envisioned by the GATT in the 1990s and enforced by the WTO since the agreement came into force and the WTO was created. It is single-handedly the most comprehensive document dealing with IP issues around the world. The document describes different approaches to deal with protections of IP related to copyright issues, trademarks, industrial designs, patents, and of course Geographical Indications as well among all the nations that are part of the WTO (WTO, 1995).

Articles 22, 23 and 24 of the agreement are the ones that are of importance to this study because those are the ones dealing specifically with GI and its definitions. As it was already presented in the introduction to this work, the definitions of the aspects of what can be considered a Geographical Indication both by the European Union and now by the WTO through the TRIPS agreement are quite similar, with only the phrasing being a little different between the two definitions.

What varies indeed when looking at what is presented on both institutions is the way in which the provisions are enforced. In the EU, it is up to the European Commission to propose new registers, which are going to be analysed by the DG AGRI and approved by the European Council and Parliament through the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (OLP). Disputes among GI holders and fake and or misleading products are taken directly to the CJEU for deliberation and eventual settlement.

As for the TRIPS agreement and the WTO, settlement of disputes regarding issues of not only Geographical Indications, but of any other matter related to the whole agreement are to be discussed and settled through the Dispute Settlement Understanding of the GATT from 1994 (WTO, 1995).

It is also important to highlight that the TRIPS agreement and the WTO do not grant certificates of Geographical Indications whatsoever. The provisions related to the TRIPS agreement are in place to understand how it is that the members of the WTO can deal with the issues of GI. The TRIPS agreement is a manual with instructions and guidelines for WTO members to regulate what can and what cannot be done in the IP world field, which includes the Geographical Indications. As the European Union is a member of the WTO, it is subject to the TRIPS agreement, leading to the realisation that the EU GI scheme is as well.

4.1.2 - The work of the European Union - a balance of Member State and European Union action

The existence of the GI scheme in the European Union is something that cannot exist unless all parts involved - the EU as an institution, the Member States authorities, and the producers - want it at the same time. It is a reality that requires that all spheres are working together simultaneously in order to achieve a working scenario that is conducive of what is being discussed and looked for.

The process to achieve a registration is straightforward. It requires the filing of an application in the MS national authorities, a document which will then be reviewed by the MS authorities. Once it is cleared by the MS it will be forwarded by the MS authorities to the European Commission, which is going to evaluate the request through the DG AGRI personnel and will eventually send it to the other deciding bodies of the EU in order for it to be discussed and voted by the Council of the European Union (Council) and the European Parliament (EP) through the OLP (European Union, 1992/2014).

The process, as one can infer, is a bottom-up process instead of a top-down one, meaning that all of the registers that the EU (top) eventually certifies with GI status begin at the lowest level (bottom) with producers of foodstuff and the associations and cooperatives associated with each product that seeks accreditation.

The EU has introduced the scheme and made it available, but it is not up to the EU to seek the protections and actively initiate the process of getting products certified with the GI certificates. That part of the process relies almost entirely on the will of the producers, associations and cooperatives. Almost, that is, because the EU does have a role to play when it comes to the increase in the figures of GI products in the EU after all.

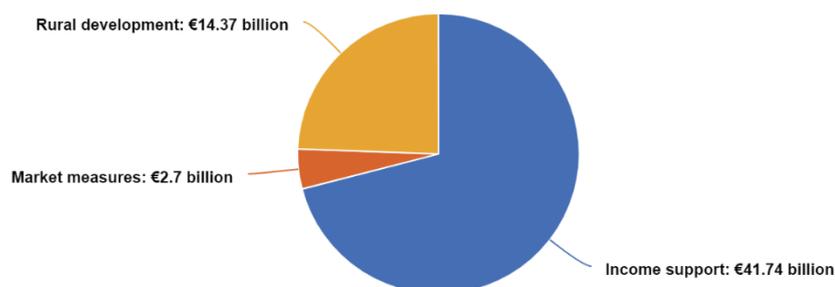
One of the roles of the CAP is the development of rural areas of the EU so that they remain active and interesting for people to live in in a sustainable way, guaranteeing the production and availability of affordable foodstuff products for consumers and also reasonable standards of living for European farmers (European Union, 2020).

Success cases in regions where the landscape surrounding a product that has a GI certification have been transformed due to the legend created around the product, such as the Gailtal valley in Austria and its *Gailtaler Almkäse*, are the stories and legacy that the DG AGRI, and by definition the European Commission, are looking for with the expansion of the GI certifications across the EU. The possibility of turning local products into exotic and exciting new delicacies simply by the certification of a product is one of the desired outcomes of the GI scheme.

Apart from the financing itself of farmers in the agricultural sector provided by the CAP, which in 2018 had figures as high as €58.82 billion on funding divided among incentives to rural development, market measures, and income support, the work of the EU on trying to increase the use of GI certificates across the entire bloc is a much more subtle one.

Figure 2: EU CAP funds

The EU supports farmers with €58.82 billion in 2018



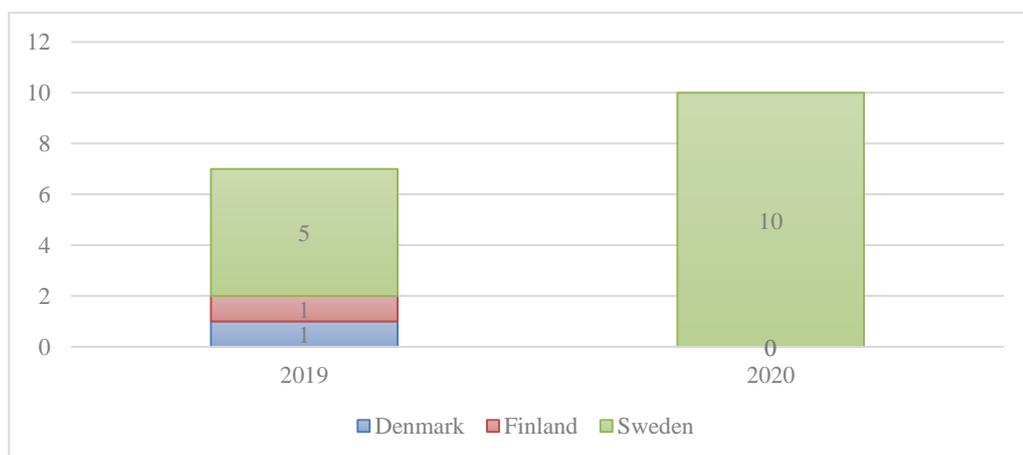
Source: European Union, 2020

In the second interview performed for this study, the anonymous interviewee recounted on the challenges of spreading information on GI certifications for MS that are not used to the scheme. The DG AGRI and the EU Commission “are trying to wake them up!” (Interviewee 2, 2020) to the different possibilities and upsides to the usage of GI certifications overall. And their way of waking them up is through making the EU present at different conferences and fairs of agricultural purposes throughout the EU every year. The Commission always has stands and is an exhibitor at the two biggest European agricultural fairs - the *Grüne Woche* in Berlin and *the Salon International de l’Agriculture* in Paris - every year and also makes itself present at seven different smaller national conferences in different countries of the EU each year (Ibid).

Of course, the DG AGRI does not have the staff to visit every MS every year on a regular basis, so it is through those conferences that the EU Commission is able to talk directly to producers’ representatives, stakeholders and even individual producers who are attending the conferences themselves, possibly even answering questions related to the GI scheme if they arise.

Another active work of the EU Commission is the use of so-called mini conferences, which are meetings organised by the EU Commission through the DG AGRI and individual MS groups of stakeholders designed to discuss issues related to the work of the DG AGRI, being those related to GI or not. On those mini conferences the MS and the group of stakeholders is visited by representatives of the European Commission themselves. In the beginning of 2020, in February, Sweden was one of the last nations visited by the DG AGRI before the COVID-19 pandemic was spread out (Ibid).

Graph 6: PDO and PGI in the Nordic EU countries – 2019 and 2020



Source: European Union, 2020

This information is of importance when one analyses the recent surge in the Swedish applications for GI certificates, which have seen an increase of ten new applications for PGI and PDO products in the period following the mini conference in the country. The number of ten applications in 2020 alone is already double the number of applications registered in the previous year, 2019.

