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⁽¹⁾ Text with EEA relevance

II

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

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Non-opposition to a notified concentration**(Case M.7561 — PRE/AXIS)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2015/C 186/01)

On 22 May 2015, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾. The full text of the decision is available only in English language and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

- in the merger section of the Competition website of the Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/>). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,
- in electronic form on the EUR-Lex website (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=en>) under document number 32015M7561. EUR-Lex is the online access to the European law.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND
AGENCIES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Euro exchange rates ⁽¹⁾

4 June 2015

(2015/C 186/02)

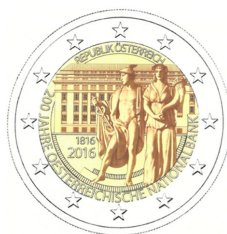
1 euro =

| Currency | Exchange rate | Currency | Exchange rate | | |
|----------|-------------------|----------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| USD | US dollar | 1,1317 | CAD | Canadian dollar | 1,4089 |
| JPY | Japanese yen | 140,47 | HKD | Hong Kong dollar | 8,7733 |
| DKK | Danish krone | 7,4599 | NZD | New Zealand dollar | 1,5834 |
| GBP | Pound sterling | 0,73540 | SGD | Singapore dollar | 1,5221 |
| SEK | Swedish krona | 9,3396 | KRW | South Korean won | 1 256,92 |
| CHF | Swiss franc | 1,0551 | ZAR | South African rand | 13,9625 |
| ISK | Iceland króna | | CNY | Chinese yuan renminbi | 7,0177 |
| NOK | Norwegian krone | 8,7370 | HRK | Croatian kuna | 7,5605 |
| BGN | Bulgarian lev | 1,9558 | IDR | Indonesian rupiah | 15 047,75 |
| CZK | Czech koruna | 27,467 | MYR | Malaysian ringgit | 4,1867 |
| HUF | Hungarian forint | 312,30 | PHP | Philippine peso | 50,790 |
| PLN | Polish zloty | 4,1692 | RUB | Russian rouble | 62,1695 |
| RON | Romanian leu | 4,4285 | THB | Thai baht | 38,171 |
| TRY | Turkish lira | 3,0377 | BRL | Brazilian real | 3,5498 |
| AUD | Australian dollar | 1,4618 | MXN | Mexican peso | 17,5812 |
| | | | INR | Indian rupee | 72,4362 |

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

New national side of euro coins intended for circulation

(2015/C 186/03)



National side of the new commemorative 2-euro coin intended for circulation and issued by Austria

Euro coins intended for circulation have legal tender status throughout the euro area. For the purpose of informing the public and all parties who handle the coins, the Commission publishes a description of the designs of all new coins ⁽¹⁾. In accordance with the Council conclusions of 10 February 2009 ⁽²⁾, euro-area Member States and countries that have concluded a monetary agreement with the European Union providing for the issuing of euro coins are allowed to issue commemorative euro coins intended for circulation, provided that certain conditions are met, particularly that only the 2-euro denomination is used. These coins have the same technical characteristics as other 2-euro coins, but their national face features a commemorative design that is highly symbolic in national or European terms.

Issuing country: Austria

Subject of commemoration: 200 years of Oesterreichische Nationalbank

Description of the design: The design depicts two gods of Roman mythology featured in the carved relief above the entrance to the main building of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank (OeNB): to the left, Mercury, the messenger of the gods and the god of merchants and commerce; to the right, Fortuna, the goddess of fate and prosperity, who is portrayed with a horn of plenty. The background picture, running from the left to the right edges of the core, shows the OeNB's main premises. An ornamental band hugging the bottom of the coin centre evokes the red-white-red pattern of the Austrian national flag, with hatched vertical lines symbolizing the colour red, as laid down in the rules of heraldic design. The years '1816' and '2016' to the left of Mercury refer to the OeNB's founding year and its bicentennial. The inscriptions running along the edges of the gold-coloured centre read 'Republik Österreich' (Republic of Austria) and '200 Jahre Oesterreichische Nationalbank' (200 years Oesterreichische Nationalbank).

