

REGISTRATION DATE

**June 22, 2021**

REGISTRATION NUMBER

**GI-1231**

CONTRACTING PARTY OF ORIGIN

**European Union**

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

**Τσικουδιά/Tsikoudia/Τσίπουρο/Tsipouro**

*Transliteration* Tsipouro/Tsikoudia

GOOD(S)

1. **Spirit drink**

BENEFICIARIES, NATURAL PERSON OR LEGAL ENTITY

1. Any producer who respects the product specification.
2. Ένωση Αποσταγματοποιών Αμπελοοινικών Προϊόντων Ελλάδας (Εν.Απ.Α.Π.Ε.) - Association of Distillers of Vine and Wine Products of Greece (ENAPAPE).

*Transliteration* Enosi Apostagmatopion Ampeloinikon Proionton Elados

*Address* Leoforos Karamanli & Dimokratias  
41335 Larissa  
Greece

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

Greece

LEGAL BASIS FOR THE GRANT OF PROTECTION IN THE  
CONTRACTING PARTY OF ORIGIN

1. Authority: European Commission.

Legal instrument: Article 37 of Regulation (EU) No 2019/787.  
PGI-GR-02079  
February 13, 2008

COMPETENT AUTHORITY

European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural  
Development, Unit F3 – Geographical Indications

*Address* Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 130, 1040 Bruxelles / Brussels  
European Union

LANGUAGE OF THE INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION

English

DATE D'ENREGISTREMENT

22 juin 2021

NUMÉRO D'ENREGISTREMENT

GI-1231

PARTIE CONTRACTANTE D'ORIGINE

Union européenne

INDICATION GÉOGRAPHIQUE

**Τσικουδιά/Tsikoudia/Τσίπουρο/Tsipouro**

*Translittération* Tsipouro/Tsikoudia

PRODUIT(S)

1. **Boisson spiritueuse**

BÉNÉFICIAIRES, PERSONNE PHYSIQUE OU MORALE

1. Tout producteur respectant le cahier des charges du produit.
2. Ένωση Αποσταγματοποιών Αμπελοοινικών Προϊόντων Ελλάδας (Εν.Απ.Α.Π.Ε.) - Association des distillateurs de vin et de produits viticoles de Grèce (ENAPAPE).

*Translittération* Enosi Apostagmatopion Ampeloinikon Proionton Elados

*Adresse* Leoforos Karamanli & Dimokratias  
41335 Larissa  
Grèce

AIRE GÉOGRAPHIQUE

Grèce

BASE JURIDIQUE DE L'OCTROI DE LA PROTECTION DANS LA  
PARTIE CONTRACTANTE D'ORIGINE

1. Administration: Commission européenne.

Instrument juridique: Article 37 du Règlement (UE) n° 2019/787.  
PGI-GR-02079  
13.02.2008

ADMINISTRATION COMPÉTENTE

Commission européenne, Direction générale de l'agriculture et du  
développement rural, Unité F3 – Indications géographiques

*Adresse* Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 130, 1040 Bruxelles / Brussels  
Union européenne

LANGUE DE LA DEMANDE INTERNATIONALE

Anglais

FECHA DE REGISTRO

**22 de junio de 2021**

NÚMERO DE REGISTRO

**GI-1231**

PARTE CONTRACTANTE DE ORIGEN

**Unión Europea**

INDICACIÓN GEOGRÁFICA

**Τσικουδιά/Tsikoudia/Τσίπουρο/Tsipouro**

*Transcripción* Tsipouro/Tsikoudia

PRODUCTO(S)

- 1. Bebida espirituosa**

BENEFICIARIOS, PERSONA FÍSICA O JURÍDICA

- 1. Cualquier productor que respete las especificaciones del producto.**
- 2. Ένωση Αποσταγματοποιών Αμπελοοινικών Προϊόντων Ελλάδας (Εν.Απ.Α.Π.Ε. Asociación de Destiladores de Productos Vitivinícolas de Grecia (ENAPAPE).**

*Transcripción* Enosi Apostagmatopion Ampeloinikon Proionton Elados

*Dirección* Leoforos Karamanli & Dimokratias  
41335 Larissa  
Grecia

ZONA GEOGRÁFICA

Grecia

FUNDAMENTO JURÍDICO DE LA CONCESIÓN DE PROTECCIÓN EN LA PARTE CONTRATANTE DE ORIGEN

1. Autoridad: Comisión Europea.

Instrumento jurídico: Artículo 37 del Reglamento (UE) nº 2019/787.

