Geographical Indications for Craft and Industrial Products

Legal Studies on the New EU Regime under Regulation (EU) 2023/2411

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II. Evidence in Applications for Geographical Indications — Izabela Konopacka
III. Murano Glass and the New EU Regime: From Legal Framework to Professional Opportunities — Giulio Zarro
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Our goal as the FBE Commission on Intellectual Property is to ensure that European lawyers are well-equipped to advise on the registration, protection and enforcement of geographical indications for craft and industrial products — and that they do so with professional rigour and a firm grasp of the rapidly evolving regulatory framework.

INTRODUCTION

A NEW CHAPTER IN EU INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW

The entry into force of Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 on the protection of geographical indications for craft and industrial products marks a decisive turning point in European intellectual property law. For the first time, a unified EU-wide system confers enforceable, origin-based protection on craft and industrial products — from handblown glass and hand-woven textiles to worked stone, porcelain and metal goods — whose reputation and quality are essentially attributable to the place and people of their making.

The gap this Regulation fills was long acknowledged. While wines, spirits, agricultural products and foodstuffs have benefited from harmonised EU GI protection for decades, craft and industrial producers were left to navigate a patchwork of national systems, trade mark law, unfair competition rules and sector-specific measures. The result was legal uncertainty, regulatory fragmentation, and inadequate protection against misappropriation — both within the internal market and in third-country markets. The new regime, built around a centralised registration procedure administered by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), addresses these deficiencies in a structural and lasting way.

This collection of legal studies, prepared by the FBE Commission on Intellectual Property, is intended to serve as a reference resource for European lawyers entering or deepening their practice in this area. The four articles that follow address the pillars of the new regime in sequence: its scope of protection and procedural architecture; the evidentiary standards applicable to applications; the application of the framework to a paradigmatic product — Murano glass; and the position of applicants and producers from third countries within the new system and the international framework surrounding it.

The articles are the work of practitioners and specialists who have engaged directly with the Regulation, with EUIPO practice, and with the national implementation processes underway in various Member States. The Commission is grateful to all contributors for their commitment and scholarship. It is our hope that this collection will assist lawyers in recognising the professional opportunities the new regime presents, and in fulfilling their role as advisers, representatives and system-builders in what promises to be a significant and growing area of European intellectual property practice.

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OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

THE FOUR ARTICLES AND THEIR SCOPE

The present collection brings together four original legal studies on the new EU regime for geographical indications for craft and industrial products under Regulation (EU) 2023/2411. The articles are conceived as a coherent sequence, each addressing a distinct dimension of the regime, while remaining self-contained for the reader who approaches a specific topic.

- Article I, by Joana Domingues, provides a systematic analysis of the Regulation's scope of protection, the categories of entitled applicants, and the two-tier procedural architecture combining national and Union-level examination before the EUIPO. It constitutes the foundational piece of the collection and is the recommended starting point for readers new to the framework.
- Article II, by Izabela Konopacka, addresses the evidentiary standards applicable to GI applications. It identifies the categories of supporting documentation typically assembled in successful applications, examines the treatment of reputation evidence, and sets out a practical checklist for lawyers preparing application files.
- Article III, by Giulio Zarro, uses the case of Murano glass as a laboratory for understanding how the new regime interacts with pre-existing national and regional protection systems. It traces the current legal architecture governing Murano glass in Italy and analyses the professional opportunities that the possible registration of a 'Murano glass' CIGI would open for the legal profession.
- Article IV, by Karolina Wilamowska, examines the position of applicants from third countries under the Regulation and situates the new CIGI regime within the broader framework of international GI law, including the TRIPS Agreement, the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement and the EU's bilateral trade agreements.

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DEFINITIONS

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION (GI) FOR CRAFT AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS (CIGI)

A geographical indication for craft and industrial products is a name identifying a product as originating in a specific place, region or country where a quality, reputation or other characteristic of the product is essentially attributable to its geographical origin, and where at least one production step takes place in the defined geographical area. The term CIGI is used throughout this collection to refer to registered geographical indications for craft and industrial products under Regulation (EU) 2023/2411.

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

The product specification is the core document accompanying a CIGI application. It must contain a description of the product and its principal characteristics, a definition of the geographical area with supporting maps, a description of the production method, and a detailed explanation of the link between the product's qualities or reputation and its geographical origin. It also sets out the control and verification arrangements that ensure ongoing compliance.

PRODUCER GROUP

A producer group is an association of producers of the same product in the defined geographical area, which is the default — and preferred — applicant for CIGI registration. Producer groups bear ongoing governance obligations after registration: they must operate in a transparent, open and non-discriminatory manner, maintain internal compliance systems and act as custodians of the product specification.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

The single document is a summary of the key elements of the product specification, required as part of the application file both at national level and before the EUIPO. It is published in the Union register upon successful registration and serves as the primary public reference document for the registered CIGI.

EUIPO

The European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), headquartered in Alicante, Spain, is the EU agency responsible for administering the registration system for geographical indications for craft and industrial products under Regulation (EU) 2023/2411. EUIPO conducts formal and substantive examination of applications, manages opposition proceedings and maintains the EU GI Register (GIview).

ARTICLE I

Scope, Eligible Applicants and the Procedural Architecture of the New EU Regime on the Protection of Geographical Indications for Craft and Industrial Products

Joana Domingues

1. Introduction

With the introduction of Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 (hereinafter referred to as "Regulation"), the European Union (hereinafter referred to as "EU") has concluded the long-awaited extension of geographical indication (hereinafter referred to as "GI") protection beyond agricultural products to incorporate craft and industrial goods. The new regime responds to a structural gap in EU intellectual property law: while products such as wines, spirits and foodstuffs have long benefited from harmonised GI protection, non-agricultural products whose qualities are equally rooted in place-based know-how, from ceramics and textiles to stone and cutlery, were previously protected, if at all, through fragmented national schemes only.

The new framework is intended to serve both economic and cultural objectives. By establishing a unitary EU system for craft and industrial geographical indications (hereinafter referred to as "CIGI"), the Regulation aims to protect the traditional skills, increase consumer faith, and improve the competitiveness of regionally distinctive products within the internal market. At the same time, it aligns the protection of craft and industrial products with the established logic of agricultural GIs. CIGIs are thus positioned alongside protected designations of origin (hereinafter referred to as "PDOs") and protected geographical indications (hereinafter referred to as "PGIs") as collective rights grounded in origin, reputation and human know-how, yet governed by a dedicated and autonomous regulatory framework.