The coin's outer ring depicts the 12 stars of the European flag.

Number of coins to be issued: 16 million

Date of issue: 2016

⁽¹⁾ See OJ C 373, 28.12.2001, p. 1 for the national faces of all the coins issued in 2002.

⁽²⁾ See the conclusions of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council of 10 February 2009 and the Commission Recommendation of 19 December 2008 on common guidelines for the national sides and the issuance of euro coins intended for circulation (OJ L 9, 14.1.2009, p. 52).

V

(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Call for applications 2015**Third programme of the Union's action in the field of health (2014-2020)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2015/C 186/04)

A call for applications 'Health — 2015' is launched today within the framework of the third programme of the Union's action in the field of health (2014-2020) ⁽¹⁾.

This call for applications consists of:

— a call for proposals for the award of a financial contribution to specific actions in the form of project grants.

Deadline for online submissions of the proposals is 15 September 2015.

All the information, including the Commission Decision of 2 June 2015 on the adoption of the work programme for 2015 for implementation of the third programme of the Union's action in the field of health (2014-2020), and on the selection, award and other criteria for financial contributions to the actions of this programme, are available on the website of the Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (Chafea) at the following address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/>

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) No 282/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on the establishment of a third Programme for the Union's action in the field of health (2014-2020) and repealing Decision No 1350/2007/EC (OJ L 86, 21.3.2014, p. 1).

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Open call for proposals — GP/DSI/ReferNet_FPA/001/15

**ReferNet — Cedefop's European Network for Information on Vocational Education and Training
(VET)**

(2015/C 186/05)

1. Objectives and description

With the objective of establishing a European network for information on VET – ReferNet –, this call aims at selecting one applicant from each eligible country (EU Member States, Iceland and Norway) with which Cedefop will conclude a four-year framework partnership agreement.

Founded in 1975 and based in Greece since 1995, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) is an agency of the European Union (EU). Acknowledged as an authoritative source of information and expertise on VET, skills and qualifications, its mission is to support European vocational education and training (VET) policy development and contribute to its implementation.

ReferNet is Cedefop's European network for information on VET. The mission devoted to ReferNet is to support Cedefop by reporting on national VET systems and policy developments and by raising the visibility of VET and Cedefop's products. It comprises 30 members known as ReferNet national partners from EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. ReferNet national partners are key institutions involved in VET or labour market policies in the country they represent.

Framework partnership agreements are implemented through annual specific grant agreements. Therefore, after signing a Framework Partnership Agreement for the years 2016 to 2019, successful applicants will be invited to submit the grant application for the 2016 action (which may lead to the signature of a Specific Grant Agreement for the year 2016). The applicant must demonstrate its capacity to carry out all the activities foreseen over the four-year period and ensure adequate co-financing for the implementation of the requested tasks.

2. Budget and project duration

The estimated budget available for the four year duration of the framework partnership agreements amounts to EUR 4 000 000, depending on the annual decisions of the Budgetary Authority.

The total available budget for the 2016 annual work plan (project duration: 12 months) will be EUR 980 000 for the 30 partners (from the 28 EU Member States, Iceland and Norway).

The grant varies according to the country population and is awarded for carrying out an annual work plan. The total available budget for the 2016 work plan will be distributed on the basis of three country groups based on country population:

- Country group 1: Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovenia and Iceland. Maximum grant amount: EUR 23 615.
- Country group 2: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Sweden and Norway. Maximum grant amount: EUR 33 625.
- Country group 3: France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom. Maximum grant amount: EUR 43 620.

The Union grant is a financial contribution to the beneficiary's (and/or co-beneficiaries') costs which must be supplemented by own financial contribution and/or local, regional, national and/or private contributions. The total Union contribution shall not exceed 70 % of the eligible costs.

Cedefop reserves the right not to award the total budget available.

3. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, applicants should meet the following requirements:

- (a) be a public or a private organisation, with a legal status and legal personality (natural persons, i.e. individuals, are not eligible);

(b) have their seat registered in a country where the grant is applied, i.e. in one of the following:

- EU-28 (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom);
- associated countries (Iceland and Norway).