PGI-GR-02079

13.02.2008

ADMINISTRACIÓN COMPETENTE

Comisión Europea, Dirección General Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural,  
Unidad F3 – Indicaciones Geográficas

*Dirección* Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 130, 1040 Bruxelles / Brussels

Unión Europea

IDIOMA DE LA SOLICITUD INTERNACIONAL

Inglés

**PARTICULARS CONCERNING THE QUALITY, REPUTATION OR CHARACTERISTIC(S)  
(RULE 5(3))<sup>1</sup>**

**DONNÉES CONCERNANT LA QUALITÉ, LA NOTORIÉTÉ OU D'AUTRES CARACTÈRES  
(RÈGLE 5.3))**

**DETALLES RELATIVOS A LA CALIDAD, LA REPUTACIÓN O LAS CARACTERÍSTICAS  
(REGLA 5.3))**

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<sup>1</sup> The Rules referred to above are those contained in the Common Regulations under the Lisbon Agreement and the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement – Les règles mentionnées ci-dessus sont celles contenues dans le règlement d'exécution commun à l'Arrangement de Lisbonne et à l'Acte de Genève de l'Arrangement de Lisbonne – Las Reglas mencionadas anteriormente son las que figuran en el Reglamento Común del Arreglo de Lisboa y del Acta de Ginebra del Arreglo de Lisboa.

**Additional requirements under Rule 5(3) of Common Regulations under the Lisbon Agreement and the Geneva Act - Particulars concerning the quality, reputation or characteristics**

ΤΣΙΠΟΥΡΟ / ΤΣΙΠΟΥΡΟ / ΤΣΙΚΟΥΔΙΑ / ΤΣΙΚΟΥΔΙΑ

EC No: PGI-GR-02079/ 13/02/2008

PGI ( X ) PDO ( )

**1. Name(s)**

ΤΣΙΠΟΥΡΟ / ΤΣΙΠΟΥΡΟ / ΤΣΙΚΟΥΔΙΑ / ΤΣΙΚΟΥΔΙΑ

**2. Member State or Third Country:**

Greece

**3. Description of the spirit drink**

**3.1. *Type of product:***

Grape marc spirit or grape marc

**3.2. *Description of the product to which the name in point 1 applies:***

Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics

- It is a colourless, transparent liquid with intense organoleptic properties due to the raw materials used in its production (grape marc and sometimes lees) as well as the specific production method (stills and distilling process) used. When the spirit is flavoured using traditional methods, the aromatic substances used (mainly aniseed) combine with the flavour of the grape marc and shape its taste and aroma.
- It contains a quantity of volatile substances equal to or exceeding 140 grams per hectolitre of 100 % vol. alcohol and has a maximum methanol content of 1 000 grams per hectolitre of 100 % vol. alcohol.
- The minimum alcoholic strength by volume is 37.5 %.
- Addition of alcohol, diluted or undiluted, as defined in Annex I(5) is not permitted.

Specific characteristics (compared to spirit drinks of the same category)

In addition to the general requirements for grape marc spirit, ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ has certain specific characteristics that shape its distinct identity. Specifically:

- caramel may be added only in the case of ageing;

- sweeteners among those listed in point 3 of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 may be added when the grape marc spirit is ready for bottling, in such a quantity that the content of sweeteners does not exceed twenty (20) grams per litre, expressed as invert sugar, when the spirit is placed on the market;
- aromatic plants and/or seeds may be added, in line with traditional practice, during the distillation of the marc and/or redistillation of the product. The most common practice is flavouring with aniseed;
- the methanol content is always low as a result of particular care taken during the production process.

