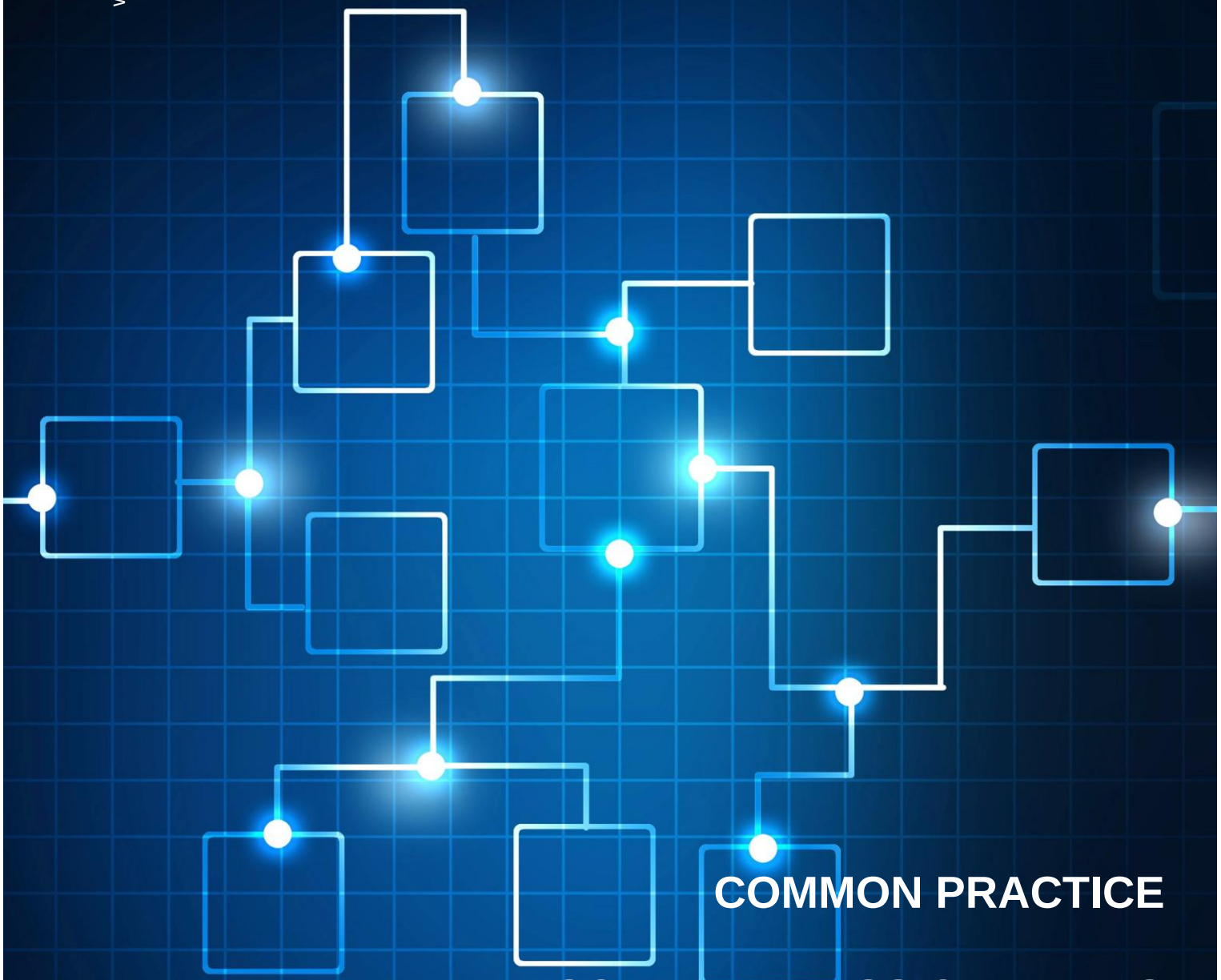
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COMMON PRACTICE

DESCRIPTIVENESS OF MARKS DESIGNATING GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN

NOVEMBER 2026

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objective of this document

This Common Practice establishes a common understanding on how to assess whether a sign may serve, in trade, to designate the geographical origin of the goods or services applied for, and is therefore to be held descriptive in the meaning of Article 4(1)(c) of Directive (EU) 2015/2436 (TMD) and Article 7(1)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 2017/1001 (EUTMR) ([1]). It includes numerous illustrative examples and is meant to serve as a reference for the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property, and Member States' Intellectual Property Offices (MS IPOs) – collectively referred to as IPOs; User Associations (UAs); applicants and their representatives.

It will be made widely available and will be easily accessible, providing a clear and comprehensive explanation of the principles on which the Common Practice is based. The principles of the Common Practice are designed to be generally applied and aim to cover the large majority of cases in which the issue of geographical origin under Article 4(1)(c) TMD may be raised. **Although the assessment of whether a mark designates the geographical origin of the goods or services concerned will always be carried out on a case-by-case basis**, the principles mentioned in this document serve as guidance to ensure that different IPOs approach it in a similar and predictable way.

1.2 Background

IPOs and UAs have been actively cooperating to converge trade mark and design practices since 2011. Through the Convergence Programme (2011-2015), seven areas of trade mark and design practice were harmonised (CP1-CP7). In December 2015, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the EU trade mark reform package ([2]), under which cooperation with the MS IPOs to promote convergence of practices and tools in the fields of trade marks and designs, in particular to establish common practices, became a core task for the EUIPO (Articles 151-152 EUTMR). Consequently, the European Cooperation Projects were launched in 2016 and continued during the EUIPO Strategic Plan 2025. Among them was the Convergence Analysis project (later Convergence Analysis 2.0), which identified areas where convergence in trade mark and design practices would be most beneficial. As a result, eight further Common Practices were developed and implemented widely across the EU (CP8-CP15) ([3]).

Following the approval of the EUIPO Strategic Plan 2030 by the EUIPO Management Board in November 2024, convergence initiatives continued under a new methodology. **CP18** was launched in October 2025, under the title **'Descriptiveness of marks designating geographical origin'**. In the project, representatives from IPOs and UAs worked closely together, via a Virtual Community to develop common principles. These draw upon various sources, in particular: judgments from the Court of Justice (CJ) and General Court, the EUIPO Boards of Appeal (BoA) *Case-law Research Report – descriptiveness of marks designating geographical origin*, the EUIPO Guidelines and the MS IPOs' Guidelines (available in the TMDN IP repository), and national case-law. The result of this collaborative effort is the Common Practice outlined in this document.

1.3 Practice scope

This Common Practice delivers a set of principles on how to assess the descriptiveness of marks designating

([1]) Directive (EU) No 2015/2436 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2015 to approximate the laws of the Member States relating to trade marks (TMD) and Regulation (EU) No 2017/1001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 June 2017 on the European Union trade mark (EUTMR).
([2]) This consisted of the EUTMR and the TMD.
([3]) European Union Intellectual Property Network. 'Common Practices'. [Accessed 10 June 2025]: https://www.euipn.org/en/practices

geographical origin in accordance with Article 4(1)(c) TMD ([4]).

The following topics are **in scope** of the Common Practice.

- agreement on common criteria for the assessment of whether a sign consisting of or containing a geographical term without any additional distinctive element may serve, in trade, to designate the geographical origin of the goods or services, namely the assessment of:
  - **the existence of a geographical term** in the sign,
  - **knowledge of this geographical term** by at least a non-negligible part of the relevant public, and
  - existence of **a current or potential association** between the goods or services concerned and the geographical term in the mind of the relevant public; and
- illustrative examples for the assessment.

The following topics are **out of scope** of the Common Practice:

- descriptiveness of geographical terms under Article 4(1)(c) TMD, in relation to characteristics other than the geographical origin of the goods or services (e.g. quality, intended purpose, subject matter) ([5]);
- assessment of any other absolute ground for refusal under Article 4(1) TMD, in particular, designations of origin and geographical indications in the meaning of Article 4(1)(i) TMD;
- assessment of types of marks other than word marks ([6]);
- distinctiveness acquired through use (Article 4(4) and 4(5) TMD);
- collective marks and guarantee/certification marks (Article 27 TMD);
- assessment of geographical terms under national law not deriving from Article 4(1)(c) TMD, such as labelling regulations or laws safeguarding the origin of goods and services (e.g. rules on the use of 'Made in' indications); and
- procedural aspects.