4. **Deadline**

Applications for the framework partnership agreement must be submitted **at the latest on 21 August 2015**.

5. **Further information**

The detailed specifications of the call for proposals, the application form and its annexes will be available as from 8 June 2015 on Cedefop's website at the following address:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/about-cedefop/public-procurement>

Applications must comply with the requirements set out in the full text of the call and be submitted using the official forms provided.

The evaluation of proposals will be based on the principles of transparency and equal treatment.

All submitted applications will be evaluated by a committee of experts against the eligibility, exclusion, selection and award criteria defined in the full text version of the call.

PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETITION
POLICY

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Prior notification of a concentration

(Case M.7647 — Bridgepoint/Nordic Cinema Group Holding)

Candidate case for simplified procedure

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2015/C 186/06)

1. On 28 May 2015, the Commission received a notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾ by which the undertaking Bridgepoint Advisers Group Limited ('Bridgepoint', United Kingdom) acquires within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation control of the whole of the undertaking Nordic Cinema Group Holding AB ('Nordic Cinema Group', Sweden) by way of purchase of shares.
2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are:
 - for Bridgepoint: private equity group;
 - for Nordic Cinema Group: cinema operator active in Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden.
3. On preliminary examination, the Commission finds that the notified transaction could fall within the scope of the 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 Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽²⁾ it should be noted that this case is a candidate for treatment under the procedure set out in this 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 e-mail to COMP-MERGER-REGISTRY@ec.europa.eu or by post, under reference number M.7647 — Bridgepoint/Nordic Cinema Group Holding, 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 'Merger Regulation').

⁽²⁾ OJ C 366, 14.12.2013, p. 5.

Prior notification of a concentration
(Case M.7571 — Dawn Meats/Terrena/Elivia)
Candidate case for simplified procedure
(Text with EEA relevance)
(2015/C 186/07)

1. On 28 May 2015, the Commission received a notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾ by which the undertakings QDB Holdings Group/Dawn Meats ('Dawn Meats', Ireland) and Terrena (France) acquire within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation joint control the undertaking Elivia (France), by way of purchase of shares. Elivia is currently wholly-owned by Terrena.

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are:

- for Dawn meats: slaughtering of livestock, deboning and further processing of meat, including rendering of abattoir by-products, with main operations in the beef and lamb sectors,
- for Terrena: various activities throughout the value chains of agricultural products, including processing and marketing of meat products,
- for Elivia: slaughtering of cattle, production and sale of fresh and processed beef products, including abattoir by-products, primarily in France.

3. On preliminary examination, the Commission finds that the notified transaction could fall within the scope of the 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 Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽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 the reference number M.7571 — Dawn Meats/Terrena/Elivia, 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 'Merger Regulation').

⁽²⁾ OJ C 366, 14.12.2013, p. 5.

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

(2015/C 186/08)

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⁾****‘ISTARSKI PRŠUT’/‘ISTRSKI PRŠUT’****EC No: MULTI-PDO-0005-01041 — 04.10.2012****PGI () PDO (X)****1. Name**

‘Istarski pršut’/‘Istrski pršut’

2. Member State or Third Country

Republic of Croatia/Republic of Slovenia

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**3.1. Product type**

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

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

‘Istarski pršut’/‘Istrski pršut’ is a preserved dry-cured meat product made of a pig’s ham without the foot, the skin and the subcutaneous fat but with the pelvic bones, which is dry-brined with sea salt and spices, air-dried without smoking and then dried and matured for at least 12 months.

‘Istarski pršut’/‘Istrski pršut’ is elongated in shape because it also contains the pelvic bones. The foot is removed from the ham at the tarsal joint, and the skin and the subcutaneous tissue are also removed apart from the section under the tarsal joint (10–15 cm). ‘Istarski pršut’/‘Istrski pršut’ has evenly rounded edges and flat surfaces that are clean or covered with a thin layer of mould. The cross-section of the muscle tissue is of a uniform pink-red colour without any pronounced discolouring, and the fat must be white. ‘Istarski pršut’/‘Istrski pršut’ has a distinctive, pronounced aroma of dried ripe pork and herbs and a moderately salty taste.