In this regard, it is worth noting that, according to data from the General Chemical State Laboratory, of 1 068 samples of products from different areas and distilleries examined between 2011 and March 2014, no sample was found to exceed the maximum limit of 1 000 grams per hectolitre absolute alcohol. Moreover, in 96.7 % of the samples the methanol content did not exceed 400 grams per hectolitre absolute ethyl alcohol.

#### **4. Geographical area**

##### **4.1. Description of the defined geographical area**

‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ is produced exclusively in Greece. The stages of production that must take place in Greece include:

- cultivation of the various wine grape varieties;
- vinification and collecting the grape marc and lees;
- fermentation of the grape marc;
- distillation of the fermented grape marc (and lees), with or without the use of aromatic substances;
- ageing;
- addition of sweeteners;
- dilution with water to obtain the final alcoholic strength;
- bottling.

In Greece the two variations of the geographical indication (‘Tsipouro’ and ‘Tsikoudia’) are used as follows according to region:

- ‘Tsipouro’ when the spirit is produced anywhere in Greece, other than Crete;
  - ‘Tsikoudia’ when the spirit is produced in Crete;
  - either ‘Tsipouro’ or ‘Tsikoudia’ when the spirit is produced in the Cycladic islands, but both geographical indications may not be used by the same distillery.
- Specifically, the entire production process, from the distillation of the marc and lees to the final preparation and bottling of the spirit, must take place in the relevant geographical areas.

The requirement that spirit drinks with a geographical indication must be bottled in the area where they are produced is Greece's standard position on the issue and this has been reflected over time in all the relevant national legislation.

The requirement is based exclusively on the substantive objective considerations (ultimately related to the nature of spirit drinks) of protecting and guaranteeing the identity and quality of the products and therefore the reputation of the geographical indication in question.

Moreover, it should be stressed that the traditional nature of spirit drinks, especially those with a geographical indication, is an integral part of their identity, and this has been consistently reflected in the Union's relevant legislation. More precisely, as a part of the tradition, the bottling of spirits in the geographical area where they are produced is something that is taken for granted not only by consumers but also by the distilleries, which, upholding the tradition, bottle the spirit drinks they produce themselves, fully aware that this is the only way to ensure that the final product is authentic.

#### **4.2. Method for obtaining the spirit drink**

The method used in the production of 'Tsipouro'/'Tsikoudia' complies with the general terms on grape marc spirit laid down in Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008, in conjunction with certain more specific procedures aiming to ensure the distinct identity and quality of the product.

It is produced exclusively from grape marc fermented and distilled either directly with water vapour or after water has been added. The grape marc, a by-product of vinification, is obtained by regular and careful pressing of the grapes. In accordance with the applicable national legislation, the maximum yield is 7.5 litres of pure ethyl alcohol per 100 kilograms of pure grape marc. This is a quality requirement which, combined with the specific distillation method, i.e. the stills and distilling process used, contributes significantly to the product's special organoleptic characteristics and is therefore linked to the way it is consumed (mainly as an accompaniment for appetisers with a strong/spicy flavour).

The grapes, having been harvested at the appropriate point of maturity, are transported with great care to the winery, where they are de-stemmed (i.e. the grapes are separated from the wooden parts of the plant, such as stalks and stems) before the must-making and vinification stage. The residue (grape marc) from the production of white and rosé wines, which consists of grape seeds and peel along with a certain amount of (unfermented) must, in keeping with the limit provided for by national legislation, is transferred to special stainless steel tanks, where it is fermented by adding selected yeasts under optimal hygiene and temperature conditions and other critical parameters.

In red wine production, the separation and collection of the grape marc takes place after fermentation is completed. The grape marc is therefore already fermented and thus contains a certain amount of wine (depending on the degree of pressure) in keeping with the above limit provided for by the national legislation.

The stems (stalks) are removed before the grape marc is delivered to and processed in the winery, and is it essential for the marc to be clean and healthy to reduce the methanol content of the spirit.

A quantity of lees not exceeding 25 kg of lees per 100 kg of grape marc used is usually added to the grape marc, and the quantity of alcohol derived from the lees may not exceed 35 % of the total quantity of alcohol in the finished product.

The grape marc and lees used are obtained exclusively from the vinification of grapes from wine grape varieties grown in vineyards in Greece.