1.4 Implementation

This Common Practice will take effect on the date specified by each IPO. The implementation date and further details are available in the table below.

List of implementing offices

Implementing offices may choose to publish additional information on their websites.

If there is a discrepancy between the translation of the Common Practice in any of the official languages of the European Union and the English version, the latter will prevail.

([4]) The prohibition in Article 4(1)(c) TMD is the same as the one laid out in Articles 7(1)(c) and 59(1)(a) EUTMR. Accordingly, any reference to Article 4(1)(c) TMD should be understood as also referring to Article 7(1)(c) EUTMR.
([5]) Geographical terms may describe not only geographical origin but also other characteristics of the goods or services, such as their quality or subject matter, under Article 4(1)(c) TMD. This Common Practice focuses only on descriptiveness in relation to geographical origin.
([6]) This Common Practice refers to a few case-law examples concerning figurative marks (e.g. 23/02/2022, T-806/19, Andorra (fig.), EU:T:2022:87; 03/07/2024, T-597/22, Sw Sophienwald (fig.), EU:T:2024:432). For the purposes of this Common Practice, these signs are regarded as word marks.

2 THE COMMON PRACTICE

2.1 General context

In accordance with Article 4(1)(c) TMD, trade marks that consist exclusively of signs or indications that may serve, in trade, to designate, inter alia, the **geographical origin** of the goods or services cannot be registered or, if registered, will be liable to be declared invalid.

Article 4(1)(c) TMD pursues an aim of public interest, namely that descriptive signs may be freely used by all and are not reserved to one undertaking alone as trade marks ([7]).

The assessment of whether a sign may serve, in trade, to designate the geographical origin of the goods or services should be carried out in reference **to the goods or services concerned** and **the perception/understanding of the relevant public** ([8]). This relevant public may consist of the general public and/or the professional public. It is sufficient that this ground of refusal only exists for a non-negligible part of the relevant public.

Geographical origin refers to an **association** between a geographical location and the goods or services concerned, based on the relevant public's perception, as a result of the overall assessment set out in Section 2.2. Geographical origin may be perceived in different ways by the relevant public, depending on the context and on the goods or services concerned.

For goods, depending on the case, their geographical origin may be perceived as:

- the place where the goods are or could be **manufactured** ([9]);
- the place from which the **ingredients** of the goods originate ([10]);
- the place where the goods were **conceived and designed** ([11]);
- the place where the goods were **processed and/or adapted** ([12]).

For services, depending on the case, their geographical origin may be perceived as:

- the place where the services are **carried out** (i.e. place of performance) ([13]); or
- the place from which the services are **supplied** ([14]).

The above lists are **non-exhaustive**.

There is no need to establish whether the geographical term designates the true geographical origin of the goods or services concerned. Only the fact that the relevant public **may perceive** the geographical location as the origin of the goods or services concerned is important ([15]).

([7]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 25.
([8]) 25/10/2005, T-379/03, Cloppenburg, EU:T:2005:373, § 37.
([9]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 36.
([10]) 21/02/2024, T-756/22, AMAZONIAN GIN COMPANY, EU:T:2024:101, § 38-39.
([11]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 36.
([12]) 16/07/2025, T-105/23, Iceland, EU:T:2025:729, § 43, 52.
([13]) 13/06/2024, T-274/23, Acapulco, EU:T:2024:389, § 30, 39.
([14]) 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL, EU:T:2016:422, § 51.
([15]) 15/10/2003, T-295/01, OLDENBURGER, EU:T:2003:267, §43

2.2 Common criteria for the assessment of whether a sign may serve, in trade, to designate the geographical origin of the goods or services

In order to decide if a sign may designate the geographical origin of the goods or services concerned, and is therefore descriptive under Article 4(1)(c) TMD, the following criteria must be assessed.

- Whether the sign **contains a geographical term** without any additional distinctive element.
- Whether the geographical term **is known as the designation of a place** to the relevant public ([16]).
- Whether the geographical term **is currently associated** in the mind of the relevant public with the goods or services concerned, or it is reasonable to assume that **such an association may be established in the foreseeable future** ([17]).

These criteria are **cumulative**.

2.2.1 Does the sign contain a geographical term?

It should be determined whether a sign contains or refers to a geographical term as defined below.

A geographical term is **any name of an existing geographical location**, **which constitutes a specific geographical spot or area**, for example, names of:

- a country ([18]);
- a region, including self-governing administrations (e.g. provinces, states) ([19]);
- an archipelago ([20]);
- a city ([21]);
- a city district/harbour ([22]);
- a lake ([23]);
- a river and/or a waterfall ([24]), including their shores and surroundings ([25]); and
- a mountain or a range of mountains.

This list is **non-exhaustive**.

In addition, a geographical term may take various **forms derived from the name of a geographical location**, such as:

- adjectival forms ([26]);
- shortened forms/abbreviations ([27]);
- historical names, that is, former geographical names which are no longer officially in use ([28]);

([16]) 25/10/2005, T-379/03, Cloppenburg, EU:T:2005:373, § 38.
([17]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 31.
([18]) 16/07/2025, T-105/23, Iceland, EU:T:2025:729; 23/02/2022, T-806/19, Andorra (fig.), EU:T:2022:87.
([19]) 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL, EU:T:2016:422.
([20]) 05/03/2025, T-73/24, EAST INDIES GIN (fig.), EU:T:2025:208.
([21]) 20/11/2018, T-790/17, ST ANDREWS, EU:T:2018:811.
([22]) 17/05/2023, T-656/22, DEUTZER HAFEN, EU:T:2023:254.
([23]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230.
([24]) 27/04/2016, T-89/15, NIAGARA, EU:T:2016:244.
([25]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 34; 27/04/2016, T-89/15, NIAGARA, EU:T:2016:244, §21 and 25.
([26]) 15/10/2003, T-295/01, OLDENBURGER, EU:T:2003:267, § 36, 39; 21/02/2024, T-756/22, AMAZONIAN GIN COMPANY, EU:T:2024:101, § 36-37; 14/09/2022, T-498/21 Black Irish, EU:T:2022:543, § 23.
([27]) 15/01/2015, T-197/13, MONACO, EU:T:2015:16, § 59; 13/06/2024, T-274/23, Acapulco, EU:T:2024:389, § 33.
([28]) 03/07/2024, T-597/22, Sw Sophienwald (fig.), EU:T:2024:432, § 56.

- country codes (e.g. ES for Spain) ([29]);
- nicknames (like ‘Big Apple’ for New York);
- translations into languages other than the language of the relevant public; or
- versions with minimal differences in spelling ([30]).

The fact that a sign may also have **meanings other than a geographical term** does not preclude the application of Article 4(1)(c) TMD ([31]).

However, terms that identify categories or types of places in a general or abstract way without identifying a specific geographical location (such as ‘countryside’ ([32]), ‘old farmhouse’ ([33]), ‘village’ or ‘forest’) are not geographical terms in the meaning of this Common Practice.

2.2.2 Is the geographical term known as the designation of a place to the relevant public?

The CJ has established that Article 4(1)(c) TMD does not, in principle, preclude the registration of geographical terms that are unknown to the relevant public, or at least unknown as the designation of a geographical location ([34]). Therefore, it should also be determined whether the geographical term is known to the relevant public as the designation of a place ([35]).

To determine whether a geographical term is known as the designation of a place, the assessment must take into account the perception of the relevant public identified in relation to the goods and services concerned (see Section 2.1). Depending on the goods and services, this public may consist of the general public, and/or professionals who may be familiar with specific geographical locations due to their expertise in the field of those relevant goods/services ([36]). The relevant consumer is considered to be reasonably well-informed and reasonably observant and circumspect.

A geographical term may only describe the origin of the relevant goods or services if at least a non-negligible part of the relevant public knows that it is a geographical location ([37]).

Example
‘Baile Átha Cliath’ is the Irish name for the city of Dublin, which is the capital of Ireland. Although Dublin is a well-known city in Europe, the relevant public in Slovenia will not recognise the name of the city when written in Irish. When this name is applied for registration as a Slovenian mark, since the geographical term is not understood by the relevant public as designating a geographical location, it cannot be descriptive of geographical origin.

