



Implementation of the EU optional quality term “mountain product”

Part 1

Guillaume Corradino

Euromontana

Brussels, 10 April 2024



EUROMONTANA

What is Euromontana?



- ▶ European **multisectoral** association for cooperation and development of mountain areas (since 1996)
- ▶ Around 65 members from 16 countries
- ▶ Comprising :
 - regional and local authorities
 - regional development agencies
 - chambers of commerce and industry
 - agriculture organisations
 - environmental organisations
 - research organisations
 - training institutes...



25 years of work on mountain foods:

From research to European legislation to implementation

1999-2000

- First working group
- DG AGRI study
- **EMC Trento on Quality**



2002-2004

- FP5 project **"European Mountain quality food products"**
- Mountain foods are **specific**
- Strong **territorial** impact



2005

- **European Charter for mountain Quality Food products**
- European Parliament
- 69 signatories from 12 countries



2007-2010

- FP6 **EuroMARC**
- Consumers interested in a mountain sign
- Need to strengthen the offer



2010-2012

- EU Policy debate
- Impact assessment
- IPTS study (ISARA-EM-UHI)



2012-2013

- Regulation CE 1151/2012, article 31: an **optional quality term "mountain product"**

2014-2015

- **Delegated act 665/2014**
- **European Mountain Convention on Mountain products** (New CAP – Mountains of Opportunities Project)

2016-2017

- Study on the implementation of the legislation
- **2016 Charter for Mountain Quality Food products**



2018 - 2020

- **2020 Study on the implementation of the legislation**
- MOVING starts

We continue!



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The optional quality terms

► European Commission definition:

Optional quality terms help farmers to market products made in difficult natural conditions, such as mountainous regions or islands, while others are used to promote local farming and direct sales.

**Mountain
product**

**Product of EU's
outermost
regions**

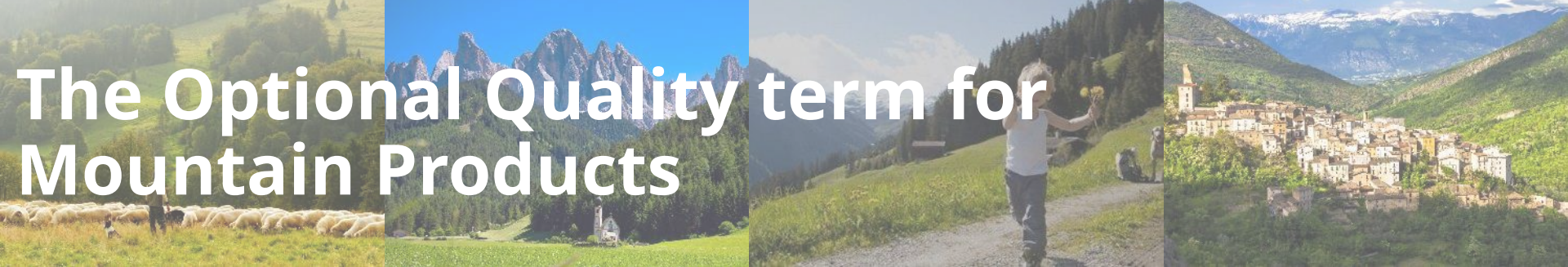


Expected benefits



- ▶ Recognising the social, environmental and touristic value and constraints of mountain areas, and help farmers **market the product better** but also ensures certain characteristics are **clear to the consumer**
- ▶ Alternative for producers who cannot access other quality schemes: easy to use (few criteria, no certification fees)
- ▶ Prevent fraudulent use of “mountain product” with a clear, simple legislation (only criteria is geography).