The distillation is carried out in the presence of the grape marc, following total fermentation, at less than 86% vol., mainly in discontinuous copper stills, while in certain cases redistillation is also carried out (at the same alcoholic strength, i.e. 86%).

Distillation is performed as soon as possible after completion of the marc fermentation, so as to prevent a higher concentration of methanol (due to hydrolysed pectins) and alcohol conversion leading to the formation of substances (acetic acid and ethyl acetate) that would be transferred to the distillate and alter its organoleptic characteristics.

Flavouring ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ by adding aromatic plants and seeds (mainly aniseed and/or fennel) during distillation of the grape marc and/or redistillation of the initially obtained spirit is a long-standing traditional practice.

During distillation, the first and last fraction (heads and tails) are discarded and the middle fraction (the heart) is collected. This improves the quality of the spirit by minimising the concentration of methanol and other substances that give the spirit unwanted organoleptic characteristics (such as aldehydes and isoamyl alcohols).

Subsequently, the distillate obtained as described above is diluted with water, and may also be sweetened (within the stipulated limits), to obtain the final product.

#### **4.3. Link with the geographical environment of origin**

Details of the geographical area or origin relevant to the link

Link between the spirit’s reputation and the geographical area

Ancient Greece

The history of ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ is closely interwoven with Greece and its inhabitants. Its beginnings are lost in the mists of Greek history and tradition, yet it is directly linked both to the raw material (grape marc) and the distillation technology used.

The ancient Greeks were familiar with distillation. Aristotle (4th century BC) describes how sea water can be made drinkable by using evaporation to remove the salt (Meteorology, Tome 2). Learned Greeks of the Alexandrian school studied distillation, which had been used by the Egyptians mainly to make cosmetics. Descriptions of stills are found in the writings of Dioscorides (1st century AD) and Zosimos (5th century AD).

Nevertheless, spirits were unknown to the ancient Greeks (5th and 4th century BC). For this reason there are many references to wine drinking, but no references to spirit drinking.

A simple and abstemious people, Greeks were not attracted by strong beverages and did not feel the need to produce stronger drinks using the distillation technique. However, it should be noted that Athenaeus, in his work 'The Deipnosophists' (1st century BC), refers to a beverage named 'trimma', which is thought to be similar to today's tsipouro and to which they added fragrant flower petals.

### The art of distilling

The exact period when wine distillation first began is not known. Yet as early as the 5th century AD, Egypt was home to thousands of monks whose main produce was wine. High temperatures and a lack of containers and space meant that preservation techniques were developed. Given that many alcoholic beverages such as whisky, brandy, champagne and benedictine were the invention of monks, it is highly likely that those monks were the first to make alcohol (also called οινόπνευμα or 'spirit of wine' in Greek) as a distillate of wine, passing on their knowledge to the Arab alchemists who played a major part in developing the techniques of distillation (also keeping its secrets), and who named the product obtained 'alcohol'. They are believed to have brought the art of distilling to Europe.

In Europe, wine distillation first made its appearance in Italy (at the medical school of Salerno) around 1150, and in France (at the university of Montpellier) around 1250, whereas the production of various spirits (gin in the Netherlands, whisky in Scotland and Ireland, armagnac and cognac in France) dates back to the 15th and 16th centuries.

The oldest written reference to wine distillation can be found in mappae clavicula, a 12th century alchemy manuscript in Latin which was encrypted using the Temura method, in order to escape persecution by the Catholic Church. The manuscript states that 'by mixing pure and strongest wine with three parts of salt and heating in a vessel customary for that purpose, a water is produced which when kindled inflames, yet leaves the material unburned'. This clearly describes the production of alcohol.

At the 1163 Council of Tours, Pope Alexander III banned monks from devoting themselves to the natural sciences. Several years later Pope Honorius III extended the ban to all clergy.

The alchemists' knowledge spread across Europe in coded form, notably through the music and songs of the troubadours. In this way the art of distilling reached Byzantium, where the sciences were not subject to the edicts of the Catholic Church.

### The origins of 'Tsipouro'/'Tsikoudia'

Grape marc distillation in Greece appears to have begun on Mount Athos, where grape marc from winemaking was being fermented and distilled long before the 15th century, i.e. as early as from the Byzantine era. The exact period is unknown, but the monastic community on Mount Athos was founded in the 10th century AD.

