



CP.MI-067-2022 /18 May 2022

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the provision of nutrition information & ingredient listing of spirits drinks sold in the EU

2nd Implementation Report

Rollout progress during Phase II (1 January – 31 December 2021)

May 2022

Executive Summary

During Phase II (1 January – 31 December 2021), Europe's spirits sector has continued to deliver successfully on the commitments made in 2019 with regards to the provision of nutrition information and ingredient listing of spirits drinks sold in the EU. By the end of Phase II, an estimated 50% of all hl of spirit drinks released on the market in the 31 countries analyzed (EU-27 plus UK, Switzerland, Norway and Iceland) included on-label energy information.

Notably, during Phase II, significant progress was made in:

- ✓ **Launching a sector-wide digital consumer information platform:** together with the wine sector, the spirits sector built a bespoke E-label Platform which launched on 1 December 2021 and allows the development of tailored e-labels in an easy, reliable and cost-efficient way. Within the first months, more than 30 spirits companies have registered to the platform and created more than 400 e-labels.
- ✓ **Mobilising SME producers to change labels & sign up to the MoU:** during Phase II, a growing number of smaller producers have started to enact label changes and have co-signed the MoU. The formal signature of 59 SMEs on 18 May 2022 shows that the MoU is a truly sector-wide approach which is supported and implemented across companies of all sizes.
- ✓ **Widening the geographical reach:** the co-signing of the MoU by 6 additional national producer associations during Phase II shows the broad geographical reach of the initiative.

The MoU has continued to prove its value to:

- **European consumers:** by obtaining energy information on-pack as well as ample product-specific information (ingredient listing, nutrition declaration, additional information) via dedicated e-labels.
- **producers:** by providing them with clear, appropriate, and harmonized guidance on consumer information for spirits drinks sold in the EU. This, in turn, has enabled the sector to make rapid progress in the roll-out and go well beyond what is currently mandated by EU rules.
- **policy-makers and regulators:** by showing that tangible progress can be achieved through adequate self-regulatory initiatives.



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In light of the success of the initiative, the European spirits sector calls on the:

- European Commission to include the MoU approach (energy on-pack, ingredient listing and full nutrition declaration provided by e-labels) in the upcoming proposal on food information to consumers (FIC Regulation) [Option 1a of the Impact Assessment]
- European Parliament and EU Member States as co-legislators to enshrine the MoU approach in the revised FIC Regulation.

I. INTRODUCTION

This document constitutes the **2nd Implementation Report** on rollout progress of the MoU's commitments, in line with the reporting process outlined in the MoU until the end of its implementation period on 31 December 2022.¹

➔ **Next steps foreseen for Phase III:** the **3rd Implementation Report** will be prepared in spring 2023, evaluating the rollout progress made in Phase III (1 January – 31 December 2022).

II. DELIVERING ON THE COMMITMENTS

1. More & more energy-labelled spirits bottles (SKUs) are being placed on the market

Europe's spirits sector has successfully delivered on the first and second milestone commitment of its MoU. By the end of Phase II on 31 December 2021, it is estimated that, on average, around 50% of all hl of spirit drinks released on the market in the 31 countries analyzed (EU-27 plus, UK, Switzerland, Norway and Iceland) included on-label energy information in conformity with the MoU.

Among the 11 biggest spirits producers, 5 reported compliance rates well above the 50% threshold by the end of Phase II, namely 97%, 87%, 73%, 69%, and 63% respectively. As expected, early label changes have thus been driven mainly by larger producers. At the same time, during Phase II, more and more smaller producers have started to enact labelling changes, too. In line with this, roll-out speed and

¹ Signed on 4 June 2019, the [Memorandum of Understanding on the provision of nutrition information & ingredients listing of spirit drinks sold in the EU](#) (hereafter referred to as: 'MoU'), formalizes the spirits sector's commitment to make nutrition information and ingredients listing available for spirits sold in the EU by the end of 2022 (on-pack and/or online). The MoU reflects the sector's ambition to go beyond current legal labelling obligations in the EU – under which alcoholic beverages above 1.2% ABV are exempted from providing such information – and make such information available in accurate, meaningful and transparent ways for the benefit of consumers. In July 2019, the MoU's signature and approach was endorsed by the European Commission in a [public letter](#) by EU Health Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis and EU Agriculture Commissioner Phil Hogan.

progress continues to vary between countries. Countries with a higher market share of the early movers (Western European countries in particular) continue to show higher levels of products sold with energy information on-pack than countries in which that market share is lower.



Figure 1: Samples of energy on-pack labels

2. Launching a sector-wide digital consumer information platform

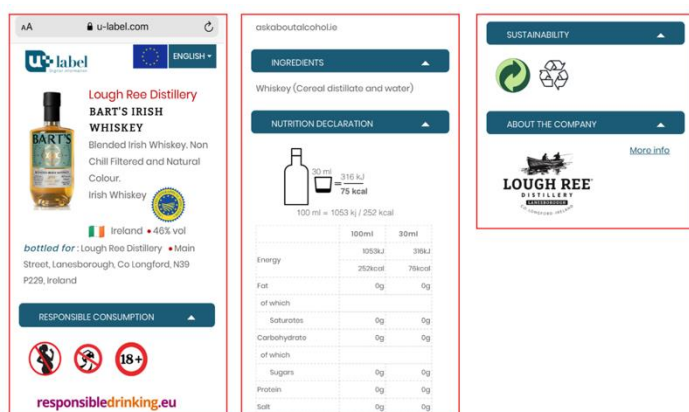
The new E-Label Platform named **'U-label'** provides EU consumers with full and multilingual product information at the click of a button in a marketing free, secure way. It is the first practical sector-wide application of e-labelling in Europe.

