



Spirits Export Success Story: 5% growth to 2017

Brussels - 19 June 2018 – spiritsEUROPE launched its annual Trade Review. The clear message: **In Trade We Trust... more than ever!**

Introducing the Trade Review 2018, **spiritsEUROPE Director for Trade Marie Audren** highlighted that spirits exports generated a total of €10.7 billion in 2018. *“This result shows that spirits’ greatest source of growth comes from outside the EU and it demonstrates once again the need to continue the strong EU trade strategy in the coming years”.*

The event was opened by **Everton Viera Vargas, the Ambassador of Brazil to the EU** who pointing out the opportunities the MERCOSUR agreement would bring to European companies, accessing a market with a combined GDP of approximately €15.3 trillion and 750 million people. He voiced his optimism on the stage and progress of the negotiations so far. Further, he assured that the largest parts of the normative texts have already been agreed on, nevertheless, some sensitive and complex issues are still left to be finalized. *“We have been showing a great deal of flexibility to accommodate the demands presented by the EU. We remain confident the EU understands compromises are needed to cross the finishing line”.* Nonetheless, Ambassador Vargas sees the *“mutual potential to bring our markets together”* since *“MERCOSUR is a key global supplier of foodstuffs and the EU is a key consumer – it’s a win-win”.*

Angelos Pangratis from the Commission (EEAS), emphasized the role of the private actors in European Economic Diplomacy. He pointed out that *“the world around us is changing quickly” which requires intense efforts to adjust*”. Consequently *“the future [would be] about mobilizing the private sector complementary to the public sector to deepen [...] partnerships”* and seizing the opportunities arising globally. On the whole, we need a better coordination of all forces (EP, Delegations, Member States and companies) to act more efficiently on issues raised by operators on our priority markets. He reminded everyone that the EU institutions as well as the Member States have to be proactive to *“ensure our companies are supported and treated fairly”.*



F. Collache, A. Pangratis, C Fjellener, D. Galperian, M. Audren, E. Viera Vargas

Darya Galperina from Pernod-Ricard confirmed the great expectations the spirits sector has for the current trade negotiations with MERCOSUR. *“Trade deals, for us, are about opening markets, but even more importantly to enforce international trade rules”.* Ms. Galperina sees that *“it is a competitive world out there”* and to adjust *“EU trade policy needs to be faster, sharper and closer to business needs”.* She stressed the vital importance of (regional)



products like Cognac or 'Absolut Vodka' in terms of prosperity in those areas which rely on smooth trading. 17,000 people are employed in Cognac and 'Absolut Vodka' employs indirectly 1,500 farmers in the region 'Skåne' alone and 99% is exported outside Sweden to 150 countries around the world.

The Swedish MEP **Christofer Fjellener**, active member in INTA in favour of free trade and liberalisation, warned participants on the consequences of the rising protectionism in Europe and outside. Even though the US tariffs are today in the center of attention, the main problem for European companies remains Chinese protectionism. He called upon the EU and the Member States to take up their responsibilities to become more offensive in international trade. Fjellener stated that: *"we are the shining star because its dark out there"* and stressed that many of our achievements have been due to others misdoings rather than due to our successes. He reasoned that *"it is time to act fast and open up"*. Christofer Fjellener appraised the work done by the European Parliament on trade policy since it was given the co-decision power after the Lisbon Treaty.

François Collache from SOPEXA told participants that *"consumer trend is towards local and craft products"*, thus the importance to support small distillers in promoting of their products abroad to meet consumers expectations. François presented a couple to great campaigns to support wine and spirits exports. *"I advise producers to act jointly to access financial means to promote their know-hows on external markets"* he concluded.

Looking at this event we are truly pleased to see that "In Trade We Trust" was not just the catching slogan but reflected the views and believes of our speakers and guests.

- REG 1144 : Gradual rise to 200M€ per year in 2019
 - In 2017, **France** received **39%** of the available grants
Spain : 25%
Greece: 7%

Available grants (M€)



sopexa