The content of all mini conferences could be checked but in the case of the Swedish one that happened in February 2020, interviewee 2 mentioned that the procedural aspects of applying for an EU GI certification was one of the topics on the agenda of the day (Ibid).

The EU also works on GI recognition systems in other areas of the EU that are not the DG AGRI. One of the instances in which they are discussed is on the Committee on International Trade of the European Parliament. Recently in 2020 the EU signed a trade agreement with China related to the mutual recognition of 100 EU GIs in China and another 100 Chinese GI products in the EU on a mutual recognition basis (European Union, 2020). All issues related to agricultural policy are topics that are highly discussed among parties of a trade deal whenever one is being designed, and the realm of GI, being an official policy of the EU, is undoubtedly looked at during the negotiation phases of the any deal (Interviewee 1, 2020).

The inference taken from work of the EU on GI schemes, thus, is that it is both active and passive, but both depend on the will and initiation of the interested agents in the bottom layer of the process of achieving European accreditation. It is active when one considers that the system exists due to the EU having designed and put it forward. It is also active due to the fact that it is the EU through the work of the DG AGRI that actually does the certification. One final active aspect of the EU on this is the fact that the EU is trying all the time to show different MS through its presence on international fairs and conventions and the mini conferences around the EU, and also on the heavy use of social media apparatus, the importance and relevance of the GI scheme. The passive aspect of the work of the EU, and perhaps the most important one, is presented on the fact that the whole process of regional protection relies on being initiated by agents that are not on the EU bureaucratic framework.

4.2- A comparison between two regions

For the purposes of the COV analyses of the uneven distribution of the GI certificates in the European Union, two regions were chosen as the cases for comparison. Those regions were chosen not only because of the values given through the dependent variables (the number of GI certificates in each region that leads to unevenness) but also due to the results of two specific independent variables (causes) that are closely related to the effects seen on the dependent variable.

The first control variable, which are the mechanisms ensuring that the cases are comparable, was set as the availability of regionally unique products that have the full potential of becoming GI protected products. Remembering the EU GI and TRIPS definition of what is it that makes a product suitable for these characteristic states that a product has its name connected to one specific region, with aspects that are given to the product because of and inherently due to regional geographical location of where the product is made. Those characteristics could be natural - such as specific fungi that give some cheese its distinctive flavour - or related to local craftsmanship techniques that are unique to a regional area.

Both the regions of France and Italy, and the Nordic EU countries have products that are known because of their locality of production, and they are easy to identify by going to groceries stores and supermarkets, the biggest difference is that in Sweden and the other Nordic nations that are members of the EU most of those products have not been granted GI certificates. Out of some of the most well-known Nordic products that are still to be granted a GI protection one could mention one of the most well-known cheeses of Sweden, the Västerbotten Cheese, which even gets its name from the Swedish region where it is produced. Another product also of Swedish heritage is the *Isterband* sausage, which is a traditional sausage made in the Småland region of the country. Both products are not registered as GI in the EU, despite having a strong regional baggage attached to them (European Union, 2020).

On the Italian and French side, even though data shows that the number of recognised GI is overwhelmingly bigger than in the Nordic EU countries, there are still some products that are of even international reputation that are yet to be considered for GI protection and recognition. Panettone, an Italian Christmas cake originally from Milan in northern Italy composed of a soft and delicate brioche dough fermented by a stiff sourdough starter enriched with nuts, dried fruit and citrus peel has yet to be registered

(Ibid). In France, Cognac, a distilled beverage that gets its name from the French village of the same name in the *Nouvelle-Aquitaine* region of France, does have an AOC certificate, but it has not been certified by the EU GI scheme yet (INAO, 2020).

The second control variable chosen for the study is a more straightforward one. It is membership of the EU. The GI scheme is not a mechanism that is allowed exclusively for members of the EU. In fact, countries from around the globe can apply for GI protection of their products in the EU. But a choice was made on the research design to have only EU MS for means of comparisons and controls.

More interesting than the controls, and arguably the core of the answers to the question of uneven distribution of EU GI certificates among the two different regions are the independent variables. These independent variables are the main causes for the dependent variables of the study. They are what causes the effects being looked upon on the whole study. The presence of such variables - or not - is to be considered as the main reasons why the outcome happens or not.

Two of the so-called independent variables were chosen for this study due to their significance in the results of this study. The first one is the existence of previous GI schemes in the two groups of nations being analysed, the first group being France & Italy and the second one being the Nordic EU Countries, namely Denmark, Finland and Sweden. France, as it is known, had the *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* in place since 1935 and Italy had the *Denominazione di Origine Controllata* from 1963 on. When it comes to the three nations of the Nordic EU, none of them had a system designed for the recognition or protection of GI until it was introduced by the EU in 1992.

The second independent variable chosen for this work is the levels of expenditure on the agricultural sector of such countries in both regions being studied. Once again, a discrepancy can be found, with levels of expenditure in the EU Nordic countries not being even close to the levels seen in Italy and France.

The empirical evidence of the effects that both independent variables have will be seen in the data consolidating the number of PDO and PGI registers on the two regions, which are available with ease on the digital platforms of the European Union. The following table also helps the visualisation of how independent and dependent variables are intertwined.

Table 2: COV control variables, independent variables and dependent variables

Variable	Case	Italy and France	Nordic EU
Control Variable 1	<i>Regionally unique products</i>	Present	Present
Control Variable 2	<i>Member of the EU</i>	Yes	Yes
Independent Variable 1	<i>Previous GI system</i>	Yes	No
Independent Variable 2	<i>Great agricultural expenditure</i>	Yes	No
Dependent Variable	<i>GI products</i>	1616	45

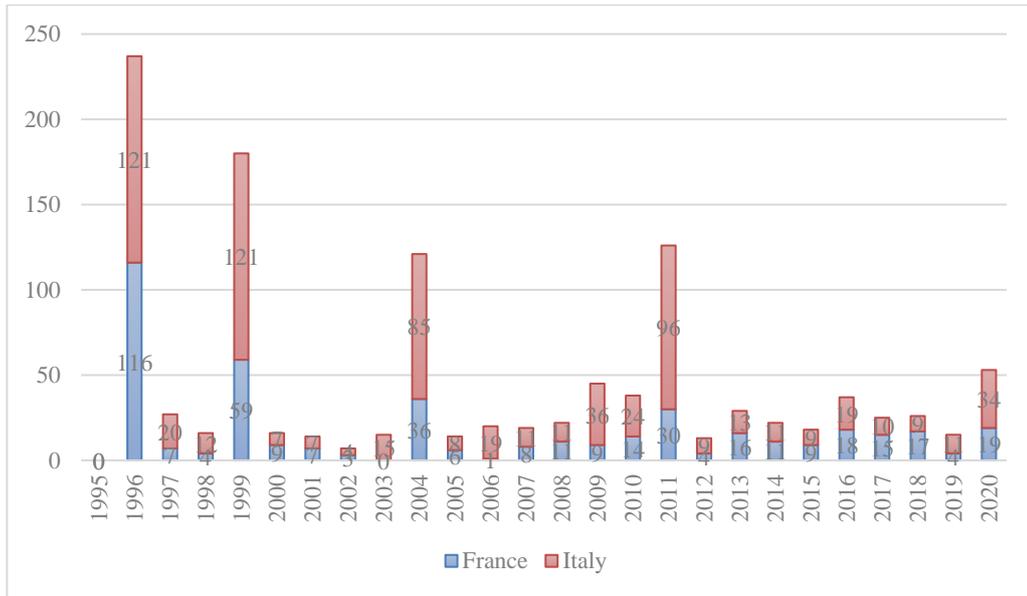
Source: European Union, 2020 [electronic] Available: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/food-safety-and-quality/certification/quality-labels/geographical-indications-register/> Last access 04/01/2021

4.2.1 - The cases of France and Italy and the EU Nordic Countries

As it would be expected, in the beginning the countries that already had a previous GI scheme mechanism were the first ones to quickly transfer the records and previous national certifications to the European ones. France and Italy were the pioneers of such schemes, and it would be only natural that they would be the ones to lead the figures on accreditations from a very early stage on, while other recent MS had to take some time to get acquainted to the new possibilities presented by the European Union GI scheme (Interviewee 1, 2020).

