

# Official Journal of the European Union

# C 481



English edition

## Information and Notices

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<sup>(1)</sup> Text with EEA relevance.

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## IV

*(Notices)*

## NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

## COUNCIL

## COUNCIL DECISION

of 25 October 2022

**appointing members and alternate members of the Advisory Committee on Freedom of Movement for Workers for Denmark, Germany, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta and Portugal**

(2022/C 481/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on freedom of movement for workers within the Union <sup>(1)</sup>, and in particular Articles 23 and 24 thereof,

Having regard to the lists of candidates submitted to the Council by the Governments of Denmark, Germany, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta and Portugal,

Whereas:

- (1) By means of its Decision of 20 September 2022 <sup>(2)</sup>, the Council appointed the members and alternate members of the Advisory Committee on Freedom of Movement for Workers for the period from 25 September 2022 to 24 September 2024.
- (2) The governments of Denmark, Germany, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta and Portugal have submitted lists of nominations for several posts to be filled,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

*Article 1*

The following are hereby appointed as members and alternate members of the Advisory Committee on Freedom of Movement for Workers for the period ending on 24 September 2024:

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 141, 27.5.2011, p. 1.<sup>(2)</sup> Council Decision of 20 September 2022 appointing the members and alternate members of the Advisory Committee on Freedom of Movement for Workers (not yet published in the Official Journal)

## I. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

| Country    | Members                                         | Alternates             |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Denmark    | Mr Stig HANSEN NØRGAARD<br>Ms Rikke MARK SEERUP | Ms Lone HENRIKSEN      |
| Germany    | Mr Friedemann BENDER<br>Mr Oliver MAOR          | Ms Dagmar HILPERT      |
| Greece     | Mr Georgios NERANTZIS<br>Ms Angeliki LINTZOU    | Ms Angeliki TZORTZAKI  |
| Croatia    | Mr Petar STRIŽAK<br>Ms Martina ŠPUNDAK          | Ms Iva MUSIĆ OREŠKOVIĆ |
| Italy      | Mr Daniele LUNETTA                              |                        |
| Cyprus     | Mr Prodromos PRODROMOU<br>Mr Antonis KAFOUROS   | Ms Alexia TSAOUSI      |
| Luxembourg | Ms Patrice FURLANI<br>Mr Tom MEYER              | Mr Armin SKROZIC       |
| Portugal   | Ms Ana Margarida SILVA<br>Ms Helena BENTES      |                        |

## II. TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES

| Country | Members                                          | Alternates                 |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Denmark | Ms Lotte DICKOW SCHMIDT<br>Ms Christina BORRIES  | Ms Käthe MUNK RYOM         |
| Germany | Ms Alexandra KRAMER<br>Mr Nicolas ENGELBARTS     | Ms Maria DIMCHEVA          |
| Greece  | Ms Stavroula DIMITRIADOU<br>Mr Vasilios MANTAZIS | Ms Vaso KRATIMENOU         |
| Croatia | Ms Vesna MAMIĆ<br>Ms Ana KRANJAC JULARIĆ         | Ms Ivana ŠEPAK ROBIĆ       |
| Italy   | Mr Andrea MALPASSI<br>Mr Michele BERTI           | Ms Ilaria Arianna FONTANIN |
| Cyprus  | Ms Marina STAVRINO KOUKOU<br>Mr Christos KARYDIS | Mr Stelios CHRISTODOULOU   |

| Country  | Members                                                          | Alternates                                  |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Malta    |                                                                  | Ms Isabella FARRUGIA                        |
| Portugal | Mr José Manuel DA LUZ CORDEIRO<br>Mr Fernando José MACHADO GOMES | Ms Ana Elisabete MARTINS CLEMENTE<br>BORGES |

