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⁽¹⁾ Text with EEA relevance

II

*(Information)*INFORMATION FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES
AND AGENCIES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Communication from the Commission relating to the available quantity for the September 2013 subperiod in the framework of certain quotas opened by the European Union for products in the rice sector

(2013/C 166/01)

Commission Regulation (EU) No 1274/2009 opened tariff quotas for the import of rice originating in the overseas countries and territories (OCT) ⁽¹⁾. No import licence applications have been submitted during the first seven days of May 2013 for the quotas with order number 09.4189 and 09.4190.

In accordance with the second sentence of Article 7(4) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1301/2006 ⁽²⁾, the quantities for which applications are not submitted are to be added to the following subperiod.

In accordance with the second subparagraph of Article 1(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1274/2009, quantities available in the following subperiod are communicated by the Commission before the 25th day of the last month of a given subperiod.

As a result, the total available quantity for the September 2013 subperiod under the quotas with order number 09.4189 and 09.4190 as referred to in Regulation (EU) No 1274/2009 are set out in the Annex to this communication.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 344, 23.12.2009, p. 3.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 238, 1.9.2006, p. 13.

ANNEX

Quantities available for the following subperiod under Regulation (EU) No 1274/2009

Origin	Order number	Import licence applications introduced for the May 2013 subperiod	Total available quantity for the September 2013 subperiod (in kg)
Netherlands Antilles and Aruba	09.4189	⁽¹⁾	25 000 000
Least developed OCTs	09.4190	⁽¹⁾	10 000 000

⁽¹⁾ No allocation coefficient for this subperiod: no licence applications were sent to the Commission.

III

(Preparatory acts)

EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

OPINION OF THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

of 17 May 2013

on a proposal for a directive on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing and on a proposal for a regulation on information accompanying transfers of funds

(CON/2013/32)

(2013/C 166/02)

Introduction and legal basis

On 27 February 2013, the European Central Bank (ECB) received a request from the Council of the European Union for an opinion on a proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing (hereinafter the 'proposed directive')⁽¹⁾. On 28 February 2013, the ECB received another request from the Council, on this occasion for an opinion on a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on information accompanying transfers of funds (hereinafter the 'proposed regulation')⁽²⁾ (hereinafter collectively referred to as the 'proposed Union instruments'). The ECB also received requests from the European Parliament for an opinion on the proposed Union instruments, namely on 2 April 2013 in respect of the proposed directive and on 3 April 2013 in respect of the proposed regulation.

The ECB's competence to deliver an opinion is based on Articles 127(4) and 282(5) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, since the proposed Union instruments contain provisions falling within the ECB's fields of competence. In addition, the ECB's competence to deliver an opinion is based on Article 127(2) and (5) and Article 128(1) of the Treaty and Articles 16 to 18 and Articles 21 to 23 of the Statute of the European System of Central Banks and of the European Central Bank, as the proposed Union instruments contain provisions which have implications for certain European System of Central Banks' tasks. In accordance with the first sentence of Article 17.5 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Central Bank, the Governing Council has therefore adopted this opinion.

1. Purpose and content of the proposed Union instruments**1.1. Proposed directive**

The proposed directive aims to update and amend the Union anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing regime to take account of recent revisions to applicable international standards, namely the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendations, which were adopted in February 2012⁽³⁾, as well as several reports and assessments by the European Commission regarding the application of Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2005 on the prevention of

⁽¹⁾ COM(2013) 45 final.

⁽²⁾ COM(2013) 44 final.

⁽³⁾ International Standards on Combating Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism & Proliferation — the FATF Recommendations, Paris, 16 February 2012, available on the FATF's website at <http://www.fatf-gafi.org>

the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing⁽¹⁾. The proposed directive, when adopted, will repeal and replace Directive 2005/60/EC and Commission Directive 2006/70/EC of 1 August 2006 laying down implementing measures for Directive 2005/60/EC⁽²⁾.