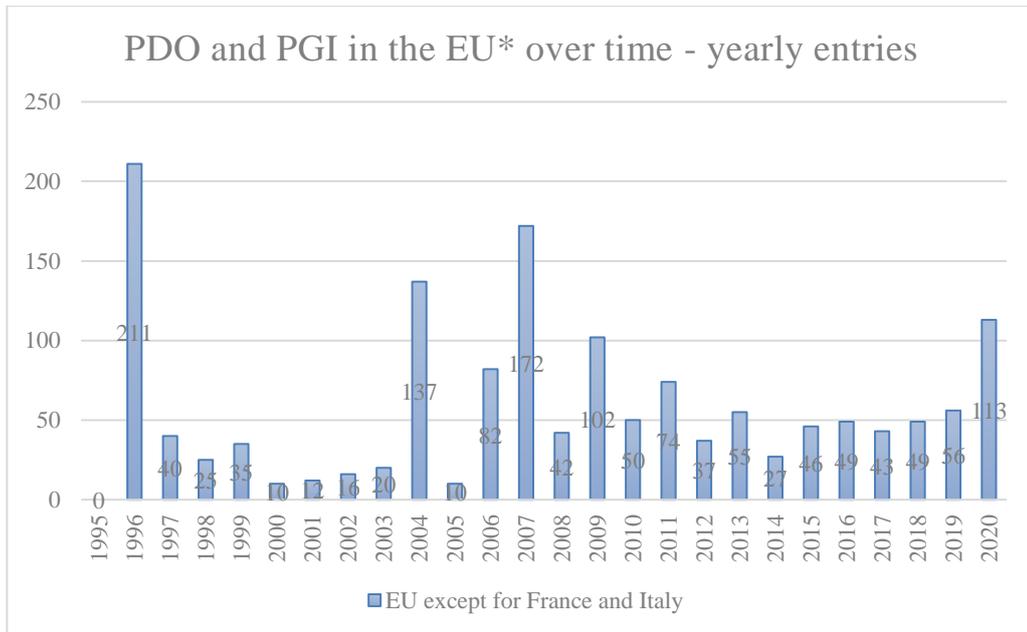
As a matter of illumination, France and Italy alone, in 1996 - the first year on which the registers of the EU GI scheme would become valid and enforced - were responsible for 236 registers, 115 for France and 121 for Italy. The remaining EU countries at the time (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) combined had presented 211 applications. That is, out of a total 447 initial registers, France and Italy held on their own 52,79% of those. The remaining 13 countries of the EU at the time had to pull together to come up with 47,21% of protections (European Union, 2020)

Graph 7: PDO and PGI in France and Italy over time – yearly entries



Source: European Union, 2020

Graph 8: PDO and PGI in the EU over time – yearly entries – excluding Italy and France



Source: European Union, 2020

In the years to come, such proportion would remain almost unchanged. France and Italy are still the countries that retain the largest share of EU GI certificates overall. In December 2020 48,72% of all GI certificates continue to be exclusively from Italy or

France, but countries outside of the area comprising the two nations are now more than 50% of the overall registers (European Union, 2020).

An interesting movement that can be seen through the data on the previous charts is also the overall decrease of the French and Italian new files for registries of Geographical Indications over time. Naturally, if Italy and France already enjoyed great levels of recognition of their products domestically, all they had to do was transfer those records for the European Union GI scheme, without having the need to spend great amounts of money and time on the development of domestic mechanisms for enforcing and monitoring the registered products.

For the countries that are having their first contact with the GI scheme, the development of those national mechanisms is one of the first and necessary steps on the path of a product towards having its Geographical Indication recognised, protected and registered. One cannot forget that the whole system is a symbiosis of both MS domestic action and EU reaction, and the domestic action is reliant on the MS building the proper mechanisms for the GI scheme to be successful. Therefore, it is understandable that it would take more time for such MS to be ready to register their first products under the GI schemes.

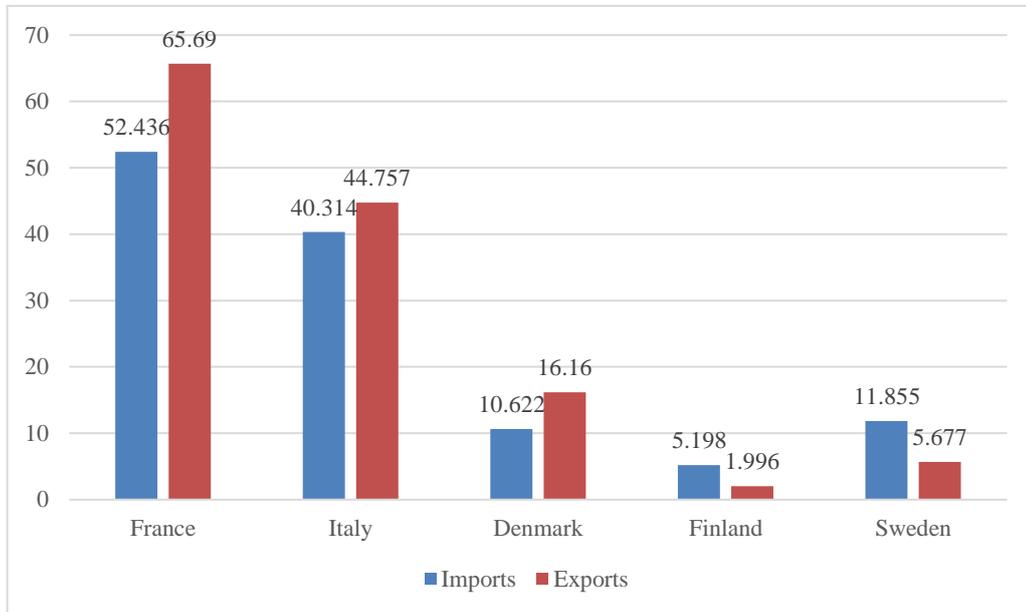
The existence or not of a previous system for the recognition of GI in the nations observed is part of the answer to the first research question regarding the reasons for the uneven distribution of the GI certifications across the EU. However, it is not the only reason that could be measured.

The second independent variable used to answer the first question of this study is the expenditure levels of the two regions examined based on data provided by the European Union through the DG AGRI statistical factsheets for each of the countries looked at. This is to make the argument that some regions are not as represented on the number of GI as others because they are not countries with great agricultural practises to begin with, leading to an overall smaller number of products available for Geographical Indications purposes.

In the case of the two regions under scrutiny for this piece of work, the evidence pointing to the stark difference in the agricultural tradition of the areas is too great to be ignored. The first evidence towards the lack of a strong agricultural scenario in the Nordic EU countries is the fact that based on data from 2019 put together by the DG AGRI and published on their Statistical Factsheet for each of the EU countries is the fact that both Finland and Sweden are countries that import more agricultural goods than they export.

Denmark is the only country in the region that actually exports more than it imports. Regardless of it, the absolute figures of the levels of imports and exports of the regions when compared are miles apart.