### III. EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTATIVES

| Country    | Members                                              | Alternates                                    |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Denmark    | Ms Maja KLUGER DIONIGI<br>Ms Trine Birgitte HOUGAARD | Ms Birgitte NYMARK                            |
| Germany    | Ms Noora NEUMAYER<br>Mr Nicolas KELLER               | Ms Teresa HORNUNG                             |
| Croatia    | Ms Nuša ŽUNEC<br>Mr Dario ĆORIĆ                      | Ms Mirela GUDAN                               |
| Italy      | Ms Paola ASTORRI<br>Mr Paolo BALDAZZI                | Mr Fabio ANTONILLI                            |
| Cyprus     | Mr Giorgos HADJIKALLIS<br>Mr Emilios MICHAEL         | Mr Andreas ALEXI                              |
| Luxembourg | Mr Philippe HECK<br>Mr Raymond HORPER                | Ms Cristelle BRETNACHER-CERVELLATI            |
| Portugal   | Ms Cristina NAGY MORAIS<br>Mr Nuno BERNARDO          | Mr Afonso Manuel ALVES E PINHO DE<br>CARVALHO |

#### *Article 2*

The members and alternate members not yet nominated will be appointed by the Council at a later date.

#### *Article 3*

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at Luxembourg, 25 October 2022.

*For the Council*

*The President*

J. SÍKELA

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

### Euro exchange rates <sup>(1)</sup>

**16 December 2022**

(2022/C 481/02)

#### 1 euro =

| Currency |                   | Exchange rate | Currency |                       | Exchange rate |
|----------|-------------------|---------------|----------|-----------------------|---------------|
| USD      | US dollar         | 1,0619        | CAD      | Canadian dollar       | 1,4506        |
| JPY      | Japanese yen      | 145,53        | HKD      | Hong Kong dollar      | 8,2632        |
| DKK      | Danish krone      | 7,4379        | NZD      | New Zealand dollar    | 1,6687        |
| GBP      | Pound sterling    | 0,87233       | SGD      | Singapore dollar      | 1,4413        |
| SEK      | Swedish krona     | 11,0153       | KRW      | South Korean won      | 1 389,70      |
| CHF      | Swiss franc       | 0,9879        | ZAR      | South African rand    | 18,6708       |
| ISK      | Iceland króna     | 150,10        | CNY      | Chinese yuan renminbi | 7,4037        |
| NOK      | Norwegian krone   | 10,4833       | HRK      | Croatian kuna         | 7,5385        |
| BGN      | Bulgarian lev     | 1,9558        | IDR      | Indonesian rupiah     | 16 575,47     |
| CZK      | Czech koruna      | 24,262        | MYR      | Malaysian ringgit     | 4,6984        |
| HUF      | Hungarian forint  | 407,10        | PHP      | Philippine peso       | 58,967        |
| PLN      | Polish zloty      | 4,6925        | RUB      | Russian rouble        |               |
| RON      | Romanian leu      | 4,9213        | THB      | Thai baht             | 37,145        |
| TRY      | Turkish lira      | 19,8039       | BRL      | Brazilian real        | 5,6233        |
| AUD      | Australian dollar | 1,5866        | MXN      | Mexican peso          | 21,0634       |
|          |                   |               | INR      | Indian rupee          | 87,8240       |

<sup>(1)</sup> 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 M.10987 – BAIN CAPITAL / CAVERION)**

**Candidate case for simplified procedure**

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2022/C 481/03)

1. On 9 December 2022, the Commission received notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 <sup>(1)</sup>.

This notification concerns the following undertakings:

- Bain Capital Investors, LLC ('Bain Capital', USA),
- Caverion Corporation ('Caverion', Finland).

Bain Capital will acquire within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation sole control of the whole of Caverion.

The concentration is accomplished by way of public bid.

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are the following:

- Bain Capital is a private equity investment firm that invests, through its family of funds, in companies across a number of industries, including information technology, healthcare, retail and consumer products, communications, financial services and industrial/manufacturing,
- Caverion is a public limited liability company incorporated under the laws of Finland. Caverion operates in building technology and industrial processes installation and maintenance, notably in heating, electricity, energy, ventilation, cooling, building automation and building security technical disciplines. In addition, Caverion provides maintenance services for industrial manufacturing processes such as hydropower, pulp & paper manufacturing and chemical processes.

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 <sup>(2)</sup> it should be noted that this case is a candidate for treatment under the procedure set out in the Notice.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1 (the 'Merger Regulation').