When the product is ready for sale it has the following physico-chemical properties: the sodium chloride content is less than 8 % and the water activity (aw) is under 0,93.

⁽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.

'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' must weigh at least 7 kg when it is placed on the market.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)

'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' is produced from the hams of pigs that are the offspring of pure breeds and their cross-breeds, with the exception of the Piétrain breed and its cross-breeds.

At the time of slaughter, the average live weight of pigs per group must exceed 160 kg, and the pigs must be at least nine months old. The hams are trimmed so as to leave the bones of the pelvic joint (ilium, ischium and pubis), while removing the sacrum and the tail vertebrae. The sacrum is removed by cutting the sacro-iliac joint. Trimmed hams must weigh more than 13 kg.

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only)

Pigs that are to be used for the production of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' are fed with compound feed in the fattening phase. All the ingredients of the compound feed, except minerals, vitamins and other additives, must originate from the area in which the raw materials may be produced and which is described in section 4. The origin of all ingredients has to be traceable from the place of production to the sty.

Apart from compound feed, pigs may be fed with wheat or wheat bran, fresh clover and alfalfa, pumpkins, cabbages, fodder beet, sugar beet pulp, whey and boiled potatoes, which must also originate from the same area. It is forbidden to use spent brewer's grain, swill and slaughterhouse waste for fattening the pigs.

Feed which originates from outside the production area of the raw materials may be added in accordance with the rules on the feeding of animals that apply to DOs for products of animal origin.

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

All production phases of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' must take place within the geographical area specified in section 4.

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

'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' may be marketed in one piece (whole) or in the form of packages that may contain de-boned cured ham, large or small chunks of cured ham or sliced cured ham. These forms of cured ham must be packed in a vacuum or modified atmosphere.

The process of de-boning the cured ham, cutting it into pieces or slicing it for portioning and packaging with a view to further sale, has to take place exclusively in the production area of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut'. The fact that the product is portioned and packaged only in the area in which it is produced considerably simplifies the monitoring of this process, facilitates the application of the system of traceability, minimises the risk of fraud and abuse of labels and guarantees the required quality of the product for consumers. Keeping the operations of cutting and packaging in the area of production also means that this process can be carried out by the very producers or other people who have the necessary skill and who are familiar with the specific characteristics and quality of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut'. This ensures that the original quality of the product is preserved even after it has been cut and packaged.

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling

Upon completion of the maturing phase, all hams are hot-branded with a common brand mark, which is the same for the entire area of production of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut', and with the producer's numerical code. The common brand mark is shown below.



When the whole product or packages of any kind are put on the market, the product must be labelled with the common brand mark and the inscription 'Istarski pršut'/Istrski pršut'.

The inscription 'Istarski pršut'/Istrski pršut' must be clearly legible and indelible, and its characters must be sufficiently large and highlighted through type and colour to stand out more clearly than any other indication.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The production area of the raw material for 'Istarski pršut'/Istrski pršut' is limited to the production area of the product and the following Croatian counties: Primorje-Gorski Kotar (only the mainland), Karlovac, Sisak-Moslavina, Zagreb, Bjelovar-Bilogora, Koprivnica-Križevci, Međimurje, Virovitica-Podravina, Požega-Slavonia, Slavonski Brod-Posavina, Osijek-Baranja and Vukovar-Syrmia.

The production area of 'Istarski pršut'/Istrski pršut' comprises part of the Istrian Peninsula without the islands.

The boundary of the geographical area of production of 'Istarski pršut'/Istrski pršut' begins at Stupova Cove, at the boundary between the counties of Istria and Primorje-Gorski Kotar, and continues northwards along that boundary up to the border with the Republic of Slovenia.

