

# Progresses of Romania in the field of traditional products

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## **ABSTRACT**

In Romania there are many products that have potential to be applied in accordance with Regulation (EC) 1151/2012 on the certification of traditional products. However, Romanian traditional products do not have a good representation in the EU market, imposing such measures on their certification and promotions. One reason is the lack of association of farmers and procedures that require a long time for the EU attestation of traditional products. In this paper is presented the situation of the certification of traditional products in Romania, as well as its evolution during 2005 - 2013, each food category.

Key-words: traditional products, promotion, European Union

## **INTRODUCTION**

The producers of traditional products represent an important asset for the EU rural economy and particularly for the less-favored areas, both by increasing farmers' income and the stability of the rural population in these areas.

Quality is an issue for every farmer and buyer, whether dealing with commodities produced to basic standards or with the high-end quality products in which Europe excels and EU farmers must build on high quality reputation to sustain competitiveness and profitability<sup>1</sup>.

A new EU Regulation on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs entered into force at the beginning of 2013, having a more simplified regime for several quality schemes by putting them under one single legal instrument and it creates a more robust framework for the protection and promotion of quality agricultural products, its main key elements being the followings<sup>2</sup>:

- more coherence and clarity to the EU quality schemes;
- a reinforcement of the existing scheme for protected designations of origin and geographical indications (PDOs and PGIs);
- overhauling the traditional specialties guaranteed scheme (TSGs);

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/index_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Idem

- laying down a new framework for the development of optional quality terms to provide consumers with further information, it creates and protects the optional quality term "mountain product".

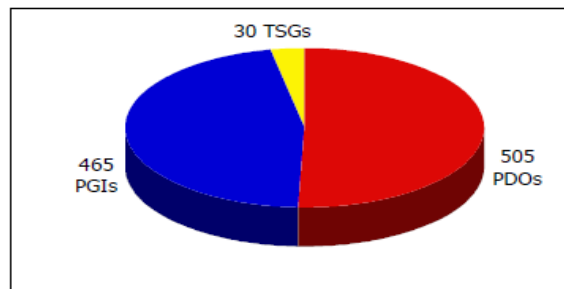
**Table no. 1 – Situation of traditional products registration at EU level by countries**

Nr.	COUNTRY	QUALITY SYSTEM/ number of products			TG
		I.G.P.	D.O.P.	S.T.G.	
1.	France	127	125	1	253
2	Italy	114	183	2	299
3	Germany	86	34	-	120
4	Spain	91	112	4	207
5	Romania	1	-	-	1

*Source: data processing from European Commission*

Traditional food products (TFP) are an important part of European culture, identity, and heritage. In order to maintain and expand the market share of TFP, further improvement in safety, health, or convenience is needed by means of different innovations<sup>3</sup>.

**Graph nr. 1 - The share of PDO, PGI and TSG in all products made in EU**



*Source: Eurostat*

Of the total registration of EU products, it is found that over 50% of these are products of origin, followed by products with PGI by 46.5% and on the last place are the products that were obtained by traditional production methods with about 3.5%.

### 1. Traditional products registered at national level

At national level there are a number of regulations on traditional products, namely: MARD Order no. 690/2004 and Order 724/2013 . According to the two regulations, traditional product is a agro-food product made on the national territory and using local raw materials, which has the

<sup>3</sup> Luis Guerrero, Maria Dolors Guàrdia, Joan Xicola, Wim Verbeke, Filiep Vanhonacker, Sylwia Zakowska-Biemans, Marta Sajdakowska, Claire Sulmont-Rossé, Sylvie Issanchou, Michele Contel, M. Luisa Scalvedi, Britt Signe Granli, Margrethe Hersleth - Consumer-driven definition of traditional food products and innovation in traditional foods. A qualitative cross-cultural study , *Appetite*, Volume 52, Issue 2, April 2009, Pages 345-354

composition of food additives, which have a traditional recipe, a production and / or processing and traditional technological process that distinguishes it from similar products of the same category. Also, traditionalism is the element or set of elements in which a product is distinguished from other similar products of the same category; traditionalism cannot be limited to a qualitative or quantitative composition or to a mode of production established by Community or national legislation or by voluntary standards, however this does not apply if the regulation or standard that has been established to define the traditionalism a product.

**Table no. 2 - Situation of Romanian traditional products registration during 2005 – 2013**

1.	Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 at 30 June
2.	No. of products	280	695	774	325	450	279	1050	438	111
	%	6,3	15,7	17,5	7,3	10,2	6,3	23,8	9,9	2,5
<b>TOTAL</b>										<b>4402</b>

*Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development*

In the period 2005 - 2013 were registered as traditional Romanian products a number of 4402 products. The main document was the basis for certification of traditional products has been the Decree of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development no. 690/2004.

In Romania there are many areas that are still producing agro-foods products in regions with traditional production methods that could acquire protection at national and / or Community level. It appears that most traditional products were registered in 2011 (23,8%), 2007 (17,5%) and 2006 (15,7%).

From the total of 4402 traditional products certified and nationally registered the highest number is owned by meat products (1541), followed by dairy products (1535), bakery products (750). Drinks category are recorded (285), vegetables and fruit (jams, jams) - 193 fish and traditional products - (11).

**Table no. 3 – Situation of meat products registration by counties, 2013**

Sibiu	233
Braşov	139
Argeş	127
Maramureş	119
Botoşani	107

*Source: data processing from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development*

Regarding the registration of meat products, it can be seen that Sibiu county has the highest number of certificates because of its potential and the cultural diversion. On the second place it is ranks Brasov, a county placed in the same region as Sibiu.