The following indicators may help to assess whether the relevant public knows the geographical term as the designation of the geographical location in question:

([29]) 06/06/2025, R0156/2025-2, IE., § 25, 27.
([30]) 13/09/2013, T-320/10, CASTEL, EU:T:2013:424, § 70 and 74-77.
([31]) 23/10/2003, C-191/01 P, DOUBLEMINT, EU:C:2003:579, § 32; 06/10/2017, T-878/16, KARELIA, EU:T:2017:702, § 37-38; 21/02/2024, T-756/22, AMAZONIAN GIN COMPANY, EU:T:2024:101, § 45.
([32]) 04/09/2024, T-470/23, Hinterland, EU:T:2024:585, § 35 and 37.
([33]) 27/06/2017, T-327/16, ANTICO CASALE, EU:T:2017:439, § 27.
([34]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 33.
([35]) 25/10/2005, T-379/03, Cloppenburg, EU:T:2005:373, § 38.
([36]) 03/07/2024, T-597/22, Sw Sophienwald (fig.), EU:T:2024:432, § 62.
([37]) 25/10/2018, T-122/17, Devin, EU:T:2018:719, § 48.

- the size of the geographical location ([38]);
- the population/number of inhabitants in relation to the size of the geographical location ([39]);
- the proximity of the geographical location to the relevant EU Member State(s) ([40]);
- the economic activity ([41]) or significance of the location in an economic sector ([42]), for example: tourism ([43]), agriculture ([44]), oil, natural gas or timber extraction ([45]), glassmaking ([46]);
- whether major attractions or events are held at the location ([47]), for example: a Formula 1 Grand Prix, a circus festival ([48]), golf tournaments ([49]), shopping ([50]), international trade fairs ([51]);
- whether the location is of historical value ([52]);
- other peculiarities that provide a reason to assume that the relevant public knows the location, for example: the autonomy and specific language regime ([53]) or the administrative status (e.g. capital) ([54]) of a location, the presence of a royal family ([55]), being the setting for numerous films ([56]), inclusion in a popular song/album title ([57]), or its landscape or environment ([58]).

The above list is **non-exhaustive**. Depending on the case, the presence of one or more indicators may suffice to determine whether the relevant public knows the term as the designation of a place.

Example
The **Principality of Monaco** was deemed to be known 'despite its area of about 2 km² and its population of no more than 40 000' due to its attractions, which include famous international sports events, the fame of its royal family, its proximity to EU Member States and its currency ([59]).

Conversely, although certain indicator(s) may be present, they may not necessarily be sufficient to establish that the relevant public knows the place.

Example
'**Roraima**' refers to a Brazilian state located along the border with Venezuela and Guyana. However, despite its size of around 224 000 km², the general public in the EU is unlikely to know Roraima as a specific

([38]) 25/10/2005, T-379/03, Cloppenburg, EU:T:2005:373, § 43 and 46; 23/11/2022, T-701/21, Cassellapark, EU:T:2022:724, § 85; 21/02/2024, T-756/22, AMAZONIAN GIN COMPANY, EU:T:2024:101, § 37.
([39]) 02/06/2021, T-854/19, Montana, EU:T:2021:309, § 91 ; 01/09/2021, R 0834/2021-4, Chocolates benabarre, § 15.
([40]) 15/01/2015, T-197/13, MONACO, EU:T:2015:16, § 52; 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL, EU:T:2016:422, § 40.
([41]) 25/10/2005, T-379/03, Cloppenburg, EU:T:2005:373, § 45.
([42]) 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL, EU:T:2016:422, § 40-41.
([43]) 23/02/2022, T-806/19, Andorra (fig.), EU:T:2022:87, § 65; 13/06/2024, T-274/23, Acapulco, EU:T:2024:389, § 33-34.
([44]) 15/10/2003, T-295/01, Oldenburger, EU:T:2003:267, § 37.
([45]) 08/07/2009, T-226/08, Alaska, EU:T:2009:257, § 23.
([46]) 03/07/2024, T-597/22, Sw Sophienwald (fig.), EU:T:2024:432, § 59.
([47]) 25/10/2005, T-379/03, Cloppenburg, EU:T:2005:373, § 45.
([48]) 15/01/2015, T-197/13, MONACO, EU:T:2015:16, § 52.
([49]) 20/11/2018, T-790/17, ST ANDREWS, EU:T:2018:811, § 29.
([50]) 23/02/2022, T-806/19, Andorra (fig.), EU:T:2022:87, § 66.
([51]) 17/05/2023, T-656/22, DEUTZER HAFEN, EU:T:2023:254, § 33.
([52]) 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL, EU:T:2016:422, § 40; 03/07/2024, T-597/22, Sw Sophienwald (fig.), EU:T:2024:432, § 55 and 59.
([53]) 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL, EU:T:2016:422, § 40.
([54]) 15/10/2003, T-295/01, OLDENBURGER, EU:T:2003:267, § 37.
([55]) 15/01/2015, T-197/13, MONACO, EU:T:2015:16, § 52.
([56]) 13/06/2024, T-274/23, Acapulco, EU:T:2024:389, § 33
([57]) 28/02/2024, T-746/22, COMPTON, EU:T:2024:134, § 66.
([58]) 08/07/2009, T-226/08, Alaska, EU:T:2009:257, § 23; 21/02/2024, T-756/22, AMAZONIAN GIN COMPANY, EU:T:2024:101, § 37.
([59]) 15/01/2015, T-197/13, MONACO, EU:T:2015:16, § 52.

geographical location ([60]), as it is remote, sparsely populated, and seldom mentioned outside geographical or scientific contexts.

If it is established that the geographical term is **not known** as the designation of a place to the relevant public, the sign cannot be considered descriptive of the geographical origin of the goods or services ([61]). Conversely, if knowledge of the geographical term is **established**, the **degree** of familiarity of the relevant public with the geographical term will be a relevant factor in the assessment of whether there is a current or potential association with the goods or services concerned (see Section 2.2.3 below).

2.2.3 Is there a current or potential association between the goods or services concerned and the geographical term in the mind of the relevant public?

Provided that the relevant public knows the geographical term, it should be assessed whether there is a **sufficiently concrete and direct association between the geographical term and the relevant goods or services** to justify that the sign is capable of designating their geographical origin ([62]). The existence of such association should be **assessed in each case**, including when the geographical term refers to **countries, regions or major cities** ([63]).

There are **two possible types of association** capable of describing the geographical origin:

- **current association**, in the mind of the relevant public, between the geographical term and the goods or services concerned; or
- **potential association**, which is the reasonable assumption that an association may be established in the foreseeable future ([64]).

When assessing the existence of a current or potential association, the following factors will be relevant: **the degree of familiarity, among the relevant public, with** ([65]):

- **the geographical term** (i.e. how well the relevant public knows the geographical term) ([66]), for example, the greater or lesser recognition, especially within the relevant economic sector, of the geographical location in question and the relevant public's greater or lesser familiarity with it ([67]);

- **the characteristics of the place** designated by that term (i.e. what the relevant public knows about the place), for example:

([60]) This conclusion reflects the circumstances at the time this Common Practice was drafted. The perception of the relevant public may evolve over time, for example as a result of international events.
([61]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 33; 28/02/2024, T-746/22, COMPTON, EU:T:2024:134, § 75.
([62]) 15/01/2015, T-197/13, MONACO, EU:T:2015:16, § 58; 14/12/2022, T-526/20, Devin, EU:T:2022:816, § 53.
([63]) 02/06/2021, T-854/19, Montana, EU:T:2021:309, § 97.
([64]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 31 and 37.
([65]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 32; 25/10/2005, T-379/03, Cloppenburg, EU:T:2005:373, § 38 and 49.
([66]) See for instance 25/10/2005, T-379/03, Cloppenburg, EU:T:2005:373, § 50 (account is taken of the fact that the relevant public is 'only slightly, or at the very most, moderately, familiar with the town of Cloppenburg').
([67]) See for instance 23/02/2022, T-806/19, Andorra (fig.), EU:T:2022:87, § 47 (in relation to tobacco in Class 34: account is taken of the fact that the relevant public in Spain knows and perceives Andorra as a place where the price of tobacco is lower than in neighbouring countries).

