



C/2024/2873

24.4.2024

**Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 50(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs**

(C/2024/2873)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(1)</sup> within three months from the date of this publication.

**PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF A TRADITIONAL SPECIALITY GUARANTEED**

**‘DÖNER’**

**EC No: TSG-TR-02843 – 20 May 2022**

**Member State or Third Country ‘Türkiye’**

**1. Name(s) to be registered**

‘Döner’

**2. Type of product [as in Annex XI]**

Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)

**3. Grounds for registration**

**3.1. Whether the product:**

☒ results from a mode of production, processing or composition corresponding to traditional practice for that product or foodstuff

☐ is produced from raw materials or ingredients that are those traditionally used.

[Provide explanation]

‘Döner’ is a traditional meat product prepared by fixing thinly and horizontally sliced meat cutlets from cattle, sheep, or chicken horizontally on a stainless-steel ‘Döner’ skewer and cooking it by rotating vertically around its axis in front of a fire. Before cooking, the thin and horizontally sliced meat cutlets are marinated in a mixture of yoghurt or milk, pepper or tomato puree, herbs, spices, and salt. During skewering, horizontally sliced concept fat, tallow, or sheep tail fat cutlets are placed between the meat layers. As a meat source, large cattle meat chunks or mutton, minced beef or minced mutton or a mixture thereof, or chicken meat are used.

‘Döner’ has spread from Istanbul to different cities of the Ottoman geography since the beginning of the 1800s. It was cooked and sold in restaurants and inns. According to Takiyyiddin’s manuscript, the vertical cooking of ‘Döner’ dates to 1546. The way it is prepared (slicing, marination, stacking on a bar) and cooking it vertically by rotating gives it the traditional production feature.

It is claimed that Greece was the first country in Europe where ‘Döner’ was introduced during an exchange of people between Turkey and Greece in 1922. In Greece, it has been named ‘gyro’.

‘Döner’ has become a cultural symbol of Turkish immigration to Europe, in particular, to Germany, which intensively continued from 1962 to 1979. According to the Association of Turkish Döner Producers in Europe (ATDID), ‘Döner’ was first produced by Turkish worker Kadir Nurman in Berlin in 1972. Since then, the name and production process remained unchanged and has spread widely in Germany and other European countries.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2012/1151/oj>.

Eventually, 'Döner' has become one of the most popular ethnic street foods. After 35 years of searching, German Sociologist Eberhard Seidel published a book entitled "Döner": Eine türkisch-deutsche Kulturgeschichte in 2022, to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 'Döner' in Germany.

### 3.2. Whether the name:

- ☒ has been traditionally used to refer to the specific product
- ☐ identifies the traditional character or specific character of the product

[Provide explanation]

The term 'Döner' relates to the traditional cooking technique, not to a geographical area. The Dictionary of Turkish Language of Turkish Language Institution describes 'Döner' as a type of kebab obtained by horizontally skewering sliced meat cutlets on a metal rod, known as a döner skewer, and cooking vertically in front of a fire by turning its axis. 'Döner' comes from the verb 'dönmek' which means 'turning' in English.

In Europe, however, it has become known as 'Döner kebab'. Here, 'kebab' is a generic name used for all kinds of meat cooked in front of a fire and is originally an Arabic word. There are several types of kebab such as Adana Kebab, Urfa Kebab, Şiş Kebab, Patlıcan Kebab, Kuyu Kebab etc. All these kebabs, except for 'Döner Kebab', are either produced from minced meat (Adana Kebab) or diced (Patlıcan Kebab and Şiş Kebab, Tokat Kebab) meat or as a whole (Kuyu Kebab). Before cooking, they are skewered in a short bar and cooked horizontally over a fire or in a well vertically.

As stated earlier in the book of German Sociologist Eberhard Seidel, the term(s) 'Döner' or 'Döner Kebab' has not changed since it was first produced in Berlin in 1972. There are several scientific articles indicating that the term(s) 'Döner' or 'Döner Kebab' has been widely accepted and used throughout Europe as shown below. Even, there are associations established by 'Döner' producers in Germany and Europe.

## 4. Description

### 4.1. Description of the product to which the name under point 1 applies, including its main physical, chemical, microbiological or organoleptic characteristics showing the product's specific character (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)

'Döner' is a traditional meat product cooked vertically in front of a fire by being rotated at its axis after the thinly and horizontally sliced meat cutlets obtained from cattle, sheep, or chicken carcass are marinated with a variety of spices (black pepper, white pepper, red pepper), thyme and salt. If necessary, yoghurt or milk and onion are added. Milk is not used for the marination of chicken meat. Then meat leaves are stuck up on a skewer together with thinly and horizontally cut animal fat cutlets (cattle concept fat, tallow or sheep tail fat). Minced beef or mutton or a mixture thereof can also be used as a meat source. Depending on the source of meat, 'Döner' can be classified as red meat 'Döner' (from cattle and sheep meat) and chicken 'Döner'.