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 366, 14.12.2013, p. 5.

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. The following reference should always be specified:

M.10987 – BAIN CAPITAL / CAVERION

Observations can be sent to the Commission by email, by fax, or by post. Please use the contact details below:

Email: [COMP-MERGER-REGISTRY@ec.europa.eu](mailto:COMP-MERGER-REGISTRY@ec.europa.eu)

Fax +32 22964301

Postal address:

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

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**Prior notification of a concentration**  
**(Case M.10919 – APOLLO / ATLAS AIR WORLDWIDE HOLDINGS)**  
**Candidate case for simplified procedure**

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2022/C 481/04)

1. On 9 December 2022, the Commission received notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 <sup>(1)</sup>.

This notification concerns the following undertakings:

- Apollo Management, L.P. ('Apollo', United States),
- Atlas Air Worldwide Holdings, Inc. ('Atlas Air', United States).

Apollo will acquire within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation sole control of the whole of Atlas Air.

The concentration is accomplished by way of purchase of shares.

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are the following:

- Apollo is a global asset manager active in portfolio investments,
- Atlas Air provides outsourced aircraft and aviation operating services, mostly for cargo, and to a more limited extent, for passengers, and is active in Africa, Asia, Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, North America and South America.

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 <sup>(2)</sup> 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. The following reference should always be specified:

M.10919 – APOLLO / ATLAS AIR WORLDWIDE HOLDINGS

Observations can be sent to the Commission by email, by fax, or by post. Please use the contact details below:

Email: COMP-MERGER-REGISTRY@ec.europa.eu

Fax +32 22964301

Postal address:

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

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1 (the 'Merger Regulation').

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 366, 14.12.2013, p. 5.

## OTHER ACTS

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Publication of an application for registration of a name 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**

(2022/C 481/05)

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 <sup>(1)</sup> within three months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**‘Rökt Vättersik’**

**EU No: PDO-SE-02591 – 7.11.2019**

**PDO (x) PGI ( )**

**1. Name(s) [of PDO or PGI]**

‘Rökt Vättersik’

**2. Member State or Third Country**

Sweden

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

**3.1. Type of product**

Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom

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

‘Rökt Vättersik’ is a whitefish (*Coregonus* spp.) from Lake Vättern that is smoked in a smokehouse.

‘Rökt Vättersik’ is sold unpackaged or vacuum-packed for added shelf life.

It has the following characteristics:

Size: Usually between 0,3 and 0,6 kg, but larger specimens are possible.

Fat: 0,5-2,5 %. The fat content varies according to the catch site.

Outer colour: From dark nougat with a violet tinge (back) and dark cafe latte with a brassy tinge (belly) to a light brassy sheen.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

Meat colour: Varied light and darker shades of caput mortuum with a tinge of nougat.

Consistency: The fish meat has a distinctly cooked feel, and is pleasantly firm to the bite.

Flavour: Deep salty flavour and a distinct smoky taste, with a slight sweet-sour note of tar.

Aroma: A deep, distinct aroma of smoke.

### 3.3. **Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)**

The whitefish mainly feed on glacial relict small crustaceans (*Mysis sp.*, *Pallasea sp.* and *Pontoporeia sp.*), fish roe, gastropods, mussels, crustaceans and small fish naturally present in Lake Vättern.

Whitefish (*Coregonus ssp.*) from Lake Vättern, known as 'Vättersik'.

### 3.4. **Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area**

All steps in production, from catching the fish, naturally present in Lake Vättern, to producing 'Rökt Vättersik' by then smoking the fish, must take place in the geographical area described in (4).

### 3.5. **Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to**

—

### 3.6. **Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to**

—

## 4. **Concise definition of the geographical area**

The production area of 'Rökt Vättersik' consists of Lake Vättern and the surrounding land within a radius of 10 km of the waterline at normal water levels.

## 5. **Link with the geographical area**

The link between the geographical area and the characteristics of 'Rökt Vättersik' are based on both the natural conditions in the geographical area and on human factors.

