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Russia Plans €5-Per-Liter Duty on Beer and Spirits From ‘Unfriendly’ Countries

Draft budget materials cited by Reuters say the tariff would begin Jan. 1, 2027, sharply increasing the levy on beer.

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Russia is planning to raise import duties on beer and spirits from countries it calls “unfriendly” to €5 per liter starting Jan. 1, 2027, according to Reuters, which cited materials prepared for the country’s draft 2027-2029 budget.

For beer, the move would more than triple the current duty. The tariff is now set at €1.5 per liter and would rise to €5 per liter under the proposal. Russia last increased that rate in September 2025. Before that, it had lifted the duty to €1 per liter in January 2025 from an earlier €0.1 per liter.

The planned change would also affect strong alcohol imports. Spirits from “unfriendly countries,” a Russian designation that broadly covers most Western nations, are currently subject to a duty of 20% of their value, with a minimum charge of €3 per liter. Under the new proposal, that rate would move to €5 per liter.

Reuters reported that the higher duty on spirits could bring an additional 10 billion rubles a year into the Russian budget from 2027 through 2029. The same budget materials indicate that Russian authorities also plan to raise excise taxes on alcohol and tobacco by 6.5% in 2027.

The proposal follows earlier discussions inside the Russian government about raising the minimum tariff on imported spirits. Russian business daily Kommersant reported in the spring that the Finance Ministry was considering a €5 per liter minimum duty starting May 1, 2026, but that change was not adopted. At the time, market participants said the measure was expected to support demand for Russian-made cognac and whiskey.

The beer market is likely to be watched closely because beer dominates alcohol consumption in Russia by volume. Reuters, citing Nielsen data, said Russia’s alcohol market shrank by 1.2% in the 12 months through April 2026. Beer accounted for 85.2% of sales by volume, while spirits and vodka made up 11.2%. Imported beer held a 3.1% share of the market in the first quarter.

Those figures suggest that even though imported beer remains a small part of the Russian market, the proposed increase could still matter for brewers, distributors, and exporters. A rise to €5 per liter would make foreign beer more expensive in Russia, which could put pressure on the margins of European suppliers and alter shipping and sales strategies. It could also further tilt demand toward domestic brands if retailers pass the added cost on to consumers.

Earlier tariff increases have already affected trade routes. The New Voice of Ukraine, citing The Moscow Times, reported that some suppliers responded to previous duty hikes by rerouting shipments through Belarus and Kazakhstan to reduce costs. If the new tariff takes effect, companies involved in the beer trade could again look for alternative logistics channels, although it is not yet clear how widely that would happen.

The proposal comes at a time when Russia continues to use tariffs and other trade barriers against countries it considers hostile. Alcohol imports have become one of the areas where that policy is showing up in direct costs. For beer in particular, the pace of increases has been sharp. In less than two years, the import duty would have moved from €0.1 per liter to €5 per liter if the new plan is approved.

No final adoption of the measure was described in the budget materials cited by Reuters, but the proposal sets out the clearest timetable so far, with Jan. 1, 2027, named as the intended start date. For beverage companies that still export to Russia, the measure would add to a market that is already more difficult to serve because of tariffs, compliance risks, and shifting transport patterns.