**TECHNICAL FILE**

**FOR THE GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION**

**‘ΟΥΖΟ ΠΛΩΜΑΡΙΟΥ’/‘OUZO OF PLOMARI’**

**(amended)**

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**Category of spirit drink:**

Distilled anise (as laid down in Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 – product category 29).

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**Ι.** **Description of ‘Ouzo of Plomari’**

‘Ouzo of Plomari’ is a compound geographical indication that includes the geographical indication ‘Ouzo’. It belongs to the ‘distilled anise’ category and meets the relevant requirements set out in point 29 of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 in conjunction with the general requirements for ‘Ouzo’ laid down in the national legislation, in particular Part I of Article 4 of Decision No 30/077/2131/2011 of the Alternate Minister for Finance. In addition, it has certain specific characteristics which are linked, as is its reputation, to the geographical area denoted by the words ‘of Plomari’.

Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics

- It is a colourless, transparent and fluid alcoholic liquid. It may be flavoured with anise, fennel, liquorice and eucalyptus, but anise is the predominant flavour. It has a semi-sweet taste of intense anise, well-balanced with alcohol, a persistent finish and a sweet aftertaste.

When it is mixed with water and/or ice, a white emulsion (or cloudiness) appears. This is because a reduction in temperature and ethyl alcohol concentration reduces the solubility of the aromatic compounds it contains.

- Its aroma and taste are a result of the alcohol being flavoured by maceration and subsequent distillation with aniseed, mastic from the native Chios mastic tree (*Pistacia Lentiscus Chia* or *Latifolia*) and other aromatic seeds, plants and fruit, such as fennel, star anise, coriander, cardamom, cinnamon, nutmeg, barley and onion. The product’s characteristics depend on the type, quantity and proportion of aromatic raw materials used (seeds, plants, fruit) and on the production process. There are ‘light’ products with a smooth aroma and taste, and ‘heavy’ products with more intense aromas and a stronger taste.

- The minimum alcoholic strength by volume is 40 %, but the alcoholic strength is often higher (42-48 % vol.) so as to ensure the solubility of the numerous aromatic compounds and thus the stability of the spirit’s organoleptic characteristics.

Specific characteristics (compared with other spirit drinks in the same category)

1. The aromatic profile varies from one product to another, depending on the type of flavouring and the proportion of the various aromatic raw materials used (seeds, plants, fruit), combined with the distillation conditions. However, the anise flavour is always predominant.

The main aromatic raw material used to flavour ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ is the dried ripe fruit of the aniseed plant (*Pimpinella anisum rhomboidal*) grown in the Lisvori area on the island of Lesvos.

2. The flavouring of ethyl alcohol by distillation takes place exclusively in traditional discontinuous copper stills with a capacity of up to 1 000 litres, and the distillate obtained has an alcoholic strength of minimum 55 % vol. and maximum 80 % vol.

3. Ethyl alcohol flavoured by distillation accounts for the totality (100 %) of the product’s alcoholic strength. As a result, ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ generally contains a broader range and a larger concentration of aromatic substances than other ouzo products.

*In a study conducted by the General State Chemical Laboratory, 27 aromatic substances were identified in a sample of ‘Ouzo of Plomari’, most notably: α-pinene, limonene, linalool, estragole, fenchone, trans anethole, caryophyllene, γ-himachalene,**α-zingiberene, α-bergamotene and β-bisabolene.*

*A comparison with two samples of ouzo products for which ethyl alcohol flavoured by distillation did not account for 100 % of the alcoholic strength showed that there were significant differences in the products’ aromatic profile. More specifically:*

*(a)*  *A number of aromatic compounds, such as limonene, linalool, fenchone, γ-himachalene, α-zingiberene, β-bisabolene, were found in the ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ sample that were not found in concentrations above the limit of detection in the other products and other compounds were found in smaller concentrations.*

*(b)*  *Some aromatic compounds such as α-pinene, estragole, caryophyllene and α-bergamotene were found in significantly larger concentrations in ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ than in the other two products.*

4. The minimum alcoholic strength is 40 % vol.

5. Only flavourings that have been extracted or distilled from the same aromatic seeds, plants and/or fruit as those used to flavour the ethyl alcohol by maceration or distillation may be added.

