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French Lawmakers Seek New Disclosure Rules for Wine Liquidation Sales

The proposal would require prior notice and post-sale reporting for judicial sales of wines with protected geographic labels.

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A proposal introduced in the French National Assembly on April 28 would require new disclosure rules for judicial sales of wines with protected geographic labels, in an effort to make those transactions more transparent and to protect the reputation of French

appellations.

The measure, filed as bill No. 2709, targets wines sold under AOP and IGP designations when they are sold through judicial proceedings or by private agreement during a liquidation. Before any such sale, a prior declaration would have to be sent to the Institut National de l’Origine et de la Qualité, known as the INAO. The agency would then forward the information to the relevant defense and management organization and to the appropriate interprofessional body so that the sector could be informed in a coordinated way.

The declaration would have to include the volumes involved, their characteristics and the terms of the sale. After the transaction, a report would be sent listing the final price and, when the buyer is a professional, the buyer’s identity. The proposal places this system in France’s rural and maritime fishing code rather than in commercial law, on the grounds that it concerns the protection of origin labels rather than insolvency procedure itself.

Supporters of the bill say the goal is to help ensure that lots sold under appellation rules remain compliant with those rules and that industry groups can better monitor what happens to wines coming out of liquidation sales. The text also says that when a professional buyer later puts those wines back on the market, that resale would have to be reported to the INAO, which would pass the information along to the relevant organizations in the sector.

The proposal does not create a prior authorization requirement and does not restrict resale. Instead, it seeks to improve traceability and give producers and trade groups earlier notice of possible market disruptions tied to judicial sales.