The article presents a thorough analysis of the new regime, observing its scope of protection, identifying who is entitled to apply for registration, and detailing the procedural set-up of the system.

2. Scope

The newly introduced EU regime for CIGIs has a specially assigned subject-matter scope which is expected to incorporate non-agricultural products whose identity cannot be detached from the human skill exercised in a specified place. This regime's approach of putting equal, and sometimes greater, emphasis on know-how, technique, and locally embedded production cultures is in sharp contrast to the agricultural GI framework, which is primarily based on natural factors and raw materials.

2.1 Definition of craft and industrial products

Article 4 of the Regulation provides the statutory definition, which purposely adopts a broad and technologically neutral approach. Craft and industrial products are defined as products that are one of the following:

(a) produced entirely by hand, or with the aid of manual or digital tools, or by mechanical means, where the manual contribution is an important component of the finished product; or

(b) produced in a standardised way, including serial production and by using machines.

Three key elements flow from this definition and from the structure of the Regulation as a whole.

First, the product must be non-agricultural. The Regulation clearly states a regime distinct from the EU schemes for agricultural products, foodstuffs, wines and spirit drinks. This separation is not merely formal: it reflects the legislators' view that crafts and industrial goods raise different questions of origin, reputation and evidentiary proof.

Second, human skill and know-how must play a significant role. Article 4(a) focuses on the significance of the human contribution to the end product rather than the absence of machinery. The manual skill may be expressed via traditional techniques, specialised finishing stages, or locally transmitted know-how, and it can coexist with modern or digital tools. The regime therefore protects living practices instead of freezing protection around an idealised concept of pre-industrial craftsmanship.

Third, the product must be linked to a specific geographic region. Like other GI schemes, protection is reserved for names designating goods whose quality, reputation or other characteristic is mainly attributable to their geographical origin. In the case of craft and industrial goods, that connection may rest not only on natural factors but, in fact, primarily on human and organisational ones — the presence of specialised workshops or the existence of long-established local production structures.

2.2 Eligible product categories

The Regulation does not provide an exhaustive list of eligible products, reflecting its intentionally flexible scope. In practice, guidance from the European Commission and national authorities indicates that a wide range of goods may fall within its ambit.

Craft products are likely to comprise textiles and woven goods, ceramics and pottery, glass and crystalware, jewellery and filigree work, leather goods and musical instruments, where their defining characteristics are shaped by local skill and tradition.

Industrial products may equally qualify where standardised or serial production is nonetheless rooted in a geographically concentrated production ecosystem. Article 4(b) of the Regulation makes clear that serial production is not, in itself, disqualifying. Typical examples include tools and cutlery, worked natural stone, porcelain, metal goods and other manufactured items whose reputation is closely associated with a particular place and its production culture.

Difficult cases tend to arise where production has been highly mechanised or geographically delocalised. In such instances, eligibility will depend on whether the applicant can show that the product's character or reputation remains essentially attributable to the claimed geographical area. These evaluations are generally made at the stage of product description and supporting evidence, rather than through categorical classification.

2.3 Exclusions and limitations

Certain limitations follow implicitly from the statutory framework. Purely mass-produced goods with only a nominal connection to a place are very likely outside the scope of Article 4 of the Regulation. The regime is not intended to protect generic factory output that happens to be located in a particular region.

Likewise, generic product names that have lost any geographical significance, or that designate a type of product rather than an origin, remain excluded from protection, in line with general GI principles reflected throughout the Regulation.

Finally, the Regulation acknowledges potential issues with respect to prior rights, such as earlier trade marks, which are assessed during examination and opposition procedures and are addressed elsewhere in this publication cycle.

3. Eligible Applicants and Representation

The Regulation builds the new CIGI system around the idea that geographical indications for craft and industrial products are essentially collective instruments: they preserve and mobilise shared skills, reputations and production rules that are seldom the preserve of a single

workshop. For that reason, the default applicant is a producer group. Exceptions are expressly narrow and justified only when the collective route would be impracticable.

3.1 Producer groups as the default applicants

The producer group is the obvious applicant under the new system. According to Article 8 of the Regulation, an application "shall be submitted by a producer group", which may take any legal form — association, cooperative, consortium and others — provided it brings together producers of the same product in the defined geographical area.

The rationale is both legal and practical. On the legal side, producer groups reflect the collective nature of geographical indications. The Regulation states that groups must operate "in a transparent, open and non-discriminatory manner" and ensure that "all producers of the product [...] join the producer group at any point in time", underscoring that the right to use a registered name is collective and conditional upon compliance with the product specification. On the practical side, the group structure allocates administrative, evidentiary and monitoring burdens which an individual craftsman could not reasonably bear alone.

The tasks assigned to producer groups underline their custodial role: they act as managers of the product specification, have authority to prepare and amend it (subject to prescribed procedures), facilitate access for new producers, and may agree to undertake commitments regarding sustainability. Cross-border products illustrate the cooperative logic of the regime further: the Regulation allows joint applications to be filed by producer groups from more than one Member State, or from producer groups together with third-country applicants under specific rules.

3.2 Individual producers

Under the Regulation, a single producer is allowed to apply only in very specific circumstances. By derogation from the general rule, a single producer may submit an application if that producer is "the only producer willing to submit an application" or the geographical area has "distinct characteristics" differentiating the product from those of neighbouring areas. The text therefore foresees truly exceptional cases — such as production limited to one workshop — where no producer group can in practice be formed.

3.3 Role of public authorities and associations

Local and regional public bodies — along with chambers, craft associations and similar organisations — have a supporting and, in some cases, initiating role. The Regulation allows that, under certain conditions, an application may be submitted by "a local or regional authority or a private entity designated by a Member State", particularly where such bodies assist producers in organising and preparing the application. Where those public authorities later participate in verification or decision-making, they must act impartially and independently.

3.4 Governance obligations

Participation in the CIGI system presupposes sustained governance. Producer groups are not merely passive recipients of rights: ongoing compliance must be ensured through producers' self-declaration or verification by competent authorities or delegated bodies. These obligations explain why the Regulation privileges collective applicants — it presumes a stable manager of the collective right capable of long-term oversight.

4. The Procedural Architecture: National and Union Levels

The procedural structure of the CIGI regime is purposefully hybrid, integrating decentralised national examination with centralised Union-level adjudication. This architecture reflects a balance between proximity to local production realities and the need for uniform protection at Union level. The system is structured as a two-step registration process and depends on a clearly defined distribution of powers between the Member States and the EUIPO.

4.1 Two-step registration system

In general, applications for the registration of a GI originating in the Union must first pass through a national phase and then a Union phase.