As recorded in ‘The History of Greek Wine’ (Cultural-Technological Institute of the Greek Industrial Development Bank, 1990), citing a monk named Alexandros Lavriotis: *‘The Administration of Mount Athos, the Ottoman government and the Ecumenical Patriarchate were greatly concerned by the free operation of the stills on Mount Athos and by spirits being exempt from tax. More than twenty decrees on this matter are included in the archive kept in the tower of the holy community, dating back to 1590.’*

This shows that the activity of distilling grape marc had taken on such dimensions that it had become a matter of concern to the officials responsible for making taxation policy.

(Enclosed, as Annex I, is a picture showing a traditional still used for grape marc distillation on Mount Athos.)

#### Copper processing

Copper, as the material used to make the distillation device (still), as well as the knowledge of how to work it, also constitute important factors in spirit production.

During the Byzantine era, copper processing flourished in various regions, in particular in Armenia, Pontus and Epirus (Agrafa area). According to the ‘History of the Greek Nation’, published by ‘Ekdotiki Athinon’ (Athens Editions), *‘During the years before and just after the fall of Constantinople, many residents of Agrafa, which was named for the fact that it was not registered to pay taxes to the Ottomans, moved towards the Thessalian plain, first to Tyrnavos and Larissa, then to Kozani, Veroia, Edessa and Thessaloniki and from there to Thrace, Constantinople, the Sea of Marmara (Propontis) and to the coast of Asia Minor and Filipoupolis.’*

No matter where they settled, the former residents of Agrafa mainly worked as coppersmiths, thus creating, along with fellow craftsmen migrating from other regions of the Byzantine Empire (mainly Armenians from Albania and Bulgaria referred to as Greco-Armenians), the tradition of copper processing which continues to the present day, at least in Greece.

Besides traditional copper articles for the home, these coppersmiths also manufactured stills that became increasingly elaborate, also thanks to the properties of copper as a raw material. At the same time, they improved the technical characteristics of the stills, which helped improve the quality of the spirit produced and contributed to the spread of distilling.

As a result, Asia Minor and the wine-growing regions of Greece developed a great tradition of distillation. By the mid-15th century Constantinople, Smyrna, Thessaloniki, Alexandria and other cities had become centres of expertise in distilling spirits.

During the period of Ottoman rule, viticulture initially declined, but in time recovered, along with grape marc distillation. Although Islam prohibits the consumption of alcohol, so-called ‘rakitzides’, i.e. producers of tsipouro/tsikoudia (raki), soon made their appearance and the best of them acquired special privileges.

#### Later period

By the eve of the Greek Revolution in 1821, distillation by winegrowers had thus become a cottage industry, mainly involving the distillation of grape marc, but also wine and grapes, using small stills.

Due to the stills used at the time, which were technologically incomplete and did not achieve a satisfactory separation of the volatile components, and due to the nature of the raw material, the distillate obtained often had unwanted organoleptic characteristics. Thus, the need to improve the organoleptic qualities of the spirit brought about the tradition of flavouring with various aromatic plants, seeds or fruits (such as aniseed, fennel, etc.), which were mixed with the raw material (grape marc) in the still or during redistillation, a tradition that continues to the present day.

The industrialisation of ethyl alcohol production in Greece, with the appearance (around 1870) of distillation columns, the taxation of ethyl alcohol and the adoption of a legislative framework all finally led to restrictions on distillation as a cottage industry, but did not put an end to the tradition of distilling grape marc or producing grape marc spirit on a domestic scale. Thus, until the adoption of Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89, while prohibited for distilleries, grape marc distillation remained the exclusive privilege of winegrowers who were allowed to distil grape marc from the vinification of their own grape production, using simple stills with a capacity of no more than 130 litres and for a very limited period of time each year, in order to produce their own grape marc spirit which was consumed at a strictly local level.

This did not prevent the legislature from laying down objective and quantitative quality requirements for the raw material used (grape marc) and for the product.

