



SPIRITSEUROPE HAILS THE EU-INDIA FTA AS A TRUE GAME CHANGER FOR THE EU SPIRITS SECTOR

Brussels, 27 January 2026 - *spiritsEUROPE welcomes the conclusion of the EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA), a transformational deal for the EU spirits sector that will significantly improve access to one of the world's most important spirits markets.*

"This agreement is a real game changer for our sector," said spiritsEUROPE Director General Mark Titterington. "Cutting tariffs from 150% to 40% will unlock long-term growth, create new jobs across the value chain, and give Indian consumers greater choice through a complementary, rather than competing, offering. The deal benefits both sides: a stronger EU presence will support market diversification, boost revenues, attract investment, and generate downstream employment in India, without displacing domestic production."

India is the second-largest spirits market globally by volume, after China, and its consumers drink more spirits than beer or wine. While the market remains primarily whisky-driven, growing demand for quality, authenticity, and premium products means all EU spirits categories stand to gain.

Under the agreement, tariffs on EU spirits will be cut by half upon entry into force, followed by a gradual reduction to 40%. This represents a step change for the sector, building on a decade in which the value of EU spirits exports to India increased sixfold, despite historically high tariffs and regulatory barriers.

spiritsEUROPE also welcomes the creation of a dedicated EU-India Working Group on Wine and Spirits, which will allow both sides to deepen regulatory dialogue, enhance mutual understanding and address market access concerns.

"The EU-India FTA opens a new chapter for spirits trade," Mark Titterington added. "We look forward to working closely with authorities on both sides to ensure swift implementation. This agreement demonstrates how strong partnerships and open trade can deliver tangible growth and benefits for both economies."

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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 27 January 2026, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and India Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the successful conclusion of EU-India trade negotiations. During [her speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos](#), President von der Leyen described this agreement as “the mother of all deals”, “one that would create a market of 2 billion people, accounting for almost a quarter of global GDP”.

For spirits specifically, the agreement will be a game changer, by:

- halving tariffs on EU spirits from entry into force, before a subsequent further gradual reduction to 40%.
- Providing a platform to strengthen regulatory cooperation, exchange best practices and address trade concerns of relevance to wines and spirits, through a dedicated EU-India wine and spirits working group.

India is the second biggest spirits market in the world by volume and a significant producer of spirits at global level. Demand in alcoholic beverages is primarily concentrated on spirits. This is true for both value and more uniquely, volume. This makes India one of the most promising markets for EU spirits in the world. However, this potential is not currently realised due to high tariff and non-tariff barriers, and most particularly, a staggering import duty of 150% on EU spirits in India. The Indian spirits market is dominated by the whisky category (in terms of consumption), although other categories in which the EU is a strong performer are emerging.