The procedure begins at national level. Applications must be submitted to the national competent authority of the Member State in which the product originates and should include the product specification, the single document, and the supporting documentation required under Articles 9 to 11 of the Regulation. The Regulation specifically stipulates that national authorities shall provide for electronic submission. The competent authority examines the application for compliance with the substantive eligibility requirements and informational completeness, reviewing in particular whether the application meets the geographical indication definition, whether it is filed by a rightful applicant, and whether the product specification and single document are complete and consistent. Where deficiencies are identified, applicants must be allowed the opportunity to rectify the application within a specified period.

If the application is found compliant, the authority must initiate a national opposition procedure, which includes publication of the application and a minimum two-month period during which persons having a legitimate interest and established or residing in the concerned Member State may file an opposition. Grounds for national opposition mirror those at Union level and include failure to comply with the Regulation, conflicts with protected names or trade marks, and risks to pre-existing lawful uses. Any opposition accepted triggers a mandatory consultation phase aimed at achieving a friendly settlement.

After examination and any opposition, the competent authority either refers the application to the EUIPO with a favourable decision, or rejects it. Favourable decisions must be made public and are subject to appeal. Member States may grant temporary national protection with effect from the date the application is submitted to the EUIPO, pending the Union decision.

By way of derogation, Member States may opt out of the two-stage procedure where no national sui generis protection for craft and industrial GIs exists and domestic interest is noticeably low. In these cases, applications may be filed directly with the EUIPO, which then undertakes the examination tasks ordinarily performed at national level, with the support of a designated national point of contact.

4.2 The role of the EUIPO

At Union level, the EUIPO is the most significant actor in the CIGI regime. Unlike certain agricultural GI frameworks, where examination functions remain largely decentralised, the EUIPO acts as the principal administrative authority responsible for examining applications, conducting opposition procedures and adopting registration decisions.

Applications forwarded by Member States after a positive national decision must include the single document, accompanying documentation, a declaration confirming compliance, and a reference to the product specification published nationally. EUIPO's Geographical Indications Division checks for manifest errors, completeness and technical precision of the single document. This examination must in principle be completed within six months.

The EUIPO may request supplementary information from national authorities and must reject applications that remain incomplete or incorrect after correction requests. If the prerequisites for registration are fulfilled, the EUIPO makes the single document publicly available for opposition.

The EUIPO's decisional autonomy is not absolute. Where issues of public policy or Union external relations arise, the Commission may take over decision-making at any stage. Decisions of the EUIPO can be appealed before the Boards of Appeal and are subject to judicial review by the General Court.

4.3 Opposition procedures

The Regulation creates a dual opposition framework differentiating clearly between national and Union-level challenges. After Union-level publication, any eligible opponent established or residing in another Member State or a third country may file an opposition within three months. National opponents who participated in the national phase are deliberately barred from this stage.

The EUIPO first assesses admissibility. Substantively, the grounds at Union level mirror those applicable nationally. If an opposition is admitted, the EUIPO encourages the parties to engage in consultations, supported by alternative dispute resolution including mediation. Where consultations lead to agreement, the EUIPO examines its compliance with Union law before proceeding to registration. If no agreement is reached, the EUIPO decides on the merits and either dismisses the opposition and registers the GI, or rejects the application.

In parallel, the Regulation introduces a notice of comments procedure allowing third parties to submit observations without becoming parties to the proceedings.

4.4 Registration, publication and effects

Where registration is granted, the EUIPO registers the GI in the Union register, recording the registered name, product category, applicant, country of origin and reference decision. Decisions are published in all the EU's official languages and referenced in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Registration produces erga omnes effects throughout the Union, subject to any transitional periods granted to protect existing lawful uses. The Union register also serves as an evidentiary tool: official extracts can be downloaded and used as authentic certificates of protection.

5. Interaction with Member State Systems

While the Regulation lays out a uniform system at Union level, it does not completely rule out involvement of the Member States.

Member States may grant temporary national protection from the moment an application is submitted to the EUIPO. This protection is inherently provisional and ceases automatically upon a final decision or withdrawal. If registration is ultimately refused, all consequences of the temporary national protection are borne exclusively by the Member State concerned.

The Regulation allows for transitional periods for the coexistence of newly registered geographical indications and pre-existing lawful uses. The EUIPO may, at the time of registration, permit the continued use of a designation that would otherwise infringe, where an admissible opposition shows that registration would jeopardise the existence of an identical or similar name used in trade, or that the name has been legally marketed for at least five years prior to publication. In well-established cases, transitional periods can be extended up to fifteen years in total, provided the name has been used legally, consistently and fairly for at least twenty-five years.

Member States may also allow transitional periods of up to ten years for compliance by producers situated within the geographical area who had legally and continuously marketed the product under the relevant name prior to the application.

6. Concluding Notes

The EU regime for craft and industrial geographical indications introduces a long-awaited layer of origin-based protection beyond agriculture. Its design is deliberately collective and procedural: producer groups are central not only to registration, but to the ongoing governance of the protected name. For applicants, success will depend less on formal eligibility than on the quality of preparation, coordination and evidence assembled from the outset.

Clarity in navigating the national and EU dimensions of the system will be crucial to its uptake. Where the procedural architecture is understood and used strategically, the regime has the potential to offer meaningful protection and increased market credibility. The next articles in this series address two pivotal issues: evidentiary standards for establishing the link to origin, and the position of third-country applicants within the new framework.

ARTICLE II

Evidence in Applications for Geographical Indications for Craft and Industrial Products

Izabela Konopacka

This article provides practical guidance for lawyers and practitioners preparing applications for geographical indications for craft and industrial products under Regulation (EU) 2023/2411. The focus is on the evidentiary material required to demonstrate the link between a product and its geographical origin, the types of documentation typically submitted in GI applications, and common evidentiary mistakes identified in EUIPO guidance and GI practice.

1. Evidentiary Standard in GI Applications

Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 does not expressly define a formal standard of proof. However, the evidentiary framework can be derived from the substantive conditions for protection and from the documentation requirements imposed on applicants.

The Regulation establishes three cumulative conditions for the protection of a geographical indication. A product name may be registered only where the product originates from a specific place, region or country, where a quality, reputation or other characteristic is essentially attributable to its geographical origin, and where at least one production step takes place in the defined geographical area (Art. 6(1) Regulation (EU) 2023/2411).

The main evidentiary document in the application is the product specification. This document must contain a description of the product, the definition of the geographical area and the explanation of the link between the product and the geographical origin (Art. 9 Regulation (EU) 2023/2411). In addition, the application must contain a single document summarising the key elements of the specification, including the main characteristics of the product and the description of the geographical link (Art. 14 Regulation (EU) 2023/2411).