6. Any sugars used must be added in small amounts, so that the dry matter content of ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ does not exceed 25 grams per litre when it is placed on the market.

**ΙΙ.** **Geographical area**

‘Ouzo of Plomari’ is produced in Greece, more specifically on the island of Lesvos within the boundaries of the municipal unit of Plomari.

Map

(The area of Plomari is highlighted in red on the map of Lesvos).



The stages of production that must take place within the defined geographical area are:

- flavouring of ethyl alcohol with aromatic raw materials (seeds, plants, fruit) by maceration and subsequent distillation;

- blending of the flavoured alcohols;

- adding aromatic substances and sugars (if any);

- dilution with water to obtain the final alcoholic strength;

- bottling.

**ΙΙΙ.** **Method of production**

‘Ouzo of Plomari’ is produced by blending alcohols that have been flavoured by maceration and subsequent distillation with aniseed and possibly fennel, mastic from the native Chios mastic tree and other aromatic seeds, plants and fruit.

Traditional discontinuous copper stills with a capacity of up to 1 000 litres are used for distillation (a picture of a still used in the production of ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ is enclosed as Annex III).

The aromatic raw materials (seeds, plants, fruit) are kept in storage under controlled humidity and temperature conditions. When the distillation process starts the raw materials are weighed, put in cloth bags and placed in the still. The still is then filled with ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin and water from local sources. Inside the still the aromatic raw materials remain in contact with the hydro-alcoholic solution for a specific length of time which varies from producer to producer, until they macerate (or ‘swell’).

After this the process of heating up the still begins, rapidly at first, until it is brought to the boil. The heat is then turned down to achieve a slow and regular rate of distillation. For a 1 000-litre still the distillation process lasts for at least eight hours.

The first drops of distillate that appear as the distillation gets under way are rich in highly volatile substances and are collected separately as the ‘heads’ of the distillation run.

From this first fraction a quantity is separated the size of which varies from one producer to the next, according to the flavours they wish to obtain in the final product. The next phase of the distillation process is where the ‘heart’ is produced. During this phase, the rate of distillation is slowed down further to allow the various fractions of the distillate to homogenise. The ‘heart’, which is collected separately, has an alcoholic strength by volume of 72-80 % and is the distillation product from which ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ is made.

The distillation process continues until the third and final fraction, known as the ‘tails’, is obtained. This fraction has a high ethyl alcohol content but also contains oily fractions with a ‘heavy’ smell and taste. It is collected separately so as not to affect the ‘heart’, where the delicate aromas are found.

The ethyl alcohol flavoured by distillation (also known as the ‘mayia’ [‘starter’] or ‘adoloto’ [‘unbaited’] alcohol) is then slowly blended with water from local sources and possibly with an aqueous sugar solution until the final product is obtained. No ethyl alcohol is added to the distillate, as the totality of its alcoholic strength comes from the ethyl alcohol flavoured by distillation. This is the reason ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ is referred to as ‘100 % distilled’.

The final blend is left in containers to rest and homogenise for an appropriate period of time, the length of which varies according to the product type.

The product is then filtered and bottled. Due to the fragility of the aromatic substances in general, and of anethole in particular, when exposed to air and sunlight, bottling takes place on a daily basis in closed premises with no bright lights to avoid prolonged exposure to air until the required number of bottles has been produced.

Once bottled, ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ has taken its final form and is ready to be placed on the market.

**IV. Link with the geographical environment or origin**

 The island of Lesvos is of special importance in the history of ouzo production in Greece. Although it has an area of 1 636 km2 (1.2 % of Greece’s territory) and a population of 85 330 (0.8 % of Greece’s total population), it produces almost 17 % of the country’s ouzo.

It is worth noting that Lesvos has two geographical indications for ouzo (‘Ouzo of Mitilene’ and ‘Ouzo of Plomari’). The geographical area from which ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ originates is the municipal unit of Plomari (as described above under the heading ‘Geographical area’).

