



Untapped Potential:
Protected Food and Drink
Name Policy in the United
Kingdom

Foreword



I am delighted, as Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Geographically Food, to present the APPG's report into the United Kingdom's Geographical Indication policy.

Entitled *Untapped Potential: Protected Food and Drink Name Policy in the United Kingdom*, this report is the first effort to identify best practices from around the world, uncover how UK GI policy is currently working and set out ways to make the UK's GI policy even better.

Now that the United Kingdom has left the European Union, we have a once-in-a-generation chance to define our food and drink policy, to promote our local industries, support the best of our culinary heritage, and further create good paying jobs in the agriculture, food and drink manufacturing sectors.

As an MP with three Geographical Indications in my constituency, the Melton Mowbray Pork Pie, Rutland Bitter and Stilton Cheese, I have seen first-hand the extraordinary effort, care and indeed love that goes in to making some of the UK's finest products.

But, too often the food and drink products and culture of Britain is played down, and indeed in many cases, the UK is a follower rather than a leader when it comes to Geographical Indication Policy.

As an All Party Parliamentary Group, we want to change this. I welcome in particular the interest that Ministers and civil servants at the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs have shown in anticipation of this report. May I also say a special thank you to all those who contributed to this report, including all members of the APPG.

I wish you happy reading in the following pages. On behalf of the whole APPG we hope that this report makes clear the opportunity ahead of us all, thanks to the expertise and culinary quality within our country.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Alicia Kearns'.

Alicia Kearns MP

Executive Summary

- I. The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Geographically Protected Foods decided in 2020 to publish a report into the state of geographical indication policy in the United Kingdom.
- II. The report, entitled *Untapped Potential: Protected Food and Drink Name Policy in the United Kingdom* draws on primary sources in the forms of interviews, written submissions from producers, retailers and consumers, as well as an online consultation form open to the public. Overall, there were over 140 submissions considered by the report as well as a number of secondary sources.
- III. Protected Food Name policy in the United Kingdom encompasses in the first and broadest instance Geographical Indications, which is protection provided to a product based on its connection to the land or to a specific manufacturing or creation process with great culinary, heritage or cultural significance. GIs are effectively divided into three categories in British regulation:
 - a. Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)
 - b. Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)
 - c. Traditional Specialty Guaranteed (TSG)

PDOs are more stringent than PGIs which are more stringent than TSGs.
- IV. The APPG report published here is the first of its kind in the United Kingdom and represents a significant intervention by parliamentarians to deliver suggestions into the future of UKGI policy in every nation of the United Kingdom. The report offers 38 recommendations over three broad areas:
 - a. Making GIs work for producers
 - b. Expanding the recognition of GIs with consumers
 - c. Building a stronger food brand at home and abroad
- V. The underlying view of this report is that the United Kingdom has not done enough for many years to raise the profile of British food and drink, and that geographical indications are an excellent way to celebrate the best of Great Britain's food culture and boost Britain's brand profile at home and abroad.
- VI. The report also takes as its starting point that producers and consumers have a key role to play, but are not currently engaged sufficiently, despite significant and praise-worthy efforts taken by Government over the last two years. The Government was operating from a low base, and there has been significant improvement, but more can be done.
- VII. In particular, this report argues that more can be done to identify new GIs, working with community stakeholders of all kinds, from Members of Parliament to local trade associations and national food, agriculture and trade groups. This report also argues that GIs are not well known domestically, and this is a drag on the value GIs can bring to the UK economy.
- VIII. In particular, this APPG wants to see a GI policy that is a mark of quality both in the United Kingdom and abroad, is able to command premiums across the range of price products, and a range of GI products that are exported. Currently, only a few GIs make up the vast majority of all British GI exports. We want to see this change.
- IX. Above all, we call on the Government to increase engagement with civil society, producers and with communities to expand the opportunities that are available for producers who want to become GI producers and for producers who are already GI producers. This should include

a significant marketing and publicity campaign designed specifically to boost the profile of GIs domestically and internationally. As we discuss in Section 2, the UK lags behind in this regard, and we welcome the Government's ambition in this area.

- X. We also call on all parliamentarians to help their local communities develop geographical indications, and we stand ready to assist all parliamentarians who want to know more about this important policy area. Our door is always open.

Many of the recommendations included herein touch upon devolved responsibilities, and therefore some recommendations may apply more directly to England. However, we hope the lessons included herein will be of interest to every nation in the United Kingdom, and we encourage co-operation across the United Kingdom wherever possible.

For too long, the United Kingdom has not been seen to punch its weight when it comes to GI and food and drink policy. With this report, we hope to go some way to changing that.

Introduction

At the end of 2020, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Geographically Protected Foods launched an inquiry into British protected food and drink policy. This consultation was launched so that parliamentarians could examine ways to improve how the UK supports and protects British food and drink of a particular quality, cultural heritage or significance to a local area or community.

The inquiry was composed of an online survey, which was divided into three categories: consumer, producer and retailer/other. Overall, there were 108 replies to the online surveys. There were an additional 25 submissions received either in writing or via interviews, with producers and retailers ranging from artisanal cheese shops to butchers and fishmongers. Overall, the evidence received represented every nation of the United Kingdom, and included a range of respondents in age, demographic and region.

Respondents were asked a variety of questions related to the effectiveness of the UK's protected name policy. In particular, the inquiry examined how the UK Government could improve its outreach to producers, retailers, and consumers regarding the existing GI regime, and how accessible it was to other producers and to businesses trying to get a product registered.

Protected names, or geographical indications, are a category or form of designation for intellectual property. As the UK Government states:

“Food, drink and agricultural products with a geographical connection or that are made using traditional methods can be registered and protected as intellectual property. This protection is called a geographical indication (GI).”

An individual or business does not own a GI – any producer may make or sell a protected product so long as the sold product meets the specifications set out in the GI registration. It is therefore different from a trademark, which belongs to the business in question. Some products, such as Scotch Whisky or Melton Mowbray pork pies, have both a trademark and a GI.

The UK's geographical indication scheme is now no longer part of the European Union's Scheme and became an independent scheme on 1 January 2021. While there is continuity between the new UK scheme and the EU scheme – mainly by continuing reciprocal protection of EU and UK products protected as of 31 December 2020 – new products have been registered through the UK scheme.

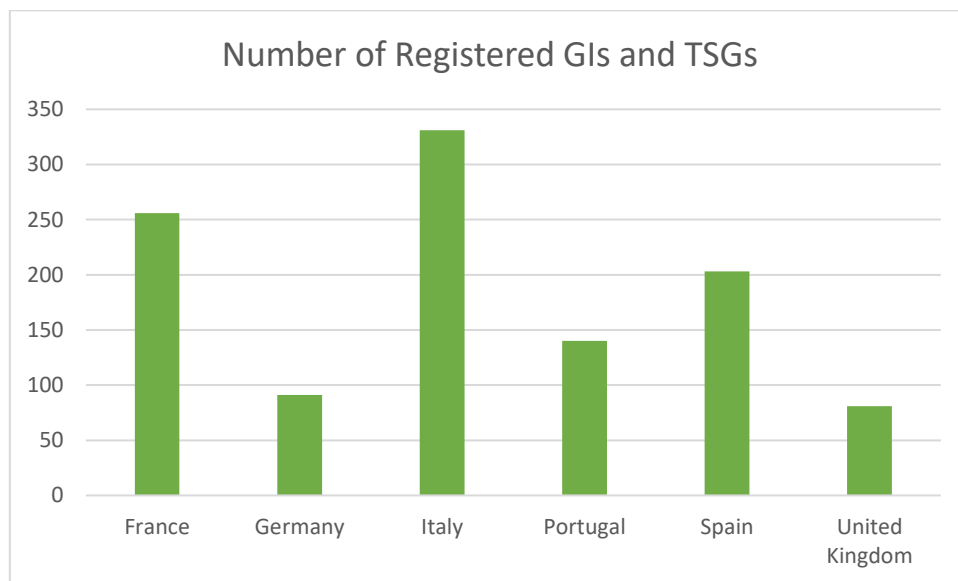
Three UK GI products have been registered since 1 January 2021. They are

- Gower Salt Marsh Lamb (Registered 21 September 2021)
- Watercress (Registered as TSG 21 September 2021)

- Cambrian Mountains Lamb (Registered 11 August 2021)

There are currently 81 registered GIs or TSGs originating from the United Kingdom. A full list can be found at link.¹