Applications are first examined by the competent national authority, which verifies compliance with the substantive conditions and documentation requirements before transmitting the file to the EUIPO (Art. 17). At Union level, EUIPO examines whether the application contains the required information and whether the description of the geographical link is sufficiently precise and coherent. The Office may request additional information where necessary (Art. 23).

The evidentiary assessment may also be tested through the opposition procedure, which allows third parties to challenge the application where the conditions for protection are not fulfilled or where earlier rights are affected (Art. 29).

2. Typical Evidence Used in GI Applications

In practice, successful GI applications rely on several categories of supporting documentation demonstrating the connection between the product and the geographical area:

- technical descriptions of the product and its production process
- scientific or technical reports describing materials or manufacturing techniques
- historical documentation showing the long-standing association between the product and the geographical area
- archival records and historical literature

- evidence of reputation such as press articles, awards, trade catalogues and professional publications
- expert opinions explaining local know-how or specialised skills
- maps defining the geographical area and documentation showing the location of production stages

3. Evidence of Reputation in GI Applications

In many GI applications, the reputation of the product plays an important role in demonstrating the link between the product and the geographical area. Evidence of reputation may include references in media publications, specialised literature, awards obtained by producers, historical trade catalogues and evidence of export markets. Such documentation helps demonstrate that consumers associate the product with the specific geographical area.

EUIPO guidance emphasises that reputation must be supported by reliable sources. Purely promotional statements or unsupported claims are not sufficient. Evidence should come from independent and verifiable sources such as academic publications, recognised professional materials or official data.

4. Typical Evidentiary Mistakes in GI Applications

EUIPO guidance on the preparation of GI applications identifies several recurring evidentiary weaknesses:

1. Insufficient explanation of the causal link between the product and the geographical area.
2. Reliance on general or descriptive statements without supporting documentary evidence.
3. Use of unreliable sources such as search engine results, hyperlinks or self-generated promotional materials.
4. Inconsistencies between the product description, the geographical area and the explanation of the geographical link.
5. Unclear description of production stages taking place in the geographical area.
6. Definition of an overly broad geographical area without historical or objective justification.

5. Practical Checklist for Lawyers Preparing GI Applications

- Prepare a clear and technically precise product specification.
- Define the geographical area accurately and provide supporting maps.
- Collect historical documentation demonstrating the link between the product and the region.
- Gather evidence of reputation from reliable and independent sources.
- Describe the production process and identify which stages occur in the geographical area.
- Ensure consistency between all sections of the application.

SOURCES

Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 on the protection of geographical indications for craft and industrial products (OJ L 2023/2411, 27 October 2023).

European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), Building the causal link with the geographical area, GI Portal guidance document.

European Commission, Geographical indications for craft and industrial products, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW).

ARTICLE III

Murano Glass and the New EU Regime for Craft and Industrial GIs: From Legal Framework to Professional Opportunities

Giulio Zarro | 23 November 2025

1. The Legal Framework: Fragmentation of National Systems and the Genesis of Regulation (EU) 2023/2411

The lack of uniformity at European level in the protection of craft and industrial products characterised by a territorial link has so far resulted in a fragmented and diversified legal framework, both across the territory of the Union as a whole and within individual Member States.

Some Member States have long since introduced sui generis systems for non-agricultural geographical indications; others have opted for partial or sector-specific solutions, limited to certain categories of products or to particular regions. Others again — including Italy — have relied almost exclusively on trade marks, rules on unfair competition and special legislation. This has resulted in legal uncertainty, additional costs, regulatory fragmentation and an interaction between the legal profession and a system in clear need of evolution.

Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 is explicitly designed to fill this normative gap by providing a uniform title of geographical indication protection for craft and industrial products and a structured registration procedure at Union level, while still leaving Member States a significant role in the national phase.

The adoption of Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 of 18 October 2023 represents a systemic step for the Union. The EU legislator thereby creates a unitary intellectual property title for the protection of non-agricultural products of considerable economic importance, filling a gap that the Commission itself had already highlighted in the explanatory memorandum to the proposal COM(2022) 174.

Both the explanatory memorandum to the proposal and the 2024 EUIPO study on products potentially eligible for protection as CIGIs explicitly cite Murano glass among the emblematic examples: as a case study that politically justifies the reform, and as a product included in the list of items "potentially protectable" and potential beneficiaries at Union level. In this sense, the CIGIs identified in the EUIPO studies constitute a genuine laboratory to test how the new system can interact with existing protection tools and, above all, to explore the professional opportunities that may open up for legal practitioners.

2. The Current Legal Protection System for Murano Glass

Among the potential CIGIs identified in the EUIPO studies, Murano glass — and the legal framework currently surrounding it — constitutes a particularly significant test case for analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the new regime in an applied perspective.

At present, the legal protection of Murano glass is essentially based at regional level. It does not rely on a sui generis geographical indication, but on a system built around a collective mark of origin established by Veneto's regional legislature. By Veneto Regional Law No 70 of 23 December 1994, the Region is authorised to file the collective mark "Vetro artistico di Murano" and retains ownership of it. Subsequent legislative measures — in particular Regional Law No 39 of 9 December 1997 — refined the governance of the system, better

defining the role of the promoting consortium and the involvement of industry operators. The mark has been registered in several classes of goods, and in practice has taken the distinctive form now known as "Vetro Artistico® Murano".

In implementation of the regional law, the Regional Government has adopted regulations on use of the mark, governing in detail the conditions for the grant and modalities of use. These regulations define: the relevant territorial delimitation (the island of Murano); the categories of products covered; the traditional techniques considered consistent with the Murano glassmaking tradition; the requirements for obtaining and maintaining the licence to use the mark; and the control and traceability system, based on the affixing of specific numbered stickers accompanying each certified piece.

Only undertakings that actually produce on Murano, in compliance with the techniques and requirements laid down by the regulations on use, may obtain from the Region — following a technical assessment — a licence to use the collective mark. Every "authentic" product is accompanied by a sticker allowing identification of the producing undertaking and verification of the authenticity of the item.

The operational management of the mark and the promotional activities are entrusted to the Consorzio Promovetro Murano, which acts as an interface between institutions and undertakings: it assists companies in filing applications for licences, coordinates promotional activities and cooperates with the Region in monitoring activities. A technical committee of experts operates within this framework, with consultative functions on matters such as the admissibility of new techniques or product types.