The Optional Quality term for Mountain Products



► Art.31 Regulation 1151/2012: definition of an optional quality term “Mountain products”:

– **both the raw materials and the feedstuffs for farm animals** come essentially from mountain areas

↳ Products of animal origin:

- 2/3 life in mountain areas
- at least ¼ life in transhumance grazing on pastures in mountain areas

↳ Feedstuffs:

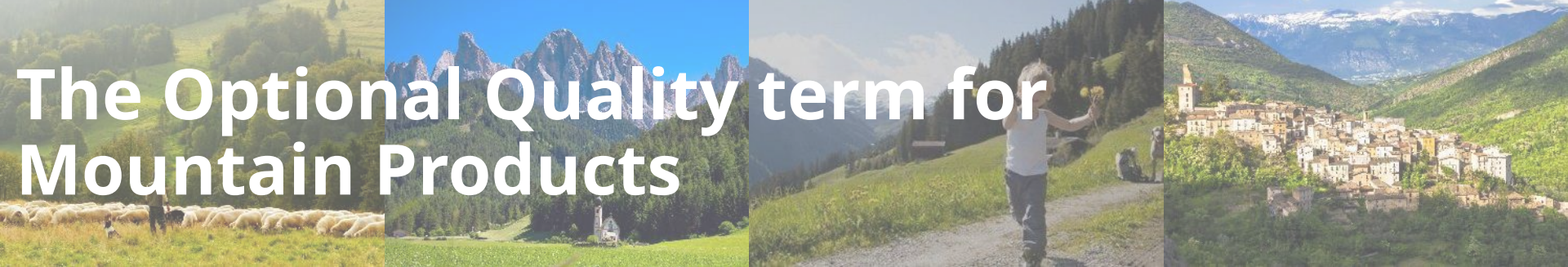
- % of annual animal diet (expressed as a % of dry matter) produced in mountain areas should be 50% for all animals but 60% for ruminants, 25% for pigs

– in the case of processed products, **the processing also takes place in mountain areas**

