

Changes to the Alcohol Act – further developments of the drafts

On 29 July, the Health Committee held a meeting to review pending legislative drafts amending the Act on Upbringing in Sobriety and Counteracting Alcoholism (“**Alcohol Act**”). The drafts contain numerous changes significant to the alcohol industry, including those related to alcohol advertising and promotion. During the meeting, the Committee reviewed the report of the special subcommittee, which had been working over the past few months on the draft acts proposed by Lewica (Print No. 2007) and Polska2050 (Print No. 2010) Parliamentary Groups. **The Committee adopted the draft act amending the Alcohol Act, while reserving the right to submit some of the amendments introduced by the subcommittee at later stages of the legislative process.**

During the special subcommittee’s work, which lasted several months, a lead draft (proposed by Lewica) was selected, and amendments were made to the text of that draft. At that time, numerous changes were made to the draft, including the **removal of the proposed minimum price for alcohol, provisions regarding the remote sale of alcohol, and the ban on the sale, serving, and consumption of alcoholic beverages at gas stations**. Instead, a provision was proposed stipulating that the sale of alcoholic beverages at gas stations must be conducted in a manner that prevents the display of alcoholic beverages at the point of sale (so-called “behind-the-counter sales”). Other changes proposed by the subcommittee include: standardizing the method for determining the distance at which alcohol may be sold near specific facilities and locations; introducing provisions into the Lewica draft regarding the appearance of alcoholic beverage packaging and introducing provisions concerning sponsorship disclosures.

During the Health Committee meeting, several amendments developed during the sessions of the special subcommittee were set aside, as they would most likely require notification to the European Commission, and introducing them at this stage would prolong the legislative process. **However, it was decided that these amendments would be submitted during the second reading of the draft.**

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