

# **Spirit drinks: definition, presentation and labelling; use of names in the presentation and labelling of other foodstuffs; protection of geographical indications**

2016/0392(COD) - 19/05/2019 - Final act

**PURPOSE:** to clarify and improve the legal framework for the definition, description, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks, including their use in other foodstuffs and the protection of geographical indications (GIs).

**LEGISLATIVE ACT:** Regulation (EU) 2019/787 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the definition, description, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks, the use of the names of spirit drinks in the presentation and labelling of other foodstuffs, the protection of geographical indications for spirit drinks, the use of ethyl alcohol and distillates of agricultural origin in alcoholic beverages, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 110/2008.

**CONTENT:** this Regulation lays down rules on:

- the definition, description, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks, as well as on the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks;
- the ethyl alcohol and distillates used in the production of alcoholic beverages; and
- the use of legal names of spirit drinks in the presentation and labelling of foodstuffs other than spirit drinks.

This Regulation applies to products that are placed on the Union market, whether produced in the Union or in third countries, as well as to those produced in the Union for export.

The rules applicable to spirit drinks should contribute to attaining a high level of consumer protection, removing information asymmetry, preventing deceptive practices and attaining market transparency and fair competition. They should safeguard the reputation which the Union's spirit drinks have achieved in the Union and on the world market by continuing to take into account the traditional practices used in the production of spirit drinks as well as increased demand for consumer protection and information.

The rules:

- stipulates that ethyl alcohol and distillates used for the production of spirit drinks must be exclusively of agricultural origin;
- ensures a certain level of harmonisation of the composition of spirit drinks at European level, for example as regards the maximum sugar content;
- specifies that an ageing period or age may only appear on the label if it refers to the youngest alcoholic component of the spirit drink and provided that all ageing operations of the spirit drink have been carried out under the fiscal control of a Member State or under a control offering equivalent guarantees;

- ensures clearer labelling of spirit drinks such as whisky, brandy, cognac or ouzo throughout the EU, in accordance with the rules on consumer information on foodstuffs laid down in [Regulation \(EU\) No 1169/2011](#);
- provides for provisions on the use of compound terms and references in Member States for the presentation of spirit drinks in order to provide consumers with appropriate information, thereby avoiding misleading them;
- protects the interests of producers by strengthening the protection of geographical indications (GIs) in order to combat counterfeiting more effectively. The Commission must establish, by 8 June 2021 at the latest, an electronic register accessible to the public and updated with recognised geographical indications for spirit drinks.

The Commission may adopt delegated acts in order to take into account changes in consumer requirements, technical progress, international standards and the need to improve economic conditions for production and marketing, traditional ageing processes and the law of importing third countries, and to safeguard the legitimate interests of food producers and operators in the protection of geographical indications.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 24.5.2019.

APPLICATION: from 25.5.2021.