► Precised in the Delegated Act 665/2014

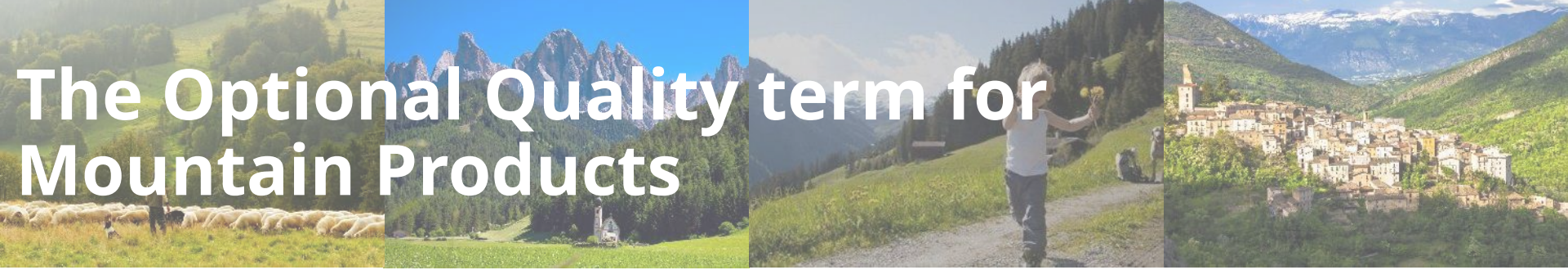


The Optional Quality term for Mountain Products

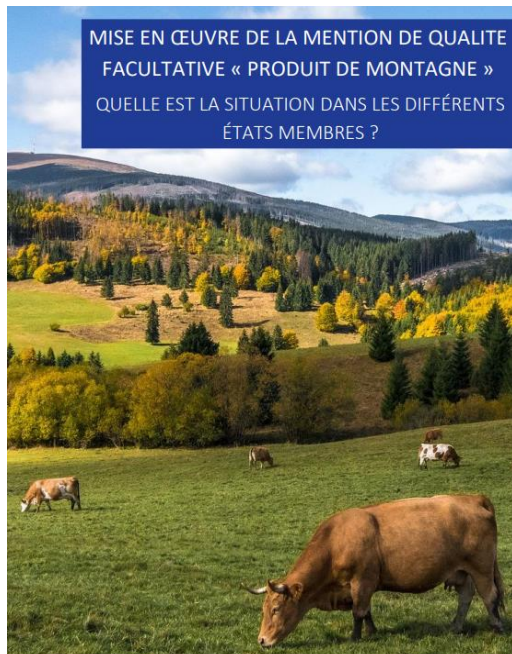


- ▶ **This common framework has to be implemented at national level**
- ▶ **At Member States level, to define:**
 - Derogations for processing outside mountain areas (area of 30 km)
 - Conditions for controls
 - Use of logo
 - (pre) autorisation /notification of farmers
 - Registration (or not) in a database

The Optional Quality term for Mountain Products

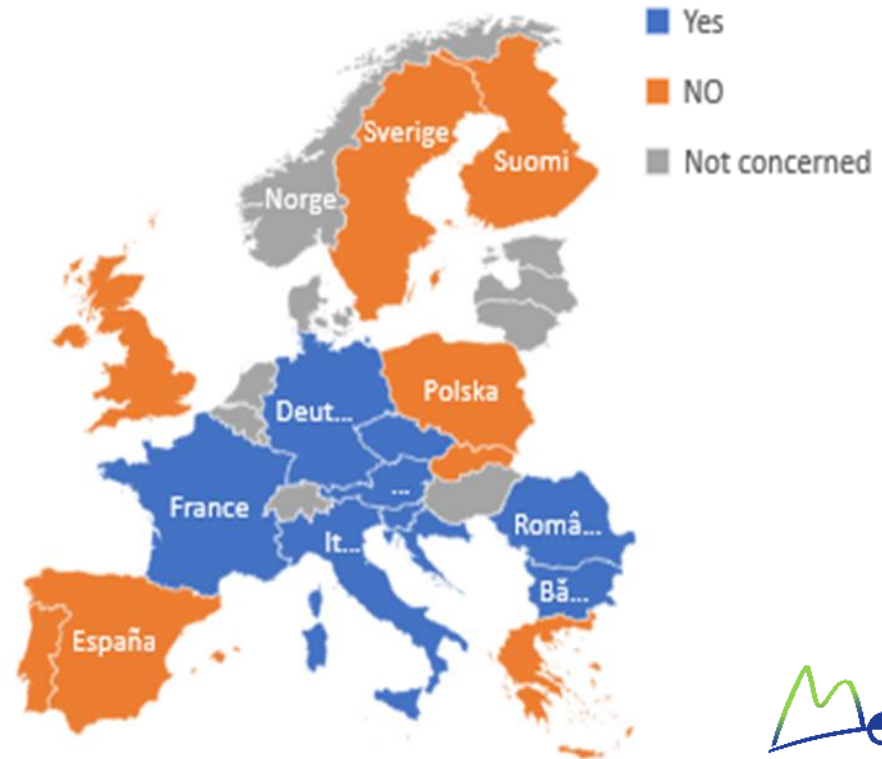


► Implementation of the EU Optional Quality Term “mountain product” (2020)