The proposed directive takes a more risk-based approach to measures⁽³⁾ to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. It strengthens the 'customer due diligence'⁽⁴⁾ requirements so that certain categories of clients and transactions⁽⁵⁾ will no longer be exempted from simplified customer due diligence requirements and so that 'obliged entities'⁽⁶⁾ will henceforth have to assess the level of risk before deciding whether to conduct customer due diligence. In addition, the European Supervisory Authorities (ESAs)⁽⁷⁾ will be required to provide a joint opinion on the money laundering and terrorist financing risks affecting the internal market within two years from the date the proposed directive enters into force, whilst Member States will be required to conduct and maintain updated national risk assessments to identify those areas where enhanced customer due diligence⁽⁸⁾ is required. The proposed directive also expands the scope of the Union anti-money laundering regime, notably by reducing the threshold for the application of the regime to traders in high-value goods dealing with cash payments from customers from EUR 15 000 to EUR 7 500.

The proposed directive will raise the level of customer due diligence to be conducted in respect of 'politically exposed persons' (PEPs)⁽⁹⁾, notably by requiring that enhanced customer due diligence⁽¹⁰⁾ be conducted in respect of such persons as well as their family members and close associates. PEPs will now include not only 'foreign' individuals but also 'domestic' individuals entrusted with prominent public functions⁽¹¹⁾.

The proposed directive provides stronger and more well-defined rules and procedures for identifying beneficial owners⁽¹²⁾ of corporate or other legal entities and trusts, although the definition of beneficial ownership remains unaltered. In addition, corporate or other legal entities and trusts will be required to maintain records in regard to the identity of their beneficial owners. Moreover, the proposed directive introduces some changes to record-keeping requirements in respect of customer due diligence and transactions, as well as to obliged entities' internal policies and procedures, attempting to strike a balance between facilitating robust money laundering and terrorist financing controls and respecting the principles of data protection law and the rights of data subjects.

The proposed directive also strengthens the cooperation between the Member States' financial intelligence units whose tasks are to serve as national contact points to receive, analyse and disseminate to competent authorities reports about suspicions of money laundering or terrorist financing.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 309, 25.11.2005, p. 15.

⁽²⁾ Commission Directive 2006/70/EC of 1 August 2006 laying down implementing measures for Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the definition of 'politically exposed person' and the technical criteria for simplified customer due diligence procedures and for exemption on grounds of a financial activity conducted on an occasional or very limited basis (OJ L 214, 4.8.2006, p. 29).

⁽³⁾ The proposed directive requires obliged entities, inter alia, to carry out customer due diligence, maintain records, have internal controls and file suspicious transaction reports in relation to money laundering and terrorism financing.

⁽⁴⁾ See Chapter II, Sections 1 and 2, Articles 9 to 15, of the proposed directive.

⁽⁵⁾ For example, customers who are regulated businesses, such as credit and financial institutions established in the Union and companies listed on regulated public securities markets.

⁽⁶⁾ See Article 2(1) of the proposed directive which lists the 'obliged entities' to which the proposed directive applies, notably including credit institutions and financial institutions as further defined.

⁽⁷⁾ The ESAs are the European Banking Authority (EBA), the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) and the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA).

⁽⁸⁾ See Articles 16 to 23 of the proposed directive.

⁽⁹⁾ See definitions in Article 3(7) as well as obligations on such persons provided for in Article 11 and Articles 18 to 22 of the proposed directive.

⁽¹⁰⁾ See Articles 16 to 23 of the proposed directive.

⁽¹¹⁾ See Article 3(7)(b) of the proposed directive. In this respect, 'domestic' means when the PEP has been entrusted by a Union Member State with prominent public functions, and 'foreign' means when the PEP has been entrusted by a third country with such functions.

⁽¹²⁾ See Article 3(5), Article 29 and 30 of the proposed directive.

Finally, the proposed directive puts greater emphasis on enforcement and sanctions than previous directives. Member States must ensure that businesses can be held liable for breaches of the money laundering and terrorist financing rules and competent authorities may take appropriate measures and impose administrative sanctions in respect of such breaches. The types of administrative sanctions that can be applied are set out in the proposed directive.

1.2. *Proposed regulation*

The proposed regulation is closely linked to achieving the aims of the proposed directive. It is essential for financial institutions to report adequate, accurate and current information in respect of transfers of funds carried out for their clients to enable the competent authorities to effectively counteract money laundering and terrorist financing.

