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Germany’s spirits industry registers Bundestag petition against proposed 20% excise tax increase.

The filing urges lawmakers to conduct a realistic impact review before deciding on a 2027 rise to €15.64 per liter.

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Germany’s spirits industry has formally stepped up its opposition to a proposed increase in the country’s excise tax on distilled beverages, registering a petition with the Bundestag that calls for the plan to be reviewed using what it describes as a “realistic” impact assessment.

The move, recorded in the Bundestag’s primary register and updated on September 22, marks the latest step in an industry campaign against a tax proposal that was first disclosed in July. According to the draft circulated at that time, the tax on spirits would rise to €15.64 per liter of pure alcohol from €13.03, starting in January 2027. That would mean an increase of €2.61, or 20%.

The filing does not mean the tax has been adopted. The measure remains a proposal, and the current development is the formal registration of business opposition in parliament rather than a new fiscal decision by the government.

The trade group behind the petition, identified in the filing as BSI, is asking lawmakers to reexamine the plan before any final decision is taken. Its request centers on the economic effects of the increase on producers, importers, retailers and consumers in Germany, which is the largest spirits market in Europe by the measure cited in industry coverage of the issue.

Under the July draft, the increase would be calculated on the amount of pure alcohol contained in a product, not on the bottle price itself. That means the effect at retail level would vary by volume and alcohol content. Deutschlandfunk, which quantified the proposal on July 2, said the tax impact on a standard 0.7-liter bottle of vodka at 40% alcohol would be roughly €0.90.

That figure has become a simple reference point in the debate because it gives consumers and retailers a practical way to understand the proposal. While €0.90 reflects the tax component only, the final change in shelf price could differ depending on how much of the increase companies pass through to buyers and how much they absorb in their own margins.

The industry’s opposition comes at a time when many producers and distributors are already dealing with pressure on costs and demand. A 20% increase in the excise burden on spirits could affect pricing strategies across the supply chain, from large international brands to smaller domestic distillers. Companies have also warned that changes of this size can alter purchasing patterns, including the possibility that wholesalers, retailers or consumers bring forward orders before a higher tax takes effect.

That potential shift matters because the proposal is set for January 2027, which gives the market time to react if the draft advances. A pre-implementation buying surge could distort inventories and sales data in late 2026, while also complicating production planning for manufacturers and importers. Businesses in the sector argue that those knock-on effects should be part of any official assessment.

The case being made by BSI is not only about retail prices. Industry groups typically focus on how excise changes affect competitiveness, especially in a market where imported and domestic products compete across multiple price points. For producers, a tax increase can narrow margins if they decide not to pass the full cost on to customers. If they do raise prices, they risk weaker demand, particularly in lower-priced categories where buyers are more sensitive to changes at the checkout.

Germany’s tax debate is also being watched because of the size of its market within Europe. Changes there can influence cross-border pricing decisions, distribution plans and the timing of shipments. That is one reason industry publications have treated the July draft as a significant proposal even before any approval process is completed.

A sector publication on September 23 reported that the industry had now formalized its resistance through the Bundestag channel. That report, together with the parliamentary register and earlier reporting by Deutschlandfunk, forms the basis of the current update. No new tax rates were announced this week. The key numbers in circulation remain those from the July draft: €13.03 per liter of pure alcohol under the current framework and €15.64 under the proposal.

The petition’s request for a “realistic” impact assessment suggests that the industry believes the effects have either been understated or not fully modeled. In disputes over excise policy, business groups often argue that governments place too much weight on expected fiscal gains and too little on changes in consumer behavior, substitution between product categories, weaker volumes and pressure on employment and investment. The available filing information makes clear that BSI wants lawmakers to take a broader view before moving ahead.

For now, the issue remains at the stage of political and regulatory review. The proposed increase has not become law, and there has been no public indication in the materials cited here that parliament has reached a final position. What has changed is that opposition from the spirits industry is now formally on the record in the Bundestag, giving the debate a clearer institutional form as Germany considers whether to raise the tax from January 2027.

The next steps will depend on how lawmakers and the government handle the draft in the coming months. Until then, producers, importers, retailers and consumers are left weighing the possible effects of a 20% increase in the excise rate on spirits in one of Europe’s most important alcohol markets.