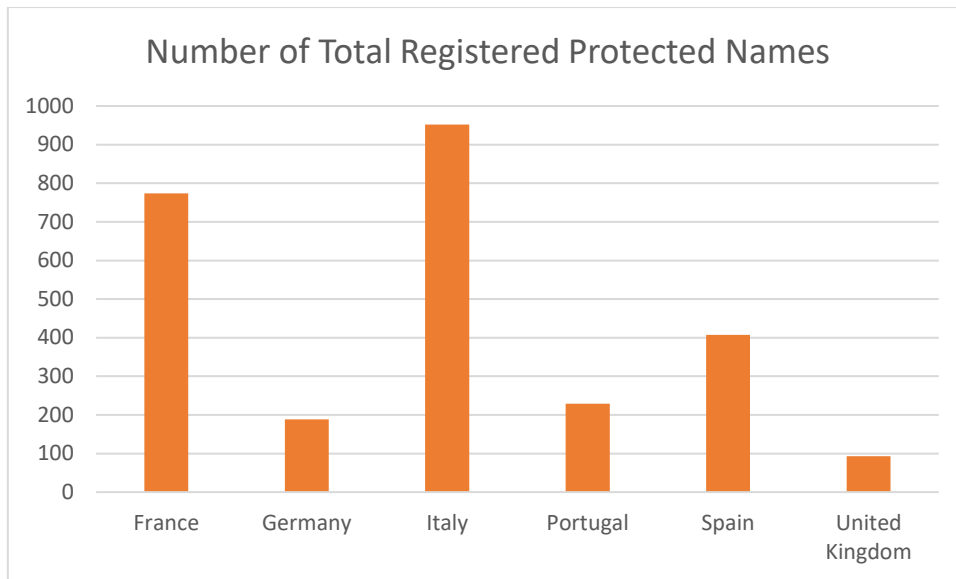
It should be noted that 81 is significantly fewer than EU member states. Because the United Kingdom, under the terms of agreements with the European Union, must register European Union GIs that were afforded protection under the EU scheme, the UK Government has helpfully maintained a register of all foods the UK currently protects from EU countries. The UK also maintains a register of products currently registered from other states. The following table illustrates the extent to which the United Kingdom has not used GIs to the same extent as many of its neighbours. Italy currently has 331 GIs registered, and Portugal, a country with one sixth the population of the United Kingdom, currently protects 140 products.²



This disparity is even more stark when considering the various forms of indications not included here, most specifically those placed on alcoholic drinks. For example, while Germany only possesses 91 GIs or TSGs, when various registrations for alcoholic products are included, Germany has 188 protected names. Indeed, when considering all forms of food and drink protection, as Table 2 demonstrates, the UK lags significantly behind its peers:

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-geographical-food-and-drink-names-uk-gi-schemes>

² Data for Figures 1 and 2 can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-geographical-food-and-drink-names-uk-gi-schemes>, selecting the countries in question, and for Figure 1 selecting only “Foods: designated origin and geographical indication” and “Foods: traditional speciality guaranteed”, under ‘Register’.



This report, and indeed the working of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Geographically Protected Foods, starts from the premise that it is not a good thing that United Kingdom has so few protected foods and drinks, and that protected food and drink names are a vital part of a vibrant, locally-powered agricultural and food policy.

As seen throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, it is vitally important to promote British food and produce from every corner of the United Kingdom. Members of this APPG were particularly vocal in ensuring that dairy farmers had the support they needed through the Dairy Hardship Fund, and have repeatedly raised COVID-19 related concerns with the Government. In the vast majority of cases, the Government moved swiftly to support those in the agricultural sector in need, and the APPG notes and welcomes the Government's actions in this regard.

As we recover from COVID-19 and having left the European Union, we must do more as a country to promote and cherish the very best of British food and drink and support the communities and heritage that make the United Kingdom's food landscape so special. Not least because the importance of GIs to local economies is significant.

Too often, there are those here at home who assume that the United Kingdom cannot compete with some of the countries referenced above, like France or Italy, and that it would be foolish to try. However, throughout our consultation, this is clearly not the case. In fact, there is too much untapped potential and too many as yet hidden treasures in the British food landscape, in every part of our United Kingdom to waste the opportunity to support our food and drink industries. This report is written in a constructive spirit, to show that there are concrete steps the Government, and indeed the four nations, can be taking now to boost our food policy and level up our food and drink ambitions both at home and abroad.

This report is divided into four sections. The first deals with how to encourage and develop food production at home, particularly how the GI register engages with producers, trade organisations and retailers in building a robust food policy, and encouraging new food and drink producers to join the register. This section has been informed by discussions with various stakeholders, as well as responses to the online consultation.

The second section of the report concerns consumers and the promotion of British food and drink to consumers and supermarkets. This section is informed by the online consultation, but also discussions with stakeholders, including devolved and local government .

The final section of this report deals with British food policy abroad, and what steps can be taken to ensure that British GIs can work best for consumers in other countries and our producers and farmers here at home. A truly Global Britain should have a truly global food and drink export policy, and here the APPG will discuss ways to build a better British brand for our incredible food and drink.

Throughout this report will be discussions of the positive effects of GIs for local communities, places and producers, with recommendations at the end of each section.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Geographically Protected Foods welcomes the Government's meaningful ambitions when it comes to protected food and drink names policy, as well as its overarching ambition to boost exporting and develop a stronger British agricultural sector. In that spirit, we commend this report to fellow Parliamentarians, ministers, food and drink producers, retailers and the general public. Thank you again to all those who gave evidence over the past year.

Chapter 1: Making GIs Work for Producers

“A geographical indication right enables those who have the right to use the indication to prevent its use by a third party whose product does not conform to the applicable standards. For example, in the jurisdictions in which the Darjeeling geographical indication is protected, producers of Darjeeling tea can exclude use of the term “Darjeeling” for tea not grown in their tea gardens or not produced according to the standards set out in the code of practice for the geographical indication.”

World Intellectual Property Organization

“In the emerging global market we can counter cheap imports by establishing the UK as the cornerstone of great products, the best there is available.”

Respondent to the APPG’s Producer Consultation

1. When the UK left the European Union Geographical Indication Scheme, it maintained the same architecture as the European Union scheme. The UK scheme does not apply in Northern Ireland, where the European Union Scheme is still in force. Since the two schemes are currently virtually identical, in practice this means that any EU or UK GIs are automatically registered in Northern Ireland, whereas currently any new UK GI must apply for separate registration in the European Union, and any European Union GI must apply in the United Kingdom.

2. The United Kingdom has maintained the tripartite structure of the current EU scheme, with three levels of protection, Protected Designations of Origin (PDOs), Protected Geographical Indications (PGIs) and Traditional Specialty Guaranteed (TSGs).

3. The European Union currently uses the following in relation to a PDO:

“Every part of the production, processing and preparation process must take place in the specific region. For wines, this means that the grapes have to come exclusively from the geographical area where the wine is made.”³ An example of a British PDO would be West Country Farmhouse Cheddar, as the milk, production, processing, and preparation process all occur within three counties in the West Country.

4. The PDO is currently indicated with the following British label:



5. Protected Geographical Indications are defined by the EU as:

“For most products, at least one of the stages of production, processing or preparation takes place in the region. In the case of wine, this means that at least 85% of the grapes used have to come exclusively from the geographical area where the wine is actually made.” A British example of a PGI would be Melton Mowbray Pork Pies, where the pies are made within a certain vicinity using a

³ Quality Schemes Explained: https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/food-safety-and-quality/certification/quality-labels/quality-schemes-explained_en

certain process, but the meat essential to the pork pies need not necessarily come from the location in question.

6. The PGI is currently indicated by the following British label:



7. Traditional Specialty Guaranteed is not necessarily tied to a specific location, but indicates a product made in a particular way, often with particular ingredients and/or methods. This can include the rearing methods of livestock. A British example of a TSG would be Gloucestershire Old Spot Pork, which can be reared in any part of the country but mandates specific methods of raising and feeding the animal.⁴

8. TSGs are currently indicated by the following British label:



9. It should be noted that this tripartite gradation of GI is not the only way to protect or to demonstrate geographic origin or a specific method of production. Indeed, GIs are not even always how countries choose to protect local products.
10. Indeed, the World Intellectual Property Organization notes that there are generally four ways to protect geographical indications: via special protection systems, collective marks, methods focusing on business practices, and unfair competition laws.⁵
11. For producers, GIs are not the same thing as a trademark, and indeed many products in the United Kingdom included on the GI register also have a trademark. Those include Scotch Whisky and Melton Mowbray Pork Pies. Trademarks, however, protect a product from a particular company, rather than a specific area or method. Under GI protection, any person or entity can make a GI so long as they conform to the rules when the product was registered.
12. As will be explained further in the next chapter, the existence of successful food brands with unique character currently protected by trademarks but not by any part of the GI scheme poses a peculiar challenge for the GI scheme, as there are some products whose inclusion on the GI scheme would likely enhance the calibre of the GI scheme rather than enhance the desirability of the product.

