



July 2021

Subject: ETRC Contribution to Roadmap on the proposal for a revision of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, for what concerns labelling rules on alcoholic beverages

ETRC, the European Travel Retail Confederation, welcomes the opportunity to give feedback on the European Commission's roadmap on the revision of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, for what concerns labelling rules on alcoholic beverages.

ETRC fully supports the principle that consumers should have access to relevant and meaningful information on the products they wish to purchase and consume, including alcoholic beverage products. To that end, we believe digital means offer a great opportunity to effectively communicate product information to consumers via means other than the label, packaging or leaflet, while ensuring compliance with regulations. ETRC has developed extensive experience on the matter via the development of our project, Duty Free Label.

ETRC would like to draw attention to the ongoing negotiations on the CMO Regulation and on Regulation (EU) No 251/2014, where it is likely that the revision regulations will allow for the mandatory list of ingredients and nutrition declaration to be provided either on or off label. In parallel, spirits producers have also started to provide this information voluntarily as per the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the European Commission in September 2019. ETRC is supportive of such measures, noting that digital tools can engage and inform consumers in an innovative, effective and efficient way thus creating a culture of better-informed EU citizens.

Therefore, **should the European Commission decide that EU intervention is justified** to require the indication of the list of ingredients and the nutrition declaration for all alcoholic beverages, ETRC would like to invite the European Commission to consider digital means as a legally recognised option to provide mandatory product information and adapt the relevant regulatory framework as part of the ongoing revision of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers (FIC Regulation) – which would be reflected in ***Option 1 - Revise the rules for all alcoholic beverages: revoke the exemption and allow certain indications off-label*** of the Inception Impact Assessment.

One means to achieve this is by enacting **article 12 of the Food Information to Consumers Regulation (Reg. 1069/2011)**, which states that *“In order to ensure that consumers benefit from other means of provision of mandatory food information better adapted for certain mandatory particulars, and provided that the same level of information as by means of the package or the label is ensured, the Commission, taking into account evidence of uniform consumer understanding and of the wide use of these means by consumers, may establish, by means of delegated acts in accordance with Article 51, criteria subject to which certain mandatory particulars may be expressed by means other than on the package or on the label.”*



Providing Information to Consumers in Duty Free & Travel Retail: Duty Free Label

Anticipating the growing trend towards digital product information, ETRC has been working for many years to find a pragmatic solution to provide consumers with product information in a way that meets both the requirements of the regulators and the specificities of our unique consumer, the international traveller, particularly in the context of the FIC Regulation.

After considering a number of options, in 2018 ETRC contracted for a pilot project to explore the feasibility of creating a multilingual digital platform for information to consumers in duty free and travel retail, across three core categories: Beauty, Alcohol and Confectionery. As part of this pilot project, ETRC conducted a series of passenger interviews, which took place at Hamburg Airport in December 2018 to collect crucial users' feedback on the pilot platform.

Building on this first success, the ETRC Digital Labelling platform moved into its second phase involving a two-year project with 15+ suppliers with the objective to build a fully functional platform, concluding with the creation of a website '**Duty Free Label**'. Duty Free Label provides product information in multiple languages, which can be accessed when the barcode on the packaging is scanned via a smartphone or in-store scanners. As part of this project, ETRC also conducted an online consumer survey of over 1000+ EU consumers who tested the usability of the platform.

The survey provided overwhelmingly positive results, with **88% of respondents being satisfied** with the platform, 85% of travellers considering the platform to be easy to use, and 74% considering themselves to be more likely to use digital labels compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic.

10 years after the adoption of the "FIC Regulation" which foresaw that "Food information rules should be able to adapt to a rapidly changing social, economic and technological environment" (recital 51), ETRC believe our project and similar initiatives provide an opportunity to implement efficient and relevant solutions for the digital age and looks forward to working together with the Commission on this matter.

About the European Travel Retail Confederation (ETRC)

The European Travel Retail Confederation (ETRC) is an industry association for the duty free and travel retail industry in Europe, serving the industry and its members to help create the right environment to allow the industry to achieve its potential and protect it when challenges arise.

ETRC is composed of national and regional affiliated trade associations representing over 200 European companies, Tax Free World Association (TFWA) representing 520 brand companies, and direct corporate membership from individual companies working in the duty free and travel retail trade across Europe and beyond. The European Travel Retail Confederation's operations are directed by its Supervisory and Managing Boards and carried out by a full-time secretariat. For more information about the organisation, please visit our website – www.etr.org