

Murano glass fights back with a bid for EU protection

Posted on June 7, 2026 by Angelica Peruzzi

VENICE — A thousand-year-old craft is making its boldest move yet. In December 2025, the *Consorzio Promovetro Murano,* the body representing the island's glassmakers, launched the formal process to obtain *Indicazione Geografica Protetta (IGP)* status, or protected geographical indication. The European certification would make it illegal to sell imitation glass under the Murano name anywhere in the EU.

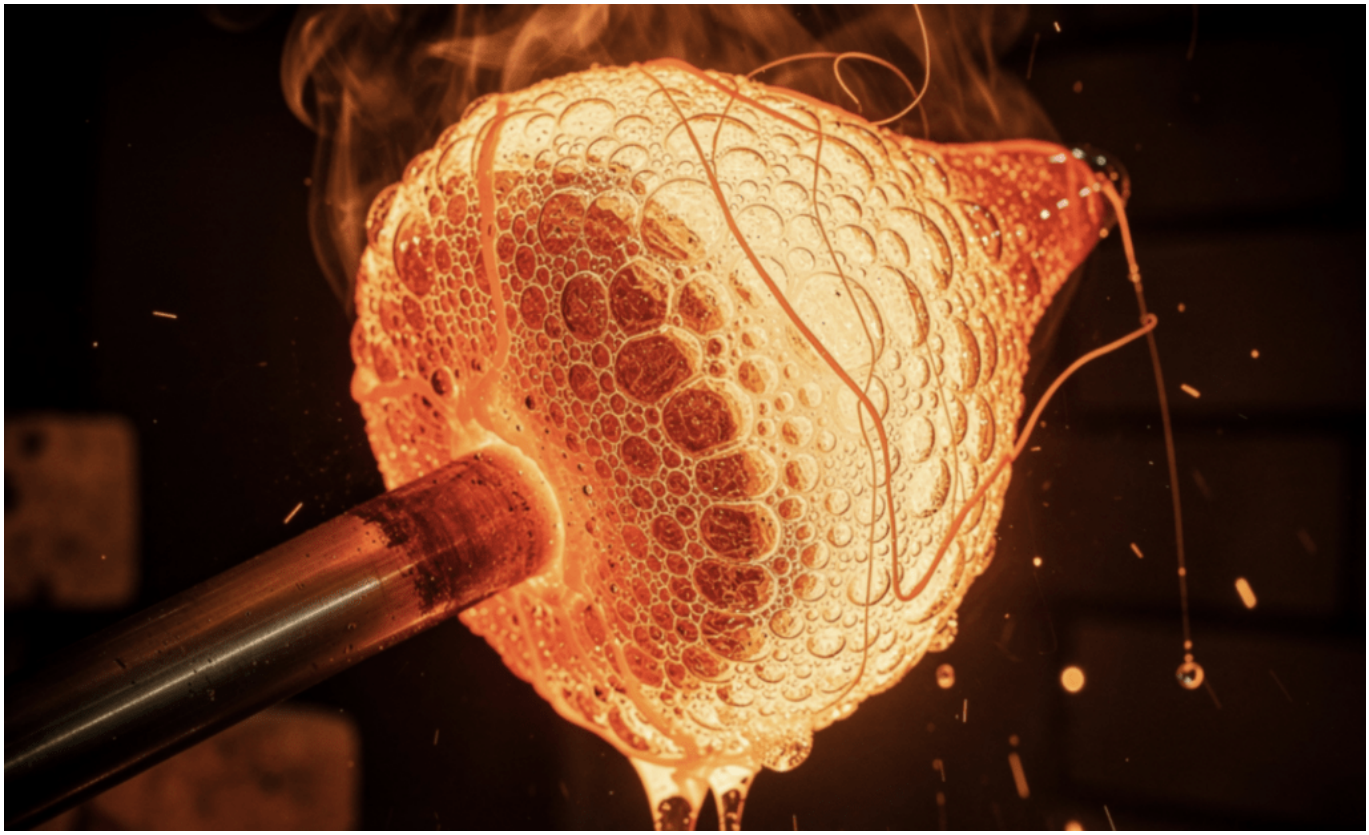
"The survival of Murano glass depends on legal protection," said Muriel Balensi, a glass artist who works on the island told Italy Now. "Without it, the tradition disappears quietly, replaced by cheap copies."

The stakes are significant. Murano's glassblowing tradition dates back over a millennium, and the island's workshops have been regulated under Italian laws with a trademark registered at the European Intellectual Property Office.

Fakes flood the market

Yet counterfeiting has accelerated. Mass-produced imitations, often manufactured in Asia, are routinely sold to tourists in Italy and abroad as authentic Murano pieces, undercutting workshops where a single vase may require days of skilled labour.

Source: https://italynow.co.uk/murano-glass-fights-back-with-a-bid-for-eu-protection/



Molten Murano glass being worked (*Credits: Italy Now*)

Murano glass has been made on the Venetian lagoon island since the 13th century, when the Republic of Venice relocated all furnaces there in 1291 to prevent fires and guard trade secrets. At its peak in 1990, the island employed 6,000 professional glassmakers. Today fewer than 1,000 remain, a collapse driven by cheap Asian imitations flooding global markets. The December 2025 application for EU protected status is the craft's most significant legal defence in its 700-year history.

A living archive under threat

Marisa Convento, who documents the island's artisanal knowledge, told Italy Now the craft was to be considered a "living archive" Each technique passed between generations represents knowledge that cannot be recovered once lost, she said.

The IGP application is part of a broader regional push. Veneto, the northeastern Italian region that includes Venice, holds nine UNESCO World Heritage sites, more than any other Italian region, and its tourism strategy places artisanal sustainability at its centre.

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