Red meat Döner can be classified further according to the form of red meat as *Yaprak* (sliced), *Kıyma* (minced), and *Karışık* (mix).

1. *Yaprak* 'Döner' (Sliced Döner) is produced from cattle or sheep carcass meat where large meat pieces are horizontally sliced into cutlets with a thickness of 3-5 mm.
2. *Kıyma* 'Döner' (Minced Döner) is produced from minced red meat from cattle and/or sheep carcasses. This type of 'Döner' contains 100 % of minced cattle or sheep carcasses meat.
3. *Karışık* 'Döner' (Mixed Döner) is produced from thinly and horizontally sliced cattle meat cutlets (60 % at least) and minced cattle or sheep meat (40 % at most).

*Chicken 'Döner'*

It is produced from chicken meat (thigh and breast) that is horizontally sliced cutlets 1-2 cm thick.

Some physical and chemical properties of uncooked 'Döner', regardless of type, are as follows:

- Fat content by mass; maximum 25 % for those produced from red meat and 20 % for those produced from poultry meat,
- pH; 5,2 to 6,3 regardless of 'Döner' types,
- Salt content by mass; maximum 2 %,
- Collagen content in total content meat by mass; maximum 15 % for those produced from red meat and 10 % for those from poultry meat,
- Starch+vegetable protein by mass; maximum 1,0 %,
- Ammonia content: maximum 30 mg/100 g,
- Peroxide value only in fat extracted from frozen 'Döner'; maximum 1,5 mmol O<sub>2</sub>/kg.

'Döner' must not contain non-animal proteins, starch, starch-containing substances, soy, and soy products. The amount of starch and vegetable protein that may come from the composition of the spice cannot exceed 1 % of the total weight. 'Döner' produced from chicken meat must not contain internal organs, foreign tissue, and mechanically separated poultry meat. Hyperaemia and lymph nodes in meat are prohibited. All meats should be obtained from healthy animals.

Regardless of 'Döner' type, the cooked surface part is cut from top to bottom in a thin strap form with a thickness of 3 to 5 mm on cooking. In the cooked and cut 'Döner' strap, the meat and fat layers can be clearly distinguished and easily separated. During cooking, the fire-facing part of 'Döner' becomes dark brown and sometimes crusty while the cut face has lighter brown colour and a softer texture.

Cooked 'Döner' is characterized by the taste of barbecued meat in the mouth. Depending on the source of fire, the flavour may change. In the use of a wood fire, smoked flavour participates in barbecued-like flavour. During fire cooking, fat layer melts to some extent and contributes to total flavour. The use of onion paste and yoghurt during marination gives 'Döner' a barbecued-onion flavour and slightly sour taste. Depending on the amount of black pepper, red pepper, white pepper, thyme, and salt, it also tastes hot and salty with a delicate thyme odour.

- 4.2. *Description of the production method of the product to which the name under point 1 applies that the producers must follow including, where appropriate, the nature and characteristics of the raw materials or ingredients used, and the method by which the product is prepared (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)*

Preparation of raw material and the production process:

Ingredients

*For red meat 'Döner'*

- 100 kg of carcass meat from cattle that is at least sixteen months old or thigh and/or back meat of sheep that is at least six months old,
- 8-10 kg of animal fat (bovine suet, bovine concept fat, sheep tail fat, tallow),
- 2,0-3,0 kg of yoghurt or milk, if necessary,
- 2,0-3,0 kg of onion,
- 2,0-3,0 kg of salt,
- 100-200 g of black pepper,
- 100-200 g of white pepper,
- 100-200 g of red pepper,
- 100-200 g of thyme.

*For chicken 'Döner'*

- 100 kg of chicken breast and/or thigh meat,
- 8-10 kg of animal fat (bovine suet, bovine concept fat, sheep tail fat, tallow),
- 2,0-3,0 kg of yoghurt, if necessary, milk is not used for chicken 'Döner',
- 2,0-3,0 kg of onion,
- 2,0-3,0 kg of salt,
- 100-200 g of black pepper,
- 100-200 g of white pepper,
- 100-200 g of red pepper,
- 100-200 g or thyme,
- 500-1 000 g or pepper or tomato paste.