U-label allows small and large companies – also outside the membership of spiritsEUROPE – to easily start building their digital information strategy and meet consumer expectations at a moderate cost. We consider the Platform to be a leading example of successful efforts towards more transparency and digital consumer information. **Continuous improvements of the Platform – in close cooperation with its users – are foreseen to continue in the future,** responding to consumer as well as to user needs, technological developments, and legislative requirements.



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Today, more than 30 spirits drinks producing companies are using U-label and label more than 400 Stock Keeping Units (SKUs). We expect rapid growth and uptake of the Platform to continue during Phase III.



When developing U-label, it was one of the focus points to create a Platform that is democratic and open to all – also in terms of cost-structures, which are designed in way that they are affordable - also for SMEs.

For non-members to spiritsEUROPE, access costs to U-label vary from 250 EUR/annually for the basic package to 2500 EUR/annually for the premium package (more information available [here](#)).

= Source: QR code from Lough Ree distillery:
<https://www.u-label.com/qr/9519cb455d91e>

Any spirits (and/or wine) producing company can access U-label, as explained [here](#). Today, already 21 non-spiritsEUROPE members are using U-label.

3. More & more organisations co-sign the MoU and report on compliance & roll-out progress

The number of spirits producers across Europe that have reported to the sector association's secretariat their compliance with the MoU has continued to grow sharply. During Phase II and the first months (until May 2022) of Phase III, the following associations and companies signed the MoU:

- ✓ **Estonia: ATML** (February 2021)
- ✓ **Jägermeister** (September 2021)
- ✓ **France: FFS** (October 2021)
- ✓ **Belgium: V&S** (December 2021)
- ✓ **Bulgaria: Spirits Bulgaria** (January 2022)
- ✓ **Germany: BSI** (March 2022)
- ✓ **Sweden: SPAA** (May 2022)

In total, the MoU signatories now include (see Annex I for details):

- 8 multinationals
- 16 national associations
- 59 SMEs



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III. CONCLUSIONS & OUTLOOK

As demonstrated by the range of activities described above, producers and trade associations in Europe's spirits sector are making significant efforts and substantial financial investments to ensure a swift roll-out progress of the MoU in line with the commitments made.

During Phase II, the MoU has continued to prove its value to:

- **European consumers:** by obtaining energy information on-pack as well as ample product-specific information (ingredient listing, nutrition declaration, additional information) via dedicated e-labels.
- **producers:** by providing them with clear, appropriate, and harmonized guidance on consumer information for spirits drinks sold in the EU. This, in turn, has enabled the sector to make rapid progress in the roll-out and go well beyond what is currently mandated by EU rules.
- **policy-makers and regulators:** by showing that tangible progress can be achieved through adequate self-regulatory initiatives.

In light of the success of the initiative, the European spirits sector calls on the:

- European Commission to include the MoU approach (energy on-pack, ingredient listing and full nutrition declaration provided by e-labels) in the upcoming proposal on food information to consumers (FIC Regulation) [Option 1a of the Impact Assessment]
- European Parliament and EU Member States as co-legislators to enshrine the MoU approach in the revised FIC Regulation.



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Annex I

LIST OF SIGNATORIES OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BY SPIRITSEUROPE MEMBERS UPDATED 18 May 2022

LEADING MULTINATIONALS (8)

 BACARDI-MARTINI	
	
	
 RÉMY COINTREAU	



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NATIONAL TRADE ASSOCIATIONS (16 associations in 14 countries)

THE NETHERLANDS	 SPIRITS NL
SPAIN	 ESPIRITUOSOS ESPAÑA
POLAND	 POLSKI PRZEMYSŁ SPIRYTUSOWY
FRANCE	 BNIC COGNAC FRANCE
	 LES SPIRITUEUX Fédération Française des Spiritueux
IRELAND	 Drinks Ireland



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FINLAND	<p>SAJK SUOMEN ALKOHOLIJUOMAKAUPPA RY</p>
SWEDEN	<p>SVL SPRIT OCH VINLEVERANTÖRSFÖRENINGEN</p>
	<p>SVERIGES PRODUCENTER av Alkoholdrycker</p>
LATVIA	<p>LANA</p>
PORTUGAL	<p>ANEBE ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DE EMPRESAS DE BEBIDAS ESPRITUOSAS</p>
ESTONIA	<p>A T M L Alkoholitootjate ja Maaletootjate Liit</p>



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BELGIUM	<p>VINUM ET SPIRITUS</p>
BULGARIA	<p>SPIRITS BULGARIA</p>
GERMANY	<p>BSI</p> <p>BUNDESVERBAND DER DEUTSCHEN SPIRITUOSEN-INDUSTRIE UND -IMPORTEURE e. V.</p>
DENMARK (NON-MEMBER)	<p>VSOD</p> <p>Wine & Spirits Denmark</p>

SMES ACROSS EUROPE (59 SMEs)

FRANCE (26)



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GERMANY (13)

AUGUST ERNST	
	
	
	
	
	
	



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IRELAND (5)

LATVIA (1)

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AUSTRIA (1)

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BULGARIA (1)

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PORTUGAL (6)

SPAIN (6)