The proposed regulation ⁽¹⁾ aims to tighten the existing legal obligations for money laundering and terrorist financing as regards funds transfers and those providing payment services in the light of developing international standards ⁽²⁾. In particular, it aims to enhance the traceability of payments by requiring payment service providers to ensure that transfers of funds are accompanied by information also on the payee for the competent authorities. For that purpose, it will require payment service providers to verify the identity of beneficiaries of payments originating outside the Union for amounts over EUR 1 000 ⁽³⁾. It will require payment service providers to have risk-based procedures in place to assess when to execute, reject or suspend funds transfers and to maintain records of payments for five years. The proposed regulation also clarifies that the requirements will cover credit and debit cards, mobile phones and other electronic devices, if they are used to transfer funds.

2. *General observations*

The ECB welcomes the proposed Union instruments. The ECB strongly supports a Union regime which ensures that Member States and Union resident institutions have effective tools in the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing, in particular against any misuse of the financial system by money launderers and financiers of terrorism and their accomplices. The ECB considers that the proposed Union instruments correctly and effectively address the weaknesses identified in the current Union regime and update it to take account of identified threats from money laundering and terrorist financing to the Union and to its financial system and the evolving international standards on how to deal with those threats. The ECB also considers that the proposed Union instruments will improve the clarity and consistency of the applicable rules across the Member States, for example in key areas such as customer due diligence and beneficial ownership.

3. *Specific observations*

3.1. As regards the proposed directive, the ECB notes that its legal basis is Article 114 of the Treaty and that it accordingly aims to approximate relevant national provisions and minimise inconsistencies between them across the Union. Member States may decide therefore to further lower the thresholds set by the proposed directive for the application of its obligations or to take even stricter measures ⁽⁴⁾. For example, in the case of transactions between dealers in high-value goods and non-business customers amounting to EUR 7 500 ⁽⁵⁾ or above, it appears that Article 5 of the proposed directive would permit Member States to choose to apply stricter measures than merely requiring the dealer to satisfy the customer due diligence, reporting and other relevant obligations under the proposed directive. Any such measures should be carefully weighed against the expected public benefits.

⁽¹⁾ The proposed regulation will repeal Regulation (EC) No 1781/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 on information on the payer accompanying transfers of funds (OJ L 345, 8.12.2006, p. 1).

⁽²⁾ Principally FATF Recommendation 16 on enhancing the transparency of cross-border wire transfers.

⁽³⁾ See Article 7 of the proposed regulation.

⁽⁴⁾ See Article 5 of the proposed directive that provides that Member States may adopt or retain in force stricter provisions in the field covered by the proposed directive to prevent money laundering and terrorist financing.

⁽⁵⁾ See Article 10(c) of the proposed directive.

- 3.2. Whilst the ECB notes the definition of ‘payment service provider’ in Article 2(5) of the proposed regulation, it also notes that, pursuant to recital 8 of the proposed regulation and recital 35 of the proposed directive, it is not the Union legislators’ intention to include within the scope of the regulation persons who provide ‘credit or financial institutions solely with a message or other support systems for transmitting funds or with clearing and settlement systems’ such as the ECB operated TARGET2 system. The ECB supports this approach and stresses the importance of maintaining this exemption for the continued smooth functioning of payment systems in Europe. Imposing this requirement on the providers of clearing and settlement systems could lead to significant difficulties and delays in processing payments between the banks and other entities providing payment services. This in turn would potentially have a severe impact on the banks’ liquidity planning and ultimately on the smooth functioning of the financial markets. For this reason, and in the interests of legal certainty and transparency, the ECB recommends providing for this exemption in the enacting terms of the proposed Union instruments, rather than in the recitals. Moreover, it should be carefully considered whether other related Union legal acts which currently use the same approach and drafting technique for this type of exemption ⁽¹⁾ should follow this recommendation.
- 3.3. Further, the ECB notes that several of the concepts defined in Article 2 of the proposed regulation are also defined in other Union legal acts closely related to the proposed regulation, e.g. Directive 2007/64/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2007 on payment services in the internal market amending Directives 97/7/EC, 2002/65/EC, 2005/60/EC and 2006/48/EC and repealing Directive 97/5/EC ⁽²⁾ (hereinafter the ‘Payment Services Directive’ (PSD)), Regulation (EC) No 924/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 on cross-border payments in the Community and repealing Regulation (EC) No 2560/2001 ⁽³⁾ and Regulation (EU) No 260/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2012 establishing technical and business requirements for credit transfers and direct debits in euro and amending Regulation (EC) No 924/2009 ⁽⁴⁾. Since the use of established definitions would improve consistency and facilitate the understanding of Union legal acts as a whole, the ECB suggests that Article 2 of the proposed regulation be amended where appropriate, namely:
- (a) the definitions of ‘payer’ and ‘payee’ should be aligned with the definitions of these terms in the PSD;
 - (b) ‘payment service provider’ is a concept established by the PSD and limited to six different categories of providers of such services listed in the PSD; accordingly the definition of this concept in the proposed regulation should refer to the PSD;
 - (c) the definition of “a person-to-person” transfer of funds’ should be more clearly defined as a transaction between two natural persons, both acting in their personal capacity outside the scope of their business, trade or profession.