Around this core, a constellation of further protection tools has developed: trade marks filed by private parties, registered designs for specific product shapes and, for works of particular originality, copyright protection. Rules on unfair competition, the provisions on "made in Italy" and on unfair commercial practices towards consumers are also applicable.

What all these instruments have in common is that they protect distinctive signs, shapes or specific conduct, but do not confer unitary protection, at Union level, on the geographical name "Murano" as an indication of origin for artistic glass. In other words, there is a lack of a sui generis title and of a framework which, at supranational level, directly protects the link between quality, reputation and geographical origin of Murano glass.

Even within this framework, there have always been areas of activity for the legal profession: from managing relations between undertakings, the Region and the Consortium in proceedings for the grant and revocation of licences, to cases of infringement of the collective mark, through to actions for unfair competition and disputes concerning undue references to the name "Murano" on national and international markets. However, this remains essentially a regional and national context, far from a truly European dimension in which legal practitioners can act as advisers in long-term value-creation strategies based on a unitary Union title.

3. The CIGI Model Applied to Murano: Substantive Requirements and Procedural Scenarios

Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 lays down, in Article 6, the substantive requirements for the protection of a name as a CIGI. In summary, it is necessary that: the product originates in a specific place, region or country; a quality, reputation or other characteristic is essentially attributable to that geographical origin; and at least one of the production steps takes place in the defined geographical area.

Murano glass appears to be a "textbook" candidate in this respect: the island of Murano is a perfectly delimited geographical area; the quality and reputation of Murano glass are inextricably linked to the history of the Republic of Venice, to the concentration of furnaces on the island and to the skills of the master glassmakers; production — at least in its qualifying stages — has traditionally taken place locally. The CIGI model therefore appears as a particularly well-suited template for the Murano reality.

In this context, the transitional regime laid down in Article 70 of the Regulation is of particular relevance: by 2 December 2026, Member States may notify the Commission and the EUIPO of the names they intend to register and protect under the new rules, submitting a complete file in line with Union law. Since Italy does not have a sui generis GI system for craft and industrial products, it does not have a portfolio of existing national CIGIs that can be automatically converted: any inclusion of "Murano glass" within the scope of Article 70 therefore requires an express political and technical choice.

It will therefore be interesting to see whether Italian institutional and private actors decide to use the channel provided by Article 70 (treating Murano as an "existing name") or follow the ordinary two-stage registration procedure. In any event, the transformation of the current "Murano system" into a Union CIGI will depend on the capacity for convergence between producers and Italian institutions.

Should a balance between public and private interests be reached in the short term, the State may submit, pursuant to Article 70(2), a complete file relating to "Murano glass". Alternatively, the ordinary registration procedure would be followed, broken down into a national phase and a subsequent phase before the EUIPO.

The European Delegation Law of 13 June 2025, No 91 instructs the Government to adopt a legislative decree to implement Regulation 2023/2411 and designates the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy (MIMIT) as the authority competent for the national phase of the procedure. Article 25 provides that MIMIT will be responsible for examining applications at national level.

In such a scenario, the application for registration of the "Murano glass" CIGI would follow an itinerary which can be described as follows:

- identification of the applicant(s) — for example, an association of producers, possibly coordinated with the Region and the Consortium;
- drafting of the product specification, most likely building on the existing regulations on use of the regional collective mark, but adapting it to CIGI standards: delimitation of the geographical area, precise definition of the product, indication of the production stages to be carried out locally, explanation of the link between quality, reputation and origin;
- preparation of the single document in accordance with the model set out in Annex II;
- filing of the dossier with MIMIT as the competent authority.

Following national examination, and in the absence of well-founded oppositions, the authority would transmit the file to the EUIPO, together with a declaration attesting that the application meets the conditions for registration. The EUIPO would then carry out a second examination, publish the application in the Union Register and open the opposition procedure at Union level.

At that stage, issues could arise regarding the territorial delimitation, the definition of the product, the possible genericity of the name "Murano" in certain markets, and conflicts with earlier trade marks. In complex cases, the Geographical Indications Division of the EUIPO, the Boards of Appeal and the Advisory Board provided for in Regulation 2023/2411 could all become involved. If the application is upheld, the product would be entered in the Union Register and made accessible through GIview.

The possible registration of a "Murano glass" CIGI would not automatically entail the extinction of the regional collective mark or of pre-existing private trade marks. Rather, it would give rise to an issue of multi-layered coexistence and coordination between the CIGI, the regional collective mark and individual trade marks, with a need to harmonise rules and practices to avoid inconsistencies.

4. Professional Opportunities for Lawyers: Murano as a Pilot Case

The potential CIGI pathway for a product such as Murano glass represents a potentially very broad field of activity for the legal profession, particularly for practitioners specialising in intellectual property and commercial law. The reference is not only to the specific case of Murano, but to the possible replicability of the model in other European craft districts.

By way of example, one may think of: analysing the existing situation and assessing the compatibility between the current system and a possible CIGI product specification; assisting in the establishment or reorganisation of the applicant entity; carrying out due diligence exercises on trade marks and other potentially conflicting rights; and negotiating agreements, licences and coexistence arrangements.

At the stage of drafting the product specification and the single document, the lawyer's work takes the form of a genuine legal-conceptual translation: defining precisely the characteristics of the product and the production methods; putting forward a legally robust argument on the link between quality, reputation and origin; regulating the use of digital or innovative techniques without undermining the craft profile required by the Regulation. This calls for close cooperation between lawyers, technical experts, art historians, economists and business representatives.

This is followed by the procedural and contentious stages, both at national and Union level: assistance in filing applications; handling observations from the competent authorities; representation in national and Union opposition proceedings; possible appeals before the Boards of Appeal and, ultimately, before the General Court.

Once recognition has been obtained, a further front opens up in terms of compliance and enforcement: adapting production processes to the product specification; managing relations with control authorities; updating the specification; bringing civil and criminal actions against unlawful uses; seeking border measures; and countering online infringements.

Should the Murano case materialise as a genuine pilot case, the model could be exported to other craft districts potentially eligible for CIGI protection, with lawyers assisting regions, chambers of commerce and craft associations in national and transnational recognition processes.

5. Conclusions

The case of Murano glass clearly illustrates the shift from a local and stratified protection system — based on regional collective marks, unfair competition and domestic legal tools — to a possible unitary Union title in the field of geographical indications for craft and industrial products under Regulation (EU) 2023/2411.

The new framework does not simply add another layer of protection; it affects the very architecture of rights: the geographical name "Murano" would cease to be merely a reflected reference in trade marks and commercial claims, and would become the core of a public-law right, shared by a group of producers and recognised at Union level.