The boundary then runs westwards, entering the territory of the Republic of Slovenia, passing south of Ravni Kot, turning north-westwards over Vincarija, before reaching as far south as Glavičorka where it turns briefly westwards and then north-westwards again to Lipica, reaching Mala Vrata. Here the boundary turns westward to Jelovščina, then to the south-west as far as Blažinov Vrh, where it sharply turns westward, passing to the north of Stružnjak and Gnoj in before turning to the south-west and reaching the Jelovice-Podgorje road. It then follows that road north-westwards through Podgorje, past Praproče and Črnotiče to the south. It continues to follow the road to the north of Kastelec, turning towards the Slovenian/Italian border before Sočerb.

The boundary then traces the border westwards, reaching the coast at San Bartolomeo, and then follows the coast to the south-east to the point of origin at Stupova Cove.

5. Link with the geographical area

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area

The climate of the Istrian peninsula is mainly Mediterranean, gradually changing further inland into a continental climate, with both climates being characterised by frequent winds, which in the winter blow from the north and east. These types of winter winds are conducive to the production of ham, which begins at precisely that time of year (salting and drying). The bora, a strong north-easterly wind which blows from the mainland towards the sea from the direction of Mt Učka, is particularly favourable. It makes it possible to dry 'Istarski pršut'/Istrski pršut' by using air only, without any smoke, which has a considerable impact on its quality and uniqueness in relation to other cured hams.

The famous and distinctive taste of 'Istarski pršut'/Istrski pršut' stems not only from the climate, but also from the experience and skill of many generations of Istrian farmers.

Traditionally, the pigs were raised for more than one year and fed with various feedstuffs that were available on the farm at different times of the year: clover and alfalfa, pumpkins, cabbages, fodder beet, whey, boiled potatoes, etc. One of the particularities of the long-standing Istrian method is the composition of the dry brine prepared from salt and one or more spices (black pepper, garlic, laurel, rosemary). Another particularity is the way the hind leg is separated from the half carcass and the way the ham is shaped and prepared. For instance, the traditional and quite unique way of trimming hams has been preserved from the time when rural households needed to melt as much adipose tissue as possible into fat and preserve it for later use. Therefore, according to the traditional recipe, in the first stage of preparation of 'Istarski pršut'/Istrski pršut', all the skin and subcutaneous fat is removed from the fresh ham, which is rare, in fact almost unique, compared to the way that cured ham is produced in other areas. Another peculiarity in the trimming process is that the pelvic bones are not removed, which means that more meat remains on the ham, making it bigger.

The art of ham production in Istria dates back several centuries, over which the traditional methods of production have been improved. So far the earliest record from Istria which explicitly mentions the cured ham dates back to 1580, when in the Glagolitic records of Roč municipality it was documented that the foods ordered for the prefect's wedding ceremony included cured ham (Dražen Vlahov: *'Knjiga računa općine Roč'* (1566–1628), State Archive in Pazin, Pazin, 2009, pp. 102–103). Also in Roč, but a few years later, in 1594, cured ham was ordered and served for lunch to the Rašpor captain (the governor of the Venetian part of northern Istria) and his entourage, to celebrate St. Marina's day (ibid., pp. 110–111). One record from 1612 states that 'four hundred Uskoks crossed Učka ... The Uskoks stole a lot of cattle and large quantities of cheese, cured ham, wine and other foods' (Miroslav Bertoša: *'Istra: doba Venecije'*, Zavičajna naklada Žakan Juri, Pula, 1995, p. 318). One document from 1810 states that the most expensive meat of all was salted pork – ham and bacon (Nevio Šettó: *'Napoleon u Istri'*, IKK Grozd, Pula, 1989, pp. 54, 100, 112, 116, 139, 141).

The tradition of producing 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' at farms in the towns of Manžan, Nova Vas and Bertoki is described by Stanislav Renčelj in his book *'Suhe mesnine narodne posebnosti'* (Kmečki glas, Ljubljana, 1990, pp. 169, 209, 211).

5.2. Specificity of the product

The specificity of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' is mainly due to three factors: the raw material, the production technology based on tradition and the product's organoleptic properties.