This opinion will be published on the ECB’s website.

Done at Frankfurt am Main, 17 May 2013.

The President of the ECB

Mario DRAGHI

⁽¹⁾ See Council Regulation (EU) No 267/2012 of 23 March 2012 concerning restrictive measures against Iran and repealing Regulation (EU) No 961/2010 (OJ L 88, 24.3.2012, p. 1).

⁽²⁾ OJ L 319, 5.12.2007, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 266, 9.10.2009, p. 11.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ L 94, 30.3.2012, p. 22.

IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Euro exchange rates ⁽¹⁾

11 June 2013

(2013/C 166/03)

1 euro =

Currency	Exchange rate	Currency	Exchange rate		
USD	US dollar	1,3273	AUD	Australian dollar	1,4206
JPY	Japanese yen	128,60	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,3594
DKK	Danish krone	7,4575	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	10,3057
GBP	Pound sterling	0,85390	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,7080
SEK	Swedish krona	8,7454	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,6723
CHF	Swiss franc	1,2305	KRW	South Korean won	1 503,51
ISK	Iceland króna		ZAR	South African rand	13,6365
NOK	Norwegian krone	7,6860	CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	8,1410
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	HRK	Croatian kuna	7,4988
CZK	Czech koruna	25,613	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	13 038,61
HUF	Hungarian forint	299,71	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	4,1883
LTL	Lithuanian litas	3,4528	PHP	Philippine peso	57,209
LVL	Latvian lats	0,7020	RUB	Russian rouble	43,1010
PLN	Polish zloty	4,2789	THB	Thai baht	41,133
RON	Romanian leu	4,5113	BRL	Brazilian real	2,8642
TRY	Turkish lira	2,5172	MXN	Mexican peso	17,2549
			INR	Indian rupee	77,5210

⁽¹⁾ Source: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.

V

*(Announcements)*PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETITION
POLICY

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Prior notification of a concentration**(Case COMP/M.6951 — Bain Capital/FTE)****Candidate case for simplified procedure****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2013/C 166/04)

1. On 5 June 2013, the Commission received a notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾ by which the Bain Capital Europe Fund III, L.P, part of Bain Capital Investors, LLC. ('Bain Capital', USA), acquires within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation sole control over FTE Verwaltungs GmbH ('FTE', Germany) by way of a purchase of shares.
2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are:
 - for Bain Capital: private equity investment firm, active worldwide across most industries, including information technology, healthcare, retail and consumer products, communications, chemicals, financial and industrial/manufacturing,
 - for FTE: manufacturing company, active worldwide in particular in the development, production and sale of hydraulic clutch actuation and hydraulic brake systems and components.
3. On preliminary examination, the Commission finds that the notified transaction could fall within the scope of the EC Merger Regulation. However, the final decision on this point is reserved. Pursuant to the Commission Notice on a simplified procedure for treatment of certain concentrations under the EC Merger Regulation ⁽²⁾ it should be noted that this case is a candidate for treatment under the procedure set out in the Notice.
4. The Commission invites interested third parties to submit their possible observations on the proposed operation to the Commission.