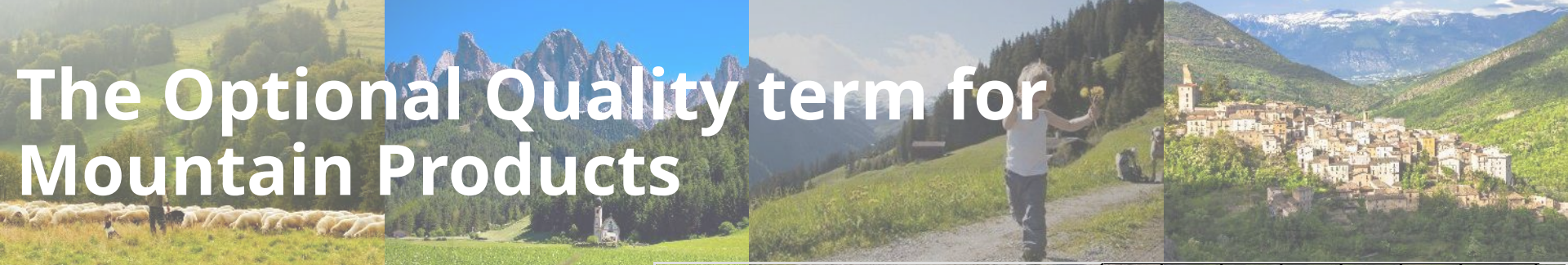


Rapport d'Euromontana
Mai 2020

 **EUROMONTANA**
European association of mountain areas



The Optional Quality term for Mountain Products



► **Very different implementation levels**

	Not adapted into national law	Adapted into national law	Derogation	Pre-authorisation / declaration	Database	National logo	Uptake
Austria	■						
Bulgaria		■	■	■	■	■	25
Croatia		■		■			
Cyprus	■						
Czech Republic		■		■			
Finland	■						
France		■					
Germany		■					
Greece	■						
Italy		■	■	■	■	■	1 186
Poland	■						
Portugal	■						
Romania		■	■	■	■	■	3 777
Slovakia	■						
Slovenia		■		■	■		0
Spain	■						
Sweden	■						



Key conclusions from the 2020 study

- ▶ **Not relevant everywhere and for everyone**
- ▶ **Used both in complementarity with other quality schemes (IT, FR), or alone (RO)**
- ▶ **Communication campaigns to producers and consumers are key drivers of uptake**
- ▶ **No EU-level recognition by consumers, and weak recognition when there is no national logo.**

From quantitative to qualitative assessment



► What is the actual impact of the OQT?

- Have the expected advantages been realised?
- What is the impact on consumer perception and revenues for farmers?
- Is it an incentive to relocate or develop value chains in mountain areas?
(to comply with OQT geographical criteria)
- Does it contribute to the economic resilience of mountain value chains?
- What are the best use cases for the Optional Quality Term ? As standalone quality term or together with other quality terms?

► More data and research needed

- MOVING study (IT / RO)
- World Bank study (RO)



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The future of the Optional Quality Term « mountain product »

► Generally

- We need more data and impact assessments similar to those carried out in Romania and in the MOVING project.
- We need to hear from the producers

► At Member State level

- Generally, more clarity and incentives to foster the use of the OQT.
- A national registry and more support for producers are needed (awareness and information about the scheme and realistic messages on potential benefits)
- A (national?) logo and communication campaign to raise awareness among consumers are key to any meaningful implementation.
- Support cooperation and collective governance among mountain producers.

► At EU level

- Facilitate the promotion of OQT products through the Promotion programme (OQT not clearly listed on website, and promotion programme not adapted to small producers)
- **LONGER TERM** | Reassess the creation of a common EU logo, similar to the one for Outermost Regions, to strengthen the scheme and its recognition (taking into account producers needs)



The future of the Optional Quality Term « mountain product »

► For Euromontana

- Update of the 2020 study with fresh data and qualitative assessment from recent studies.
- Keep working with mountain actors, including producers, to better understand how this OQT is implemented.
- Keep working with AREPO to better understand the interactions between OQT and PDOs/PGIs

A man in a dark blue jacket and black pants is hiking on a grassy mountain trail. He is carrying a young child on his back in a grey and red backpack. The child is wearing a black beanie and a green jacket. They are looking towards the right, where a vast mountain range stretches into the distance under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The foreground is filled with tall, golden-brown grasses.

Thank you !

www.euromontana.org

info@euromontana.org

+32 (0)2 280 42 83

Euromontana
Place du Champ de Mars, 2
1050 Brussels

Let's keep in touch