- its natural resources or eco-friendliness ([68]); and/or
- its economic prosperity, skilled workforce, or dynamic economy ([69]); and/or
- the current availability of the goods or services concerned in the geographical location ([70]) – the more established a market of the relevant goods or services is in the relevant location, the higher the likelihood that the relevant public could associate those goods or services with that place; and/or
- whether it has a recognised tradition or positive associations in the relevant sector ([71]).

Only the characteristics that show whether the location could be perceived as the place of origin of the relevant goods or services should be considered.

- **the category of goods or services** concerned ([72]), inter alia:
  - the nature of the goods ([73]) or services concerned, such as whether the services are performed or supplied locally; and/or
  - the customs in the market sector concerned and the habits of consumers ([74]), including to which extent the geographical origin of the goods or services may be relevant ([75]).

    For example: if it is current practice in trade to indicate the geographical origin of the goods or services (in advertising or when offering the goods or services on the market, etc.) ([76]), or if consumers are accustomed to paying particular attention to such origin when assessing characteristics of the goods or services ([77]). This may be important, for instance, for food products ([78]) or for local transportation services.

The above list of examples is **non-exhaustive**.

All circumstances under each of these factors should be considered as part of a **global assessment.** Therefore, whereas there are cases where the presence of only some circumstances may not be sufficient, as such, to establish an association between the geographical term and the category of goods or services concerned, there are other cases where the presence of several factors may support the existence of an association.

([68]) See for instance 27/04/2016, T-89/15, NIAGARA, EU:T:2016:244, § 43 (the fact that 'the first association that springs to mind in connection with the word 'niagara' is water, and this, above all, because of the famous waterfall with the same name' is taken into account). See also 16/07/2025, T-105/23, Iceland, EU:T:2025:729, § 36, 56, 68 for eco-friendliness.
([69]) See for instance 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL, EU:T:2016:422, § 41 (reference is made to key characteristics of the South Tyrol region, namely its prosperity and dynamic economy). See also 16/07/2025, T-105/23, ICELAND, EU:T:2025:729, § 39.
([70]) See for instance 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL, EU:T:2016:422, § 43 (the fact that the services in question are actually offered in the South Tyrol region by various undertakings is found relevant).
([71]) 03/07/2024, T-597/22, Sw Sophienwald (fig.), EU:T:2024:432, § 67.
([72]) See, for instance, 21/02/2024, T-756/22, AMAZONIAN GIN COMPANY, EU:T:2024:101, § 38-39 (account is taken of the fact that consumers may choose a specific gin based on its particular taste/aroma and thus on its ingredients).
([73]) See, for instance, 08/07/2009, T-226/08, Alaska, EU:T:2009:257, § 27 (reference is made to the nature of some of the goods, which are based on fruits which cannot be produced in Alaska).
([74]) The professional public may know the customs of the market sector better than the general public.
([75]) See, for instance, 02/06/2021, T-854/19, Montana, EU:T:2021:309, § 102 (the Court refers to the BoA's findings according to which the location in which furniture is manufactured is usually irrelevant).
([76]) 25/10/2005, T-379/03, Cloppenburg, EU:T:2005:373, § 50-51 (the Court notes that it has not been established that it is current practice in trade to indicate the geographical origin of retail trade services).
([77]) 25/10/2005, T-379/03, Cloppenburg, EU:T:2005:373, § 49.
([78]) For the importance of trade practices and consumer habits in relation to food / agricultural products, see 16/07/2025, T-105/23, Iceland, EU:T:2025:729, § 41 and 46; 15/10/2003, T-295/01, OLDENBURGER, EU:T:2003:267, § 42; and 08/09/2021, R 1787/2020-5, Marbella, § 58-61.

Examples	
MONTANA ([79])	The **presence** in the geographical location (the US state of Montana) of an industrial activity related to the goods or services concerned may not be sufficient, in itself, to establish an association.
SUEDTIROL ([80])	The fact that the same services as those concerned were offered in the region was found relevant, along with other factors such as the region's prosperity and dynamic economy, and the familiarity of the relevant public with these characteristics.

As a result of the overall assessment, it may be found that an association exists in the mind of the relevant public between the geographical term and the goods or services concerned.

The assessment will depend on the type of association (current or potential) examined and on the characteristics of the geographical location concerned, as explained in the sections below.

2.2.3.1 Assessment of the current association

If the geographical location **is already famous or known for the category of goods or services concerned** and therefore is **associated** with those goods or services in the mind of the relevant public, there is a **current association** ([81]).

All the factors described in Section 2.2.3 can be applied in this assessment.

2.2.3.2 Assessment of the potential association

If the relevant public does not already associate the geographical term with the goods or services concerned, it is to be examined whether it **is reasonable to assume that such an association may be established in the foreseeable future** ([82]).

All the relevant factors mentioned in Section 2.2.3 can be taken into account ([83]) since they may help assess if it is reasonable to expect that the relevant public may, in the foreseeable future, perceive the geographical term as being associated with the goods or services, that is, whether such a perception is plausible and credible.

Among the above-mentioned factors, some of them may have **particular relevance for the assessment of the potential association,** and could influence its outcome ([84]):

- **Size** ([85]) **and economic importance of the geographical location in question:** there is generally a correlation between geographical size, the variety of goods and/or services made available in the place concerned, and the corresponding expectations on the part of consumers. This may be particularly the case for geographical locations that benefit from a high level of prosperity and

([79]) See for instance 02/06/2021, T-854/19, MONTANA (in relation to furniture), EU:T:2021:309, § 98-99.
([80]) 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL (in relation to, inter alia, business management, packaging and storage of goods, scientific and technological services, legal services), EU:T:2016:422, § 41, 43.
([81]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 29 and 30.
([82]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 31; 08/07/2009, T-226/08, Alaska, EU:T:2009:257, § 28.
([83]) 04/05/1999, C-108/97 & C-109/97, Chiemsee, EU:C:1999:230, § 32.
([84]) 15/12/2011, T-377/09, PASSIONATELY SWISS, EU:T:2011:753, § 41; 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL, EU:T:2016:422, 20/07/2016, § 44.
([85]) 20/07/2016, T-11/15, SUEDTIROL, EU:T:2016:422, § 44.

economic development and may therefore host a wide range of economic sectors.

- **The nature of the geographical location**: some geographical locations may, by nature, be less likely to be perceived as the geographical origin of goods or services (for instance, a mountain or a lake), whereas others – such as countries or capital cities – may indicate that it is not unlikely for the relevant public to expect the goods and services to originate from that location. In both cases, these indications may be overridden by relevant facts, such as the category of goods or services concerned or the characteristics of the geographical location.

- **The widespread knowledge of the geographical location** among the relevant public **for a wide range of goods or services and its image** may also indicate a potential association ([86]).

In certain circumstances, if a place is already associated with a particular category of goods or services, it might be reasonable to infer that it could also be associated with other goods or services in the same market sector ([87]).

However, the above might not, in themselves, suffice to establish an association with any category of goods or services. Whether the relevant public may expect the goods or services to originate from that place always depends on a **case-by-case assessment of all the relevant factors** and **should not be applied automatically**.

2.3 Examples to illustrate how to assess whether a sign is descriptive of the geographical origin of the goods or services for which protection is sought

If all of the criteria set out in Section 2.2 are fulfilled (i.e. the sign contains a geographical term; the geographical term is known as a place to the relevant public; and there is a current or potential association between the geographical term and the goods or services), the relevant public will perceive the sign as an indicator of the goods and services **geographical** origin (i.e. as **descriptive** of their geographical origin).

This section presents illustrative examples of signs considered descriptive of the geographical origin of the goods or services for which protection is sought, as well as examples of signs not considered descriptive of this origin. These examples aim to provide guidance on the application of the criteria and facilitate the assessment of descriptiveness based on geographical origin. In relation to the invented examples, the outcomes reflect the circumstances and perception of the relevant public at the time this Common Practice was drafted. That perception may evolve over time.

