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Trump Says He Will Lift 10% U.S. Tariff on Irish Whiskey

The carveout leaves tariffs on other European spirits in place, with no timetable for a broader rollback.

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President Donald Trump said he is removing a 10% U.S. tariff on Irish whiskey, carving out a narrow exception in a wider trade fight that has weighed on European drinks exports to the American market.

Trump made the announcement at the end of a visit to Ireland, telling a crowd at a golf event in Doonbeg that Irish leaders and others had pressed him to act. “Everybody has been bugging me” about the issue, Trump said, according to Reuters, adding that he would take the tariff off Irish whiskey. In a separate public statement reported by The Associated Press, Trump said he was lifting the duty because so many people had asked him to do it.

The move would remove a 10% tax charged at U.S. customs on Irish whiskey imports. Trump did not provide a timetable for when the change would formally take effect, and there was no immediate indication that the broader set of tariffs on other European products would also be rolled back.

The tariff on Irish whiskey has roots in a long-running trade conflict between the United States and the European Union. Irish whiskey was first caught up in retaliatory measures tied to the aircraft-subsidy dispute in 2019, according to AP. Reuters reported that the product is now among EU wine and spirit exports facing a 10% U.S. duty after changes made this year to Trump’s wider tariff policy. Taken together, the reports point to Irish whiskey remaining under a 10% import charge even as the legal and policy basis for U.S. tariffs on European goods has shifted over time.

Trump’s latest announcement appears to be limited to Irish whiskey. AP reported that he did not say whether tariffs on Scotch whisky would also be removed. That leaves an important part of the transatlantic spirits trade untouched for now and suggests that the White House is making a category-specific concession rather than announcing a broader settlement with Europe.

Irish whiskey producers and Irish officials quickly welcomed the decision. AP reported that government officials in Ireland had urged the United States to remove the tariff, arguing that it was hurting exports and jobs. The Irish Whiskey Association also praised the move. Reuters quoted the group as saying it would keep working with European and American counterparts to restore a “zero-for-zero” tariff arrangement for all drinks exports, a system the industry has long favored because it allows spirits to move between major markets without added import duties.

The United States is one of the largest and most profitable overseas markets for Irish whiskey, so even a targeted change in tariff policy can matter. Removing the 10% duty could lower import costs for U.S. buyers and improve margins for Irish producers, American importers, distributors, retailers, and bars that sell the product. It could also ease pressure on shelf prices or support higher sales volumes, though the extent of any price change would depend on how companies choose to pass through the savings. For the broader beverage sector, the decision may reduce some uncertainty around one spirits category even if the larger trade dispute remains unresolved.

The announcement also carries political and symbolic weight beyond the whiskey business. Irish whiskey is one of Ireland’s best-known exports, and Trump framed the decision in personal and diplomatic terms during his trip. Reuters reported that Trump said he had discussed the issue with Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin, known in Ireland as the taoiseach, during a meeting in Dublin. He also mentioned being lobbied by golfer Shane Lowry before making the announcement to the crowd.

Still, the change does not settle the larger trade issues between Washington and Brussels. The dispute over subsidies and other trade matters has produced several rounds of retaliatory measures over the years, and talks have continued even as some tariff rates have been revised. AP said trade experts and politicians were already treating Trump’s statement as a notable shift in trade policy that could influence future negotiations, but neither side has announced a broader agreement.

For now, the immediate effect is clear in one corner of the market: if the administration follows through, Irish whiskey entering the United States would no longer face the 10% tariff that has added to costs and complicated trade planning. What remains less clear is whether the step is an isolated concession tied to Trump’s Ireland visit or the start of a wider easing of tariffs on European wines and spirits.