Graph 9: DG Agri Statistical Factsheet – in millions of Euros – 2019 figures



Source: European Union, 2020

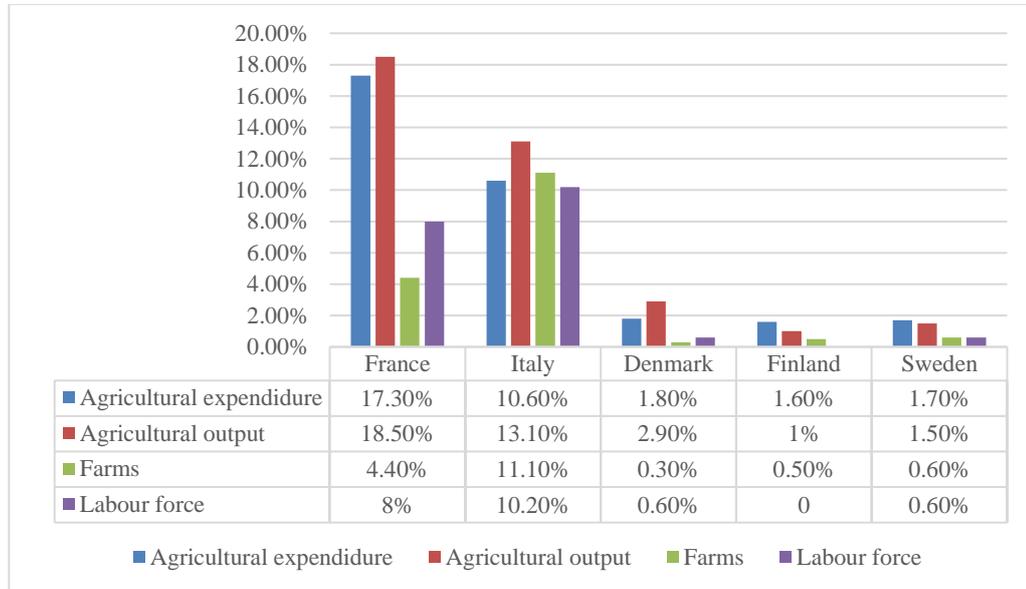
If one were to combine the exports figures of all three Nordic EU countries, the result achieved would be €23.833 million. Italy alone has €44.757 million, nearly double the figures of the Nordic countries. France alone has €65.690 million, nearly tripling the figures of the Nordic EU area. In fact, the sum of the imports of the Nordic EU region account to €27.675 million. If one considers that the exports sum to some €23.833 million, that means that the EU Nordic countries export less than what they import when it comes to agricultural goods.

As for Italy and France, together they do import an impressive €92.750 million on agricultural goods. The good news for them is that their exports add up to €110.447 million, leading to a clear surplus when it comes to their agricultural goods stats.

The data on more indicative of the agricultural landscape of the two analysed regions also points to the same direction of a clear supremacy of France and Italy overall on their agricultural scenario. Figures related to overall expenditures on agricultural schemes, the number of holdings of farms on each country, the stats on how many workers there are on each of the nations and also the agricultural output in general, all lead to the

inevitable realisation that the agricultural advantages and tradition, so to speak, of France and Italy are tremendously bigger than that of the Nordic EU countries.

Graph 10: DG AGRI Statistical Factsheet - % out of EU 27 – 2019 figures



Source: European Union, 2020

The two independent variables that were chosen due to their causal character under this COV approach to the questioning of why is it that there is such an uneven distribution of GI certificates across some areas of the EU are the existence of a prior GI mechanism in the MS being analysed, and the existence of great overall expenditures on the agricultural sector of the economy of the countries chosen for this case study.

By contrasting the two regions it is clear that the choice of such independent variables was correct. They do point to a possible path of understanding of the issue given. And this path says that had it not been for the previous GI schemes in France and Italy, or for the dismal disparity of expenditures and landscape of the agricultural sector of such countries, it might well be that the distribution of GI certificates would be more levelled than how it is now.

Had the GI concept developed in the Nordic region at the same time as it did in France and Italy, maybe the countries of the north would have national mechanisms of their own that would level their number of GI products with the Italian and French levels. That was not the case, and as a result, the Nordic countries did not have a prior GI system when the EU introduced its very own one. The combination of both of these factors, our

independent variables, culminated in the great unevenness of the distribution of the Geographical Indications certificates in the European Union nowadays.

4.3 - Geographical Indications: a measurement of Europeanisation?

The second question proposed for this study is dealing with the issue of Europeanisation. And by Europeanisation it is meant truly and simply that the EU has effects on the MS of the bloc (Sedelmeier, 2012, p. 825). For the purposes of this study, the GI scheme of the EU is going to be looked at as an incentive to Europeanisation of the Nordic EU because not only it would mean that those nations are abiding to a European Union level practise that was unknown to them before joining the EU, leading to different sets of change in domestic policy and practises.

For this, the tools and inferences from the Causal-Process Tracing (CPT) methodological approach are the chosen method of analysis, looking at the evolution of the adoption of the GI mechanism in the Nordic EU countries, building a narrative that leads to greater Europeanisation levels the more the GI schemes are used over time.

In order to do this, it is necessary to look into some of the inferences from the previous question as well, and all of the inferences taken from the COV approach are useful, but the familiarisation of the new EU countries with EU provisions and possibilities are more important on understanding how the Europeanisation process actually happens when considering the impact of the GI schemes.

Using some of the variables from the COV approach one can design some of the necessary conditions and configurations for the CPT analysis. A necessary condition is a factor that is necessary for an outcome to exist but its existence does not infer on the occurrence of the outcome. A necessary configuration is, in simplified terms, only the combination of different factors into creating a new necessary condition, composed of at least two factors.

For this study, the conditions that are to be considered as necessary for the increased level of Europeanisation resulted from the usage of GI certificates in a EU MS, either on their own or in conjunction with others, are the availability of products that can be certified as GI, membership of the EU, knowledge of the GI scheme and provisions, having an agricultural landscape that is favourable for a large number of products that can be certified, previous GI schemes, and meetings of the DG AGRI team with specific MS.

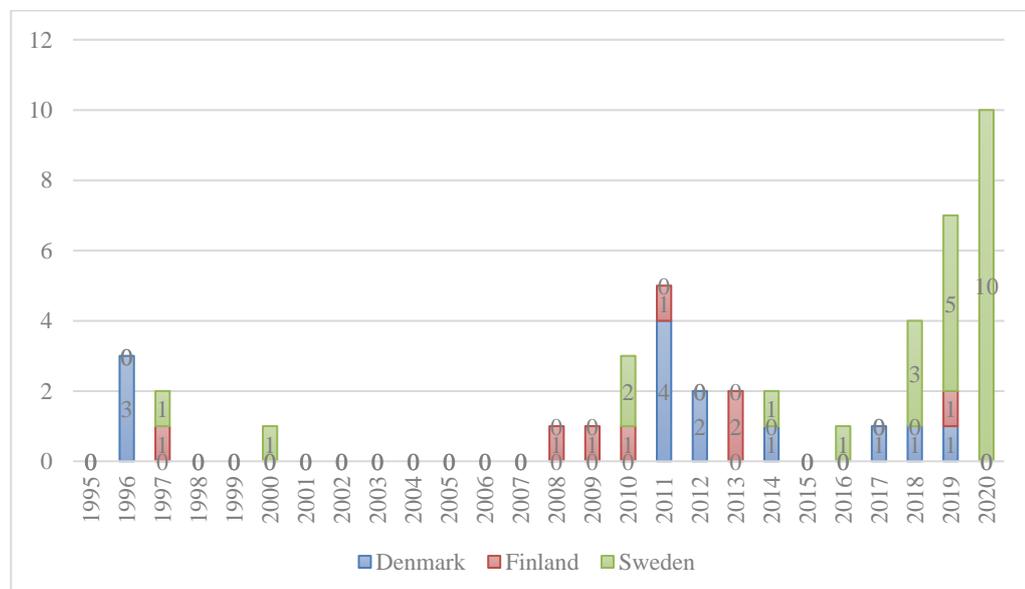
It is important to understand as well that “The result of a study that is based on CPT is a full-fledged ‘recipe’ for making an outcome of interests possible.” (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 81). That recipe, based on a specific combination of causal factors - a necessary configuration - is also reliant on the ‘recipe’ having a particular order for the ingredients to be added. Should that order not be followed, the expected outcome might not happen. This is when the concept of evolutionary contingency, which was already explained on the methodology chapter, comes into play on this study. It is not enough to simply have the ingredients. You also need to have them in the correct order so that the recipe can work.