In this scenario, nothing is automatic. The possible registration of a "Murano glass" CIGI will depend on political and technical choices by the Italian State, on the capacity for coordination between the Region, the Consortium, producers and the central administration, and on the handling of inevitable tensions with earlier rights. It is precisely this complexity that opens up a structural space for the legal profession.

Ultimately, Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 can be read in two ways: as a technically sophisticated reform, destined to remain confined to specialists, or as an opportunity to build new professional practices in which lawyers, in dialogue with institutions and businesses, contribute directly to the legal and economic enhancement of territories. The choice between these two readings — including in the case of Murano glass — will not depend solely on the legal texts, but on the ability of the legal profession to recognise and occupy this new space.

ARTICLE IV

Third-Country Applicants and Global Interactions: CIGIs Beyond the EU

Karolina Wilamowska

1. Introduction

The adoption of Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 on the protection of geographical indications for craft and industrial products represents a structural reform of EU intellectual property law. The preceding contributions in this publication cycle have examined the Regulation's scope of protection, its procedural architecture and the evidentiary standards applicable to applications. The present article turns to a dimension that, while already foreshadowed in the first contribution, merits a dedicated and systematic analysis: the position of applicants and producers established outside the European Union, and the broader international framework within which the new CIGI regime must operate.

The Regulation is not a purely inward-looking instrument. Its drafters were conscious that craft and industrial products of notable geographical character exist beyond the Union's borders, and that a credible EU protection system must accommodate the international dimension if it is to function coherently within a globalised market. At the same time, the regime must furnish EU producers with adequate tools to protect their registered designations against misappropriation in third-country markets, and must align with the existing architecture of international intellectual property law.

The Regulation addresses this dual objective through four principal mechanisms: it allows producer groups from third countries to apply directly before the EUIPO for CIGI registration; it extends to registered third-country CIGIs the same scope of protection as to EU-origin registrations; it provides for the recognition of equivalence between the EU system and the GI protection regimes of third countries; and it empowers the Commission to negotiate international agreements extending mutual protection of CIGIs.

This article proceeds in five substantive parts. First, it examines the category of third-country applicants and the procedural gateway available to them. Second, it analyses the scope of protection accorded to registered third-country CIGIs within the Union. Third, it addresses the international dimension of the regime, covering the TRIPS framework, the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement and bilateral trade agreements. Fourth, it considers the tools available to protect EU CIGIs in third-country markets. Fifth, it offers concluding observations on the practical implications for applicants and legal practitioners.

2. Third-Country Applicants: Who May Apply and on What Basis

2.1 Producer groups from third countries

The Regulation establishes producer groups as the default applicants for CIGI registration, reflecting the collective nature of geographical indications as intellectual property rights. This collective model extends without territorial limitation to applicants from third countries. A producer group established in a third country is therefore entitled to apply for CIGI registration under the same conceptual framework as a group of EU producers, subject, however, to a significantly different procedural pathway.

The Regulation defines a producer group as any association of producers, whatever its legal form, bringing together producers of the same product in the defined geographical area. For

third-country applicants, this requirement must be satisfied under the law of the country of origin, which may or may not recognise legal forms directly analogous to those common in EU Member States. The Regulation does not prescribe a specific legal form, leaving this matter to applicable national law.

Unlike producer groups established in EU Member States, who must ordinarily channel their application through a designated national competent authority, third-country producer groups apply directly to the EUIPO. The direct application route is the sole procedural gateway available to them: there is no intermediate national phase, no national opposition procedure and no national temporary protection pending the Union decision. The EUIPO is therefore both the initial and the final administrative instance for third-country applications.

2.2 Single producers from third countries

The Regulation permits a single producer to apply for CIGI registration only by way of derogation from the general rule, and exclusively in two narrowly defined circumstances: where that producer is the only one willing to submit an application, or where the geographical area has distinct characteristics differentiating the product from those of neighbouring areas. These conditions apply without modification to third-country applicants.

For third-country contexts, the single-producer derogation may be of particular relevance in cases where a craft tradition is genuinely concentrated in a single atelier transmitting knowledge through a narrow lineage of craftsmen, or where the production area is so precisely delimited that no second producer currently operates within it. However, the derogation remains exceptional, and legal practitioners advising third-country clients should carefully assess whether its conditions are genuinely met.

2.3 Joint applications bridging EU and third-country producers

One of the more structurally innovative features of the CIGI applicant framework is the express recognition of joint applications filed by producer groups from more than one Member State together with producer groups from one or more third countries. This provision accommodates production realities that straddle the EU's external frontier: craft traditions developing across a political border, shared resources or techniques used by producers on both sides, or historical production ecosystems predating current national boundaries.

Joint applications of this kind raise particular coordination challenges. The co-applicants must agree on a single product specification covering all relevant production territories, on a common definition of the shared geographical area, and on a governance framework capable of managing compliance on both sides of the border. Applicants should negotiate and formalise inter-partes agreements governing specification amendments, use rights and compliance responsibilities before the application is submitted.

3. The Direct Application Procedure Before the EUIPO

3.1 Rationale and structure of the direct route

The elimination of the national phase for third-country applications is both a pragmatic and a principled choice. From a pragmatic standpoint, the EU cannot impose a harmonised administrative infrastructure on third countries in the way that the Regulation requires Member States to designate national competent authorities. From a principled standpoint, direct access to the EUIPO avoids the risk of inconsistent treatment across different national systems and places third-country applications within a uniform procedural environment.

The direct application procedure before the EUIPO is governed primarily by Articles 21 to 24 of the Regulation, which apply to all applications reaching the Office, whether forwarded by Member States, submitted directly under a derogation, or filed by third-country applicants. Procedural equality of treatment is thus a structural feature of the Union-level phase.

3.2 Documentary requirements for third-country applications

Third-country applications must include the same core documentation as EU-origin applications forwarded to the EUIPO: the product specification (Art. 9), the single document (Art. 11), and the declaration of compliance required under Article 22(1). No additional

documents are required solely by virtue of the third-country origin, but the absence of a national phase means that the EUIPO will not have the benefit of a prior national examination report when assessing the file.

Third-country applicants should therefore expect the EUIPO to scrutinise the product specification with particular care. The specification must contain a precise definition of the geographical area that is sufficiently clear to allow assessment without independent local knowledge. Applicants are well-advised to include detailed cartographic materials, references to officially recognised administrative boundaries and, where appropriate, corroborating information from public registries or official databases of the third country concerned.