This section does not analyse whether a sign may also be descriptive of other characteristic(s) under Article 4(1)(c) TMD (e.g. kind, quality, intended purpose, subject matter ([88])). Therefore, signs considered descriptive of geographical origin may also be descriptive of other characteristics, and signs considered non-descriptive of geographical origin may still be refused as descriptive of other characteristics or even on other grounds.

The outcome of the assessment of whether a sign is descriptive of the geographical origin of the goods or services may vary from one Member State to another, as it depends on the perception of the relevant public in the territory concerned. With regard to EUTMs, pursuant to Article 7(2) EUTMR, it is sufficient that the ground

([86]) 15/12/2011, T-377/09, PASSIONATELY SWISS, EU:T:2011:753, § 41.
([87]) See the 'OLDENBURGER' example in Section 2.3.1 below, based on the General Court Judgment (15/10/2003, T-295/01, OLDENBURGER, EU:T:2003:267).
([88]) For further guidance on the assessment of 'Signs describing the subject matter of goods and/or services', see CP16.

of refusal under Article 7(1)(c) applies in only part of the European Union.

2.3.1 Examples of signs containing a geographical term that are objectionable under Article 4(1)(c) TMD

Descriptive	
OLDENBURGER **Case number**: T-295/01 **Relevant public** (§ 35): average consumers in Germany (EUTM application) **Goods and services**: Class 29 *(dairy products, meat, fish, poultry, game, etc.)* Class 30 *(ice-cream products, cheese and milk preparations in the form of snacks, etc.)* Class 32 *(non-alcoholic mixed drinks containing milk)*	• **Geographical term**: the term 'OLDENBURGER' is an adjective referring to the German town Oldenburg. Oldenburg is the principal town in the administrative district of Weser-Ems in Niedersachsen (§ 36). The adjectival form is not sufficiently different for the relevant public to perceive the sign as referring to anything other than the geographical term 'Oldenburg' (§ 39). • **Knowledge**: it is well-known in Germany at national level that Oldenburg is the capital of a region that is essentially centred on agriculture, particularly the dairy, livestock and meat-processing industries (§ 37). • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant goods:** ○ **Current association**: account is taken of: ▪ the characteristics of the place: the region surrounding Oldenburg is essentially centred on agriculture, in particular in the dairy, livestock and meat-processing industries (§ 37); ▪ the nature of the goods, which are types of goods produced in that region (§ 38); ▪ the familiarity of the German public with the importance of agriculture in the region (§ 37); ▪ and the customs in the market sector concerned: a large number of agricultural products carry the designation Oldenburger combined with a generic term, or the designation Oldenburg combined with the name of the producer (§ 37). **Conclusion**: the geographical area concerned is known for producing the goods in question; therefore, the relevant public may perceive the term 'OLDENBURGER' as an indication of the geographical origin of the goods (§ 38). ○ **Potential association**: with regard to the goods, such as fish, for which no current association has been established, it was found reasonable to assume that those goods will, in the future, be associated with the term in question in the minds of the relevant public. Even (freshwater) fish are amenable to agricultural breeding and production and may therefore originate from agricultural establishments. Consequently, taking the increasing diversification in the field of agricultural products in Germany into account (in response to consumer tastes and behaviour) the consumer will ascribe the foodstuffs and beverages concerned to the relevant region and not to an individual producer (§ 32, and § 44 of BoA decision cited). **Descriptive of geographical origin: YES**

Descriptive	
BADEN-BADEN **Invented example** **Relevant public:** German	• **Geographical term**: the term 'BADEN-BADEN' refers to a town in Baden-Württemberg, Germany. • **Knowledge**: the German spa town of Baden-Baden has, for centuries, been widely known as a prominent destination for health tourism, luxury leisure and cultural events. It is internationally recognised for its historic thermal baths, its casino and its long-established reputation as a meeting place for the European elite. The term is

general public in the EU (EUTM application)	therefore clearly understood by the relevant public as referring to a geographical location. • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant services:** ○ **Current association**: account is taken of: ▪ the characteristics of the place: the town of Baden-Baden is renowned for its thermal waters and hosts two main public thermal bath complexes as well as numerous private hotels and spas. ▪ the category of services, which are spa services. **Conclusion**: the relevant public will assume that the services concerned are performed and supplied in the spa town of Baden-Baden. ○ **Potential association**: N/A **Descriptive of geographical origin: YES**
Goods and services: Class 44 *(Health spa services)*	

Descriptive	
AMSTERDAM POPPERS ([89])	• **Geographical term**: the term 'AMSTERDAM' refers to the biggest city in the Netherlands in terms of population (§ 44). • **Knowledge**: Amsterdam is the biggest city in the Netherlands in terms of population. The relevant public knows it, inter alia for tolerating the use of drugs and for its 'coffee shops'. The city of Amsterdam can also be associated with its nightlife and pleasure activities (§ 44). Those are well-known facts (§ 45). • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant goods:** ○ **Current association**: N/A ○ **Potential association**: account is taken of: ▪ the characteristics of the place and the familiarity of the relevant public with them: the relevant public knows and associates Amsterdam with an environment of partying and pleasure; ▪ the nature of the goods, which are prone to be used in such environments (§ 49). **Conclusion**: it is reasonable to believe that the relevant public may think that the stimulant goods with aphrodisiac or euphoric properties concerned, in other words, poppers, originate from the city of Amsterdam (§ 49). It is not necessary for the geographical term to be currently associated with the category of goods concerned, but only for it to be reasonable to assume that such an association may be established in the future, which is the case here (§ 50). **Descriptive of geographical origin: YES**
Case number: T-680/21	
Relevant public (§ 35): English- and French-speaking specialised public (EUTM application)	
Goods and services: Class 5 *(poppers, stimulants with aphrodisiac and/or euphoric properties)*	

([89]) The assessment in this example refers only to the term 'AMSTERDAM'. The other verbal element, 'POPPERS' was also found descriptive of the goods in question.

Descriptive	
AMAZONIAN GIN COMPANY ([90])	• **Geographical term**: the term 'AMAZONIAN' is an adjective referring to the Amazon region (§ 36-37), which is a well-defined geographical area (§ 37). The fact that this term has other possible meanings is irrelevant (§ 45). • **Knowledge**: the Amazon region is renowned for being a very large region. It is home to the largest rainforest in the world, which is particularly famous for its rich biodiversity and its enormous agricultural potential (§ 37). • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant goods:** o **Current association**: account is taken of: ▪ the nature of the goods, which are gin or gin-based drinks made mainly from juniper and a wide variety of other botanicals, some of which may originate from the Amazon region. The goods marketed by the applicant are flavoured with sacha inchi, a botanical with Amazonian provenance (§ 38); ▪ the characteristics of the place: the Amazon region is a territory that is well-known for its countless botanical species (§ 39); ▪ consumer habits in relation to the goods concerned: the specific taste of each type of gin is one of the characteristics that might determine the choice made by the consumer (§ 38). Consumers may perceive that botanicals are the ingredients that give each gin its specific character (§ 39). **Conclusion**: the relevant public will establish, 'immediately and without further thought', a connection between the Amazon region and the goods concerned (§ 39). o **Potential association**: N/A **Descriptive of geographical origin: YES**
Case number: T-756/22	
Relevant public (§ 30): English-speaking general public allowed to consume alcoholic beverages (focus on the public of Ireland and Malta) (EUTM application)	
Goods and services: Class 33 *(gin and alcoholic beverages based on gin)*	

Descriptive	
Acapulco	• **Geographical term**: the term 'Acapulco' is the common abbreviation of the name of the Mexican city of Acapulco de Juárez (§ 33). • **Knowledge**: the Mexican city of Acapulco de Juárez has, for decades, been known internationally as a holiday and leisure destination in Mexico and as the setting for a significant number of films (§ 33). The term is therefore clearly understood by the relevant public as referring to a geographical location (§ 34). • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant services:** o **Current association**: account is taken of: ▪ the characteristics of the place, which remains a tourist destination for an international/European clientele (§ 36), and in particular of the availability of wellness services (e.g. spa, massage) in the hotels and resorts of the city (§ 37); ▪ the familiarity of the relevant public with the term 'Acapulco', which may evoke in the minds of consumers a tourist destination combining exoticism and relaxation on the beach with wellness treatments (§ 38);
Case number: T-274/23	
Relevant public (§ 27): general public in the EU (EUTM application)	
Goods and services: Class 41 *(health and wellness training)* Class 44 *(human hygiene and*	