In this small area of around 120 km2, and with just 6 000 inhabitants, there are five distilleries of widely varying production capacity, whose basic product, and in some cases only product, is ‘Ouzo of Plomari’. In 2016, for example, some 3 640 000 litres of ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ were placed on the market, about 50 % of which was exported to more than 15 countries.

The following factors attest to the link between ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ and the geographical area:

Geographical area – natural factors

1. **Water**  In every area the water tastes different, and there are even differences between water from neighbouring areas, due to the dissolved salt and gas content. ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ producers maintain that the end product largely owes its qualities to the water they use for distillation, which comes from springs of the river Sedounta.
2. **Salt** Salt used for distillation, i.e. during the basic production stage, must come from the salt pans in the Lesvos Gulf of Kalloni.
3. **Raw materials**  One of the basic raw materials used to flavour ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ is the aniseed grown in the Lisvori area, in fields that often belong to the distillers themselves. Lisvori is a small village 3.5 kilometres from the Gulf of Kalloni. The semi-closed Gulf of Kalloni, covering an area of approximately 110 km2 and with an average depth of 10 m, has salt pans and wetlands on its shores. The climate, influenced by the specific features of the gulf, combine with the fertile soil to create favourable conditions for the production of aniseed with an intense aroma (a picture of a Lisvori field planted with aniseed is enclosed as Annex II).

In Lisvori the species *Pimpinella anisum* var. *rhomboidal* is grown. Aniseed is an annual plant that is sown in January and harvested in July and August. It originated in Asia and north Africa. It grows to a height of 50-80 cm and has white or yellowish flowers and highly aromatic oval or oblong fruit. Essential oil is extracted from its seeds, the main component of which is anethole.

Other raw materials used for distillation, such as barley and onion, are also local Lesvos crops.

Link between the reputation of ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ and the geographical area

Historical factors

The ouzo tradition in Plomari on the island of Lesvos began in the mid-nineteenth century. Over time, several distilleries were founded there which produced excellent ouzo, flavoured mainly with aniseed grown in the Lisvori area. They created their own recipes and used small copper stills for distillation.

 Ouzo thus became a very important product of the Plomari area whose reputation spread throughout Greece and beyond. The Sultan of the neighbouring Turkey is said to have bought ouzo for his harem in the belief that it had revitalising properties for the human body (M. Eleftheriadis: Lesvos – History and Tourism, p. 110, Mitilene, 1972). It is also said that *‘Mustafa Kemal, that worldly recluse, would stay put in safe Ankara and get drunk on ouzo shipped in from Plomari’ ...* (Human Stories: Petros Mantaios, p. 2, Eleftherotypia newspaper, 17 November 1984, Athens).

The distilleries in operation in Plomari today represent the continuity of those enterprises that first created Ouzo of Plomari. Most of them are family-run businesses that respectfully carry on a long-standing family tradition.

Two Plomari distilleries have set up ouzo museums next door to their facilities, where the traditional equipment used to produce the spirit is displayed, together with bottles and labels and other historical objects related to ‘Ouzo of Plomari’. Visitors to the museums can see the distilling process in action and, during tastings, enjoy the traditional taste of ‘Ouzo of Plomari’.

Modern times

The production of ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ has continued uninterrupted until today. The way ouzo is made has remained unchanged over the years, and distillation continues to be performed in the same traditional, meticulous way in traditional hand-crafted copper stills.

The local economy and traditions, customs and local events are inextricably linked to ‘Ouzo of Plomari’. Drinking ouzo is an essential part of events such as the launching of a ship or the end of the olive harvest, of social gatherings such as christenings, engagements and weddings and of religious celebrations. This testifies to the spirit’s profound link with local society.

Significantly, most of the inhabitants of Plomari are immediately able to recognise, from its taste and aroma, whether an ouzo product is really ‘Ouzo of Plomari’. Those who have this ability are known in the local vernacular as ‘zontana grada’ [‘walking alcohol meters’], from ‘grado’ (alcoholic strength) and ‘gradometro’ (alcohol meter).