For third-country applications, where historical archives may not be available in EU languages and where expert knowledge may not be accessible to EUIPO examiners, certified translations of archival materials and independent expert reports take on particular importance.

3.3 Admissibility and substantive examination

Upon receipt of a third-country application, the EUIPO first conducts an admissibility examination to verify that the application contains all required elements and is formally complete. This is followed by substantive examination of the application's compliance with the eligibility conditions of the Regulation. The substantive examination must, in principle, be completed within six months of the date on which the application was received.

The substantive conditions for protection are identical for all applicants: the product must originate from a specific place, region or country; a quality, reputation or other characteristic must be essentially attributable to its geographical origin; and at least one production step must take place within the defined geographical area. The Regulation makes no provision for a reduced standard of connection applicable to third-country products.

Where the EUIPO considers the application incomplete or deficient, it issues a request for correction specifying the matters to be addressed and setting a deadline for compliance. The EUIPO may also seek additional information from the competent authority of the third country concerned; however, third countries are not under any legal obligation to cooperate with EUIPO information requests.

3.4 Publication, opposition and registration

Where the EUIPO is satisfied that the conditions for registration are fulfilled, it publishes the single document in the Union register and opens the Union opposition procedure. Any natural or legal person having a legitimate interest and established or residing in a Member State or a third country may file an opposition within three months of publication. The grounds for opposition are the same as those applicable to EU-origin applications and include failure to meet the substantive conditions for protection, conflict with an earlier trade mark enjoying a reputation within the Union, and risk of consumer confusion.

Where an admissible opposition is filed, the EUIPO invites the parties to conduct consultations and may offer access to alternative dispute resolution including mediation. If no settlement is reached, the EUIPO decides on the merits and, if the opposition is rejected, proceeds to registration.

Registration is constitutive: the CIGI is protected from the date of entry in the Union register. The entry records the registered name, product category, applicant, country of origin and reference to the registration decision. Official extracts from the register serve as authentic certificates of protection and may be used in enforcement proceedings throughout the Union.

4. Scope of Protection Accorded to Registered Third-Country CIGIs

4.1 The erga omnes effect within the Union

Once registered, a third-country CIGI enjoys the same scope of protection as a CIGI of Union origin. The prohibition on infringing use applies erga omnes throughout the territory of all Member States. The protected name may not be used commercially for products not complying with the registered product specification, whether through direct use, imitation, evocation or misleading indirect reference. The prohibition extends to uses in digital

environments, including domain names, online marketplace listings and social media identifiers, and covers uses that accompany disclaimers of geographical origin or expressions such as "style", "type", "method" or "as produced in".

Enforcement is primarily the responsibility of Member State customs authorities, market surveillance authorities and national courts. For third-country producer groups that lack a physical presence or an established network within the Union, the practical challenge of monitoring and enforcing the registered right across twenty-seven Member States may be substantial.

4.2 Governance obligations of third-country producer groups

The successful registration of a CIGI does not mark the end of the applicant's obligations under the Regulation. Producer groups — including those established in third countries — must maintain the conditions for protection throughout the registration period. In particular, they must operate in a transparent, open and non-discriminatory manner and must set up internal compliance checks to verify that producers using the registered name comply with the product specification.

The cancellation procedure may be initiated where the conditions for registration are no longer met or where the registered name has become generic. Third-country applicants whose registrations are challenged in cancellation proceedings bear the evidentiary burden of demonstrating continued compliance with the product specification.

4.3 Transitional periods for third-country GIs

The Regulation expressly provides that the transitional period framework applies mutatis mutandis to geographical indications referring to geographical areas situated in third countries. Transitional periods may be granted at the time of registration where an admissible opposition demonstrates that pre-existing designations have been in lawful commercial use for at least five years prior to the publication date of the application. In well-established cases, a transitional period of up to fifteen years may be granted where the pre-existing designation has been used legally, consistently and fairly for at least twenty-five years.

5. The International Dimension of the CIGI Regime

5.1 The TRIPS Agreement: the baseline and its limitations

At the global level, the protection of geographical indications is governed primarily by the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement), which establishes minimum standards binding on all members of the World Trade Organization. Article 22 of the TRIPS Agreement requires WTO Members to provide the legal means to prevent uses of geographical indications that mislead the public as to the geographical origin of goods.

The TRIPS minimum standard, however, falls significantly short of the protection afforded by the EU's sui generis CIGI regime. The TRIPS Agreement does not require a registration system, does not prohibit evocations or imitations that do not mislead the public, and does not extend to craft and industrial products the enhanced protection applicable to wines and spirits under Article 23. The exceptions in Article 24 of the TRIPS Agreement may further limit the de facto enforceability of a registered CIGI in third-country WTO Member markets.

This structural asymmetry creates a market reality in which a producer group holding a registered CIGI enjoys comprehensive protection within the EU but may find considerably more limited recourse in third-country markets that have implemented only TRIPS minimum standards.

5.2 The Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement

A more ambitious multilateral instrument is the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications, administered by the World Intellectual Property Organization. The Geneva Act extends the earlier Lisbon system to cover geographical indications in addition to appellations of origin and, crucially, opened the system to accession by intergovernmental organisations, thereby enabling EU membership.

The EU acceded to the Geneva Act in 2019. Under the Lisbon/Geneva Act system, contracting parties may notify registered geographical indications to WIPO for international registration, whereupon other contracting parties must either grant protection or submit a declaration of refusal within a prescribed period. The EU's participation in this system is governed by Regulation (EU) 2019/1753.

5.3 Equivalence recognition

The Regulation introduces a specific mechanism through which the Commission may formally recognise that a third country's system of protection for craft and industrial geographical indications offers a level of protection equivalent to that guaranteed by the CIGI regime. An equivalence determination is adopted by way of a delegated act, following an assessment of the third country's GI framework against defined criteria.

Where equivalence is recognised, the Commission may provide for a simplified registration procedure for GIs originating in the third country concerned. Equivalence recognition also creates conditions of structural reciprocity, safeguarding the commercial interests of EU producers without the need for a specifically negotiated bilateral agreement in every case.

5.4 Bilateral and regional trade agreements

Alongside the Lisbon/Geneva Act system and equivalence recognition, international agreements concluded by the Union constitute a major vehicle for the protection of GIs on a reciprocal basis. Third-country GIs protected pursuant to an international agreement to which the Union is a party may be registered in the Union register and are entitled to the same level of protection as registered EU-origin CIGIs.