⁴ Application for Registration of a TSG: Gloucestershire Old Spot Pork, No 509/2009, <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5fd36838d3bf7f306291b5a3/pfn-traditionally-farmed-gloucs-old-spots-pork.pdf>

⁵ Frequently Asked Questions: Geographical Indications, WIPO, https://www.wipo.int/geo_indications/en/faq_geographicalindications.html

13. Having said this, there is some evidence that GIs can have a substantial impact on the ability of local businesses to attract new customers, both at home and abroad.

Consultation with Producers – Findings

14. The APPG consulted with producers in three ways: by conducting interviews with various producers across the United Kingdom, by collecting written evidence by email to the office of Alicia Kearns MP and by soliciting online consultation responses from producers via the APPGs website, at gpfoods.inparliament.uk
15. The APPG asked a wide variety of questions regarding GIs, including whether they were aware of the GI scheme, how usable the current application system is, how present the existence of GIs are in producers' marketing, whether they consider the GI scheme useful, and whether they have considered applying for (more) products to be protected under the GI scheme.
16. The responses were exceedingly varied across the range of evidence received. However, what was notable was the extent to which established products or markets demonstrated clear understanding of the GI schemes and methods through which to apply, while many smaller producers expressed uncertainty and/or scepticism that the amount of time and financial effort it took to apply for the GI would result in much upside for the business.
17. One recurrent, though not necessarily common theme were the existing pitfalls in managing current GIs when the producers in question are not necessarily large businesses or conglomerates. As the current scheme involves a significant amount of regulatory burden – of which the APPG does not necessarily dispute the necessity but would welcome a Government review of those burdens placed on producers – it can at times be difficult to navigate and is not always a pressing concern to producers who have a unique and important product and for which there is a compelling case for the United Kingdom to do more to sell, promote and protect the product in question.
18. In one instance, a producer of a product currently under review to register as a GI was first notified that the product in question had been applied for when the APPG contacted him to ask about his experience with the application process. This indicates that even producers who have a compelling interest in responding to or disputing a GI application may not necessarily be contacted proactively. In these instances, it may be a significant task for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to contact each potential producer proactively, but this is an indication that local government and similar organisations may have a role to play in including as many people as possible in the process to ensure that producers are not unfairly prevented from producing their livelihoods.
19. In another instance, a famous product from the North East was heavily supported in its application by local government. In this case, local government officials indicated that this support was crucial in ensuring that a bid was put in place. While the APPG does not wish to prejudge the outcome of the particular application, it is the APPG's view that this sort of collaboration between business and government, in promotion of a GI product that inherently relies on place and heritage for its significance, can only be a good thing.
20. During the consultation, the APPG also engaged with a number of Local Authorities, sub-national food bodies, such as Food from England and Food and Drink Scotland, as well as trade bodies such as Dairy UK. In the vast majority of cases, the view was that organisations

wanted to do more to help producers but did not necessarily know how to go about assisting with a GI application or working with producers to uphold GI standards.

21. It is telling that Wales has a very strong record in producing new GIs, with 11 of the last 23 (since 2016) GIs originating from Wales. The APPG would like to pay tribute in particular to Fay Francis, a GI consultant who works closely with producers in developing their GI applications in Wales, and partnered with the Welsh Government, is in large part responsible for the strong Welsh showing in recent successful GI applications. Her work is a demonstrable conclusion that, with support, producers can successfully access the scheme, and already Wales has developed a growing local food culture. Ms Francis' work has been so successful that it was noted by other, non-Welsh producers in our consultation.
22. It should be noted too that both Scotland and Wales have peak industry bodies (Food and Drink Scotland, Food and Drink Wales) that are funded by the Government and which directly support food promotion in those two nations. This is likely associated with the strong presence of GIs with global significance in these jurisdictions. There is an equivalent body, Food from England, that does similar work in England at the moment, but it does not possess the same clout, partly because of a lack of a formalised relationship with central government.
23. Smaller producers have also experienced significant challenges in relation to upholding GI standards. For example, producers of Gloucestershire Old Spot Pork (GOSP) noted that so successful was their breed that it became hugely popular, with the attendant difficulties in overseeing quality standards. However, the GOSP is not actually empowered to enforce standards proactively, and as such is not able to regularly monitor producers, especially larger ones affiliated with supermarket chains, for best practices. As a result, there may be in asymmetries as to how faithfully GIs are carried out when the trade bodies themselves have not been empowered to play any part in monitoring GI standards. Indeed, that same producer noted that trading bodies may not be the most effective vehicle to enforce GI standards as "they don't have the resources or the understanding."
24. The difficulties in relation to livestock have also been present in other contexts. For example, one respondent to the online consultation noted the following regarding Lakeland Herdwick:

"To be honest I have given up! It took years of pain to get our PDO recognised but it hasn't really proved to be of benefit to a significant number of farmers. We did it all ourselves, received no support from AHDB or others except Prince Charles. It was limited by the fact only one abattoir was eligible so inaccessible for the majority of farmers..."

This is a potent example of why stronger local infrastructure and local government support is vital in ensuring that GIs work for producers and communities.

25. The difficulties for small producers is also highlighted in relation to Cumberland sausages. In the course of the APPG research, it was noted by one Cumberland Sausage producer that, what had originally been submitted as "may contain" certain spices had been changed to "may only contain" certain spices. Given that butchers in Cumberland are fiercely protective of their recipe, and that this deliberately varies from location to location, this resulted in some qualified, respected producers no longer qualifying for the Cumberland Sausage designation, even though they had made what was local described as such for generations. DEFRA should consider this particular case closely.

26. A similar point was made by a representative of a major supermarket chain, which prides itself, rightly, on stocking many local products. In this instance, the representative noted that in many of their northern locations, they stock local baked goods that differ slightly by community, and are recognised as such, but it would be time consuming to produce a different GI for each particular variation. In such cases, there should be ways to develop GI policy that allows local communities and producers to express variation while also meeting certain uniform standards of protection.
27. Another concern raised by some producers was that the current GI scheme was not necessarily viewed as a mark of quality. One producer produces a highly regarded baked good in Yorkshire, but felt that, since his product already possessed a trademark, there was little value in acquiring a GI. The only reason he would have applied for GI status is if the UKGI certification indicated quality, which, in his view, it did not currently.
28. This view was in part echoed by an exporter of Farmhouse Cheddar, who expressed significant worries that the UKGI scheme did not have an adequate brand abroad. They expressed the intention to continue using the EU logo for as long as possible, as retailers in the North American market regard this as a positive mark of quality. This will be explored further in Section 3, but the clear indication was that the UKGI scheme, as it was new, did not yet have the mark of quality in which producers could be confident as a marketing tool.
29. The points made by the Farmhouse cheddar producer were reinforced by the evidence received from a cheese retailer in the West Country, who noted that the current GI scheme is not yet recognised as a mark of quality in the UK. However, the indication across the evidence received was that producers recognised it could be, not least as the UK has an excellent and wide variety of cheese. They noted, however, that this was one of the difficulties in relation to the UK GI scheme in terms of cheese: the difference between cheeses from a protected range from a single producer making a cheese no one has heard of to a GI protection for a product, such as Stilton, that is near mass-produced. They noted that in France, GI cheeses are now effectively mass-produced to a high standard, but it is now relatively difficult to find stand-out, artisanal cheese. This potentially poses a significant challenge in terms of determining the proper focus of GI policy, but since quality for consumers remains a significant concern for many producers, and would help set the UK scheme apart, quality should be considered as a major focus of any refined model of the UKGI scheme.
30. It is important to consider too that quality was also emphasised by a number of producers in the online submissions, and that there was some worry that the switch to a new UK GI programme might potentially lead to a lessening of quality standards. The APPG is relieved that it is clear from Government that no such lessening of standards is forthcoming.
31. Hybu Cig Cymru (Meat Promotion Wales) stated the following, which sums up well much of the response we have received from producers:

“It is important that Government maintain a robust approach to assessing new applications into the new UK scheme, as it is important that only products which demonstrate genuine quality credentials, linked to a defined geographical area, be awarded UK GI protection.”
32. Producers and small retailers in the online consultation also noted that the terminology and the methodology behind GIs were not clear to consumers, nor were they well-advertised. The

following from an artisanal meat and food shop from the Hampshire-Wiltshire area sums it up very well:

“The GI scheme could really be something that we can all be proud of but at the moment if you stopped someone in the street to talk about it the overwhelming majority would never have heard of it or have any understanding of what the 3 labels actually stand for.

“The Great Taste labels are now recognised by a lot of shoppers as indicating that the product is of high quality but it has taken many years. To get the GI scheme to have the same level of recognition will require a great deal of work and advertising - how proud is the government of our British food? Time to see some concerted action, and how about another ‘Buy British’ campaign?”