The ‘Giorti Ouzou’ (Ouzo Festival), which dates back to the 19th century, is the highlight of the many ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ events. Today it has evolved into a much bigger event known as the ‘Ouzofest’, which is organised at the end of July every year under the auspices of the municipal authorities of Mitilene and Plomari, but on different dates to highlight the specificities of ‘Ouzo of Mitilene’ and ‘Ouzo of Plomari’, the two geographic indications of Lesvos.

Here visitors are able to taste the whole range of ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ products, speak with the distillers, be initiated into the secrets of ouzo, savour the gastronomy of Lesvos and enjoy ouzo at the picturesque cafés typical of this area. Events with music and food at local taverns complement the festival, giving visitors the opportunity to experience the traditional and authentic way of enjoying ouzo: with friends, mezes, music and scents of the Aegean.

‘Ouzo of Plomari’ products have competed at Greek and international fairs for years and have won a number of distinctions and prizes, such as:

- Thessaloniki International Trade Fair (1935, 1937)

- Ηonor Award for Excellence, Cambridge, Massachusetts (1999)

- Prize for continuity of activity over three generations, Lesvos Chamber of Commerce (2001)

- Prize at the 17th International Food and Beverage Exhibition (EXPO ATHENS) (2004)

- Silver medal at the Internationaler Spirituosen Wettbewerb (2006)

- Gastronomos Quality Award (2012)

- Double-Gold Medal, the highest distinction at the World Spirits Awards (2015)

- Corporate Superbrands Greece in the spirit drink category (2016).

**V. EU and national/regional provisions**

EU provisions

‘Ouzo of Plomari’ is a geographical indication registered for Greece under ‘distilled anise’ (product category 29 in Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008).

Its production and presentation is governed by specific EU legislation on spirit drinks, namely Regulation (ΕC) No 110/2008 and Implementing Regulation (EU) No 716/2013, and Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, subject to the specific provisions and exceptions for spirit drinks provided for in that Regulation.

National provisions

The geographical indication ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ was first recognised at national level by Decision No 3009419/1118/0029 of 10 August 2004 of the Deputy Minister for the Economy and Finance recognising the geographical indication ‘Plomari’ as a supplement to the sales denomination ‘Ouzo’ (Government Gazette, Series II, No 1283 of 23 August 2004).

Subsequently, following an application by the distillers concerned, that decision was replaced by Decision No 30/077/2019 of 10 June 2013 of the Deputy Minister for Finance on the use of the geographical indication ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ (Government Gazette, Series II, No 1535 of 21 June 2013), the full text of which is enclosed as Annex I.

Article 2(2) of the above Ministerial Decision lays down the following specifications for ‘Ouzo of Plomari’:

(a) a minimum alcoholic strength of 40 % vol.;

(b) alcohol flavoured by distillation (distillate) must account for the totality (100 %) of the product’s alcoholic strength.

**VI. Applicant**

Member State: Greece

Competent authority:

**HELLENIC REPUBLIC**

**INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY FOR PUBLIC REVENUE**

**DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR THE GENERAL STATE
CHEMICAL LABORATORY**

**DIRECTORATE FOR ALCOHOL AND FOODSTUFFS**

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**VII. Supplement to the geographical indication**

*Specific rules concerning labelling*

Under the Greek national legislation, ouzo may be labelled ‘εξ αποστάξεως 100%’ or ‘από απόσταξη 100%’ [100 % distilled] if the totality of its alcoholic strength derives from alcohol flavoured by distillation, provided that this indication appears separately from the sales denomination ‘ouzo’ and is written in smaller letters (second sentence of Article 4, Part A ‘Ouzo’, paragraph 7 of Decision No 30/077/2131/2011 of the Alternate Minister for Finance on the production and distribution of alcoholic beverages (Government Gazette, Series II, No 1946 of 31 August 2011).

As ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ meets the above requirement regarding alcoholic strength, the product is labelled ‘100 % distilled’.

