

Irish Whiskey Association

Submission to House of Commons International trade Committee regarding UK trade negotiations: Agreement with Australia

11 January 2021

1. The Irish Whiskey Association is the all-island representative body for the Irish whiskey industry and represents Irish whiskey distilleries, bonders and brand-owners in Northern Ireland.
2. The Irish Whiskey Association welcomes the UK free trade agreement with Australia.
3. Australia has proven to be one of the fastest-growing international markets for the Irish whiskey category in recent years. Many Northern Irish distilleries and brands have targeted Australia as a key growth market in coming years, particularly for premium and super-premium priced Irish whiskeys. The ongoing growth in Irish whiskey exports will continue to benefit the Northern Ireland economy and support the levelling-up of the region.
4. As provided for in the FTA, the elimination of the existing 5% tariff on UK whiskeys will support the growth in exports of Irish whiskey from Northern Ireland to Australia.
5. The Irish Whiskey Association also welcomes the changes to rules-of-origin for whiskeys in the FTA which allow for Irish grain whiskey distilled in Ireland, but matured and blended in Northern Ireland, to qualify for the new zero tariff. There is currently no grain whiskey distillery operating in Northern Ireland and many Northern Irish distilleries currently produce blended Irish whiskeys containing grain Irish whiskey distilled in the south. The reform of rules-of-origin in the FTA will protect traditional, long-standing supply chains in the Irish whiskey industry. The inclusion of permitted tolerances in the FTA will also allow for inclusion of malt and pot still Irish whiskey distilled in Ireland to be included (to a certain level) in Irish whiskeys blended in Northern Ireland.
6. We wish to thank the UK negotiating team for their active support in securing these new rules-of-origin.

William Lavelle

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Irish Whiskey Association

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