33. That same retailer, who is well known in the area and highly regarded within the food community, also stated that the application process for GIs was not necessarily straightforward, nor did it come easily for small producers with strong products:

“An online application portal with information about how to apply and a step by step process with all the criteria determining whether or not your product might qualify set out. I was lucky in that the person at DEFRA who I was put in touch with was very helpful, but I still had to do all the leg-work with little appreciation for what was actually needed.”

34. In our conversations with DEFRA officials, it was also clear that DEFRA does not see itself as having a role to actively solicit applications to the UKGI scheme. In our view, this may be misguided, as evidence we received from researchers on GIs have argued that the UK could have at least 200 GIs, when it currently only has 81. This is even more acute when considering, as at the end of 2021, there are only 4 GIs (three applied for, one in consultation) that are currently under consideration to be added to the list.⁶ Stephen Roper and Akunna Oledinma (both of whom have been a great help in developing this report) state in their 2020 paper that “the relatively low number of GIs in the UK reflects a reactive rather than proactive stance on the part of the UK government and is itself reflected in low levels of consumer recognition.”⁷
35. The evidence the APPG has received makes it clear that there are a number of producers, GI and not, who are not necessarily familiar with the GI scheme. We received 47 responses related to the GI scheme, and 34 % were not at all familiar or not familiar with the scheme. Just 39 % of producers were familiar or very familiar with the scheme, which is concerning given that the target audience of the consultation were those very interested in British food policy. The fact that only 39 % of producers were familiar with the GI scheme should be of concern to the APPG and to DEFRA.
36. Even more concerning were the number of responses who expressed unfamiliarity with the GI application process. 55 % of respondents expressed no or little familiarity with the GI application process, and only 20 % expressed some familiarity or a lot of familiarity with the scheme. Again, given the target audience of this consultation, this is worrying.

⁶ Data can be found by selection options, ‘United Kingdom’, ‘Foods: designated origin and geographical indication’ and ‘Foods: traditional specialty guaranteed’, and ‘Applied for’ and ‘In consultation’, at <https://www.gov.uk/protected-food-drink-names?>

⁷ Roper and Oledinma, “Taking back control’: Developing Protected Food Names post-Brexit: What can we learn from GI use internationally?”, ERC Research Paper No. 91, 2021:16, <https://www.enterpriseresearch.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ERC-ResPap91-Developing-Protected-Food-Names-post-Brexit-OledinmaRoper.pdf>

37. Nearly a quarter 24 % of respondents to the consultation stated that they do not currently have a GI but would like to apply for one. 41 % of those who responded stated that they did not know whether the current process was difficult or easy, though 28 % said it was hard or very hard, and only 9 % felt it was easy or very easy.
38. In terms of the labels themselves, producers were sceptical of their impact. 43 % were undecided as to whether they caught customers' attention, and only 23 % felt that they would.
39. Of those who responded to the question, 45 % said that they competed with a foreign product, and 45 % said they did not. 74 % felt that having a GI would help or helped them differentiate from other products on the market. Only 13 % disagreed. Only 19 % of producers who answered the question did not advertise the fact their product had a GI.
40. A key takeaway from the quantitative element of the consultation responses are that producers currently are not convinced that GI status can make a difference to them. They do currently use the status in advertising, but that they fear it is not well understood by consumers, nor is the red tape and associated difficulties in accessing the scheme appreciated by producers. One producer noted that the process "has to be a 'team' effort of government and producers, not two separate entities". Another producer added that this is particularly important in relation to developing the brand of a new GI scheme: "consumer awareness is key-it is a relatively new brand-a coordinated effort from the producers working with a single contact point within." Evidence we received highlighted how Local Authorities can play an important role, and in this case, a producer wrote in saying that we "need a GI champion in each county administered by the Local Authorities - need some funding for this."
41. In terms of the administrative burden, producers highlighted the need to make costs as minimal as possible. A producer noted one of the limitations of the red tractor scheme was the fact that costs are often passed on to producers, to the extent that some producers are now questioning the viability of the scheme.
42. Finally, some producers did point out that the EU scheme was too complex and, now, the UK had a chance to develop a GI scheme that meets the needs of consumers and producers. However, producers also highlighted the fact that over time the EU scheme became a hallmark of quality and stringency. The UK must seek to maintain these traits by being more in tune with the needs of UK consumers. This balance must be struck.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The UK should set itself a target of 200 registered GIs by 2030.

Recommendation 2: The UK should consider ways to incentivise GI production in future agricultural legislation and consider GIs a form of public good for the purposes of accessing public money.

Recommendation 3: The UK Government should consider developing GIs as a potential activity when considering applications for rural development grants.

Recommendation 4: The UK Government should actively work with and consult all relevant stakeholders to develop a formalised, non-governmental, voluntary peak body for all GIs in the United Kingdom. This would assist the UK in developing a stronger GI message both at home and abroad. This body should play a key role in the promotion of British food and drink more generally.

Recommendation 5: The UK Government should actively encourage GI applications and work with Local Authorities and food and drink industry bodies to encourage their members or local businesses to apply.

Recommendation 6: The UK Government should develop, within DEFRA, a taskforce to actively identify and encourage GI applications. The APPG intends to offer an interim measure which will be set out in the conclusion.

Recommendation 7: To encourage co-operation between trade bodies, local government, and producer groups, the UK Government should consider requiring any GI application to have a ‘sponsoring body’ in the form of a trade group or local government or MP authority.

Recommendation 8: The UK Government should recognise the role that local government is already playing in many parts of the country in promoting local food and drink and formalise the relationship between local government and the UKGI scheme.

Recommendation 9: The UK Government should study how to maintain quality in GI production and ensure that every GI currently listed is associated with a trade or producer body that can effectively uphold standards. It should not be up to individual producers to enforce GI standards.

Recommendation 10: As outlined in relation to the Cumberland sausage and baked goods in paragraphs 25 and 26, the UK Government should consult on ways to recognise important local delicacies in ways that recognise both uniform quality standards and local variation.

Recommendation 11: The UK Government should launch a consultation with consumers, producers and trade bodies seeking guidance as to ways quality standards can be maintained while making the application process more streamlined, reducing regulative demands.

Recommendation 12: For food and drink that already have an established trade-mark in the United Kingdom, the UK Government should consider a fast-tracked application process to receive a GI.

Recommendation 13: To prevent GI status being applied for while some producers are not aware of the application, the UK Government should have a proactive duty to contact relevant stakeholders in a local area and consult local government as to relevant businesses who may be affected by the application. The UK Government should also actively discourage GIs where only one producer has been identified, to enable a community approach and the broadening of the benefits to a local community.

Recommendation 14: The UK Government should update its website to more effectively foreground the various categories of protected food and drink names and explain for consumers the nature of the different schemes.

Recommendation 15: The UK Government should take active steps both at home and abroad to secure the UKGI scheme as a marker of quality and the highest standards of food and drink making. The UK Government should recognise that this took many years for the EU scheme to establish and as such the UK Government should invest now to secure that outcome.

Chapter 2: Buying British and Celebrating Our Heritage: GIs for Consumers

“Choosing British food means enjoying the diverse and delicious food that our varied countryside and seasonal climate produces. It is a way of rejoicing in the food that is grown on our doorsteps”

Love British Food⁸

“Backing from the top, positivity and excellent public information and communication. We want to buy British...”

Respondent to the online consumer APPG survey

43. The central problem in relation to GI policy for consumers is that the scheme is not well understood by consumers (as alluded to by the responses received from producers), and does not carry much significance in relation to purchasing decisions. This is despite the fact that GIs can have significant local benefits, and can represent important local heritage, tradition and British culture.
44. Recognition remains a significant challenge when it comes to the implementation of a consumer-oriented GI policy. According to Hartmann et al. (2019), only 14.43 % of those surveyed in the United Kingdom recognised the EU PGI label, and only 9.95 % recognised the EU PDO label⁹. This is low compared to Italy and France, where over 69 % and over 52 % recognise the EU PGI label respectively.
45. This lack of recognition translates into a lack of consumer use when making consumer choices. While over 40 % of the French public and over 52 % of the Italian public consider PGIs when making choices, just over 10 % of those surveyed in the UK indicated that they used the label. However, of those who recognised the label, a full 71 % of consumers in the UK surveyed said they used the label in their decision making.¹⁰
46. The numbers in Italy and France, along with the high level of consumer use when the label is recognised suggests that there is a significant incentive for the UK Government to increase consumer awareness of the GI scheme. The British public has demonstrated a receptivity to similar forms of food certification. Hartmann et al. state that over 75 % of all British consumers surveyed knew the Red Tractor label for example.¹¹
47. According to YouGov research commissioned by the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme (2021), labels are very important for UK consumers. In the 3,500-person sample, 82 % of those surveyed recognised the Fairtrade symbol, 77 % recognised the British Lion, and 74 % recognised Red Tractor. Of those who recognised the three logos, 59, 56 and 51 % of those surveyed, respectively said that the logos would influence their consumption decisions.¹²

