vinetur

Russia Proposes Letting Alcohol Importers Label Shipments in Their Own Customs Warehouses

The draft rule would widen access to Russia’s labeling experiment and ease a customs bottleneck for licensed importers.

Monday, July 27, 2026



Russia’s Finance Ministry has drafted a resolution that would allow importers of alcoholic beverages to apply mandatory labels to imported alcohol in their own customs warehouses, a change that could widen participation in the country’s current labeling experiment and ease a bottleneck for some importers.

The proposal was announced by the ministry and would revise the rules of an experiment that has governed the labeling of imported alcohol with federal special stamps inside Russia. Under the current framework, imported alcohol can be labeled on Russian territory only in customs warehouses that hold a valid license for the storage of alcoholic beverages.

The ministry said that rule has created a mismatch for some companies. To import alcohol into Russia, an organization must hold a license for the purchase, storage and supply of alcoholic beverages. That license also allows the company to store purchased alcohol in its own warehouse. But despite having that broader license, importers that operate their own customs warehouses have not been able to label the alcohol they bring in under the terms of the experiment, according to the ministry.

The draft resolution is meant to address that gap. If adopted, importers would be allowed to label the alcohol they import in their own customs warehouses, provided they hold a valid license for the purchase, storage and supply of alcoholic beverages.

The ministry framed the measure as a way to let more participants in foreign trade take part in the experiment. The existing trial ran from June 1, 2021 through May 31, 2026. The ministry did not provide further details in its announcement on when the draft could be approved or when any revised rules might take effect.

The proposal matters for wine, spirits and other imported drinks because labeling rules are tied closely to customs handling, compliance costs and delivery timing. Allowing importers to carry out the process in their own customs warehouses could reduce extra handling steps for some businesses and change how they organize logistics after goods arrive in Russia. For beverage companies that rely on imported stock, even a narrow procedural change can affect warehouse planning, staffing and the speed at which products move into distribution.

The measure also points to a broader regulatory issue in alcohol trade: small differences between licensing categories and customs procedures can shape who is able to participate in an import regime and at what cost. In this case, the ministry’s proposal suggests that companies already licensed to buy, store and supply alcohol may gain more direct control over one of the most sensitive parts of the import process

if they also operate customs warehouses.

No financial estimate of the impact was included in the ministry’s statement. It also did not specify whether the proposed change would apply equally across all categories of imported alcoholic beverages or whether additional technical requirements for stamping and supervision would be introduced later. For now, the main effect of the draft is to signal that Russian authorities are considering a more flexible approach for licensed importers that already have warehouse infrastructure in place.