Observations must reach the Commission not later than 10 days following the date of this publication. Observations can be sent to the Commission by fax (+32 22964301), by email to COMP-MERGER-REGISTRY@ec.europa.eu or by post, under reference number COMP/M.6951 — Bain Capital/FTE, to the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Competition
Merger Registry
1049 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1 (the 'EC Merger Regulation').

⁽²⁾ OJ C 56, 5.3.2005, p. 32 ('Notice on a simplified procedure').

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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

(2013/C 166/05)

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 ⁽¹⁾.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006**on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs ⁽²⁾****‘STAKLIŠKĖS’****EC No: LT-PGI-0005-0819-27.07.2010****PGI (X) PDO ()****1. Name**

‘Stakliškės’

2. Member State or third country

Lithuania

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**3.1. Type of product**

Class 1.8. Other products of Annex I to the Treaty (spices, etc.)

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

‘Stakliškės’ mead is a clear amber-coloured alcoholic beverage that is made in the traditional way by natural fermentation of mead must together with plant additives (hops, lime blossom, juniper berries). The composition of the honey and the herbs and spices gives the beverage its characteristic pronounced honey taste with a slightly sweet-sour flavour and a piquant aroma. All of the ethanol in the mead is obtained solely by natural fermentation. No sugar or other sweeteners, colourings, flavourings or preservatives are used in the production of the mead, and its strength is not corrected by adding ethanol.

Physico-chemical properties of ‘Stakliškės’ mead:

— ethanol content — 12 ± 1 % by volume,

— sugar content — 160 ± 8 g/dm³,

— titratable acids expressed as citric acid — $7 \pm 0,5$ g/dm³,

— total extract — 180 ± 8 g/dm³,

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12. Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

- volatile acids expressed as acetic acid — not more than 1,5 g/dm³,
- iron content must not exceed 10 mg/dm³,
- total sulphur dioxide and sulphite content must not exceed 200 mg/dm³.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)

Raw materials:

- water,
- natural honey that complies with the following requirements:
 - reducing-sugar content (sum of fructose and glucose): not less than 60 g/100 g,
 - sucrose content: not more than 5 g/100 g,
 - water content: not more than 20 %,
 - diastase activity (Schade scale): not less than 8,
- bottom-fermenting brewer's yeast at a concentration of up to 5 % of the must,
- herbs/spices (3,5 g/l):
 - hops,
 - lime blossom,
 - juniper berries.

'Stakliškēs' mead must is prepared by mixing equal parts by weight of honey and water, i.e. one part honey to one part water.

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only)

—

3.5. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area

- I. Dissolving the honey, decanting the liquid honey and removal of any scum and impurities.
- II. Decoction of hops and other herbs/spices; cooling, straining and dosing of the decoction.
- III. Pumping the liquid honey, the required amount of water and the decoction into a pasteurisation kettle. Pasteurisation of the mead must.
- IV. Pumping and cooling of the mead must.
- V. Fermentation of the mead must.
- VI. Clarification of the mead.
- VII. Maturing of the mead for at least nine months.
- VIII. Filtering and bottling of the mead.

3.6. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.

'Stakliškēs' mead must be bottled in glass, ceramic or other souvenir containers of various shapes and capacities immediately after maturing and filtration, as exposure to the air during transportation or interim storage would create a risk of oxidisation, which would adversely affect the specific organoleptic characteristics of this mead. Furthermore, exposure to the air would allow contamination by acetic acid bacteria or other microorganisms, leading to fermentation that would be detrimental to the product.

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling

—

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The geographical area is Stakliškēs civil parish.

5. Link with the geographical area

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area

The 'Stakliškės' geographical indication consists of the name of the town in which the mead is made, which lies in a hollow surrounded by hills and forests. The location is favourable for beekeeping and for producing the other raw materials used to make mead, as 60 % of the area is agricultural land, while 23 % is forest and 17 % is covered by water or used for other purposes.

