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COVER NOTE

From: Secretary-General of the European Commission,
signed by Mr Jordi AYET PUIGARNAU, Director

date of receipt: 2 February 2017

To: Mr Jeppe TRANHOLM-MIKKELSEN, Secretary-General of the Council of
the European Union

Subject: Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND
OF THE COUNCIL on the definition, presentation and labelling of spirit
drinks, the use of the names of spirit drinks in the presentation and
labelling of other foodstuffs and the protection of geographical indications
for spirit drinks
[doc. ST 15121/16 AGRI 651 WTO 344 CODEC 1803 - COM (2016) 750
final]
- opinion on the application of the Principles of Subsidiarity and
Proportionality

Delegations will find attached the opinion of the Irish Parliament.

An Comhchoiste um Talmhaíocht, Bia
agus Muir
Teach Laighean
Baile Átha Cliath 2
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Our Ref: AFM-i-81-2017

1 February 2017

Mr. Donald Tusk
President
European Council
Brussels

Re. COM(2016)750 Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the definition, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks, the use of the names of spirit drinks in the presentation and labelling of other foodstuffs and the protection of geographical indications for spirit drinks.

Dear President Tusk

The Oireachtas Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine considered the proposal named above and following due consideration of a number of issues, has agreed the attached report for consideration as part of the Commission's political dialogue process with national parliaments.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Deering T.D.
Chairman
Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine



**Tithe an
Oireachtais**
**Houses of the
Oireachtas**

An Comhchoiste um Thalmhaíocht, Bia agus Muir

An Cion Polaitiúil maidir le COM (2016) 750 - Togra le haghaidh RIALACHÁN Ó PHARLAIMINT NA hEORPA AGUS ÓN gCOMHAIRLE maidir le biotáillí a shainiú, a thíolacadh agus a lipéadú, maidir le hainmneacha biotáillí a úsáid le linn earraí bia eile a thíolacadh agus a lipéadú agus maidir le léirithe geografacha do bhiotáillí a chosaint

Eanáir 2017

Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Political Contribution on COM(2016)750 Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the definition, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks, the use of the names of spirit drinks in the presentation and labelling of other foodstuffs and the protection of geographical indications for spirit drinks

January 2017

32/AFM/03

Part I

Report of the Oireachtas Joint Committee

Introduction

1. The Oireachtas Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine, hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”, considers **COM(2016)750** Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the definition, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks, the use of the names of spirit drinks in the presentation and labelling of other foodstuffs and the protection of geographical indications for spirit drinks.
2. On that basis, the Committee has undertaken initial consideration of the proposal.
3. The Committee has set out a number of points for consideration by the Commission in Part 2 of this document.

Decision of the Joint Committee

The Committee agreed to submit a Political Contribution to the EU institutions on COM(2016)750. The Committee welcomes the proposed Regulation and welcomes all efforts by the Commission to simplify regulations and improve readability. Geographical Indications are an important tool for food and beverage producers, even though the proposed Regulation does not alter the substance of the law, it is to be welcomed in facilitating those who rely or wish to rely upon Geographical Products to protect products of a unique nature. The Committee seeks by way of this contribution to provide productive feedback to the Commission.

The Political Contribution, in Part 2 of this Report, was agreed by the Committee on 31 January 2017 and is hereby formally communicated to the European Commission, the European Parliament and the respective relevant Irish Government Minister, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The report will also be laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas.



Pat Deering T.D.
Chairman
Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine
31 January 2017

Part II

COM(2016)750 Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the definition, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks, the use of the names of spirit drinks in the presentation and labelling of other foodstuffs and the protection of geographical indications for spirit drinks

The Joint Committee:

1. Notes that:

- a. Geographical Indications are a useful protective instrument which allows producers to protect the unique nature of their products from imitation. This protects products; facilitating retention of their premium and unique characteristics and thereby aiding producers in securing fair prices for their produce. In the context of the subject matter of this Regulation, the affected Irish spirit drinks are:
 - i. Irish Whiskey/Uisce Beatha Eireannach/Irish Whisky;
 - ii. Irish Cream Liqueur; and
 - iii. Irish Poteen/Irish Poitín.
- b. As indicated in Recital 19 of the proposed Regulation the establishment of an electronic register of geographic indications is to be welcomed. Such an electronic register is likely to be of considerable benefit to all stakeholders.

2. Is of the opinion that:

- a. The proposed Regulation should include a comprehensive annex listing all current Geographical Indications as in Annex III of REGULATION (EC) No 110/2008.¹
- b. In the case of spirit drinks such an Annex is unlikely to be substantial in nature.
- c. Should such an Annex not be appended to the Regulation, that the proposed online register should provide for a comprehensive listing comparable to Annex III as found in REGULATION (EC) No 110/2008.

¹ Annex III of REGULATION (EC) No 110/2008 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 15 January 2008 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89 [2008] OJ L 39/16 <<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:039:0016:0054:EN:PDF>> accessed 24 January 2017