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German spirits lobby seeks fuller review of proposed tax increase

A Bundestag register filing shows the industry association urged lawmakers to conduct a realistic economic impact assessment.

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A German spirits industry association has formally asked for a fuller economic review of a possible tax increase on spirits, according to a filing published Tuesday in the German Bundestag’s public lobby register.

The filing shows that the Bundesverband der Deutschen Spirituosen-Industrie und -Importeure, or BSI, submitted a statement on a draft tax measure described as an “increase in the alcohol tax on spirits.” In the register entry, the association says it is

calling for a “robust and realistic impact assessment” of the proposed change.

The statement was entered in the Bundestag lobby register on Sept. 22. The register says it was sent on Sept. 7 to parliamentary groups, committees, and members of the Bundestag. The filing relates to a discussion draft dated June 29 and led by Germany’s Finance Ministry. That draft concerns possible changes to taxes on alcohol, sparkling wine, intermediate products, and alcopops.

The register identifies the affected federal law as the Alcohol Tax Act, known in German as the AlkStG. It classifies the matter under public finances, taxes, and duties. The filing itself does not set out, in the material visible in the register entry, the exact size of the proposed increase or the detailed methodology the association wants the government to use in its impact analysis.

The Bundestag’s lobby register also notes that the content of such statements is based solely on information provided by the interest representatives who submit them. In this case, the published entry attributes the position directly to the BSI, which represents parts of Germany’s spirits industry and importing trade.

The filing points to an early stage in the policy process rather than a final parliamentary decision. A discussion draft in Germany is typically a preliminary text used to gather reactions before a bill is finalized. The public register entry does not indicate whether the Finance Ministry will keep the proposed spirits tax increase unchanged, revise it, or drop it in a later version.

Even at this stage, the issue matters for the beverage business more broadly because any rise in excise taxes on spirits could eventually affect shelf prices and producer or importer margins if it were enacted. That could, in turn, influence consumer demand, distribution decisions, and the product mix sold in Germany across spirits and potentially other drink categories that compete for the same spending.

For distillers, importers, wholesalers, and retailers, tax changes can shape pricing strategy well before a law takes effect because companies often have to assess inventory, contracts, and promotional plans in advance. A higher tax burden does not automatically translate into a one-for-one price increase for consumers, but it can

create pressure along the supply chain depending on how much companies absorb and how much they pass on.

The filing does not provide a broader policy argument in the excerpt made public through the register beyond the request for a credible impact assessment. It also does not show any official response from lawmakers or from the Finance Ministry. What it does show is that the proposed spirits tax increase has already prompted organized lobbying at the federal level as the German government considers possible changes to alcohol-related excise duties.