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EU Denies Plan to End Czech Beer Labels

Commission officials said there is no proposal to force member states to abandon the traditional “desítka” and “dvanáctka” system.

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The European Union is not planning to ban the Czech practice of labeling beer as “desítka” or “dvanáctka,” according to the European Commission’s representation in Prague, which moved on Sunday to counter a rumor that had spread online about a possible end to the traditional system used to describe beer strength.

The commission office said there is no plan to revise the excise tax directive in a way that would force member states to abandon labeling based on degrees Plato, the measure long used in parts of Central Europe to indicate wort concentration before fermentation. That means countries can continue to tax and label beer either by alcohol content or by degree scale, as they do now.

The Czech Beer and Malt Association also rejected the claim, saying it had not seen any specific legislative proposal from the European Commission that would eliminate the Czech system or set 2031 as a deadline for ending it. Tomáš Slunečko, the association's executive director, said the group had no evidence of such a measure.

Under current European rules, member states are allowed to use different systems for beer taxation. Along with the Czech Republic, countries including Germany, Austria and Poland still use degree-based methods in some form. In the Czech market, labels such as "desítka" and "dvanáctka" remain widely understood by consumers and are closely tied to local beer culture.

The commission said discussions at the European level are focused more broadly on consumer information, product labeling and some aspects of excise taxes, but that the design of national tax systems remains primarily in the hands of individual member states. The Czech Beer and Malt Association said it would continue monitoring European legislation and defending what it described as the specific character of Czech brewing at home and abroad.