**ANNEX I**

No 30/077/2019/10-6-2013

**Conditions of use of the geographical indication ‘Ouzo of Plomari’**

#### D E C I S I O N

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FINANCE**

 **Having regard to:**

1. The provisions (point 29 of Annex III and Article 9(5)) of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89;
2. The provisions (Article 5(4)(f)) of Law 2969/2001 on ethyl alcohol and alcohol products (Government Gazette, Series I, No 281 of 16 December 2001);
3. The provisions on geographical indications and traditional designations (Article 5, Part A, paragraphs 1, 2, 3(a) and 4) of Decision No 30/077/2131 of 23 June 2011 of the Alternate Minister for Finance on the production and distribution of alcoholic beverages (Government Gazette, Series II, No 1946/Β/31-8-2011);
4. The provisions on ouzo (Chapter I of Article 4) of the same Decision;
5. Decision No 3009419/1118/0029/2004 of the Deputy Minister for the Economy and Finance recognising the geographical indication ‘Plomari’ as a supplement to the sales denomination ‘Ouzo’ (Government Gazette, Series II, No 1283 of 23 August 2004);
6. Joint Decision No 07927 ΕΞ//19-9-2012 of the Prime Minister and the Minister for Finance delegating powers to the Deputy Minister for Finance, Mr Georgios Mavraganis (Government Gazette, Series II, No 2574 of 24 September 2012);
7. The relevant application of regional distillers and the information recorded in the file submitted;
8. The recommendation dated 29 May 2013 from the Directorate for Alcohol, Spirit Drinks, Wine and Beer of the General State Chemical Laboratory to the Deputy Minister for Finance on the publication of a decision;
9. The fact that this Decision entails no expenditure under the national budget,

**has decided as follows:**

**Article 1**

1. This Decision lays down the terms of use and the checking procedures required for ouzo to be placed on the market bearing the geographical indication ‘Ouzo of Plomari’, which has already been registered for Greece pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008.
2. The ‘Πλωμαρίου’ (of Plomari) indication shall be printed on the bottle next to the sales denomination ‘ούζο’ (ouzo) in a font no larger than the font used for the sales denomination.

**Article 2**

**1.** In order for the geographical indication to be used, the entire production process, from the stage of flavouring ethyl alcohol by distillation to the final preparation of the drink and its bottling, must be carried out at the production facilities of businesses located within the boundaries of the Municipal Unit of Plomari in the Municipality of Lesvos.

**2.** ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ must have the following characteristics:

(a) a minimum alcoholic strength of 40 % vol.;

(b) alcohol flavoured by distillation (distillate) must account for the totality (100 %) of the product’s alcoholic strength.

The general requirements for ouzo, as laid down in the relevant legal provisions currently in force, shall apply in all other respects.

**3.** The geographical indication may not be used in any way on the labelling of ouzo if the conditions herein are not met.

**4.** The trade names of other spirit drinks may not contain the word ‘Πλωμάρι’ (Plomari), even in derivative or compound form.

**Article 3**

1. Distillers who wish to produce and market ouzo bearing the geographical indication ‘Ouzo of Plomari’ shall submit all relevant information supporting their entitlement to use that geographical indication to the local Chemical Service. The Chemical Service, once it has examined the evidence, shall grant the approval to use the geographical indication in question to the interested parties.
2. The local Chemical Service shall regularly inspect the distillers who make use of this geographical indication, and shall revoke the above approval if the distillers breach Articles 1 and 2 of this Decision.
3. Failure to observe the terms and conditions of this Decision constitutes a breach of Law 2969/2001 and is subject to administrative penalties under Article 11(2)(l) and criminal penalties under Article 12(h) of that Law.

**Article 4**

Decision No 3009419/1118/0029/2004 of the Minister for the Economy and Finance recognising the geographical indication ‘Plomari’ as a supplement to the sales nomination ‘Ouzo’ shall be repealed as of entry into force of this Decision.

**Article 5**

This Decision shall be published in the Government Gazette and shall enter into force on the date of its publication.

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FINANCE**

 **GEORGIOS MAVRAGANIS**