⁸ <https://www.lovebritishfood.co.uk/why-buy-british>

⁹ Hartmann et al., Report on quantitative research findings on European consumers' perception and valuation of EU food quality schemes as well as their confidence in such measures', 2019, pg 69, 85. <https://www.strength2food.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/D8.1-Consumer-analysis-on-FQS-2-surveys-compressed.pdf>

¹⁰ Ibid, 70-71

¹¹ Ibid, 120

¹² Red Tractor Assurance Scheme, “Packaging and Labelling Impacts on Consumer Trust”, 2021, <https://assurance.redtractor.org.uk/packaging-and-labelling-impacts-consumer-trust/>

48. In that same survey, 47 % of those surveyed stated they often or always look for food assurance scheme logos when they shop.¹³
49. It is notable too that the YouGov research, despite extensively polling a number of assurance schemes, did not include the UKGI scheme. This may be that even large organisations and other assurance schemes do not currently see it as comparable to what is already on the market. Given the GI scheme is almost by definition an assurance scheme, this should be rectified.
50. In the APPG's own survey, the evidence we received from consumers reflected the same findings seen in the literature. For example, out of the 56 consumer responses we received, 75 % disagreed with the statement "whether a product is a GI or not is not important to me", 46 % strongly, yet only 28 % felt they knew where to find products with the GI label. Only 11 % thought that GIs were only a 'marketing tool', meaning that, when people know what GIs are, this can have a positive impact on their consumption.
51. Over 75 % of people said that promotion of the existing GI logos and education about what they mean would influence them to buy more GI products. Over two thirds said better marketing and information on TV and radio would make them more likely to buy GI products, and more than half wanted to see dedicated space in supermarkets for GI products.
52. The demographic surveyed by the APPG are mostly people already involved in food policy, so it is likely that this skews the result somewhat. However, the fact that this engaged demographic still had less than 30 % agreement as to whether they knew where to buy GI products is a strong indication that these products and the GI certification system is neither well advertised nor well understood by those interested in food and drink production, let alone the public.
53. Such is the indication that GIs are not well understood, that while the majority of the producers surveyed noted that they emphasised GI status when selling their products in advertisements, 67 % of consumers surveyed said they had never seen a food advertisement where the GI was mentioned. This disconnect suggests that GIs are so poorly understood that they are not even noticed even when deployed in publicity, or if they do subconsciously feature, consumers cannot recall GI status featuring in their decision making.
54. The fact that this scheme is not well understood, nor is it clear to consumers, is underlined by the fact that when asked to list products they would like to see protected by the GI scheme, many respondents asked for protection for products already on the GI scheme, such as scotch whisky or Melton Mowbray Pork Pies.
55. Additionally, the tripartite nature of the UK's GI scheme, copying the European Scheme, is not necessarily well understood by consumers. One respondent stated the following:

"Why 3 different labels? That is confusing for a start. I would consider myself a well-educated food shopper, supporting local food producers and using farm shops weekly. Yet I don't understand the difference. Information needs to be clear and easily available online, and needs to make clear that these products will be cheaper than copies from abroad as they are produced to higher standards and support UK jobs."

¹³ Ibid, "Some packaging information matters more than others"

56. The fact that the tiered structure is not well understood is unhelpful for GI policy, as this is one way that consumers can benefit, as it provides a way to differentiate different marks of relationship to the land, and serves potentially as a way to distinguish between more stringent and less stringent quality indicators. As Deselnicu et al. put it:

“Therefore, a tiered GI certification scheme such as the one adopted in Europe may principally benefit consumers (see also Moschini, Menapace, and Pick, 2008) by lowering the reputation costs of providing high-quality food products¹⁴”

57. One respondent also made the point that they recognised and had seen EU labels in use, but even months into the new UKGI scheme, they had not seen GIs advertised. This was attributed in part to the use of the colour black, which was cited by a number of consumers as not necessarily the most attractive colour scheme:

“Whilst I have been aware of European DOPs (sic) and similar for a long time, I've never seen this UK label promoted anywhere! Given I work in the food & drink industry, I'm quite surprised that I've not seen it around. Personally, I'd have made it red or blue like the European ones - black tends to blend into packaging a bit.”

58. In terms of the quantitative data, the initial response regarding the new logo is not entirely positive either. Only 30 % of respondents agreed that the label caught their attention, and a full 42 % of respondents felt it did not capture their attention. 29 % were undecided. Given this is a new logo with a new scheme, those numbers are not ideal. The APPG is not aware of what research was undertaken into the design of the logo to ensure it was attractive to consumers before it was launched.

59. Only 30 % of respondents felt the label was attractive, and only 9 % agreed strongly. Conversely, 79 % said the label was trustworthy which is very reassuring. In this context, the problem is not that the label is not being regarded highly in terms of what it is indicating, but rather that the label is unlikely to attract new buyers or catch the attention of those browsing in the supermarket. However the label would be effective in securing the trust of consumers who notices it. While these are small sample sizes, the results do indicate that a redesign – or new colour - may be a worthy course of action to develop a stronger UKGI brand.

60. Amongst the comments there were some worries that any GI scheme would be anti-competitive, or subject to some form of regulatory capture. A comment from a constituent put it well: “In general I would tend to regard the scheme as being rather anti-competitive and not in consumers’ best interests.”

61. Indeed, this was an issue also raised by some retailers. GIs have at times in the United Kingdom been given to one producer for a product, which can severely limit the longevity of the GI if the producer closes down, and, in effect, allows a specific producer to potentially charge a higher premium (not necessarily a negative). Given that GIs should celebrate the food of a specific geographic area, or emphasise the connection between an area and food, GIs should not be given to products where there is only one recognised producer, and GIs should always involve a good deal of community support.

¹⁴ Deselnicu et al, A Meta-Analysis of Geographical Indication Food Valuation Studies: What Drives the Premium for Origin-Based Labels?, *Journal of Agriculture and Resource Economics*, 2013:216

62. There has been some research too that implemented poorly, GIs can negatively impact consumers if they lead to cartelisation. Oledinma and Roper (2020) note that some research suggests that when producers collude via GI policy, consumers end up with artificially limited supply and higher prices (quoting Crespi and Marette, 2003)¹⁵.
63. However, this should not be considered a significant impediment in the United Kingdom's case, as there are significant reasons to suggest that at the moment the UK is not conducting GI policy in a way that maximises utility for consumers or producers. The words of Oledinma and Roper (2020) are useful here:

“More important in most producers’ decision to use or not use a GI was the extent of customer recognition and therefore the sales price premium or additional sales of the product. In general, producers we talked to regarded GI labelling as carrying little weight with UK consumers.”

In other words, the UK's GI scheme is so poorly known by consumers at this point, as per the evidence set out previously, that it is very unlikely that a GI label could generate the sales premiums necessary to cause worries about market or regulatory capture, at least in the short term.

64. Indeed, the evidence suggests that while GIs can offer a premium, this must come through a highly recognised GI scheme, or recognised GI products. GIs are not well recognised in the UK and this is borne out by the evidence of price premiums. In 2012, the EU studied the price premiums accrued by GI designations, and determined that, while on average agriculture and foodstuff GIs in the UK attracted a 7 % price premium, the average for agriculture and foodstuffs was 55 %, and in fact GIs on spirits in the UK attracted a premium of 125 %.¹⁶
65. The 2012 EU report also indicated that three spirit GIs (led by Scottish whisky) and cheese, represent over 80 % of all GI sales in the UK.¹⁷ This is a strong indication that currently, given that GIs are not well known in the UK, premiums are being commanded by the well-known products, which are also driving GI sales.
66. In that same study, the authors noted that a significant reason for the lack of premium attached to UK GI products was the lack of robust use of the GI scheme and a general non-use of GI schemes by UK consumers.

“Conversely, British meats (Scottish and Welsh beef and lamb) showed low value premium rates. These products are as traditional and old as French wine can be, but they have been using the PGI scheme for only fifteen years. Meat market segmentation has been built taking GI schemes as a cornerstone. It relies on species, animal classification, and overall on cuts (sirloin is more expensive than minced beef, made out of any beef cuts). Indeed, British meat packers use GI labelling as a signature for continental clients, as Scottish and Welsh meat marketing chains are naturally in excess and have to export a significant part of their production. The products range does not include luxury goods (unlike wine) that create a very wide

¹⁵ Oledinma and Roper, “What’s in a name? The impact of Geographical Indications of Origin on producer growth and food heritage”, ERC Research Paper No. 86, March 2020

¹⁶ EU, Value of production of agricultural products and foodstuffs, wines, aromatised wines and spirits protected by a geographical indication (GI), 2012, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/131c84a8-3c1f-4835-9a83-fbdd0abc9b2e/language-en>

¹⁷ Ibid, 32

*price scale and open great opportunities for product segmentation and pricing strategies*¹⁸.”