([90]) The assessment in this example refers only to the term 'AMAZONIAN'. The other verbal elements, 'GIN COMPANY' were also found descriptive/non-distinctive for the goods in question.

beauty care; massage; sauna services; services for the provision of sauna facilities; providing bath houses; provision of public bath facilities for personal hygiene)	▪ the category of services concerned: the tie that connects the services concerned, in this case, is the fact that the term 'Acapulco' may convey an image that suggests the characteristics of such services (§ 38). **Conclusion**: the relevant public will 'immediately and without further thought' assume that the services in question are offered in the famous holiday resort of Acapulco, in particular, by hotels and hotel complexes (§ 39). ○ **Potential association**: N/A **Descriptive of geographical origin: YES**

Descriptive	
Sw Sophienwald ([91])	• **Geographical term**: the term 'Sophienwald' corresponds to a geographical area which covers both a locality and a forest area (§ 61) in Bohemia. It is the historical denomination of a geographical area currently known as Žofina Hut'; the specialised public would understand the historical term as referring to the same area (§ 56). • **Knowledge**: the area surrounding the locality of Sophienwald has historical importance in the art of glassmaking, due to the glass and crystal factories which were located there at the beginning of the 19th century (§ 55). Specialised glass sellers know the term 'Sophienwald' and its relation to glassmaking (§ 55). Therefore, the specialised public understands the term as a designation of a place, despite the fact that the place is currently known as Žofina Hut' (§ 56). • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant goods:** ○ **Current association**: account is taken of: ▪ the familiarity of the specialised public with the geographical term: Austrian glassmaking professionals know the term 'Sophienwald' (§ 60); ▪ the characteristics of the place, which is historically known for glassmaking, being home to many glass and crystal factories since the beginning of the 19th century (§ 55, 59). The relevant specialised public is aware of the historical importance of the area in the art of glassmaking (§ 60); ▪ the category of goods: the tie that connects the goods concerned in this case, is the fact that the region of Sophienwald has a tradition, is known and has positive connotations in the field of glassmaking, regardless of whether the goods are actually manufactured in the area (§ 67). The region surrounding the locality of Sophienwald still has positive significance in the field of glassmaking, to this day (§ 69). **Conclusion**: it is likely that a non-negligible part of the relevant public (namely the specialised public) would currently establish an association between the geographical term and the goods in question (§ 67-68). ○ **Potential association**: since the region surrounding the locality of Sophienwald continues to have a positive significance in the field of glassmaking, it is reasonable to believe that the specialised public would
Case number: T-597/22	
Relevant public (§ 44-45): general public and specialised public in Austria (EUTM application)	
Goods and services: Class 14 *(coins other than currency)* Class 21 *(beverage glassware, polishing equipment (fabrics), wine glasses)*	

([91]) The judgment refers to a figurative mark but for the purpose of this Common Practice, the sign is evaluated as a word mark. Furthermore, the assessment in this example is limited to the term 'Sophienwald'. The verbal element 'Sw' was also found to be descriptive/non-distinctive for the goods at issue, as it was considered an acronym referring to the term 'Sophienwald'.

	continue to make such an association with the goods concerned in the future (§ 67, 69). **Descriptive of geographical origin: YES**

Descriptive	
NANGA PARBAT **Invented example** **Relevant public:** general and professional public in the EU (EUTM application) **Goods and services**: Class 39 *(arranging of expeditions)*	• **Geographical term**: the term 'NANGA PARBAT' refers to a mountain located in Pakistan, in the Himalayan mountain range. • **Knowledge**: Nanga Parbat is the ninth-highest peak on Earth, reaching 8 126 metres above sea level. It is notorious for its extreme difficulty and danger, which earned it the nickname 'killer mountain'. The mountain is often mentioned in EU and worldwide media due to its popularity among climbers, its technical challenges, and the numerous tragedies that have happened on its slopes, such as the mountaineering disasters of 1934 and 1937 involving German expeditions, the terrorist attack of 2013, or the death of a Polish climber in 2018 along with the spectacular rescue of his French partner. Therefore, it can be considered that the term 'NANGA PARBAT' is known to at least a non-negligible part of the relevant public (e.g. the general and professional public, consisting of people that may have a (professional) interest in climbing and mountains) in the EU as the designation of a place. • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant services:** ○ **Current association**: account is taken of: ▪ the characteristics of the place: Nanga Parbat is known as a highly difficult mountain for very experienced climbers. It is therefore known (infamous even, due to the number of lives it has claimed) for hosting difficult mountaineering expeditions; ▪ the nature of the services, which could include the arranging of mountaineering expeditions. **Conclusion**: the relevant public will assume that the relevant services are arranged by undertakings located in the Nanga Parbat region (e.g. arranging of sherpa services in the area) or in relation to trekking expeditions to Nanga Parbat. ○ **Potential association**: N/A **Descriptive of geographical origin: YES**

Descriptive	
Segovia **Invented example** **Relevant public**: general public in Spain (national application)	• **Geographical term**: the term 'Segovia' refers to a Spanish city, which is a provincial capital in the Autonomous Community of Castile and León. • **Knowledge:** Segovia is a well-known city in Spain, recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its Roman aqueduct, cathedral, and Alcázar castle. It is a tourist destination frequently promoted in tourism guides and cultural and travel media in Spain and across Europe. It is also famous for its gastronomy, particularly *cochinillo* and other regional dishes. Therefore, the relevant public knows the term 'Segovia' as the designation of a geographical location. • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant services:**

Goods and services: Class 43 *(restaurant services)*	○ **Current association**: account is taken of: ▪ the high degree of familiarity of the relevant public with the geographical term; ▪ the characteristics of the place, in particular, the recognition of the city due to its local gastronomy and restaurants, the existence there of numerous restaurants and the fact that it is visited by thousands of tourists; ▪ the nature of the services: restaurant services. **Conclusion**: the relevant public will associate the term 'Segovia' with the place where the services are provided or where they originate from. ○ **Potential association**: N/A **Descriptive of geographical origin: YES**

Descriptive	
ANTALYA **Invented example** **Relevant public**: general public in the EU (EUTM application)	• **Geographical term**: the term 'ANTALYA' refers to a coastal city in Turkey. • **Knowledge:** the city of Antalya is well-known to the general public in the EU. It is one of the world's most visited cities, attracting around 16.5 million international visitors in 2023 and ranking among the top global tourism destinations. As Turkey's recognised 'capital of tourism' on the Mediterranean coast, with major resorts, beaches and historic sites, it is a long-established holiday destination for Europeans. It is also known as a major medical tourism destination, particularly for the popular treatment of hair transplantation. Over the past decade, the city has become one of the key hubs for international patients travelling to Turkey for affordable and high-quality medical care. Consequently, the term 'ANTALYA' is known to at least a non-negligible part of the relevant public in the EU as designating a geographical location.
Goods and services: Class 44 *(hair implantation)*	• **Association between the geographical term and the relevant services:** ○ **Current association**: account is taken of: ▪ the high degree of familiarity of the relevant public with the geographical term; ▪ the characteristics of the place, in particular, the fact that it is a major hub for hair transplantation alongside Istanbul. There is a well-established market for hair transplants in Antalya, resulting in many clinics offering their services in the city. ▪ the nature of the services and consumer habits in this regard: hair transplant services require hands-on surgical expertise only available in specialised clinics, which tend to cluster in well-known hubs like Antalya where experienced practitioners, competitive pricing and high procedure volumes are concentrated. This drives patients to travel to these hubs, making hair transplantation one of the medical treatments most strongly associated with international medical tourism. Consumers in the EU are therefore aware of the fact that it is common to travel to other countries, including Turkey, for such medical procedures. **Conclusion**: the relevant public will assume that the relevant services are supplied and performed in Antalya. ○ **Potential association**: N/A **Descriptive of geographical origin: YES**

2.3.2 *Examples of signs containing a geographical term that are non-objectionable under Article 4(1)(c) TMD*