History

The name of the town of Stakliškės was first mentioned in 1375 in the chronicles of the Teutonic Order and derives from the word 'Stokielyšek'. The story goes that some gentlemen got into an argument during a hunt about who could drink 100 glasses of mead. One gentleman drank them all and shouted 'Stokielyšek' ('one hundred glasses') in amazement, and that is how the place came to be called Stokielyček, or Stakliškės.

The earliest specific written information about the consumption of mead in the land of the Balts is to be found in the account of Wulfstan's voyage and dates from approximately 890. This traveller and merchant visited the lands along the shores of the Baltic, gaining first-hand knowledge of their abundance of honey, and that honey was used to make a drink. Kings and noblemen drank mare's milk, while poor people and slaves drank mead. The Aistians brewed no ale, because there was mead aplenty. At the beginning of the 14th century, Peter of Dusburg, chronicler of the Teutonic Order, wrote that the ancestors of the Lithuanians drank plain water, honey wine — known as mead — and mare's milk, but they never drank that unconsecrated.

Mead became a kind of legend, and attempts were made to revive it back at the beginning of the 20th century, but it was only after the Second World War that the process engineer Aleksandras Sinkevičius, of Stakliškės meadery, set out to recreate the recipe for a mead which had, in the past (from the 15th to the 18th century), been made from wild honey and various herbs and spices, and to revive the production of a traditional, natural, non-spirit mead that was, at that time, no longer produced either in Lithuania or in neighbouring countries.

In the social system of the time, Aleksandras Sinkevičius had a difficult road to travel before managing to obtain a licence to produce mead in 1957. On 8 September 1958, the first 700 litres of mead must were boiled up in the old boiling room of the Stakliškės brewery. From then on, 'Stakliškės' mead started to be produced industrially. However, as Aivaras Ragauskas wrote in his book *Aleksandras Sinkevičius (1908–1989). Trečdalis gyvenimo paskirto lietuviškam midui* (Aleksandras Sinkevičius (1908–1989). A third of a life dedicated to Lithuanian mead) (Vilnius, 2008), 'It was difficult to implement the plans. For example, in 1964, the production plan was only 91 % implemented. As there was no relevant production base and no laboratory, it was not easy to ensure that the quality of the mead was consistent, especially when many people did not know any better.' Consequently, mead production made large losses in 1963. It was only on 12 January 1967, after a long process of adjusting the recipe, the ratio of the herbs and spices and the production process, that Aleksandras Sinkevičius wrote the following to the public prosecutor, Viktoras Galinaitis, and other civil servants in letter No 24 LTSR (Stakliškės mead production archive): 'In extremely primitive conditions, I have made products that cannot be made by mechanised plants, and that is why they are high-quality.'

On 18 January 1967, the first technical manual for production of this mead was drawn up, describing the raw materials and the entire mead production process, and in 1968 the specifications with which today's 'Stakliškės' mead still complies were drawn up.

The reputation of 'Stakliškės' mead is confirmed by the steadily increasing demand for it, with 60 000 litres of 'Stakliškės' mead produced in 1977 and 80 000 litres in 1978. Back in 1989, the first batches of this mead were exported to the United Kingdom and the United States, and it is now exported to Poland, Belgium, Latvia, China, Israel and other countries.

To this day, the traditional method of producing 'Stakliškės' mead and the professional skills of the producers in this geographical area, which are passed down from generation to generation, guarantee the authenticity of this long-maturing beverage with a subtle flavour and aroma. This is demonstrated by the fact that the Lithuanian Culinary Heritage Fund granted 'Stakliškės' mead culinary heritage status

in 2002, confirming that it is made from traditional ingredients using traditional techniques, and the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture awarded it a national heritage product certificate in 2010, confirming that 'Stakliškės' mead is a traditional product embodying the age-old, authentic, traditional product characteristics, composition and production method.

5.2. Specificity of the product

'Stakliškės' mead gets its characteristic pronounced honey taste, with a slightly sweet-sour flavour and a piquant aroma, from its balanced sugar/acid ratio and traditional production method, i.e. the long natural fermentation (up to 90 days) and long maturation (at least nine months) and the traditional recipe, according to which the mead is made using only natural honey and herbs and spices (hops, lime blossom and juniper berries). 'Stakliškės' mead differs from the types of mead made in the surrounding lands by virtue of the fact that the ethanol content is obtained entirely by natural fermentation and is not corrected by adding ethanol, and the honey cannot be replaced with sugar, corresponding sweeteners or honey distillate.