## Modern times

Following the adoption of Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89 on spirit drinks, which includes the category ‘grape marc spirit’, commercial distillers were allowed (Law 1802/1988 and Decision of the Minister for Finance No 18795/4931 of 24 October 1988) to process grape marc under the terms and conditions of the national legislation and the above Regulation in order to produce grape marc spirit, which is the generic name of the product under the relevant provisions of Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89 (and Regulation (EC) No 110/2008), or ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’, which is its traditional name.

This led to new distilleries being established, while those that already existed at the time (1988) and were processing grape marc among other raw materials, expanded their activity. Today, there are a total of 86 distilleries in Greece, which mainly produce grape marc spirit (Tsipouro/Tsikoudia) and wine spirit (Brandy), the latter mainly for export.

Production of ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ by licensed businesses allowed the product to move beyond the narrow boundaries of the local ‘domestic’ economy and to evolve into a high quality product which gradually gained international recognition. Exports still account for only a small proportion of the total production of ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’, but show a clear upward trend.

The spirit features prominently at tasting events dedicated exclusively to spirit drinks, which are now well-established in Greece. Furthermore, ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ products have received awards and prizes in international competitions, for example the 2012 ‘Concours Mondial de Bruxelles’, where a ‘Tsipouro’ product won the silver award.

‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ has also won recognition as a typical Greek Product in the context of international competitions held in Greece, such as the Thessaloniki International Wine and Spirits Competition.

## History of the name

Many names have traditionally been used, depending on the area, to denote grape marc spirit produced in Greece, yet the predominant ones have long been ‘Tsikoudia’ (in Crete) and ‘Tsipouro’ (in all of Greece with the exception of Crete). In the Cyclades, due to their geographical location, both names are used; ‘Tsikoudia’ mainly on the southern islands and ‘Tsipouro’ on the northern islands.

These are traditional designations registered as such in the national legislation (Decision of the Minister for Finance No 18795/4931 of 24 October 1988 laying down the terms and formalities for the distillation of grape marc and the production of ‘tsipouro’ or ‘tsikoudia’ from grape marc spirit; Decision of the Minister for the Economy and Finance No 3010878/1396/0029/2003 on the production and marketing of spirit drinks).

## Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area

Grape marc spirit production, including by professional distillers, is usually carried out using discontinuous copper stills (discontinuous distillation), without columns etc., with a capacity exceeding 130 litres.

The spirit is directly linked with Greek customs and traditions. For centuries it has been the spirit drink of people living in rural areas, accompanying their everyday interactions and providing the perfect accompaniment for traditional Greek cuisine, due to its particularly intense organoleptic characteristics.

The ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ festival is a tradition that is very much alive across most of the country. In the countryside, where vine growing flourishes, events where the spirit is enjoyed in a festive atmosphere, as the main product featured, are held every year from October to December (depending on the local climate).

As production expanded to industrial distilleries after 1988, the spirit started to be enjoyed by people living in cities, in addition to those living in the countryside, mainly as an accompaniment to dishes with strong flavours, both on an everyday basis and at formal social events.

Causal link between the geographical area and the product

‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ originates from the area described above under the heading ‘Geographical area’. As required by Article 15(1) of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008, the geographical indication ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ identifies a drink originating in the territory of a country (in this case Greece) a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of which is essentially attributable to its geographical origin.

The link to Greece of the geographical indication ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ is based as much on natural factors such as the raw material used in its production, as on human factors such as the stills and distilling process used and the skills of the producers as they have evolved through the spirit’s age-long history. As a result, ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ now has an established reputation as an unequivocally Greek spirit drink.

Raw materials

Origin

The grape marc and lees which are used as raw material in the production of ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ stem exclusively from the vinification of wine grape varieties grown in Greece.

History of vineyards and wine in Greece

The vine is one of the oldest plants on earth, and winemaking dates back to 6000 BC when, in the view of many archaeologists, wine was first made in Asia Minor.

The vine is thought to have grown naturally in the Caucasus region, particularly in Armenia, and was brought from there to other areas, including Greece.