Non-descriptive	
KOTOR **Invented example** **Relevant public:** general public in the EU (EUTM application) **Goods and services**: Class 27 *(yoga mats)*	• **Geographical term**: the term 'KOTOR' refers to a city on the coast of Montenegro. • **Knowledge**: the fortified city of Kotor is included on UNESCO's World Heritage Site list. It has been a popular tourist destination since the early 2000s and is one of the most visited places in Montenegro. While not in the EU, the city is geographically close to Croatia and Italy. It has historical ties to multiple Member States, having been under Venetian, Habsburg and Napoleonic rule, among others, and later being annexed to Italy during WWII. It can therefore be considered that at least part of the general public in the EU knows the term 'KOTOR' as the designation of a place. • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant goods:** o **Current association (lack of)**: the city of Kotor is not known for yoga, nor is it known for the production of sports mats or equipment. Therefore, the term 'KOTOR' is not currently associated with the relevant goods in the minds of the relevant public. o **Potential association (lack of)**: account is taken of: ▪ the characteristics of the place, which is a small city (approximately 13 000 inhabitants in the inner city and 22 000 in the wider municipality), whose main economic activity relates to tourism, real estate and retail: there is no significant manufacturing activity in Kotor; ▪ the familiarity of the relevant public with the term 'KOTOR', mainly due to its status as a tourist destination, however, it is unlikely that the relevant public in the EU would be aware of a residual sports mat production activity in Kotor, even if it existed; ▪ customs in the market sector and consumer habits in relation to the category of goods concerned, specifically: it is not common in trade to identify the geographical origin of sports equipment such as mats, and consumers are not in the habit of selecting this type of equipment based on its geographical origin. **Conclusion**: it is not reasonable to believe that the relevant public would associate the term 'KOTOR' with the relevant goods in the future. **Descriptive of geographical origin: NO**

Non-descriptive	
BAKU **Invented example** **Relevant public:** general public in the EU (EUTM application)	• **Geographical term**: the term 'BAKU' refers to the capital and largest city of Azerbaijan. • **Knowledge**: Baku is the capital city of Azerbaijan, located on the western coast of the Caspian Sea. It is widely recognised for its unique blend of modern architecture and cultural heritage (e.g. the UNESCO-listed Old City (Icherisheher), Maiden Tower, and Shirvanshahs' Palace), for its futuristic skyline, featuring landmarks such as the Flame Towers, and for hosting major international events like the Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix and the Eurovision Song Contest. Its strategic position as a cultural and economic hub in the Caucasus region, along with its oil-rich history, makes it known among the relevant public in the EU.

Goods and services: Class 33 *(sake)*	• **Association between the geographical term and the relevant goods:** ○ **Current association (lack of)**: while Baku is known for its cultural heritage, its industry, and strategic position on the Caspian Sea, it is not known for sake, for which Japan is. Therefore, the term 'BAKU' is not currently associated with the relevant goods in the minds of the relevant public. ○ **Potential association (lack of)**: account is taken of: ▪ the characteristics of the place, in particular its economy: although Baku is a large city with a broad production capacity, its industry revolves primarily around oil and gas extraction, steelmaking, and shipbuilding. Azerbaijan does produce alcohol such as beer and wine but does not host sake production or transformation activities. ▪ the category of goods concerned and consumer habits: in contrast to alcoholic beverages such as beer or wine, which are commonly produced in a wide range of regions worldwide, sake remains closely and traditionally associated with Japan. Accordingly, when purchasing sake, the relevant public would generally expect these products to originate predominantly from Japan, or from established producers in countries that are recognised for manufacturing such goods (for instance, the United States and China). By comparison, consumers within the European Union are not accustomed to encountering alcoholic beverages originating from Azerbaijan and would therefore not, in the ordinary course of trade, assume that the goods concerned originate from that country. **Conclusion**: it is not reasonable to believe that the general public would associate the term 'BAKU' with the relevant goods in the future. **Descriptive of geographical origin: NO**

Non-descriptive	
GOBI	• **Geographical term**: the term 'GOBI' refers to a large desert in southern Mongolia and north China. • **Knowledge**: Gobi is a vast desert region spanning northern China and southern Mongolia. It is best known for its dramatic landscapes of gravel plains, sand dunes, and rugged mountains. Covering about 1.3 million square kilometres, it is one of the world's largest deserts and has played a significant role in history as it lays across the ancient Silk Road trade route. Today, it attracts thousands of international visitors each year, including many from Europe, for its unique wildlife, nomadic culture and adventure tourism activities such as camel treks and fossil-hunting expeditions. Its ecological diversity and striking scenery are widely featured in travel guides, documentaries, blogs and social media. Therefore, it can be considered that the general public in the EU knows the term 'GOBI' as the designation of a place. • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant goods:** ○ **Current association (lack of)**: Gobi is a desert and is widely known as such; it is not known or famous for anything else, except for palaeontology and activities related to on-site tourism (e.g. camel treks). Therefore, the term 'GOBI' is not currently associated with the relevant goods in the minds of the relevant public. ○ **Potential association (lack of)**: account is taken of:
Invented example	
Relevant public: general public in the EU (EUTM application)	
Goods and services: Class 29 *(olive oil for food)*	

	▪ the nature of the place, which is a desert divided into several protected areas, national parks and biosphere reserves, making farming and food processing impossible in large parts of its territory; ▪ other characteristics of the place, particularly its climate, with extreme cold and low rainfall, which makes it unsuitable for conventional agriculture and highly unlikely for olive trees to grow; ▪ consumer habits in relation to the category of goods concerned: EU consumers are in the habit of purchasing olive oil originating from the Mediterranean basin and would not expect to find olive oil from Central Asia on the shelves. **Conclusion**: it is not reasonable to believe that the general public in the EU would associate the term 'GOBI' with the relevant goods in the future. **Descriptive of geographical origin: NO**

Non-descriptive	
NANGA PARBAT **Invented example** **Relevant public:** general and professional public in the EU (EUTM application) **Goods and services**: Class 30 *(baking powder)*	• **Geographical term**: the term 'NANGA PARBAT' refers to a mountain located in Pakistan, in the Himalayan mountain range. • **Knowledge**: Nanga Parbat is the ninth-highest peak on Earth, reaching 8 126 metres above sea level. It is notorious for its extreme difficulty and danger, which earned it the nickname 'killer mountain'. The mountain is often mentioned in EU and worldwide media due to its popularity among climbers, its technical challenges, and the numerous tragedies that have happened on its slopes, such as the mountaineering disasters of 1934 and 1937, involving German expeditions, the terrorist attack of 2013, or the death of a Polish climber in 2018 along with the spectacular rescue of his French partner. Therefore, it can be considered that the term 'NANGA PARBAT' is known to at least a non-negligible part of the relevant public in the EU (e.g. the general and professional public, consisting of people that may have a (professional) interest in climbing and mountains) as the designation of a place. • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant goods:** o **Current association (lack of)**: the Nanga Parbat summit is known worldwide for its treacherous climbing conditions and for having claimed many lives, not in relation to any food ingredient or food-processing activity so, for this reason, it cannot be said that the relevant public currently associates the term 'NANGA PARBAT' with the goods in question. o **Potential association (lack of)**: account is taken of: ▪ the nature of the place: one of the highest mountains in the world and, as such, it would not be reasonably perceived as a place of origin for processed food; ▪ other characteristics of the place: namely its extreme height and hostile environment, where food-processing plants cannot be built and where no human activity exists apart from trekking and rescue expeditions; ▪ consumer habits in relation to the category of goods concerned: while consumers are accustomed to purchasing food originating from other continents, including Asia, this is not the case with baking powder, which usually comes from Europe. Consumers would not expect baking powder to originate from Asia, and even less from mountain peaks. **Conclusion**: it is not reasonable to believe that the general public in the EU would associate the term 'NANGA PARBAT' with the relevant goods in the future.

