

EU IP MECHANISMS FOR THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

Mădălina-Alexandra Coțiu, Cristina-Maria Bălgărădean, Ancuța-Maria Ivan
INOE 2000 Research Institute for Analytical Instrumentation, Romania

INTRODUCTION

The paper aims to present an overview of the main four IP mechanisms for the protection of agri-food products in the European Union, as well as the added value such mechanisms bring to industry professionals.

PLANT VARIETY RIGHTS

- Grants exclusive rights to breeders of new plant varieties (if they are new, distinct, uniform, stable).
- IP right specific to breeding / plant innovation.
- It gives the breeder control of propagating / harvested material for a fixed period.
- Helps incentivize breeding work.

PATENTS

- Allows protection of inventions in the agri-food / biotech area (e.g. genetically engineered plants, biotechnological processes, microbial inventions etc.).
- Includes supplementary protection certificates for certain regulated products such as plant protection products.
- Helps provide strong incentive for research & development in biotech, seeds, etc.

Acknowledgement: This analysis was performed in the framework of the project BISNet Transylvania – Services in support of business digitalization, innovation, and resilience, project ID 101216189, call SMP-COSME-2024-EEN, 1 July 2025 – 31 December 2028

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GIS)

- Protects the names of agricultural products and foodstuffs that have a specific link to a region.
- Prevents misuse or imitation of names and allows producers to differentiate their products.

TRADE MARKS

- Protection of commercial names, logos, brand identifiers used by producers.
- Helps build reputation, prevent confusion, mis-representation, misuse.
- Helps in exports, distinguishing quality.
- EU level marks (via EUIPO) protect across all Member States.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Available via SME Fund, an EC initiative implemented via EUIPO
- Covers up to 75% of registration costs at national/regional/EU/international level
- Free support via Enterprise Europe Network contact points #EENCanHelp

