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Scotch Bottle Sizes Retained

A seven year campaign to retain the standard 70cl bottle size for Scotch Whisky came to a successful conclusion this week, when the European Parliament voted to continue to allow spirit drinks to be sold in any of nine standard sizes.

Since 1993, there has been a set range of permitted bottle sizes for Scotch Whisky and other spirit drinks in the EU. As part of a deregulation plan, European Commission proposals would have abolished that range, with consumers facing a confusing plethora of similar sized products.

Following detailed representations by the SWA and other EU spirits producers, the Commission amended its plans to recognise the importance of, and to retain, set bottle sizes for spirit drinks. The European Parliament formally approved these proposals yesterday.

Nick Soper, the SWA's European Affairs Director, welcomed the vote in Brussels:

"This decision is good news for consumers. Research shows consumers prefer standard sizes, finding them easy to understand and an aid to making shopping decisions. Before regulation, over 60 bottles could be found on the market, all of slightly different sizes and quantities, and were confusing to consumers.

"Standard bottle sizes have also supported distillers' investment in high speed bottling facilities, as well as in lightweight glass, which brings substantial raw material and energy savings. At the same time, the existing regulation of bottle sizes promotes fair competition in the spirits sector and we are delighted that the European Parliament has voted to retain these standard sizes in the years ahead."

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