

PRESS
RELEASE



SPRITSEUROPE WELCOMES CONCLUSION OF EU-AUSTRALIA TRADE NEGOTIATIONS AND CALLS FOR CONTINUED MOMENTUM ON GLOBAL TRADE AGENDA

Brussels, 24 March 2026 - *spiritsEUROPE warmly welcomes the successful conclusion of negotiations for the EU-Australia Free Trade Agreement, marking a long-awaited step forward in strengthening trade ties with a key partner.*

Australia is currently the EU spirits sector's 12th largest export market by value, with exports reaching €150.2 million in 2025. The agreement's provisions to eliminate tariffs on EU spirits represent an overdue improvement in market access, levelling the playing field with spirit drinks from other regions which already benefit from tariff-free access to Australia. The sector also welcomes the protection of 231 European spirit geographical indications (GIs) under the agreement. While the phased implementation of protection for certain GIs is noted, this remains an important achievement in safeguarding the heritage and authenticity of European spirits in the Australian market.

"This agreement sends a strong signal about the importance of open, rules-based trade and the EU's ambition to not only talk the talk, but also walk the walk when it comes to trade diversification," said Pauline Bastidon, Trade & Economic Affairs Director of spiritsEUROPE. *"It will deliver tangible benefits for EU spirits and help level the playing field with other major spirit drink producers, who already enjoy tariff-free access to Australia."*

spiritsEUROPE also strongly welcomes the confirmed provisional entry into force of the EU-Mercosur agreement on 1 May, underlining a positive momentum in the EU's trade agenda.

Against this backdrop, the sector calls for equivalent ambition and progress in ongoing negotiations with partners in South-East Asia and the United Arab Emirates. In particular, spiritsEUROPE stresses the importance of the full elimination of tariffs on EU spirits and the inclusion of dedicated wines and spirits annexes where possible to address non-tariff barriers, enhance regulatory cooperation, and improve dialogue.

"Building on recent successes, it is essential that the EU continues to prioritise high-quality outcomes in ongoing negotiations," Pauline Bastidon added. *"Removing both tariff and non-tariff barriers remains critical to unlocking export potential for EU spirits globally and to supporting companies in their diversification efforts."*

spiritsEUROPE stands ready to support EU institutions in advancing an ambitious and effective trade policy that delivers for European producers and consumers alike.

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Note to editors

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- spiritsEUROPE is the representative body for the spirits industry at European level comprising 31 associations and 11 international companies: www.spirits.eu.

Background Information:

- On 24 March 2026, the EU and Australia announced the successful conclusion of their bilateral trade negotiations. The European Commission's press release can be found [here](#), the EU agri-food factsheet [here](#) and the FTA Q&A [here](#).
- The agreement will remove the 5% tariff applying to EU spirit drinks upon import in Australia, and protect 231 spirit drink geographical indications (GIs), with the opportunity for both parties to add more GIs in the future. The European Commission announced that some EU GIs names will only be fully protected after phasing-out periods of Australian products, which previously used the name in good faith and in a continuous manner. This is the case for GIs such as Tsipouro or Ouzo for example.
- On 23 March 2026, Commissioner Šefčovič confirmed that the EU-Mercosur agreement would apply provisionally as of 1 May 2026. The announcement can be found [here](#).
- The EU is negotiating agreements with Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and the UAE. More information on the progress of these negotiations can be found [here](#) and [here](#).
- More information on spiritsEUROPE priorities for trade relations with third countries can be found [here](#) – including relevant export statistics. The spiritsEUROPE 2 pager on the EU-Mercosur FTA can be found [here](#).