*Production**Preparation of 'Döner' block:*

- Red meat is sliced horizontally into 3-5 mm thick chops or chicken meat is sliced in 1-2 cm thick with food-grade machines or knives.
- The meat leaves are thoroughly mixed with spices, thyme, and salt for marination. Apart from salt and spices, onions, milk and yoghurt is used if necessary.
- Chicken meats cutlets are also added with spices, thyme and salt for marination. Apart from salt and spices, onions, pepper, tomato paste and yoghurt is used if necessary. No milk is used in the marination of chicken meats.
- The meats are then left to rest at +4 °C for at least 10 hours.
- After marination, the sliced meat cutlets are horizontally skewered on a stainless metal bar known as a döner' skewer. During skewering, sliced bovine tallow and/or sheep tail fat cutlets in the thickness of 3-5 mm are placed in every 3 to 5 sliced meat layers leaving no gaps. This procedure starts from the bottom and finishes at the top forming a 'Döner' block.
- The uncooked 'Döner' block is then trimmed with a stainless-steel special knife (*ca.* 55 cm long) known as a döner knife in the form of an egg, shuttle, or conic.
- Uncooked 'Döner' block can be frozen in a freezing chamber at -40 °C, and then it can be held in storage rooms at -18 °C for a maximum of six months. Frozen products are shipped with -18 °C refrigerated vehicles without breaking the cold chain. Uncooked 'Döner' blocks can also be stored at 0 – +4 °C for a maximum of 12 hours at the premises.

*Cooking technique*

- Uncooked 'Döner' block taken from the refrigeration is placed vertically in front of a 'Döner' stove with an adjustable fire at a distance of 10-15 cm from the fire and is subjected to precooking for at least 45 minutes with continuous rotation until the whole surface is slightly cooked and sealed.
- In the cooking of 'Döner', different fire source systems such as natural gas, electric, tube, wood, and coal are used.
- As the surface is cooked, the 'Döner' block is rotated so that uncooked parts are faced to fire. In the meantime, cooked parts are cut from top to bottom with a stainless-steel knife known as a döner knife (*ca.* 55 cm long) or a mechanical device in a ribbon-like shape with a thickness of 3-5 mm.

#### 4.3. Description of the key elements establishing the product's traditional character (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)

Some traditional features of 'Döner' produced in Turkey and Europe are as follows:

- Horizontally cutting red meat with a thickness of 3-5 mm and chicken with a thickness of 1-2 cm with a knife.
- Using different types of spices and salt. If necessary, milk or yoghurt is used in the marination of red meat 'Döner'. Milk is not used in chicken 'Döner'.
- Skewering the meat cutlets into the döner skewer and placing one or more of the beef concept and tallow and sheep tail and tallow fat slices between the meat cutlets at this stage.
- Shaping the 'Döner' block by trimming with a knife in the shape of an egg, shuttle, or conic after arranging the meat and fat cutlets on a döner skewer.
- Cooking 'Döner' block by turning it vertically around its axis in front of a fire.
- Cutting the 'Döner' into a thin strip of 2-5 mm from top to bottom with the döner knife.

In many documentaries, reports, various company videos found on EU base 'Döner' producers, traditional characteristic of 'Döner' such as preparation of Döner blocks with horizontally cut meat slices and vertically cooking, are clearly elucidated. In a Deutsche Welle report 'Döner Kebab: How The Turkish Dish Came To Germany' of 2021 by Max Modler and, in A ZDF documentary by Sebastian Lege; 'Die Tricks der Lebensmittelindustrie' of 2021, clearly reveals journey of 'Döner' from Turkey to Europe and its traditional characters.

Moreover, the guidelines for meat and meat products published in the Federal Gazette by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture on July 28, 2022, describes the productions steps and ingredients to be used in 'Döner' kebab. Today, in some German Federal States, such as Bavaria, official training on 'Döner kebab butcher or Döner Kebab specialist' is being offered. In these centers, traditional preparation of 'Döner' blocks and vertical cooking techniques are being taught.

'Döner' is not only the most popular street food in Germany, but also in other European countries such as third in France. There are numerous news, reports and advertisements on 'Döner' can be found in European media. İbrahim Sirkeci (2016) stated that how 'Döner' has become popular in the United Kingdom, in his article entitled 'Transnational Döner Kebab taking over the UK' published in Transnational Marketing Journal (TMJ). In a book chapter entitled 'MC Kebab: Döner Kebab and the Social Positioning Struggle of German Turks' in 'Changing food habits: case studies from Africa, South America and Europe' edited by Carola Lentz, 1999, Ayşe S. Çağlar, exclusively studied the history of Döner in Europe together with its social and economic aspects. The chapter emphasises the success of 'Döner' in Europe with its traditional characteristics. Maren Möhring, in her book chapters entitled 'Döner Kebab and West German Consumer (Multi-) Cultures in Hybrid Cultures – Nervous States' edited by Ulrike Linder, Maren Möhring, Mark Stein and Silke Stroh, published in 2011, describes dönerci as the person roasts meat on an upright spit and slices it with a sharp, sword-like knife.

The economy of 'Döner' in Europe is around 3,5 billion euro. The Association of Turkish Döner Producers in Europe (ATDID), established in 1996, represents this sector in Europe.