The specific characteristics of the raw material are the result of controlled rearing of pigs from pure breeds which are fed according to special requirements in an extended fattening phase until their average weight exceeds 160 kg. The pigs must be heavy at the time of slaughter in order to obtain heavy fresh hams, which lose a considerable amount of water in the drying and maturing stages due to the particularities of the production process.

In the traditional production method, hams have to be trimmed so as to keep the pelvic bones (os ilium, os pubis and os ischii), which is not common in the production of cured ham in other regions. Specifically, after hams have been trimmed and rounded off, the femur head (caput femoris – the end of the femur) is hidden, while in other types of cured ham it can be seen well from the inner, medial side and is one of their main visual features. In 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' this head is hidden because it is inside the pelvic bone (acetabulum).

The removal of the skin and the subcutaneous fat from the entire surface, i.e. right down to the meat, is also a highly unusual technique for trimming the ham. The trimmed hams are dry-brined with sea salt plus pepper, garlic, laurel and rosemary. The addition of so many spices during salting is yet another distinguishing feature of the production of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut'. The removal of the skin not only causes slightly more drying (weight loss) than is the case with other hams, but also produces one more distinguishing feature, which is the growth of mould on the external surface of the ham.

The specific organoleptic properties of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' can be seen first of all in its external appearance, since it has no skin or subcutaneous fat, contains the pelvic bones, which give it an unusually elongated shape, and often has accumulations of mould of various sizes on the surface.

The final product is characterized by a particular aroma, a mild, slightly salty taste, a uniform pink-red colour and a desirable consistency of the muscle tissue. It contains no additives because it is produced in the traditional way.

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 link between 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' and the area of Istria can be attributed to the existence of favourable natural conditions: there are no extremely low temperatures in winter, when the air is cooled and dried by frequent winds which provide ideal conditions for the natural drying of ham. An initial low temperature and a gradual decrease in relative humidity ensure a regular process of drying for the hams. For that reason, the phase of salting hams (the initial phase of production) may take place only in the period from 15 October to 20 March. This is one of the mainstays of the traditional method of production.

These climatic conditions provide an ideal environment for the production of traditional 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' that is only air-dried, without the use of smoke, thereby significantly influencing its quality and specificity compared to other cured hams.

The characteristic features of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' also stem from the cultural heritage of Istrian rural communities, i.e. from the experience and skills of many generations of Istrian farmers. They traditionally produced cured hams using only very heavy pigs (weighing over 160 kg), which were fed with clover, alfalfa, pumpkins, cabbages, fodder beet, whey, boiled potatoes, etc.

The way of trimming hams for producing 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' has remained unchanged ever since rural households needed to obtain as much lard as possible and preserve it for later use. Therefore, according to the traditional recipe, in the first stage of preparation of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut', all skin and subcutaneous fat is removed from the fresh ham, leaving the bare meat; this is rare, in fact almost unique, compared to the way that cured ham is produced in other areas where hams are generally dried with the skin on. Another feature of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' is the traditional trimming of hams so as to keep the pelvic bones, which means that the hams are always somewhat larger and heavier than cured hams produced in other regions.

The drying of the hams without the skin and the subcutaneous fat, which means that the whole surface of the muscle tissue is directly exposed to the air and that the surface becomes covered with mould during the maturing phase, certainly makes the ripening process slightly different and subsequently produces the distinctive organoleptic properties of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut'.

The specificity of the aroma and taste of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' is also the result of the various spices that are added to the dry brine. The spices have a great influence on the aroma of 'Istarski pršut'/'Istrski pršut' because, unlike other types of cured ham, the entire surface of the ham is in contact with the spices, which means that their flavour can penetrate more easily and more deeply into all parts of the ham.

Reference to publication of the specification

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

<http://www.mps.hr/UserDocsImages/HRANA/ISTARSKI%20PRSUT/Izmijenjena%20Specifikacija%20proizvoda%20Istarski%20pršut-Istrski%20pršut.pdf>

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⁽³⁾ See footnote 2.

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