That brings us to the way on which the process of Europeanisation can be actually traced, which is through the causal chain formed by the different conditions coming together in specific orders. For the Europeanisation of MS as a result of usage of EU GI schemes, the causal chain of conditions and events should be as it follows:

Joining the EU → Obtaining knowledge of the EU GI scheme → EU AGRI promotion of the scheme → EU AGRI mini conferences → MS adequacies → GI Certifications → Europeanisation

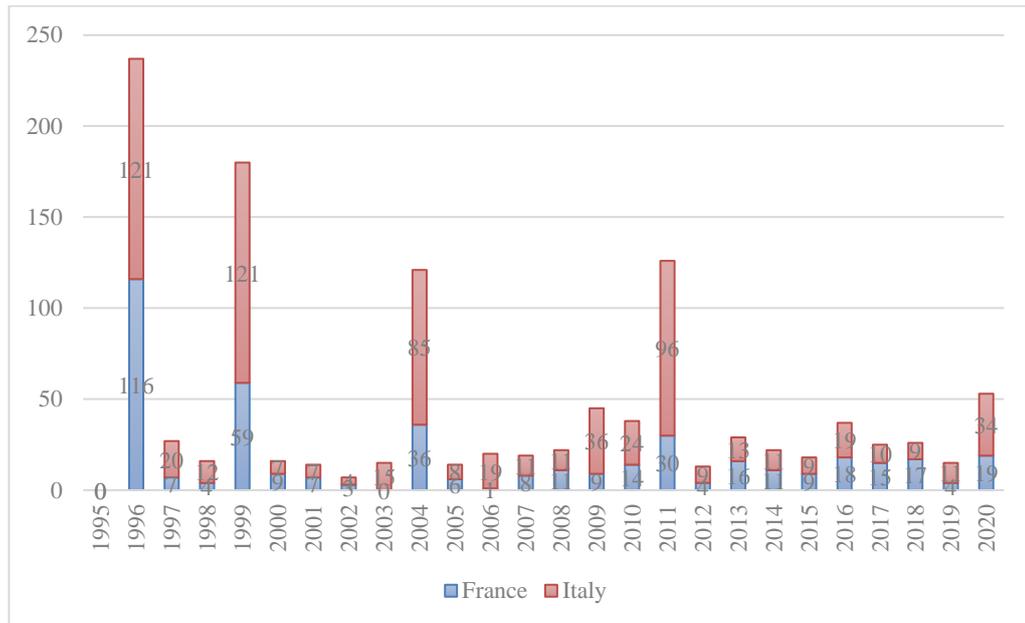
4.3.1 - The figures and evolution of the GI products certifications

Graph 11: PDO and PGI in the Nordic EU countries – yearly entries



Source: European Union, 2020

Graph 12: PDO and PGI in France and Italy over time – yearly entries



Source: European Union, 2020

The previous charts illustrate the evolution of the usage of GI schemes in the EU, both in France and Italy, and in the Nordic EU countries over the time-period covered from 1995 to 2020.

Of specific interest to the analysis of the second question proposed, it is interesting to realise that some of the Nordic countries have not developed in the same way as Sweden, even though they have been presented with the same mechanisms at the same time. Up until the year of 2018, the figures of GI certificates throughout the Nordic EU countries was pretty similar even among all of the nations of the region, but over the past three years (2018, 2019, and 2020) Sweden has experienced a surge on the number of applications and registers, setting it apart from the other countries of the same group. In fact, in those three years alone Sweden has tripled the number of PDO and PGI registered and applied to.

Through CPT it is possible to make an inference as to why this is the case. Taking the causal chain designed for the study of Europeanisation (Joining the EU → Obtaining knowledge of the EU GI scheme → EU AGRI promotion of the scheme → EU AGRI mini conferences → MS adequacies → GI Certifications → Europeanisation), one can build a narrative that ties all of the conditions together, making an explanation possible.

The storyline for the Europeanisation of Sweden in light of the GI certificates begins in 1995 with the entering of Sweden into the EU. Just after that, Sweden began its journey into having its first GI recognition in 1997, two years after accession into the EU. The process, which was intended for a PGI certification for the *Svecia* cheese led to the creation of domestic institutions that would certify and evaluate the status of producers of said cheese domestically and would be responsible for forwarding the application to the European Commission. Once that was done, the cheese would be certified and Sweden would already have a higher level of Europeanisation than it did before applying to the GI seal.

From 2018 on, the EU Commission began a process of mini conferences that would visit different countries of the EU aiming at the promotion of the work of the DG AGRI with different sets of stakeholders, producers, and cooperatives. In 2020, the year on which Sweden was visited by such an event, the greatest number of applications for GI protections were filed, indicating that the mini conference in Sweden was a smoking gun.

As for the confession aspect of the causal chain, one could easily check the websites dedicated to each recognised product and see on the specifications of the products why it is that they are contenders for GI recognition. As an example, the website dedicated to the Swedish PDO *Hånnlamb* there is plenty of information on the specifics of the products, along with some testimonials from people who have had the chance to try the products (Hånnlamb, 2020).

The tools provided by the CPT approach, associated with some of the realisations from the previous COV study on the first research question give room to a broader analysis on the effects of the EU on its Member States on the domestic level, which comes by the name of Europeanisation. To be precise, the obtaining of a GI certificate in the EU level is a process that involves many levels of Europeanisation.

The first would be the mere act of joining the EU and following the *acquis communautaire*. The second one would be the interest in having a product certified under the GI scheme. A third aspect of Europeanisation would be making the necessary changes domestically so that the GI scheme can work. The EU GI scheme is thus responsible not for one, but at least 3 levels of further Europeanisation to the MS that wish to be active in the mechanism.

5 Conclusion

In the beginning of this project, the aim was to try to understand some of the reasons behind the uneven distribution of the GI certificates across different regions of the European Union. As the studies progressed, other layers to the issue of Geographical Indications began to appear and introduce different aspects to the issue that were not considered beforehand.

The first realisation that happened was that there was a very strong connection between the historical development of the concept of Geographical Indications itself and the development of the European Union's very own mechanism available to the protection and certification of regional products. This realisation led the research into Historical Institutionalism to analyse the development of the concept of GI, and of the mechanisms of protection themselves.

The tools and theoretical prism of Historical Institutionalism made possible to understand how the GI scheme, which is to be considered an institution itself, developed overtime on a constant flow of increased institutionalisation that sparked from a parasite infestation in the vineyards of France in the late 19th Century culminating in the current sophisticated mechanism known as the EU GI scheme

The fact that the EU is not the original envisions of the Geographical Indications or Intellectual Property concepts is also an area where the institutional development of such ideas can be seen happening under the light of Historical Institutionalism. Institutions such as WIPO, GATT and the WTO are also responsible for the current standards of the statues of how to deal with GI in the whole world. Documents such as the TRIPS agreement are proof of that.

Once the link between the previous schemes available, especially the French AOC, and the EU GI was understood, it was possible to turn to Co-Variational Analysis to make sense of the uneven distribution of the certificates itself in the EU by comparing France and Italy - the most developed countries of the EU when it comes to the usage of GI - to the EU Nordic countries - an extremely underdeveloped region on the matter of GI certifications - through the analysis of the interaction of control variables and independent variables.

The findings of such experiment were that a combination of no previous GI system prior to entering the EU allied to conditions of the agricultural sector that are unfavourable to the developing of a vibrant and diverse sector are reasons enough to having fewer products available for regional protection and certification by schemes of Geographical Indication.

From the interviews conducted, other interesting aspects arose that could be explored in future research regarding the number of GI products in different regions of the EU as well. Among those reasons one of particular significance is the cultural aspect of food and the value given by different societies to the rituals of eating. There are probably links between countries with well-known rich gastronomical heritages and traditions to the number of GI accredited to those nations.

As for the issues arising from the concept of Europeanisation and the links that are possible to be made tying those to the GI schemes, the research was able to identify at least three. The first one related to following the rules of the EU soon after accession to the bloc, the so-called *acquis communautaire*. The simple interest in adhering to the EU GI schemes by producers, food cooperatives and associations is another kind of Europeanisation that is observable. Finally, the changes introduced in a country due to the adequations made necessary domestically in order to properly address all phases of the application process for a GI and the subsequent fiscalisation of the products under an EU label are another example of a kind of Europeanisation that has happened.

All those levels on Europeanisation, if followed in the order of the causal chain designed for this study should also allow us to understand even a bit more on the current state of the distribution of the GI schemes across the EU. Future research could be conducted under a CPT approach following the same groups of nations explored on this work - or other different groups, if so desired - trying to shed even more light on the issue of the first research question, the uneven distribution of GI certificates across the EU.

Fact is that there is not one single answer to the question of why the distribution of GI varies so much among different regions of the EU. The answers given on this study are sufficient for the analysis of two specific scenarios, the one covered by on the one hand by Italy and France, and on the other hand by the Nordic EU countries. If one were to analyse the same question but addressing areas such as the countries of the Eastern Enlargement of the EU from 2004, and the Iberic Peninsula, for instance, the variables and conditions chosen for this study might not be applicable.

The results achieved on this research through the theories and methods chosen are sufficient for the specific questions asked on this project. But it is an exciting and still rather unexplored research area, with plenty of opportunities and angles still to dig into.