The APPG would encourage the Government, and indeed any interested readers, to review the EU's 2012 report in full, as it demonstrates quite clearly the extent to which the UK, compared to many of its closest competitors, does not capture the value associated with GIs.

67. As a result of these very low premium rates, the Government and sceptics may argue that more widespread adoption of GI schemes will do little to impact producers or boost consumption of British food. However, as has already been established, British consumers are far less likely to recognise GI schemes than many of their European counterparts, and the new UKGI scheme is not well known.
68. Actively working to strongly publicise GIs can also have a significant positive impact on the value that GIs can bring outside of sales premiums. When GIs are well known locally, nationally and internationally, they can make a significant positive difference to their local communities. In their studies of Melton Mowbray Pork Pies and Herefordshire Cider, Oledinma and Roper (2020) note:

“The strongest links to the development of local tourism were evident in Melton Mowbray (Case 5) and in Herefordshire Cider (Case 4). In both cases producers were contributing actively to local tourism development and in turn attracting new tourist business. As one of our interviewees in Melton Mowbray commented: ‘tourism, if one wishes to call it that, is a big part of our agenda and its ours as a business, but also as a town’. This is amply illustrated by one of four pictures on the cover of the Melton Mowbray town visitor guide being of a pork pie and another of a Stilton cheese.

“In Herefordshire the Cider Route has been strongly supported by the producer association (the Three Counties Cider Association) who have also recently developed a range of Cider-based events (Craft Con, Cider and Perry Festival) and contributed to developing ‘Cider Lands’ (<https://ciderlands.org/>) an international cider tourism and heritage network.

“In both cases (Melton Mowbray and Herefordshire) the value of the GI’s contribution to local tourism has been amplified by collaboration between producers and engagement by local public and tourism agencies.”

Both these cases, Herefordshire Cider and Melton Mowbray Pork Pies, demonstrate that consumer recognition, and significant effort in marketing and advertising GIs can boost tourism, the support of local communities, provide a strong basis for public-private collaboration and ultimately further the heritage and respect for British food and drink products

69. As a result, a stronger conclusion than scepticism about the value of GI schemes would be that the cornerstone of a strong UKGI policy must be a widespread and in depth education and marketing campaign for the new UKGI scheme. As the UK delivers a new food and drink policy, and aims to boost exports, it must make sure that the incentives to develop GIs also exist at home. That is why many of the recommendations made in this chapter deal directly with consumer education and publicity.

¹⁸ Ibid, 82

70. As will be explored in the next chapter, recognition of the UKGI scheme will have positive impacts in terms of premiums and developing a stronger export policy, but any push for food and drink exports abroad must be built on a solid foundation at home.

Recommendations

Recommendation 16: The UK Government should invest in a widespread education and publicity campaign to formally launch their UKGI scheme.

Recommendation 17: The UK Government should partner with Local Authorities, retailers, regional food organisations, and other relevant non-profit and for-profit organisations to deliver its education and publicity campaign.

Recommendation 18: The UK Government should commission a public opinion polling organisation to better understand current levels of GI knowledge amongst the British public and shape future GI marketing and communications efforts.

Recommendation 19: The UK Government should aim to have at least a 50 % recognition rate amongst the general public by the year 2030.

Recommendation 20: The UK Government should consult on the current logos used by the UKGI Scheme, and strongly consider altering the colour schemes to make them more appealing.

Recommendation 21: The UK Government should include a section on GI policy in any future food strategy or whitepaper dealing with food policy where appropriate – especially export and trade efforts.

Recommendation 22: The UK Government should commission further econometric and related analyses of the price premiums currently commanded by UKGI products compared to their closest international competitors and consider ways these premiums can be strengthened.

Recommendation 23: The UK Government should develop a target to achieve a specific premium across GI products, which should aim to be comparable to those outlined above, such as Italy or France by 2030.

Recommendation 24: The UK Government should consider, in line with recommendations in the previous section, ensuring that any new GIs already demonstrate a clear customer base and local support. Every new GI should be considered a way to further enhance the reputation and reach of the UKGI Scheme.

Recommendation 25: The UK Government should collaborate across Departments to develop a food tourism strategy, which centres GIs and culinary heritage.

Chapter 3: Building Brand Britain: UK GI Policy At Home and Abroad

71. The UK Government has rightly set itself a target of £1 trillion in exports by 2030.¹⁹ The strategy, entitled ‘Made in the UK, Sold to the World’, states that the UK Government “will extend our hugely successful Export Campaign designed to promote great UK products and services, with the agri-food and drink sector at its core amongst others”²⁰.
72. According to the Food and Drink Federation, UK agri-food and drink sales overseas was nearly £24 billion in 2019²¹, and food and farming together support 4.3 million jobs and contribute £120 billion to the UK economy.
73. According to the World Bank’s WITS database, the United Kingdom, in 2019, was the third largest exporter of food products in the world by value, behind the United States and Germany.²²
74. According to the UK Government, GIs currently encompass 25 % of the UK’s food and drink exports by value, led mostly by Scottish whisky.²³
75. GIs have also been an important part of recent trade agreements. The APPG welcomes the protection accorded in the Japanese and Australian FTAs, and hopes this trend continues. There are indications GIs can help the UK establish its own interests and that they carry substantial political weight in negotiations with other states. GIs are an excellent way to defend the UK’s exporting interests²⁴.
76. However, there has been recent evidence to suggest that protection of GIs in FTAs can have only a limited impact when the products are not well known to begin with or not well established in other markets. Curzi and Huysmans (2021) note that FTAs themselves cannot necessarily kickstart GI exports. They note the following in their conclusion:

“This finding suggests that the positive effect exerted by FTA GI protection leads to an export-promoting effect that is increasing in the quality of GI products. This finding reinforces the idea that product quality is an important determinant of the success of exported products, also when considering GI products: only GIs of high perceived quality benefit from being listed. This finding is in line with evidence from McCluskey and Loureiro (2003), who find that perceived quality is a key element for the success of GI products”²⁵

This finding suggests that the UK Government cannot simply sign FTAs protecting GIs and hope that the export markets take off. Rather, the UK Government must be invested in developing, marketing and perfecting the UKGI scheme both at home and abroad to ensure UK products already have a presence and are seen as a sign of quality. The one caveat to this

¹⁹ Made in the UK, Sold to the World, 17 November, 2021, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/made-in-the-uk-sold-to-the-world-new-strategy-to-boost-exports-to-1-trillion>

²⁰ Ibid, 33

²¹ Food and Drink Federation, Exports, <https://www.fdf.org.uk/dfd/what-we-do/trade/exports/>

²² World Bank, WITS Database, “Food Products Exports by country in US\$ Thousand 2019, https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/WLD/Year/2019/TradeFlow/Export/Partner/by-country/Product/16-24_FoodProd

²³ Eustice, George, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Hansard: Volume 644, in reply to a question from Mr Chapman (Dunfermline and West Fife), <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-07-12/debates/EF364E1-2E5E-409A-8AB6-33059B94A683/ProtectedGeographicalIndicationsExportValue>

²⁴ Curzi and Huysmans, “The Impact of Protecting EU Geographical Indications in Trade Agreements”, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 2021, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/ajae.12226>

²⁵ Ibid, 15

study is that the FTAs cited by Curzi and Huysmans (signed by the EU) are relatively recent, and thus may not have captured the medium and long-run effects of GI protection.