### *Description of the natural factors relevant to the link*

Lake Vättern, the fifth-largest lake in Europe, was separated from what is now the Baltic Sea around 8 000 years ago. Today the surface of the lake is 88,5 m above the level of the Baltic Sea.

Isolation from other water systems meant that the whitefish (*Coregonus ssp.*) population of Lake Vättern developed separately from other whitefish populations and is now genetically distinct from other whitefish populations.

Lake Vättern is a typical nutrient-poor coldwater lake (average water temperature is around 10 °C) with clear water (water transparency is around 15 m) and slow water exchange (around 60 years).

The cold water provides a good habitat for typical coldwater species, such as the Lake Vättern whitefish, and for the glacial relict crustaceans that constitute its main source of food.

As a result of the cold, nutrient-poor water of Lake Vättern, the whitefish in Lake Vättern are leaner (fat content 0,5-2,5 %, depending on the time of year and catch site) and smaller in size (usually 0,3-0,6 kg) than whitefish caught in other water systems.

Its low fat content gives 'Rökt Vättersik' distinctly firmer flesh, and a pleasanter firmness to the bite, than other types of smoked fish commonly available on the market. The low fat content also helps make the taste of 'Rökt Vättersik' more subtle and elegant than that of other common types of smoked fish.

*Description of the human factors relevant to the geographical link*

From a historical perspective, the production of 'Rökt Vättersik' has been of great importance for the people living by Lake Vättern. Traditionally fishermen smoked and sold 'Rökt Vättersik' themselves. This tradition still lives on, even if today there are also those who only either fish or smoke whitefish from Lake Vättern.

Fishing and smoking whitefish is a traditional craft based on knowledge of such factors as the behaviour of Lake Vättern whitefish and how to smoke lean fish, gained over the generations and often passed down within families.

The whitefish is present at different points around Lake Vättern and at different depths, depending on factors such as food supply and the time of year. In the period between August and November, the whitefish live in shallow waters at a depth of no more than 30 metres, near spawning sites. From December, the whitefish move in increasingly deep waters, so that by the end of February they are fished for at a depth of 90-120 metres. The food supply is greater in the shallower areas of Lake Vättern in spring, meaning that the whitefish return to the shallower areas of the lake.

When fishing for the whitefish, fishermen must be familiar with its seasonal migration patterns as it searches for food. They select fishing grounds on the lake where the whitefish is most likely to be present at that particular time.

When the whitefish is smoked, the smoking must be adjusted to a number of factors for the product to achieve the characteristics of 'Rökt Vättersik'. The smoking process must be adapted to factors such as the season, climate and air pressure. The fishing grounds and fishing period – the time of the year at which the whitefish is caught – also affect the smoking process, as the fat content of the fish varies.

Knowledge of the special characteristics of each smokehouse – how much smoke the oven produces and how it is distributed within the oven – is also of decisive importance for the characteristics of the finished product.

As each smokehouse has its own special characteristics, smokers follow a smoking procedure adapted to their own smokehouse. Depending on the design of the smokehouse, the whitefish may need to be moved around inside the smokehouse during the smoking process to ensure it is smoked evenly. The development of the smoke inside the smokehouse is controlled by alternate use of dried and soaked or freshly cut wood.

The time required for smoking varies depending on the temperature (usually 70-80 °C) and the development of the smoke in the smokehouse. The smoker decides when the whitefish is ready by checking its texture, smelling the fish and feeling how tight the fins are.

**Reference to publication of the product specification**

[https://www.livsmedelsverket.se/globalassets/foretag-regler-kontroll/livsmedelsinformation-markning-halsopastaenden/skyddade-beteckningar/ansokan\\_vattersik\\_2022\\_07\\_07.pdf](https://www.livsmedelsverket.se/globalassets/foretag-regler-kontroll/livsmedelsinformation-markning-halsopastaenden/skyddade-beteckningar/ansokan_vattersik_2022_07_07.pdf)

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**Publication of an application for registration of a name 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**

(2022/C 481/06)

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.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**‘Αφρίνα / Afrina’**

**EU No: PGI-GR-02822 – 6.12.2021**

**PDO ( ) PGI (X)**

**1. Name(s) [of PDO or PGI]**

‘Αφρίνα / Afrina’

**2. Member State or Third Country**

Greece

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

**3.1. Type of product**

Class 2.6. Salt

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

‘Αφρίνα / Afrina’ is a fleur de sel produced exclusively in the ‘white’ salt marsh of Mesolongi. It is unprocessed sea salt which is additive-free and does not undergo any treatment after harvesting.