Summary

Since 1992 the European Union has introduced and put into practice its Geographical Indications scheme. Such scheme is an attempt by the Union to protect products that have on their name some characteristic inherent from one specific region, being that region a village, city, state or even a country on rare occasions.

The system of Geographical Indications itself is not one that was invented by the European Union. The current European Union scheme is the reflection of a long and slow process that has its roots on an infestation of a plague, *phylloxera*, that nearly brought the French winemaking tradition to an end in the second half of the 19th century.

Once the infestation was dealt with, a long institutional development period that began with the consolidation of a cooperative of champagne producers was initiated, leading up to the creation of the French Geographical Indications scheme in 1935, the *Appellation d'origine contrôlée* (AOC), a pioneer on national legislations regarding the protection of Geographical Indications on the national level.

Soon other countries in Europe began to set up their own national systems for the protection of such Geographical Indications, and eventually the European Union would design its very own mechanism, allowing for all of its Member States to have their products protected and certified should they want to.

What followed in the European Union sphere is that not all countries enjoyed the system with the same enthusiasm as France did, for example. This has led to great levels of discrepancy and unevenness on the number of Geographical Indications certifications throughout the European Union.

This work is the result of analysis related to this unevenness on the distribution of Geographical Indications throughout the EU. The focus of this piece of work is on two research questions, the first one dealing with the uneven distribution of certificates itself and the second one posing the question of whether or not the use of Geographical Indications certifications is a mean to obtain greater Europeanisation.

In order to do that, this piece of work relied on the theoretical frameworks provided by Historical Institutionalism and theory on Europeanisation. Historical Institutionalism is used to go through the development of the scheme of Geographical

Indications designed by the European Union authorities based on the idea that it is not an original concept, rather the expansion of systems that were already available before (such as the French AOC) and many other international instruments available at the time.

The concept of Europeanisation is explored on the work in a sense that whenever a Member State of the European Union wants to use such mechanisms, it will undoubtedly go through some sort of Europeanisation process. Being it because the Member State is using some European legislation that will require domestic changes, because it might be a new concept introduced to the Member State and so on and so forth.

To analyse the uneven distribution of the Geographical Indications certificates across the EU the methodological framework known as Co-Variational Analysis (COV) was used. This small-N research method allows for the comparison of cases with similar registers on the variables that are to make a difference on the expected outcomes. For the purposed of this research, independent variables (causes) such as the existence of prior systems of GI recognitions and in different Member States, and the conditions of the agricultural landscape scenario on different member states were used.

As for the second research question proposed, related to the effects of the Geographical Indications schemes on the Europeanisation levels on different Member States, a more comprehensive approach was necessary. For such, the Causal-Process Tracing method was used. On this method, comprehensive storylines are built in an effort to explain what are the different and varied conjunctions of factors that are necessary for an outcome to come into existence.

On this research, causes such as availability of products to be certified, membership of the EU, previous Geographical Indications schemes, agricultural conditions, meetings with the Directorate-general responsible for the Geographical Indications scheme in the European Commission and familiarity with EU provisions related to the theme were all factors of importance for the existence of the effects being looked at.

The results of this second question were positive to the role of GI as a mean of improving Europeanisation levels of countries, given that they follow the ‘recipes’ formulated by the causal chains designed during the analysis.

The research also pointed to some other points where future research could be conducted, including the analysis of the uneven distribution of Geographical Indications in the EU on different areas that those observed on this study in order to check if the results of this research would be applicable to other regions of the EU or nor. Another

area indicated for future research on the theme is related to other causes to the uneven distribution of Geographical Indications certificates, including more subjective aspects such as the cultural attachment and importance given to food and ingredients in different cultural arrangements throughout the EU.

As the area of Geographical Indications is relatively understudied, there are plenty of different possible paths for future research on it, and those have the potential to brighten up even more the reasons why there are so many discrepancies on the distribution of such protections and certifications across the EU.

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Maison Champagne
Salon International de l'Agriculture
Vinho Verde
WIPO
WTO

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Interview with MEP Iuliu Winkler

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Date: 17th November 2020

Length: 30'27''

Interviewee: Iuliu Winkler (IW)

Occupation: Member of the European Parliament, Committee on International Trade

Interviewer: Ivan Teles Campos (IC)

Location: Lund, Sweden and Brussels, Belgium (Via skype)

Transcribed by: Ivan Teles Campos

IW: Good morning!

IC: Good morning sir. Hum, yes. Is it ok if I record this session so that I can use it later on the, on the thesis?

IW: Yes, you can record it.

IC: Ok, thank you.

IW: Just when, when, hum, asking, of course when you ask any questions that I'd like to respond just bear in mind that the GI issue is basically an agricultural issue. It has of course trade aspects. What I work on is the trade aspect of Geographical Indications.

IC: Yes, I see.

IW: Ok. Perfect, please.

IC: No problem about that.

IW: I just last night read your paper and congratulations, it's a very good paper.

IC: Oh, thank you, haha. It's in the early stages so far but I'm trying to get as much information as I can.

IW: It's interesting that you got interested in this issue but it's a quite, hum, important issue and it's quite big issue for the European Union. So, it's interesting and congratulations for your work.

IC: Oh, thank you. Thank you very much. So, just to begin this, the work with geographical indications, is it something that you were interested in before coming into the European Parliament? Was it something that you knew about?

IW: Well yes, I knew about, hum, also before coming to the European Parliament. As I told you just before it has two aspects, this issue. One aspect is the essence itself of geographical indications and this is hum, hum, agricultural policies issue. It is a marketing issue. It is, hum, an issue coming from traditions of some communities and Member States of the European Union. Before coming to the European Parliament, which was in 2007, I was a minister for trade for my country. Of course Romania and all the other, hum, Eastern European states did not use the Geographical Indications system because it was something that, as I told you, is typical for the, for the European Union so we adopted this system after joining the EU, all the Member States in central and eastern Europe. Hum, as minister for trade I was aware about these aspects but I did not work on them because they did not constitute any, hum, any condition or any issue in our accession to the European Union in 2007 and before 2007. Now how I came to be rapporteur on the Geographical Indications, hum, agreement with China is not that because I am a Geographical Indications expert but because I work on China and I'm the rapporteur, as we call it in the European Parliament, so I am responsible, hum, for the EU-China relations and as such, for some years already, I was working on this agreement also because it has such multi-layered importance, it is also an agreement important from political point of view, from economic point of view, and anyway it is the first ever trade agreement between the European Union and China, so of course it is important. So this is how I came to work in this agreement, hum, being the rapporteur on EU-China relations.

IC: I see. Ah, so you would say that your general line of work in the European Parliament when it comes to Geographical Indications is basically talking about trade agreements with other countries.

IW: Hum, trade agreement with China.

IC: With China, specifically, ok.

IW: Yes, I am the vice, one of the vice chairs of the International Trade Committee, and again, I am responsible for the relations among EU and China.

IC: I see. Hum, but would you say that the Geographical Indications programme as a whole in the Parliament itself, is it something that is usually still discussed or only when there is a product that is trying to get recognition from some other countries?

IW: Look, I'm not a member of the "agri" committee, so agricultural committee of the European Parliament. I'm sure that my colleagues at the "agri" committee are discussing maybe more often about this. I don't think it's a daily topic...

IC: Uhum.

IW: ... because, hum, because Geographical Indications as such they are recognised by the European Union. They have a history which you have quite nicely caught in your

paper that you are working on it. Hum now I think we have more than 3000 geographical indications in the European Union recognised. Some of them are widely recognised in the whole world and it is about those that have a very specific economic value, they have a trade value. Geographical indications are, hum, are labels, are signs which are hum, hum, built on reputation, built on marketing value, hum, so, hum, they are important and, hum, the problem is that, hum, some countries, I give you some examples outside China, for example in our talks with Australia and New Zealand the Geographical Indications chapter is a very difficult chapter, and why is it so? Because usually the United States and big part of the world are building on the so-called trademark system. So basically, what they say, hum, you can manufacture Coca Cola wherever you want in the world from Siberia to New Zealand if you have the recipe of Coca Cola. What does Geographical Indication say? It says 'ah, but in order to manufacture champagne, you have to be in the Champagne region of France because there is not only a recipe to the champagne but it's also, hum, local knowledge, hum, hum, there is local climate specifics, local soil specific for the grapes from which you make the champagne so you cannot make champagne in Uzbekistan, you have to be in the region of Champagne in order to manufacture champagne. So, this is the difference. No, I would not say this is a daily topic in the European Parliament. It comes up whenever we have, hum, a trade agreement. Probably in the "agri" committee it comes always when there are, I don't know, hum, *changements* or something in the system but I would not be able to tell you about this because I am not working in the "agri" committee.