77. This evidence also suggests that UK producers must have the backing of the Government to develop a world-renowned and quality-oriented GI scheme. As producers noted in their responses to our consultation, there is significant worry that the UKGI scheme does not yet have the respect and regard necessary for retailers to stock British products and to rely on the British GI scheme as a mark of quality and customer satisfaction.
78. One difficulty uncovered in our discussions with officials associated with the Department for International Trade (DIT) in relation to GI policy is the fact that this is primarily a domestically administered scheme via DEFRA that then has separate trade implications implemented by DIT. Thus, while GIs are engaged with by DIT in relation to formal trade agreements, they do not yet play a large role in UK export promotion. This should be rectified, especially given the positive impacts of GIs identified in the rest of this section.
79. It was indicated to the APPG over the course of this consultation that DIT does wish to better integrate business exporting advice between DIT, DEFRA and BEIS. The APPG notes that the new exporting strategy includes an Export Support Service. Given the complexity of GIs and the fact that their recognition varies between markets, the Export Support Service should include GIs as part of the support service's areas of advice.
80. Curzi and Huysmans, as noted above, make the point that FTAs themselves cannot necessarily guarantee a positive impact for GI products, but that GIs can have a very positive impact in relation to products that are already an established market player or which have a well-regarded reputation for quality. In these cases, DIT and DEFRA may have a role to play in identifying agriculture and agri-food products currently on the market that may benefit from GI designation.
81. Perhaps most importantly, GIs can have a positive impact outside of the agri-food sector. In the previous section tourism was mentioned, but GIs can potentially help the redevelopment of rural economies and help deliver the Government's Levelling Up agenda and help spread prosperity. In a study of wines in Italy, Creszenzi et al. (2021), note that GIs have had a positive impact in reorganising and revitalising local economies. In fact, compared to parts of Italy that did not adopt a GI, the share of farming of employment actually went down. However, the share of employment for non-farming sectors of the economy actually went up. The authors explain the findings thusly:

“The dynamics of the share of farming and nonfarming employment are of course linked together. The role of GIs in triggering a reorganization of the economic structure of rural areas towards more advanced sectors involves those sectors that are mostly associated with the whole chain of the GIs. In this sense, tourism (e.g., agritourism and restaurants) might be one sector driving the shift of rural economies towards a more advance structure. Data on employment by economic activities – which are not used in the main analysis since they are available only for the 1971–2011 period – confirm that the sectors where the share of employment of DOCG municipalities grow the most are Accommodation and food service and Financial, professional, scientific technical and entrepreneurship activities...

“This finding should encourage a careful reflection on the importance of triggering non-farming activities. Indeed, even if consumers' demand and future market orientation changed, the non-farming activities generated by GIs' intersectoral spillovers would continue to support local economies. In this way, GIs can trigger a virtuous circle mainly driven by non-farming activities.”

The key indication here is that GIs are not just a luxury item, nor a marginal extra on the top of a food or export policy. Rather, GIs are a vital part of any export policy that can help deliver the Levelling Up Agenda in parts of the country – especially more rural areas - that deserve greater economic growth and prosperity.

82. Further, GI policy should be an impetus for central and local government to more deeply embed themselves into local communities. For example, while Cei et al. (2017) note that GIs have led to an increase in the value add for agricultural products in Italy, they note that this is not necessarily true for all GIs, whose nature and market vary widely.²⁶ Indeed, Vaquero-Piñero (2021) notes that the factors that make GIs possible vary widely by product, with agricultural GIs heavily associated with strong ex ante socio-economic indicators, while wine GIs are more reliant on local knowledge and well established networks, independent of socio-economic effects²⁷. This indicates that the UK Government can use GIs to develop a stronger place-based response to rural development, and DEFRA can develop ways to work directly and closely with communities to boost sales and exports.
83. Indeed, when it comes to exporting, the UK has in fact made progress in this regard in relation to GIs. According to a 2019 European Union study, the value of UK GIs continues to grow strongly, with GI domestic sales increasing by €1.9 billion (£1.7 billion) between 2010 and 2017²⁸. This amounts to an increase of 33 % over seven years. What is most positive about this development is, despite the dominance of spirit drinks (mainly whisky) in the UK's GI market, the vast majority (€1.6 billion out of €1.9 billion) came from growth related to PGI foodstuffs²⁹.
84. In terms of exports, robust growth continued to occur, with non-wine PDO and PGI exports growing by a total of 204 % between 2010 and 2017 in the EU market, and by 84 % in the non-EU market.³⁰
85. However, a note of caution. The report states that the increase in value of GI exports of agri-food was “mainly due to the development of new protected products and, to a lesser extent, the growth of existing PGIs designations produced under organic production”³¹. What is more, this fast growth was offset by a fall in Whisky exports to the EU, and slower growth in Whisky sales to the rest of the world.
86. In fact, the UK's total share of EU GI value actually decreased from 11 to 10 %, which was mostly attributed to slower growth in Scotch Whisky values. As a mark of how dependent on Scotch Whisky the UK's GIs are for value, even the explosive growth in PGI food products was not enough to offset the slow growth of whisky sales.³²
87. For example, this growth can be contrasted with Italy, who over the same period saw significant increases in export growth for GIs compared to the UK. Between 2010 and 2017, Italy's EU exports grew by 39 % and it's non- EU exports grew by 52 %, compared to the

²⁶ Cei et al, “Geographical Indications: a first assessment of the impact on rural development in Italian NUTS3 regions”, Working Paper N.14/2017, DISEI – Università degli Studi di Firenze, https://www.disei.unifi.it/upload/sub/pubblicazioni/repec/pdf/wp14_2017.pdf

²⁷ Vaquero-Piñero, C. (2021). The long-term fortunes of territories as a route for agri-food policies: Evidence from geographical indications. *Bio-Based and Applied Economics*. <https://doi.org/10.13128/bae-9429>

²⁸ European Commission, “Study on economic value of EU quality schemes, geographical indications (GIs) and traditional specialties guaranteed (TSGs)”, 2019, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a7281794-7ebe-11ea-aea8-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

²⁹ Ibid, 79

³⁰ Ibid, 78

³¹ Ibid, 79

³² Ibid, 79

UK's 24 % and 20 % respectively.³³ Moreover, the report notes that 70 % of the agri-food growth can be attributed to PDOs and PGIs that were already registered, and only 30 % due to newly registered PDOs and PGIs.³⁴ The report in particular noted the contribution the PDO Prosecco in Veneto made to increases in both the national and international markets.

88. Indeed, prosecco is an example of the extraordinary exporting success that can be generated by PDOs backed by the whole community and by an industry. The Prosecco PDO consortium was established in 2009, and from 142 million bottles sold in 2010, 485 million bottles were sold in 2019³⁵. According to the President of the Consortium, Stefano Zanette, the making of prosecco is a community endeavour:

“Prosecco ‘is not a business in the hands of 3-4 companies. More than 11,000 families are involved, and each company has an average of 2 hectares at its disposal. There are also those who work in offices or factories and manage to round out with small production. We are the driving force behind all Italy’s viticulture’”³⁶.

Like Scotch Whisky, the Prosecco PDO has been very successful in defending its trademark and GI status³⁷, and is another demonstration of how working together, communities can be empowered by the Government to defend their exports and their products.

89. Similarly, France also saw significant increases in its exports in the period between 2010 and 2017. The EU report also notes that French agri-food product growth was 60 % due to growth in existing GIs and 40 % due to new products. This is greater than Italy, but still a result of the growth of existing GIs to an extent not seen in the United Kingdom.³⁸ Indeed, the report noted that improvements in quality and targeting top-range markets increased the price premium of French products over the period.³⁹

90. The French Government has also developed GIs in a way that can encompass both a wide variety of practices while setting some uniform standards of production and process. This has helped empower communities and connect local practices and variations with the need to also generate a unified appellation and brand. For example, the experience of *Chevrotin* cheese is instructive:

The Chevrotin designation covers all traditional goats’ cheeses that are exclusively or principally produced in the departments of Savoie and Haute-Savoie, irrespective of whether they are made to the same principles as Reblochon, Tomme or Vacherin. Goat farming was for many years seen as the poor relation of mainstream farming. As a result, the Chevrotin designation has become an umbrella term which in practice embraces different realities and denotes a range of cheeses with quite distinct characteristics.⁴⁰

This method of combining variety with uniformity should also inform some of the problems laid out in the first section of this report.

³³ Ibid, pp. 74-79

³⁴ Ibid, 75

³⁵ News.Italianfood.net “Here’s why Prosecco PDO is winning Global Consumers”, 2 December 2021, <https://news.italianfood.net/2021/12/02/how-prosecco-pdo-is-winning-global-consumers/>

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Burges Salmon LLP, “Italian Consortium Successfully Opposed BROSECCO Wine Mark on the Grounds of Prosecco PDO”, <https://www.worldtrademarkreview.com/italian-consortium-successfully-opposes-brosecco-wine-mark-the-grounds-of-prosecco-pdo>

³⁸ European Commission, 2019:73

³⁹ Ibid, 73

⁴⁰ Berard and Marchenay, *From Localized Products to Geographical Indications*, 2008

91. A further potential problem identified by the APPG in relation to GI exports is the ongoing difficulty in the agriculture and food trading relationship with the European Union. According to the Food and Drink Federation, exports have fallen to Germany (-44.5 %), Italy (-43.3 %) and Spain (-50.6 %) in the first three quarters of 2021. Overall, the reductions amount to a fall of £2.7 billion, and were not offset by strong growth in China, Taiwan and Japan, among other economies.⁴¹ This demonstrates the need for the UK to urgently resolve disputes with the European Union, and also work speedily to establish new trade links across the globe as is taking place.
92. Thus, while the United Kingdom’s GI exports continue to grow, notwithstanding challenges in the EU market, the balance of evidence also shows that this is an area of policy where our competitors also continue to grow and develop. Italy and France in particular continue to develop GI policy and do so in a way that allows for the growth of existing GIs.
93. While it is outside the scope and expertise of the APPG, we note that there is likely much to learn regarding GI policy from other countries, and in particular, this report highlights the world-leading work done by Italy and France.
94. It has already been established that the UK can do more to register more GIs, but this should not be a stand-in to inflate export numbers. What is more, registering a GI should be recognised as just the start of the process. The aim should be to get as many producers as possible exporting. Even currently, this is not always the case. For example, one Stilton producer generates 60 % of all exports.
95. It should be noted too that local governments have, in the course of engagement with the APPG been some of the most stalwart champions of GIs in their local area. Local government already has an important role to play in Levelling Up and delivering many parts of the Government’s economic agenda, including freeports (a pillar of point 10 of the UK’s new exporting strategy)⁴², and prosperity boosting investment. In their online submission, one Local Authority noted that they wanted the resources to better identify businesses in the agricultural and GI space and help them develop further. One Chamber of Commerce in the North of England, with the backing of the Local Authority, said they were planning a large publicity campaign for products in the area:

“We are currently promoting rather than direct selling, activity has been on very low key basis for the past year but we are now reviewing with the intention of relaunching focussed on promotion rather than selling directly - will be regional, national and international.”