The specificity and reputation of the product are borne out by a survey carried out in 2007 by the market analysis and research group UAB RAIT, which showed that 'Stakliškės' mead differs from other beverages of the same type by virtue of its high quality (acknowledged by 70 % of respondents), nice taste (acknowledged by 59 % of respondents) and very pleasant aroma (acknowledged by 51 % of respondents). Other qualities frequently attributed to this beverage were: a strong flavour (mentioned by 39 % of respondents), attractive packaging (mentioned by 36 % of respondents), intended for older people (mentioned by 36 % of respondents) and expensive drink (mentioned by 40 % of respondents).

5.3. Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI)

The protected geographical indication for 'Stakliškės' mead is based on the history of the product possessing the characteristics set out under point 5.2, people's traditional ability to preserve the specific features of its production and its reputation.

'Stakliškės' mead gained its reputation because it is a traditional product. The book *Lietuviškas midus* (Lithuanian mead) (Kaunas, 1969), which was published back in 1969, described 'Stakliškės' mead as 'a kind of distinctive national beverage that was made in the distant past. It is a low-strength, slightly sour but very fragrant and delicate vitamin-rich beverage named after the town in which Lithuanian mead production is centred. The beverage is a clear amber colour. When poured out into a glass, it is as though it has the fragrant scents of a flowering meadow.'

The reputation of 'Stakliškės' mead is illustrated by the gold medal it won at the international AgroBalt'98 exhibition and the diploma it was awarded at Degustalit, a tasting of Lithuanian food products and beverages organised by the Lithuanian Agricultural and Food Products Market Regulation Agency in 2004, recognising this mead as the best-tasting beverage.

The appreciation and popularity of 'Stakliškės' mead is confirmed by articles that regularly appear in the regional and national press, as well as in information publications and on the Internet: 'Stakliškių midus' (Stakliškės mead) (*Mūsų sodai*, 1964, No 5); 'Kur Stakliškių auksas ir sidabras' (Where is Stakliškės' gold and silver?) (*Švyturys*, 1968, No 24); 'Stakliškių midus' (Stakliškės mead) (*Laisvė*, 25 November 1983); 'Metai, kaip lietuviškas midus' (A year like Lithuanian mead) (*Kooperatininkas*, 1988, No 9); 'Stakliškės' (*Šiaurės Atėnai*, 2003, No 646); 'AgroBalt: pirmoji lietuviškų maisto produktų ir gėrimų degustacija' (AgroBalt: first tasting of Lithuanian food products and beverages) (*Elta*, 9 June 2004); '„Ida Basar“ Europos Parlamente išlaikė pirmąjį lietuviškų vaisių egzaminą' ('Ida Basar' passes first test for Lithuanian delicacies at the European Parliament) (*menu.lt*, 11 October 2004); '„Lietuviškas midus“ degtinės gaminti nesirengia' (Lietuviškas midus is not about to produce vodka) (BNS, 14 April 2006).

Lithuanians associate the name of the town of Stakliškės only with this beverage. 'Stakliškės' mead played its part in preserving the Lithuanian identity during Soviet times, and today is a perfect 'ambassador' for Lithuania abroad. It represents Lithuania — when choosing a souvenir or present from Lithuania, this beverage is always chosen, along with amber or *šakotis* (a traditional Lithuanian cake). Since 2011, UAB Lietuviškas midus has been conducting guided tours, during which visitors learn about the age-old method of making mead and have the opportunity to taste and evaluate this

and various other beverages. The visitors like 'Stakliškės' mead best, because of its flavour and its name, which they associate with the place they have visited. In 2011, there were 1 040 visitors, and in 2012, the number will already reach approximately 1 800, which also confirms the reputation of 'Stakliškės' mead.

Reference to publication of the specification

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽³⁾)

http://www.zum.lt/l.php?tmpl_into=middle&tmpl_id=2702

⁽³⁾ See footnote 2.

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