IC: Ah, yes. But, hum, you said that in Romania, which is the country you used to work for before, right?

IW: Yes, I'm elected in Romania. I was minister of trade for the Romanian government between 2005 and 2007 before our accession to the European Union. And before I was member of the Parliament of Romania and so on.

IC: Yes. And as Romania did not use this kind of certification before acceding to the EU, do you feel like since Romania joined the EU that this is something which the country is interested in or is it something that doesn't really make any difference for the people in Romania?

IW: No, it does make importance also for the people and also for the producers. My country and the producers are interested in this system. I would say that in the last years, I couldn't tell you the figures but you can find them...

IC: Yes, I can find them.

IW:... But anyway, several products and several drinks have been certified and now they have, they possess Geographical Indication which is recognised by the European Commission. It is maybe mostly about some *agrifood*, sausages and cheese, and things like these, but also very important for the wine producers. Romania is a quite important wine producing country. We have beautiful, hum, wineries and valuable wines and some of those wines have been, hum, obtaining Geographical Indication. So, this is a plus for marketing those wines, for selling those wines also abroad and we have, indeed, hum, some wine seals even in China, but we have in Japan, we have in many different regions across the world. So, this is, this is, hum, an important issue. I see that there is interest from on behalf of the producers and, of course, this is something that gradually comes into importance as we are getting older in the European Union.

IC: Uhum. Yeah, because this is one of the things that I am actually, hum, studying for my, for my thesis, hum, the difference of applications in different areas of the EU. As you might have realised from the paper, when you look at countries such as France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, those countries already had a tradition on certifying their products from specific regions before. So, the number of products that they have certified is incredibly bigger than when you compare them to Sweden, which is where I am living right now. Ah, Sweden has only three registered PDO products and is in the process of obtaining certification for another eight. So it would be eleven in total, but when you consider Italy and France, only Italy and France have more 1500 products. Ah, and one of the reasons that I have come up with is as those countries already used Geographical Indications before, it is something that both producers and general public when they are buying something, they pay attention to when they are choosing the products, because they see the European symbol and they know it is, hum, somehow saying that that product has a higher quality than others. Because of tradition, because of the way on which things are being made, and of course, because of the region. Ah, but in countries like Sweden it seems that people are more interested in buying from specific brands, which would be perhaps similar to the trademarking system, ah, and not really paying attention to the region products come from. Ah, and I feel like this is one of the challenges for the countries to actually decide to pursue the Geographical Indications labels and certifications. Would you say that in Romania it's something similar, that people trust more brands than they would trust the region, hum, products come from?

IW: Hum, that's a question for which I think you need marketing studies and you need data because it would not be quite relevant if I answered to your question. I am not a specialist in Romanian consumer, hum, habits or in the changing of consumer habits. I would say that the difference among the states that you mentioned, the France, Italy and the others, hum, well it's understandable since they invented this system. They came up with this system. Also, if you mention those countries, I think you can immediately think of them as very important *agrifood* and drinks producers, while as you think of the Nordic countries I, I... doesn't seem to me that any of the Nordic countries, hum, are famous for their agricultural production. They are famous for various numbers of other things. Hum, also being a trading nation is something that comes, hum, from the history of at least two or three hundred years, so consumer habit is coming also from how the consumer got used to consuming in the last period. This I think does not diminish the value of the Geographical Indications. It's only an issue of habit. It's an issue, if you wish, of promoting products. So, hum, Geographical Indications give you more reasons to promote a product. Just think a little bit of the Belgium beers. I don't know if you like Belgium beers, but there are several hundreds of Belgium beers and all those beers have legends. Building a legend is a very important way to promote a product. Hum, if you go... doesn't come now, but... you remember the Pope, Pope Ratzinger, the previous Pope...

IC: The German one.

IW: Yes, the German one. And I don't remember the name of the very little town which was his home town of Pope Ratzinger, you can find it on google, but I visited that town in the period that Ratzinger was the Pope. And you could find, of course, mentioning of his home, hum, building, his home house, marked on the, on the walls of the house but you could find in the surrounding market, you could find *papst wurst*, you could find *papst bier*, so they were already building this legend "Look, this is the sausage that is the favourite sausage of the Pope! Look this is the beer that is the favourite beer of the Pope".

Coming back to the Belgium beers, hum, all those beers, some of those beers have several hundred years of history. And then it's clear that you can say "but look, we know how to do this because we are doing this for 350 years! We invented the beer!", so this is the legend that sells the product, and this is, I think, very important component. Again, I'm not an agricultural specialist, I'm not a marketing specialist. I work in trade, but I think those are elements you have to consider. So I don't think that having many GIs is an objective in itself. It's... I don't think you can measure a country by the number of GIs. But you can measure the *agrifood* sector of a country by the number of GIs. You can measure tradition, and what is Europe selling? Tradition. Europe is selling history. When you see the Japanese tourists coming, when you see the Chinese tourists coming, when you see the American tourists coming, who are speaking very loudly, of course, always, but they are also coming because they want to discover European history. And champagne, and cognac, Parma ham, and all the others. Those are pieces of European history. So when a Geographical Indication is attributed, then it is important for the community, it is important for the manufacturer, but it is also, I think, important for Europe and for what we call now the "European way of life". Maybe you saw this debate about the future of Europe and our European way of life. I don't know, of course there is a generational gap among you and myself, but anyway the European way of life is also for you, for the very young generation, you are Z, I believe. Yes?

IC: Yes, yes. No, actually I'm from the end of the millennium period because I'm from 1994.

IW: Ah, I see, ok. So anyway, it is, I believe, I think it is important also for your generation that if you want to live in Europe, you don't want to live in Australia. You don't want to live in the United States. We respect them, we love them, but I think also we respect and love our European way of life. And we like it. I mean, it's something distinctive. It's something that that you cannot find in other regions of the world. So, I think a little bit, a little piece of European way of life is also Geographical Indications. And the tradition of manufacturing food and drink.

IC: Wow, this is actually very nice to hear. This aspect of the European way of life and how to, in a way, brand Europe as this region that is talking about history and tradition and discovering those things. This is very, very interesting. Hum, so in the future for the European Union you would say that GI schemes are important in this way but it's always *gonna* come up whenever there is a trade agreement with some other nations in the world.

IW: In trade agreements agriculture is always a very sensitive part because agriculture is about local producers. And basically, everybody in the world is, hum, supporting agriculture in a way or other. We have in the European Union the Common Agricultural Policy, which of course is under heavy changes. Now we have a debate on new Common Agricultural Policy. We just had a vote in the European Parliament, hum, two weeks ago we had 5000 amendments for the new Common Agricultural Policy. So, of course things are changing in the European Union too, it's not something that we should see as static, no! The European Union is not static at all! We just had the Brexit and we will have it at the first of January, hum, definitively. So, which I regret, but it's not my decision. So, hum, so... the European Union is evolving, the consumer habit is evolving, we are consuming in a different way as even last year because coronavirus came and changed our consuming habits. but in this world of, of, of, hum... *agrifood* and of drinks of course, we are speaking now about, hum, about food security and you can imagine that in this new context, also the interests of local producers will be very important. We want to