That organisation continued saying that they

“... would be keen to do more within that to work with GI producers/those looking to apply for GI status. With increased understanding of what is needed we could certainly do so. We are already able to work with them on marketing etc.”

This is just one comment out of many made by local government and non-profit representatives to us over the course of the consultation. Local government and organisations can play an exciting role in exports and advocacy for some of the best of British food and drink. This can be a hugely empowering initiative for local areas, and will also maximise the chances that new GIs can have the largest possible socio-economic impact.

⁴¹ Food and Drink Federation, “UK Food and Drink Sees a Persistent and Significant Drop in Exports”, <https://www.fdf.org.uk/fdf/news-media/press-releases/2021-press-releases/uk-food-and-drink-sees-a-significant-and-persistent-drop-in-exports/>

⁴² Made in the UK, Sold to the World, 37

96. The APPG notes that the Government has announced the creation of a new Food and Drink Export Council. The APPG looks forward to engaging with this council in the coming year. The APPG also notes that the Trade and Agriculture Commission has called on the Government to introduce a new agri-food strategy.
97. One aspect of exports that has not yet been covered is the role that parliamentarians can have in terms of identifying local businesses and encouraging export opportunities. The APPG welcomes the Parliamentary Export Programme initiative, and notes the opportunities that await if Parliamentarians could also be involved in identifying GI products and potential export opportunities for them.
98. Similarly, as parliamentarians, the APPG notes that the UK does not necessarily follow the practice of many of its competitors either in Parliament or in missions abroad when it comes to British food. The APPG notes that many embassies in London exclusively serve food and drink from their home country, and actively encourage food and drink events in their host countries. For example, the Bosnian Embassy is hosting a ‘Taste of the Western Balkans’ event in Parliament in early 2022, and the Canadian High Commission regularly services Canadian ice wine at diplomatic events. It is our understanding that similar initiatives are not regularly organised by British representatives abroad.
99. Similarly, the APPG notes point 9 of the export strategy in relation to the Pilot Tradeshow Programme. The APPG looks forward to further discussions with DIT and DEFRA to ensure that GIs can be a foundational part of any tradeshow policy in relation to agriculture and agri-food, as these opportunities are, in the department’s own words “vital to developing sales and stimulating growth” and lend a significant degree of prestige that is vital as the UK establishes a new GI regime. Other countries invest in large stands at trade shows to celebrate their domestic produce and help increase exports, the UK should do the same.
100. The UK Government also welcomes the inclusion of agriculture as a sector meriting a note in the UK’s new export strategy⁴³. The APPG membership looks forward to further discussions with the Department for International Trade in developing a strong policy for exporting and economic development related to GIs and this informs the recommendations of this section.

Recommendations

Recommendation 26: The UK Government should aim to increase the number of GIs exported abroad by 2030.

Recommendation 27: The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs should commission a study into GI management best practices in other countries, to report back by the end of 2022.

Recommendation 28: The UK Government should develop a marketing strategy for the UK GI scheme abroad, including investment in stands at trade fairs.

Recommendation 29: The UK Government should prioritise, in collaboration between DEFRA and DIT finding established exporting businesses that may benefit from a GI but do not currently possess one. Funding should be allocated for this purpose, potentially through the £45 million allocated for the Export Support Service.

⁴³ Ibid, 44

Recommendation 30: The UK Government should include in any agri-food strategy specific plans for the development and export of geographical indications.

Recommendation 31: The Food and Drink Export Council should include as part of its terms of reference the promotion of GIs abroad and enhancing the reputation of the UK GI scheme domestically and abroad.

Recommendation 32: The Department for International Trade and DEFRA should develop a co-ordinating mechanism to ensure that GI policy domestically directly informs export promotion abroad.

Recommendation 33: The Department for International Trade should prioritise for the purposes of the Pilot Tradeshow Programme, opportunities to showcase GI products in the foreseeable future to foreground the UKGI Scheme and ensure that it maintains a strong reputation with retailers and consumers abroad.

Recommendation 34: The Department for International Trade should develop a scheme similar to the Parliamentary Export Programme specifically for agriculture, food and drink interests, and include opportunities for parliamentarians to seek out and actively promote potential GI registrants and GI export opportunities. The APPG would welcome the opportunity to offer assistance in this regard

Recommendation 35: Local Authorities and trade organisations should be active partners with central Government in boosting exporting opportunities in every part of the UK, and DIT should set out ways that they can do so, particularly in reference to the role combined authorities already play in promoting local economic opportunities.

Recommendation 36: UK Trade Envoys should include as part of their mandate the recommendation to particularly push to enhance the UK's food, drink and agriculture exports and in particular highlight the UK's GI scheme.

Recommendation 37: UK embassies should be mandated to showcase UK food and drink at relevant diplomatic and cultural functions, with a particular prioritisation of products that hold a UK geographical indication, PDO or TSG.

Recommendation 38: DEFRA should create a mechanism through which Members of Parliament can recommend for initial consideration, potential GI products. Enabling the department to provide an initial guide as to the appropriateness of the product for GI status before producers invest significant time and effort in applying for GI status. To trial this approach, the APPG will provide an initial pilot mechanism.

Conclusion

One of the most rewarding aspects of developing this report has been the enthusiasm with which producers and consumers have expressed their confidence and pride in the British food and drink sector, and the pride that they have shown in particular toward the food and drink produced in their local communities.

We hope this report pays tribute to that pride, and will encourage the Government to adopt policies that can fully harness the enormous potential food and drink offers our local communities.

As this report has outlined, the United Kingdom has for too long missed out on important opportunities because of how geographical indication policy is used. We welcome, wholeheartedly, the Government's commitment to improving its GI policy and, GI or not, boosting the profile of British food and drink.

As this report makes clear, Geographical Indications are an excellent way to instil local pride, compete on quality both at home and abroad, and support local producers. We are too quick as a nation to talk our own food and drink down, and we do not do enough to build the profile of our outstanding culinary products and culture abroad. Many other countries use geographical indications to put their stamp and their mark of quality on their food and drink exports, and the United Kingdom should too.

We should also nurture, consistently and enthusiastically, our own budding producers and local economies. Geographical indications are very often labours of love, of both food and drink and of community. We hope that labour can be rewarded with greater engagement between local producers and the Government, and we hope that it can also lead, with Government support, to a higher domestic and international profile for geographical indications.

As Members of Parliament we have a fantastic and unique opportunity to reach into our communities and identify potential future geographical indications. As such, to mark the launch of this report the APPG will launch a UK-wide search for the next food and drink products that deserve official recognition as GIs. MPs will be encouraged and supported by the APPG to assist producers to submit their products for an initial, and complimentary, assessment of whether or not a producer should officially pursue GI status.

There is so much untapped potential here in the UK when it comes to food and drink. Let's unleash it.

Acknowledgements

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Geographically Protected Foods would like to thank all those, from every corner of the United Kingdom, who responded to the online consultation or provided evidence in writing or in person. Without you, this report would not include the many recommendations and perspectives that will make it so valuable.

In particular, the APPG would like to recognise researchers at the National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE) who provided substantial evidence to the APPG, and who have been independently working on a number of research projects in relation to GIs.

The APPG also drew great inspiration from the excellent work of Fay Francis, a leading GI consultant in Wales. Her work is a demonstration that GIs can power local economies, so long as the proper expertise and community engagement is applied.

We would also like to thank Ministers at the Department of Food and Rural Affairs and the Department for International Trade for their engagement in every aspect of our work, and for their continued dialogue as we aim to improve and expand British GI policy.