The EU has developed an extensive network of bilateral and regional trade agreements containing substantive GI chapters. The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement and the agreements concluded with Vietnam, Canada and other partners represent the most developed examples of this approach. While these agreements were primarily designed to cover agricultural GIs and predate the CIGI Regulation, their institutional architecture offers a structural model for the extension of mutual GI protection to craft and industrial products in future negotiations.

For third-country producer groups, the direct EUIPO application route thus remains the most controllable and reliable pathway to EU-wide protection, as it does not depend on the state of the Union's bilateral relationship with the country of origin.

6. Protecting EU CIGIs in Third-Country Markets

The international dimension of the CIGI regime is not confined to the access of third-country producers to EU protection. It equally encompasses the tools available to EU producers for the protection of their registered CIGIs in markets outside the Union.

Within the framework of the TRIPS Agreement, EU CIGIs are entitled to the minimum standard of protection available in each WTO Member. EU producers seeking stronger protection in specific third-country markets must therefore rely on additional instruments: registration under the domestic GI or trade mark system of the third country; notification through the Geneva Act/Lisbon system where the third country is a contracting party; or the protection afforded by a bilateral EU trade agreement applicable in that market.

The Regulation empowers the Commission to take appropriate measures where a third country fails to provide a level of protection for EU CIGIs equivalent to that available in the Union. In practice, the enforcement of registered CIGIs in third-country markets depends on the monitoring capacity of the producer group, the cooperation of the third country's enforcement authorities and the availability of effective remedies under the applicable national law.

7. Concluding Notes

The CIGI regime extends, for the first time in the history of EU intellectual property law, a unified and enforceable GI protection system to craft and industrial products originating in third countries. The Regulation's treatment of third-country applicants reflects a principled

commitment to formal equality: the same substantive conditions, the same scope of protection and the same governance obligations apply regardless of geographical origin, while the procedural pathway is adapted to reflect the structural reality that no harmonised national GI administrative infrastructure exists outside the Union.

The direct application route before the EUIPO places significant evidentiary and organisational demands on applicants who must demonstrate the link between their product and its geographical origin without the support of a prior national examination. Legal practitioners advising third-country applicants must anticipate these demands and structure the documentation and governance framework well in advance of filing.

At the international level, the Regulation introduces three complementary mechanisms — equivalence recognition, registration through international agreements and EUIPO direct registration — each with distinct advantages and limitations. Until the Commission begins to exercise its delegated powers and bilateral negotiating mandate in the CIGI field, the direct EUIPO registration route remains the most reliable and independently controllable pathway to Union-wide protection for third-country producers.

The interaction between the CIGI regime and the broader architecture of international GI law will inevitably generate complex questions of coordination and priority. These questions are likely to become a significant field of practice as the system matures and as producers from an increasingly wide range of third countries seek to leverage the commercial value of EU-wide CIGI protection.

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SUMMARY

THE NEW EU FRAMEWORK FOR GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS FOR CRAFT AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS: KEY FINDINGS AND THEIR PROFESSIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

The four articles collected in this volume together offer a comprehensive map of Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 — its architecture, its evidentiary demands, its application to emblematic products and its international reach. The following paragraphs draw together the principal findings and their implications for European lawyers.

A STRUCTURAL REFORM, NOT AN INCREMENTAL ADJUSTMENT

As all four contributors make clear, the new CIGI regime is not a marginal extension of existing EU intellectual property law. It is a structural reform that, for the first time, places craft and industrial products alongside agricultural GIs within a unitary, enforceable Union framework. The centralisation of the registration function at the EUIPO, the dual-phase procedural architecture, the erga omnes effect of registration throughout the Union, and the inclusion of third-country products — all of these features mark a qualitative departure from the fragmented national landscape that preceded the Regulation.

PREPARATION IS EVERYTHING

The analysis in Articles I and II converges on a single practical conclusion: the quality of the application file is the decisive factor in determining the outcome of the registration procedure. EUIPO applies rigorous substantive criteria at every stage of examination. The most common grounds for objection — insufficient evidence of the geographical link, an imprecise product specification, overly broad geographical delimitation, reliance on unverifiable sources — are all failures of preparation, not failures of substantive eligibility. Lawyers who enter this field will find that their most valuable contribution lies in the pre-filing stage: coordinating the collection of historical and technical evidence, drafting a legally robust and internally consistent product specification, and anticipating the lines of examination and opposition.

PRODUCER GROUPS AS GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Article I's analysis of eligible applicants highlights a dimension of the CIGI regime that is easily underestimated: the producer group is not merely a procedural vehicle for filing an application. It is a governance structure that bears ongoing obligations throughout the life of the registered GI — obligations of transparency, non-discrimination, compliance monitoring and specification management. Lawyers advising producer groups must therefore think beyond the registration procedure and assist their clients in establishing the internal governance arrangements that will sustain the registered right over time.

THE MURANO MODEL AND ITS REPLICABILITY

Article III's analysis of the Murano glass case illustrates, with unusual clarity, both the potential and the complexity of the CIGI pathway. The transition from a regional collective mark system to a possible unitary Union title is not automatic, nor is it without risk: tensions with pre-existing trade marks, the need for political and institutional coordination, the management of transitional coexistence — all of these are features of the Murano scenario that are likely to recur in other craft districts across Europe. The article's conclusion — that Murano is a replicable model, not a one-off — is an important signal to the profession: wherever there is a geographically distinctive craft tradition with a recognisable name and a traceable production ecosystem, the new Regulation creates a pathway to Union-level protection that has not previously existed.

THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION REQUIRES DEDICATED ATTENTION

Article IV's systematic treatment of third-country applicants and the international framework surrounding the CIGI regime identifies a set of issues that are likely to grow in significance as the system matures. The formal equality of treatment between EU and third-country applicants is a principled commitment, but it imposes heavier practical burdens on applicants who lack the support of a prior national examination phase. At the same time, the asymmetry between the EU's robust sui generis protection and the TRIPS minimum standard creates a gap that bilateral trade negotiations and the Lisbon/Geneva Act system are only partially equipped to bridge.

A CALL TO THE PROFESSION

The FBE Commission on Intellectual Property believes that the new CIGI regime opens a significant and durable field of professional practice for European lawyers. Whether advising producer groups on registration strategy, assisting in the negotiation of coexistence arrangements, representing parties in EUIPO opposition and appeal proceedings, or advising third-country clients on the direct application route and its international context, lawyers are — or ought to be — central actors in the development of this regime.

The Commission will continue to monitor the evolution of the framework — through EUIPO decisional practice, national implementation measures, and the progressive engagement of Member States with the transitional provisions — and will update and expand this collection as the law and practice develop.

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