**Table no. 4 – Situation of dairy products registration by counties, 2013**

Argeş	398
Sibiu	245
Braşov	134
Maramureş	107
Mureş	97

*Source: data processing from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development*

Milk and dairy products represent one of the excellences in the culinary tradition of Romania meeting different preparation technics. Like meat products, it can be seen that counties with high altitudes and potential in the breeding sector rank the first places.

**Table no. 5 – Situation of bakery products registration by counties, 2013**

Sibiu	172
Maramureş	103
Sălaş	81
Alba	80
Covasna	55

*Source: data processing from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development*

Bakery products represent for the Romanian population a sacred product and counties where traditionalism is more pronounced have the highest number of products. The bakery products from in these counties have as raw-material not only grain, but as well potato.

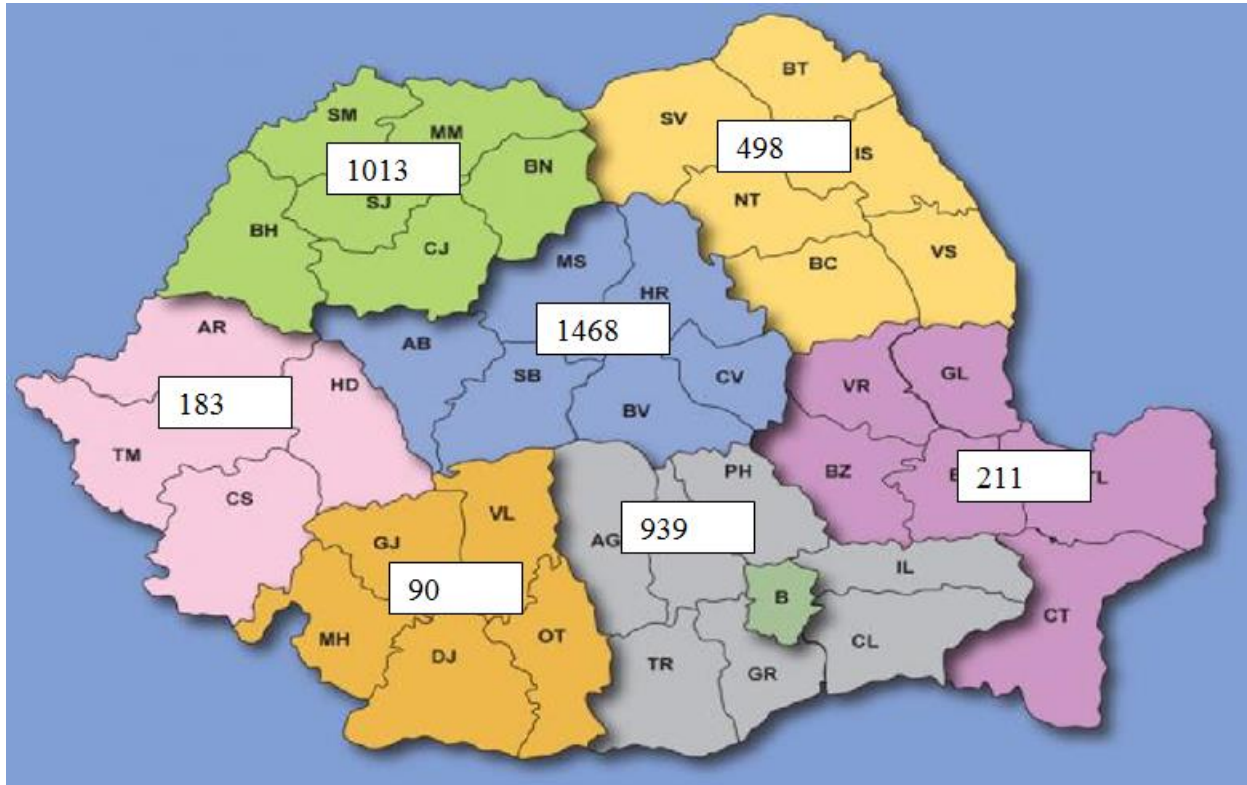
**Table no. 6 – Situation of traditional products registration by counties, 2013**

Sibiu	685
Argeş	641
Maramureş	395
Satu Mare	319
Braşov	300
Botoşani	165

*Source: data processing from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development*

Sibiu county has the highest number of traditional products and beyond meat, bakery and dairy, additional products like vegetables, fruits, magiun and deserts are made here.

**Picture no. 1 – Distribution of traditional products by regions, 2013**



*Source: data processing from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development*

By regions, it is noticed that in the Central Region, 33% of all registered products are concentrated, Sibiu being the most important county placing the region on the first place. On the second place we can find North-West Region with 23%, followed by Outh-Est Region with 21% from all registered products.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

For the agro-food producers the national regulations require to adapt to new market conditions, and finding the tools that allow them to increase the market value of the products, while ensuring the protection of consumers against improper practices and guaranteeing fair trade. It is required a revision of the national list of traditional products that were registered in the previous period in order to identify the right number and quality of the products on the market. As well, it is required a revision of the national legislation regarding the attestation of traditional products as well as the technical inspection. Clarifying and improving the conditions for registration of products it is necessary for protecting the producers and consumers. One of the most important issue is to adapt the requirements to the EU legislation and introduce the European concepts of traceability. Romania's alignment with European and international requirements has become a necessity and is generated by the new demands from EU and by the financial crisis. Connection to the international systems of quality assurance and food safety requires the development and implementation of traceability systems in the food sector, particularly important for our economy.

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