‘Αφρίνα / Afrina’ consists of fine, white sodium chloride crystals formed on the briny surface of the crystallising pools under favourable climatic conditions (wind, temperature and sunshine). It is less salty than salt, with a slightly bitter taste due to its high magnesium content and therefore ideal for raw or roasted dishes or even desserts. It is rich in trace elements – metals contained in seawater – and especially magnesium (Mg).

‘Αφρίνα / Afrina’ is collected by hand only and has the organoleptic, physical and chemical characteristics set out in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

**Organoleptic and physical characteristics**

|              |                                                |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Appearance   | White crystals                                 |
| Taste        | Salty                                          |
| Smell        | Odourless                                      |
| Granulometry | > 3 mm 0 %<br>1-3 mm 45-55 %<br>< 1 mm 45-55 % |

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

Table 2

**Chemical composition**

| Chemical parameter        | Content (%) |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Moisture                  | 1,0-5,0     |
| Insoluble in water        | 0,020-0,120 |
| Calcium (in dry matter)   | 0,010-0,300 |
| Magnesium (in dry matter) | 0,060-0,300 |
| Sulphates (in dry matter) | 0,200-1,100 |
| NaCl (in dry matter)      | 97,0-99,5   |

3.3. **Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)**

—

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

The operations that must take place in the geographical area are:

- extraction from the sea;
- circulation of the extracted water in the evaporation ponds;
- supply to the crystallising pools;
- harvesting;
- natural draining of 'Αφρίνα / Afrina'.

3.5. **Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to**

—

3.6. **Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to**

—

4. **Concise definition of the geographical area**

The geographical area in which 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' is produced, according to historical, geographical and anthropological criteria, lies within the municipality of Iera Polis Mesolongiou, in the Aitolokarnania Regional Unit within the Region of Western Greece, and is defined by the geographical limits of the 'white' salt marsh:

- North of the Foinikia marshes
- East-north-east of the old Mesolongi-Aitolikos national road
- West of the Mesolongi lagoon
- South-south-east of the municipal unit of Iera Polis Mesolongiou.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

'Αφρίνα / Afrina' is produced in the Mesolongi lagoon and has acquired an excellent reputation and considerable renown both in Greece and abroad. The product's reputation and characteristics that are due to its geographical origin therefore form the basis of its link with the geographical area.

This reputation is based mainly on its texture and taste, which are determined by the specific microclimate of the Mesolongi salt pans and lagoon and the traditional harvesting by hand, which has remained virtually unchanged over the years.

The Mesolongi salt pans are an ideal production environment, protected under the Ramsar Convention and Natura 2000. The product's reputation is enhanced by the unique nature of the Mesolongi salt pan ecosystem and the fame of the Mesolongi lagoon – Homer's 'very beautiful lake'. Professor Christos Siasos (Agriniculture, 2014) describes Mesolongi as the 'land of white treasure'.

The active surfaces of the salt pans (evaporation ponds and crystallising pools) are clayey as clay is impermeable to water. The seawater condenses in the evaporation ponds and the salt crystallises in the pools. The crystallising pools have an even surface throughout their length and width. This means that even small waves can carry 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' to the edge of the pools where it is then collected.

The production of 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' requires continuous evaporation/concentration of a sufficient quantity of seawater up to the point when the salt content begins to crystallise. Concentration occurs naturally, thanks to solar energy and the prevailing microclimate i.e. the wind speed, temperature and relative humidity. Saline waters require strong winds in addition to sunshine for concentration, especially during the summer period, while there must be no heavy rainfall during the growing season in order for the salt to crystallise.

A thin layer of salt crystals forms on the surface of the crystallising pools, which are large. Westerly winds carry the surface layer of these crystals to the eastern side of the pools where 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' is finally collected.