	Descriptive of geographical origin: NO

Non-descriptive	
TOKYO **Invented example** **Relevant public**: general public in the EU (EUTM application) **Goods and services:** Class 37 *(laundry services)*	• **Geographical term**: the term 'TOKYO' refers to the capital and largest city of Japan. • **Knowledge:** Tokyo is the capital and largest city of Japan, with more than 14 million inhabitants. It is one of the most densely populated cities in the world and is internationally famous for its vibrant culture, advanced technology and exceptional gastronomy, including sushi and other Japanese culinary traditions. Tokyo attracts millions of visitors every year and is a major hub for business and international events. Therefore, the relevant public in the EU knows the term 'TOKYO' as the designation of a place. • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant services:** ○ **Current association (lack of)**: the city of Tokyo is known internationally for its sights, culture and gastronomy. It is not known in relation to laundry services, so for this reason, it cannot be said that the relevant public currently associates the term 'TOKYO' with the services in question. ○ **Potential association (lack of)**: account is taken of: ▪ the high degree of familiarity of the relevant public with the geographical term; ▪ the characteristics of the place, in particular, it size and economic importance: Tokyo is a highly developed metropolis which hosts a wide variety of services, including hundreds of laundry-related business locations; ▪ the nature of the services: despite the factors mentioned above, it is unlikely that any association will be made in the minds of the relevant public due to the distance between Japan and the EU. Customers know that laundry services are provided locally and would not associate such services with a metropolis located thousands of kilometres away; ▪ the customs in the market sector concerned and the habits of consumers: laundry businesses provide services for local clients and do not usually provide or promote their services internationally. Therefore, European consumers are not used to being exposed to adverts promoting laundry services in Asia and would not expect such services to be promoted in the EU. **Conclusion**: it is not reasonable to believe that the relevant public will establish an association between the term 'TOKYO' and the relevant services or would believe that these services are provided in Tokyo. **Descriptive of geographical origin: NO**

Non-descriptive	
LYON **Invented example**	• **Geographical term**: the term 'LYON' refers to a city in France. • **Knowledge**: Lyon is one of France's largest and most visited cities, widely promoted across Europe as a major cultural, historical and gastronomic destination. As a major transportation hub with regular flight and rail connections, it enjoys strong visibility among European travellers, including those in Finland. Given its cultural prominence,

Relevant public: general public in Finland (national application) ([92])	accessibility, and frequent coverage in international travel media and tourism promotion, it can be considered that the general public in Finland knows the term 'LYON' as the designation of a place. • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant services:**
Goods and services: Class 37 *(plumbing services)*	○ **Current association (lack of)**: the city of Lyon is known for its culture and gastronomy. It is not known in relation to plumbing services, so for this reason, it cannot be said that the relevant public currently associates the term 'LYON' with the services in question. ○ **Potential association (lack of)**: account is taken of: ▪ the nature of the services: Finnish customers know that plumbing services are provided locally (usually by undertakings based in their city or surroundings) and would thus not expect such services to be supplied from a city located in another Member State thousands of kilometres away; ▪ the customs in the market sector concerned and the habits of consumers: plumbing businesses provide services for local clients and do not usually provide or promote their services internationally. Therefore, Finnish consumers are not used to being exposed to adverts promoting plumbing services performed in or supplied from France. **Conclusion**: it is not reasonable to believe that the relevant public would associate the term 'LYON' with the relevant goods in the future. **Descriptive of geographical origin: NO**

Non-descriptive	
PAROS	• **Geographical term**: the term 'PAROS' refers to a Greek island located in the Aegean Sea.
Invented example	• **Knowledge**: Paros is a well-known island in the Cyclades. It attracts thousands of tourists each year and is consistently highlighted as one of Greece's most popular island destinations, offering natural beauty, cultural heritage and a vibrant hospitality scene that appeals to travellers across Europe, including Poland. Given its strong presence in European tourism coverage and its popularity among travellers seeking summer island holidays, it can be considered that the general public in Poland is familiar with the term 'PAROS' as the designation of a place.
Relevant public: general public in Poland (national application)	• **Association between the geographical term and the relevant goods:**
Goods and services: Class 12 *(cars)*	○ **Current association (lack of)**: the island of Paros is known for its beaches and sights. It bears no relation to the car industry, so for this reason, it cannot be said that the relevant public currently associates the term 'PAROS' with the goods in question. ○ **Potential association (lack of)**: account is taken of: ▪ the characteristics of the place: Paros is a small island whose economy relies primarily on tourism, agriculture and fishing. There is no infrastructure that could support a car industry in Paros. ▪ market practices in the sector concerned and consumer habits in this regard: it is common in the car sector to use place names without a real geographical connotation to designate models. Therefore, a

([92]) This invented example is based on the assumption that this is a national Finnish trade mark application. The outcome would differ if the relevant public were French (e.g. in the case of an EUTM or a national application in France).

	large number of car models sold in Poland, are named after known geographic place names. Polish consumers are therefore used to seeing geographical names identifying car models and understand that such names do not indicate the vehicle's place of origin. **Conclusion**: it is not reasonable to believe that the relevant public would associate the term 'PAROS' with the relevant goods in the future. **Descriptive of geographical origin: NO**

Non-descriptive	
Segovia **Invented example** **Relevant public**: general public in Spain (national application) **Goods and services:** Class 39 *(ferry-boat transport)*	• **Geographical term**: the term 'Segovia' refers to a Spanish city, which is a provincial capital in the Autonomous Community of Castile and León. • **Knowledge:** Segovia is a well-known city in Spain, recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its Roman aqueduct, cathedral, and Alcázar castle. It is a tourist destination frequently promoted in tourism guides and cultural and travel media in Spain and across Europe. It is also famous for its gastronomy, particularly *cochinillo* and other regional dishes. Therefore, the relevant public knows the term 'Segovia' as the designation of a geographical location. • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant services:** ○ **Current association (lack of)**: the city of Segovia is known among the general public in Spain for its rich cultural heritage and gastronomy. It is not known in relation to boat or water activities and, for this reason, it cannot be said that the relevant public would currently associate the term 'Segovia' with the services in question. ○ **Potential association (lack of)**: account is taken of: ▪ the high degree of familiarity of the relevant public with the geographical term; ▪ the characteristics of the place: the city of Segovia is located inland and does not have any large navigable rivers or lakes that would be suitable for ferry transport; ▪ the nature of the services, which are transportation services provided at local level in areas where navigable rivers, lakes, or coastal waters are present. **Conclusion:** it is not reasonable to believe that the general public in Spain would associate the term 'Segovia' with the relevant services. **Descriptive of geographical origin: NO**

Non-descriptive	
Södermalm **Invented example** **Relevant public**: general public in Sweden (national application)	• **Geographical term**: the term 'Södermalm' refers to a district of the city of Stockholm, Sweden. • **Knowledge:** Södermalm is a well-known district of Stockholm, Sweden, recognised for its vivid cultural scene, historic architecture and trendy lifestyle. Frequently featured in Scandinavian and European travel guides, it is celebrated as a hub for design, art and gastronomy, with numerous cafés, boutiques, and galleries attracting both locals and tourists. Södermalm is also associated with Swedish pop culture and literature, being featured in internationally known works such as the *Millennium* trilogy. Therefore, the relevant public would recognise the term 'Södermalm' as the

	designation of a place. • **Association between the geographical term and the relevant goods:** ○ **Current association (lack of)**: the Södermalm district is known in Sweden for its cultural offer and trendy lifestyle, but **not** for producing any specific fruit, including dates. For this reason, it cannot be said that the relevant public currently associates the term 'Södermalm' with the goods in question. ○ **Potential association (lack of)**: account is taken of: ▪ the nature of the place: Södermalm is a limited urban area in central Stockholm, historically residential and industrial rather than agricultural. While Södermalm does have community gardens, these are focused on the small-scale cultivation of common vegetables, herbs and flowers; ▪ other characteristics of the place, namely its climate: the climate in Stockholm, and Sweden in general, is not suitable for growing date palms, and, consequently, dates, which require hot, arid or semi-arid climates and are highly sensitive to frost and cold; ▪ the nature of the goods, which are fresh fruit usually grown in warm, arid countries; ▪ consumer habits in relation to the category of goods concerned: consumers are in the habit of purchasing dates originating from countries such as, Egypt, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and would not expect this category of fresh fruit to originate from a city in Sweden. **Conclusion:** it is not reasonable to believe that the relevant public would associate the term 'Södermalm' with the relevant goods. **Descriptive of geographical origin: NO**
Goods and services: Class 31 (dates, fresh)	