Spirit drinks: definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications

2005/0028(COD) - 15/01/2008 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish new rules on spirit drinks.

LEGISLATIVE ACT : Regulation (EC) N° 110/2008 of the European parliament and of the Council on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) N° 1576/89.

CONTENT: the Council adopted, by qualified majority, this Regulation on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks. The Polish and Swedish delegations voted against and the Lithuanian delegation abstained.

The aims of the Regulation are:

- to clarify the current rules on the production and marketing of spirit drinks, adapting them to new technical requirements (manufacturing requirements, permitted colourings and flavourings, names and labelling);
- to specify the numerous categories and geographical indications for the manufacture and/or denomination of typical drinks from many countries, such as aquavit, brandy, fruit spirit (kirsch), genever, grappa, gin, jagertee, kummel, ouzo, pastis, rum, vodka, whisky and slivovitz;
- to adapt Community legislation to take account of the latest enlargements and the requirements of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), including Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS);
- to define the criteria for the future recognition of new geographical indications.

The Regulation applies to all spirit drinks placed on the market in the Community whether produced in the Community or in third countries, as well as to those produced in the Community for export. The Regulation also applies to the use of ethyl alcohol and/or distillates of agricultural origin in the production of alcoholic beverages and to the use of the names of spirit drinks in the presentation and labelling of foodstuffs.

In exceptional cases where the law of an importing third country so requires, the Regulation allows for a derogation to be granted from the provisions of Annexes I and II in accordance with the regulatory procedure with scrutiny.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 20/02/2008.

APPLICATION: 20/05/2008.