

G-Regs™

EU - Labelling of Alcoholic Beverages



Full title: Labelling of Alcoholic Beverages

Relevant Legislation

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers (full title – open link) – hereinafter the FIC Reg.

Link [here](#)

Commission Regulation (EC) No. 607/2009 of 14 July 2009 laying down certain detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2008 as regards protected designations of origin and geographical indications, traditional terms, labelling and presentation of certain wine sector products

Link [here](#)

Alcoholic Strength

Alcoholic beverages must be marked with their alcoholic strength where this is above 1.2% (Art. 9(1k) FIC Reg).

The actual alcoholic strength by volume of beverages containing more than 1.2 % by volume of alcohol shall be indicated by a figure to not more than one decimal place. The various tolerances are laid down in Annex XII. It shall be followed by the symbol '% vol.' and may be preceded by the word 'alcohol' or the abbreviation 'alc'. (Art. 28 (2) and Annex XII FIC Reg).

The mandatory particulars must be printed on the label/ package in such a way as to ensure clear legibility in characters using a font size where the x-height, as defined in Annex IV, is equal to or greater than 1.2 mm (Art. 13 (2)). Where the container has a surface area of less than 80cm², the font size can be equal or greater to 0.9mm (Art. 13 (3) FIC Reg).

For wine (including fortified wine) from fresh grapes, the figure must be indicated in whole or half percentage points and again followed by '% vol.' (e.g. XX%vol. or XX.5%vol). The figure may be preceded by 'actual alcoholic strength', 'actual alcohol' or 'alc'.

The font heights vary according to volume but should be at least: 2 mm: 20cl or less; 3mm: over 20cl-100cl; 5mm: over 100cl. (Art. 28 (1) FIC Reg and 54 (1) & (2) Reg. 607/2009)

General Rules (Mandatory particulars):

Beverages with more than 1.2% by volume of alcohol must be labelled with (Art. 9 (1) FIC Reg):

- A legally compliant name.
 - Any appropriate allergen information derived from ingredients or substances listed in Annexes II and III.
 - The quantity of certain ingredients or categories of ingredients.
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- A net quantity indication.
 - A durability date for some products.
 - Any particular storage conditions or conditions of use.
 - A business name and address.
 - An origin indication if the need is triggered (see Art. 26).
 - *The list of ingredients (not mandatory requirement for alc. bev.)*
 - *Nutrition declaration (not mandatory requirement for alc. bev.)*

These general rules concerning the labelling of foodstuffs (FIC Reg) will also apply to spirit drinks and wine; although specific labelling rules are provided for spirit drinks ([Reg. \(EC\) No 110/2008](#)) and wine ([Reg. No 607/2009](#)) which contain additional requirements.

Field of vision requirements:

- The name, the net quantity, and the '% ABV' must appear in the same field of vision. (Art. 13 (5) FIC Reg)

Exemptions:

1) Alcoholic beverages are at present exempt from mandatory nutrition labelling (i.e. list of ingredients and nutrition declaration). (Art. 16 (4) FIC Reg)¹

Where nutrition information is provided on a voluntary basis, it must comprise either the full nutrition declaration or it can be limited to energy value only (Arts 30 (4) and 36 (1) FIC Reg)

(Full nutrition declaration = energy value plus amounts of fat, saturates, carbohydrate, sugars, protein and salt).

For the purposes of nutrition labelling of alcoholic drinks, energy conversion factors of 29kJ/g and 7kcal/g must be used for alcohol (ethanol) (ANNEX XIV – Conversion factors)

2) Indication of the date of minimum durability or use by date is not required for (Annex X (1d) FIC Reg):

- Wines, liqueur wines, sparkling wines, aromatised wines,
- Similar products to the above obtained from fruit other than grapes,
- Fermented beverages other than the above, which have been obtained from grapes or grape musts (falling within CN code 2206 00 obtained from grapes or grape musts)
- Beverages containing 10 % or more by volume of alcohol,

Foods For Which The Labelling Must Include One Or More Additional Particulars
(Annex III FIC Reg)

3.3: Beverages containing glycyrrhizinic acid or its ammonium salt due to the addition of the substance(s) as such or the liquorice plant *Glycyrrhiza glabra* at concentrations of 50 mg/l or above, or of 300 mg/l or above in the case of beverages containing more than

¹ By 13 December 2014, the Commission shall produce a report concerning the application of Article 18 (List of ingredients) and Article 30(1) (Content of mandatory nutrition declaration) to the products referred to in this paragraph, and addressing whether alcoholic beverages should in future be covered, in particular, by the requirement to provide the information on the energy value, and the reasons justifying possible exemptions, taking into account the need to ensure coherence with other relevant Union policies. In this context, the Commission shall consider the need to propose a definition of 'alcopops'

1,2 % by volume of alcohol, must display a cautionary statement:

“Contains liquorice – people suffering from hypertension should avoid excessive consumption”.

This statement shall be added immediately after the list of ingredients. In the absence of a list of ingredients, the statement shall accompany the name of the product. (i.e. applies to brands such as Pastis and Ricard)

Where the concentration of glycyrrhizinic acid or its ammonium salt is between 10mg/l and 300mg/l, the statement should only read: 'contains liquorice' and this is not required if the term 'liquorice' is already included in the name of the food or the ingredients list. (Annex III; 3.1 FIC)

Distance Selling

Alcoholic beverages offered for sale by distance communications must include the mandatory information requirements before the purchase is concluded and at the moment of delivery. It must be available at no extra cost to the consumer. (Art. 14(1) FIC).

Language Requirements

Mandatory information shall appear in a language easily understood by the consumers of the Member States where the alcoholic beverage is marketed.

The Member State can stipulate that the information shall be provided in one or more languages from among the [official languages](#) of the Union.

These two provisions shall not prevent the information being provided in several languages. (Art. 15 Reg. FIC)