The oldest evidence of vine cultivation in Greece are grape seeds (pips) discovered:

- in a tomb in Fotolivos in Drama, dated to the Neolithic period (3500-3000 BC) using the carbon-14 method;
- near the Philippi site in Kavala, dated to the early bronze age, i.e. 2800-2200 BC;
- in the prehistoric Theopetra cave in Kalambaka.

The vine has been one of the main crops grown in Greece from ancient times until the present day, mainly for winemaking purposes.

Men, women and children all used to drink wine in Ancient Greece. However, children drank their wine ('oinos' in Ancient Greek) 'kekrameno me ydor', meaning 'mixed with water', which gave rise to the modern Greek word for wine, 'krasi'. In fact the proportion of water was far greater than the wine. As explained by Plutarch in his work, *Moralia* (46-127 AD), '*αφαιρεί η κράσις του οίνου το βλάπτον, ου συναναιρούσα το χρήσιμον*' ('the tempering of wine with water removes its harmfulness without depriving it at the same time of its usefulness').

#### 4.4. Requirements in EU, national or regional law

EU provisions and national/regional provisions

EU provisions

'Τσίπουρο/Tsipouro' and 'Τσικουδιά/Tsikoudia' are listed in Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 as Greek geographical indications in the 'grape marc spirit' category.

Provisions of the Greek legislation

In addition to the EU provisions, the production and labelling of 'Tsipouro'/'Tsikoudia' are also governed by the provisions of Greek national legislation set out in the following legislative acts:

- Law 2969/2001 on ethyl alcohol and alcohol products (Government Gazette, Series I, No 281 of 18 December 2001);
- Decision No 3002475/383/0029 of 2 February 2010 of the Minister for Finance on the operation of distilleries (Government Gazette, Series II, No 162 of 19 February 2010), which mainly sets out inspection procedures and formalities;
- Decision No 30/077/2131/2011 of the Minister for Finance on production and marketing of spirit drinks (Government Gazette, Series II, No 1946 of 31 August 2011), which sets out both specific national measures concerning geographical indications in general (Article 5, Part I) and specifications for 'Tsipouro'/'Tsikoudia' in particular (Article 4, Part II).

Description of the requirement(s)

Legislative acts

#### 4.5. Supplement to the geographical indication

Supplement to the geographical indication

##### AGEING

After aging for at least six months in oak barrels of a capacity up to 1 000 litres, ‘Τσίπουρο/Tsipouro’-‘Τσικουδιά/Tsikoudia’ may be placed on the market bearing the indication ‘old’ or ‘aged’. This may be supplemented by the exact duration of the ageing in years if the period of ageing exceeds six months (Article 4(II)(6) of Decision No 30/077/2131/2011 of the Minister for Finance).

#### 4.6. Specific labelling rules

Description of the rule

The Greek legislation lays down specific rules for spirit drinks with a geographical indication in general, and for ‘Τσίπουρο/Tsipouro’-‘Τσικουδιά/Tsikoudia’ in particular. Article 4(II)(4) and (6) of the above Ministerial Decision lays down as follows:

4. The geographical indications ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ are sales denominations which are traditionally used instead of the denomination ‘grape marc spirit’.

By way of exception, in foreign languages the sales denomination ‘grape marc spirit’ may be added for products to be shipped to other EU Member States or exported to third countries, where this indication helps inform the consumer of the nature of the product.

5. The name ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ may be combined with a geographical indication in accordance with Article 5 of this Decision.

Moreover, when ‘Tsipouro’/‘Tsikoudia’ is produced on behalf of a business established outside Greece, the provisions of Article 5(5) of the above Ministerial Decision apply:

5(a) Spirit drinks bearing a geographical indication referring to Greece or specific regions of Greece may be produced on behalf of a third party, subject to the provisions of this Article.

(b) Details of the businesses producing and bottling spirit drinks as referred to in the preceding paragraph may be included on their label in the form of the specific code provided for in Article 10 of this Decision. When the spirit drinks are produced on behalf of a third party based outside Greece, the use of the above code is allowed provided that the phrase ‘produced and bottled in Greece’ appears in all the languages used on the label.

#### 5. Inspection structure:



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**GI-1231 – DESCRIPTION – DESCRIPTION – DESCRIPCIÓN**

**PAGE 13 OF 13**

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