maintain European agriculture because that is important not only for what we eat and what we drink, it is important also for the environment, it is important for the landscape, it is important for our forests and so on and so on. But I imagine that even in a changing Agricultural Policy, I'm.. I'm... I would say I'm... I'm rather sure that in a changing Agricultural Policy the Geographical Indications will have their place because they are important for our local communities. And, hum, I don't think I wish a world in the European Union in which 25 years from now everybody will be living in the big cities. I don't imagine cities then themselves wanting all of them to be living in big cities. I imagine that, hum, there are tens of thousands of people who love nature, who love the agricultural world. Of course they want to be ensured about their security and stability. That's why we have to come with a system of subvention, of, of maintaining the agricultural activity. Which we are doing through the Common Agricultural Policy. Hum, when we discuss trade agreements with different countries, we are confronting different views, that's normal. I mean, people from Australia, people from the United States are not thinking identically as European people. So it's, it's clear that the issue of agriculture is a sensitive issue in the free trade agreements, it's an issue to debate and discuss about. That's why we are debating eight years, for example, our negotiating teams are discussing for eight or more years some agricultural agreements, and I could give you the example of Mercosur. It's not about geographical indications, but it is about agriculture. That Mercosur agreement, you know, the agreement with Latin American countries, it is so complex in the European Union because several regions of Europe and several countries of Europe, hum, think that this will be disadvantageous for our farmers. They think that imports of meat and imports of other agricultural products from the Latin American countries will influence negatively the chances and the income of our agricultural producers. Of course, we don't want to become protectionists. I myself I'm supporting the Mercosur agreement because I read very carefully the figures. But you have to know that people, the public, is not deciding based on figures. It is deciding based on emotions. That's why Geographical Indications, based on emotion, is something that is working. That's why the Mercosur agreement, for example, is viewed as something very difficult. Because deeper, based on emotion, they decided "no, I don't want an agreement with these countries which will flood the European market with their agricultural, hum, hum, hum, products".

IC: Especially when you consider countries that are big producers like Brazil and Argentina.

IW: Of course, and especially when you consider the big problems that we have there. The Amazonas, the environmental problems, and so on. So, these are, these are always complex issues. A free trade agreement is, is a, is a very, very complex issue (inaudible) with a very well-defined partner, we've had huge debates with our agreement with Canada. And you would say that Canada is a like-minded partner, but of course we have different interests, because a free trade agreement is basically about money. It's about profit, it's about expanding the market. Everybody wants to expand the market for their own producers and, of course, at the same time everybody wants to defend its own internal market vis-à-vis the producers of the other so that when you want to have a trade agreement, if you wish it, you have to have a political decision of wanting the trade agreement and then you have to have a very good negotiating teams in order to promote what we call the offensive interest, that is, my interest to conquer the market of my partner, and defensive interest, which is my interest to, hum, to protect my own producers. And the Geographical Indications system is a very important tool in this, in this sense but,

once again, and I finish here, agricultural policy is always a huge contentious issue in all the free trade agreements. The objections come usually from important... from those Member States in which agriculture has an important role in the economy. I would say it's not typical for northern countries because northern countries usually are the "free traders". Sweden, your country, is the, hum, now I would say after the UK leaving the European Union, Sweden is the number one free trader Member State in the European Union. But it is equally important that we have, hum, agricultural producing countries like Spain, like Italy, like others, who, like France, who are always very cautious in the field of agriculture in trade agreements.

IC: Yeah, a lot to think about.

IW: Yeah, and a lot to read, but I tell you: it's trade. Trade is building the world. Trade has built empires; you know very well. And trade is the motor of the world today also. Not only the motor of globalisation, but the engine of global development and growth itself.

IC: Yes, absolutely. And then talking specifically about the Chinese agreement that was just voted by the Parliament, when it comes to products from China that are certified in China and they're now going to be recognised in the European Union as well, hum, how is this recognition going to work? Are they going to take the European labels like PGI, PDO or is the Chinese system going to be introduced to the European market?

IW: No, it is a system of reciprocal recognition. So, our Chinese partners, they have built, in China, a system for attributing the Geographical Indications which is equivalent to our system of attributing Geographical Indication. They have, of course, different products, so what you'll be able to find in the European supermarkets in some time, that will be tea varieties, for example. The Chinese are famous for their teas, but also for their rice, and also for their special oils, so you will find those products. Of course you will not know them at the beginning. Cause there is a small chance that somebody will know 10 or fifteen varieties of Chinese tea. Maybe yes, maybe that is the case for some consumers, but anyway, not knowing them but seeing that they will be labelled with the Geographical, the Chinese Geographical Indication sign, probably this will be a plus when you decide to buy Chinese tea, you will look for a Chinese tea with Geographical Indication labelling. Or, of course there is the problem of counterfeiting. Because Geographical Indications system is also about protecting products against counterfeiting, and I don't know if you use the goji berries. Maybe you are familiar with them.

IC: Yes, I know them.

IW: they are grown from a variety of sources, maybe the Chinese goji berry is the best. I don't know, but maybe the Chinese are the best. But anyway, Chinese say "yes, our goji berry is the best in the world". so maybe you will be convinced as a producer, maybe not, but anyway, you could find protection against counterfeiting. Because you can find a product with any labelling, and you never know if it is a counterfeiting or not. And you, as a hum, well... a mindful consumer, probably you and many people from your generation are mindful about, hum, you know, child work, slave work, blood diamonds, hum, pollution and so on, so you wish to have products which have a recognition system that those products are not manufactured using child work, are not manufactured by polluting the environment, or are not manufactured by using slave labour or whatever else. So this is a tendency which is conquering the world, the geographical indications piece is just a

little piece of this big tendency, but it's very much mindfulness, is very important. I wish that my grand grandson also will have an Earth to inhabit. And, you know, fresh air, clean waters and beautiful landscapes. But we have to do something, it will not be by itself. We have to do something in this respect, and probably it's not only nostalgia speaking of me, as my generation representative, but also I think that there are many in the young generation who wish to preserve the so-called, and I would like to finish with this, who wish to preserve the so-called European way of life, and again, those little pieces are pieces of our European way of life.

IC: Well, this is fascinating, I really enjoyed listening to all of this. Just one final information. Ah, would you know of someone in the agricultural department that I could reach out to, so that I could have a talk like this as well?

IW: Oh, look, I will think of it and I will send you. My assistant Tudor, you have been in touch with him.

IC: Yes, yes.

IW: I will speak with Tudor and we will try to find to you to speak with, ok?

IC: Ok, thank you very much. It's been a pleasure to talk to you, and I hope you have a nice week in Brussels.

IW: Ok, Ok. Bye bye.

INTERVIEW NOTES

Date: 11th December 2020

Length: 62'10''

Interviewee: Anonymous

Occupation: European DG Agri of the European Union official

Interviewer: Ivan Teles Campos

Notes taken by: Ivan Teles Campos

- Interviewee wishes to remain anonymous
- EU COM DG - In charge of the recognition of Geographical Indication.
- Whatever is on public domain or made public by the EU can be used as a source.
- GI are much more than certifications:
 - Product certifications have to be followed in MS nationally before being able to have an EU certification;
 - Essence of Geographical Indications is the regional recognition
 - Bottom-up process (Producers → GI groups → National Authorities → EU DG AGR);
 - Once the product is registered, it has to be protected in all of the EU;
 - Protection of names is the essence of the system.
- WTO TRIPS Agreement is the most important international GI legislation.
 - Art. 22
 - Art. 23 (specific for wines)
- The uneven distribution and why it happens is also a question that the EU asks themselves as well.
 - Previous tradition of GI schemes is definitely a factor
 - Food tradition in different countries, how each nation perceives the dining experience as a whole in different countries is a factor as well.
 - Importance of getting together and sharing thoughts and experiences around the dining table is a factor.
 - Valuing good quality food
- Countries that have been in the EU for a longer period of time have also had more time and opportunity to apply to such schemes.
- Producers produce what consumers buy.
- There are funds in the EU that can be used on the promotion of the GI system. Money goes from the EU to the Member States producing organisations and it is up to them to decide what to do with the funds.
- The DG itself does not have staff or funds to go to each MS solely to promote the GI schemes.
- The European Commission is always represented at the two biggest fairs and conferences (Paris and Berlin) by the DG SANTE (Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety).
- Every year the Commission also attends seven national agricultural fairs throughout the EU.

- All-year around there are *mini conferences* with different agriculture stakeholders from different MS of the EU. On those mini conferences, topics such as the EU GI schemes will be discussed.
- Over the past three years, Sweden was one of the countries visited by such mini conferences, in February 2020. Just before the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country.
- One of the contents of the meeting with producers and cooperatives was on how to file the applications for GI protections
- Agricultural Product Quality Policy Committee
 - How information from within the DG AGRI is spread and also feedback from actions taken by the DG AGRI.