The human factor is also important, as the traditional harvesting operation, which has remained virtually unchanged over the years, has also helped to create and maintain the product's reputation. Skilled workers collect 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' by hand, using wooden tools, ensuring the uniformity of the finished product thanks to their training and experience. Identifying and separating the product requires experience and skill. This traditional technique is passed down from one generation of salt workers to the next.

Harvesting the surface salt crystals by hand gives the product a high purity with a total absence of sludge (because the crystals do not come into contact with the bottom of the crystallising pool) and a natural white colour. There is therefore no need to wash the product, and this means it has a higher content of inorganic salts, particularly soluble magnesium salts. The magnesium content of 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' therefore exceeds that of other common salts and processed commercial salts, and this gives it a special flavour (slightly bitter, less salty) and makes it ideal for raw or roasted dishes, or even desserts.

'Αφρίνα / Afrina' is the name traditionally used for the fleur de sel produced in the Mesolongi region. The word 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' itself, which comes from the word for 'foam' (αφρός), indicates how the product is made. In his book *Mesolongi* (1925), K. A. Stasinopoulos wrote: 'The naturally-evaporated luxury salt, Afrina, is also produced in the lagoon. Foam is formed by the gentle waves breaking on the shores of the lagoon. The sun's heat condenses the foam and Afrina is formed'.

The product's reputation is confirmed by many historical and bibliographical references.

The first historical references to 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' date back to the beginning of the previous century. In his book *To alas (Salt)* (1906) K. A. Stasinopoulos wrote that 'the best of all naturally-evaporated salts and of all Greek salts in general is Afrina from Mesolongi'. 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' was recognised as being of superior quality and taste and was greatly sought after as a luxury gift (Mesolongi, K. A. Stasinopoulos, 1925).

Its taste and texture have won great praise from experts, for example: In *To alas (Salt)* (1906) K. A. Stasinopoulos wrote: 'the foam is as white as snow and as delicate as ether'. In addition, Professor Christos Siasos (Agriniculture, 2014) mentions the following characteristics: 'The breeze produces flake-like forms around the crystallising pools, before the salt is extracted from the pools. These flakes constitute the fleur de sel called Afrina in this region. Afrina is collected by hand. It is considered to be the best and tastiest salt. It has a distinctive texture, melts in the mouth and produces an explosion of flavours.'

In her award-winning book *Speak the Mesolongi dialect* (1979), which contains around 2000 local words and expressions, the writer Akakia Kordosi from Mesolongi noted: 'Afrina: salt foam'.

In her book 'SALT – Salt in European history and culture' (1997), Theodora Petanidou, professor at the University of the Aegean, writes that 'Afrina is the traditional name in the Mesolongi region for the small amount of salt crystals that form on the briny surface'.

Contemporary references in print and online, on radio and television and in specialised cookery programmes maintain and strengthen the product's special reputation and renown.

'Αφρίνα / Afrina' is used by many well-known chefs. One example is in the dish for which the young chef Nikos Billis won an award at San Pellegrino, where he represented Mediterranean countries (Gastronomos, 2016). Stelios Parliaros, George Calombaris, Sotiris Kontizas, Argyros Barbarigos and others also use 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' in their dishes.

It is worth mentioning that Greece's first Salt Museum was established in 2019 in the Turlida area of Mesolongi, confirming the region's reputation and its close link with salt.

The excellent quality of 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' has been consistently acknowledged in recent years. It is not by chance that it has received two awards at international food and flavour competitions – a silver medal in 2016 at the Olymp Awards Food and Beverage Competition held in Athens and a distinction in 2020 at the Great Taste awards in London. The fact that 'Αφρίνα / Afrina' was chosen as a commemorative gift for leaders at the South EU summit in Athens in 2016 is also of note.

#### **Reference to publication of the specification**

[http://www.minagric.gr/images/stories/docs/agrotis/POP-PGE/2021/prodiagrafes\\_afrina280622.pdf](http://www.minagric.gr/images/stories/docs/agrotis/POP-PGE/2021/prodiagrafes_afrina280622.pdf)

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